

17th October, 2017

TO ALL MEMBERS OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
--

The Adjourned September Meeting of Donegal County Council, will be held on Monday 23rd October, 2017 at 10.00am, in the County House, Lifford to consider the unfinished business listed below:-

Items 9 - 52.

Please ensure that you bring the agenda previously distributed to the meeting.

Meetings Administrator

MINUTES OF ADJOURNED SEPTEMBER MEETING OF DONEGAL
COUNTY COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON 23rd
OCTOBER, 2017

C/346/17 MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Gerry Mc Monagle, Cathaoirleach, L Blaney, E Bonner, C Brogan, J Campbell, P Canning, T Conaghan, G Crawford, N Crossan, A Doherty, G Doherty, L Doherty, R Donaghey, M Farren, M T Gallagher, A Glackin, M Harley, N Jordan, N Kennedy, M C Mac Giolla Easbuig, M Mc Bride, J P Mc Daid, M McDermott, I Mc Garvey, B McGuinness, J Murray, S O'Domhnaill, J 'O' Donnell, J S O'Fearraigh, J Ryan and T Slowey.

C/347/17 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Seamus Neely, Chief Executive, Joe Peoples, Director of Housing Corporate & Cultural Services / Meetings Administrator, John McLaughlin, Director of Roads and Transportation, Liam Ward, Director of Community, Enterprise & Planning Services, Garry Martin, Director of Finance, Information Systems & Emergency Services, Con Mc Laughlin , Senior Engineer, Water & Environment, Anne Marie Conlon, Communications Officer, Sean O' Daimhin, Oifigeach na Gaeilge, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/348/17 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mc Gowan and Naughton who were unable to attend the meeting.

C/349/17 GROUP WATER SCHEMES – REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION TO MEET WITH THE MINISTER TO DISCUSS THE TAKING IN CHARGE OF SCHEMES WHERE PROMOTERS ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO CONTINUE

On the proposal of Cllr Donaghey, seconded by Cllr Crawford the following motion submitted by Cllr Mc Gowan was adopted:-

"That this Council discuss Group Water Schemes in the County and agree a deputation to the Minister to lobby for the taking in charge of schemes where promoters are not in a position to continue indefinitely."

Cllr McGowan received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/350/17

THAT DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE BANNING OF PLASTIC BOTTLES AND A RETURN TO REUSABLE AND RECYCLABLE GLASS BOTTLES

On the proposal of Cllr Slowey, seconded by Cllr Gallagher the following motion was adopted.

“That Donegal County Council supports the banning of plastic bottles and a return to reusable and recyclable glass bottles”

Cllr Slowey received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

He informed members that up to 500 million single use plastic bottles were manufactured and used each year creating massive environmental problems.

Cllr Slowey said that Donegal County Council had an excellent record in terms of recycling. He queried what facilities were available for persons wishing to dispose of ink and toner cartridges.

It was imperative, he said, that Donegal County Council got the message out that people should stop using single use plastics.

Cllr Gallagher outlined her support for the motion.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Slowey thanked members for their support and said that he hoped the call for a ban on single use plastics would gather momentum and that there would be a return to reusable and recyclable glass bottles.

C/351/17

THAT DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL DESIGN AND ERECT LARGE SIGNAGE TO PROPERLY DEMARCATÉ AND PROMOTE THE GAELTACHT AREAS OF THE COUNTY, SO THAT VISITORS AND TOURISTS ARE AWARE OF THE UNIQUE, LIVING, LINGUISTIC HERITAGE OF THE AREA THEY ARE ENTERING, AND LOCAL GAELTACHT RESIDENTS ARE INSPIRED TO KEEP THE LANGUAGE AROUND THEIR GAELTACHT IDENTITY ALIVE.

The following motion submitted by Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig was not moved:-

“Go ndéanfaidh Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall comharthaíocht úr mhór a dhearadh agus a chur suas le ceantracha Gaeltachta na condae a fhógairt agus a chur chun cinn, sa dóigh is go mbeidh cuairteoirí agus turasóirí chuig an Ghaeltacht ar an eolas faoin oidhreacht bheo speisialta teanga san áit a bhfuil siad ag dul isteach ann, agus le go spreagfaí muintir na Gaeltachta an teanga agus a bhféiniúlacht ar leith Gaeltachta a choinneáil beo. Ba chóir go mbeadh a leithéid de chomharthaíocht iontach feiceálach, agus ba chóir go ndéanfaí lógó agus mana spreagúil a dhearadh agus a chumadh go speisialta fána choinne, i gcomhar leis na pobail éagsúla sa Ghaeltacht agus i gcomhar le háisineachtaí eile a mbainfeadh seo leo”.

“That Donegal County Council design and erect large signage to properly demarcate and promote the Gaeltacht areas of the county, so that visitors and tourists are aware of the unique, living, linguistic heritage of the area they are entering, and local Gaeltacht residents are inspired to keep the language and their Gaeltacht identity alive. Such signage should have a strong visual impact, and include a specially designed logo and motto in consultation with the various Gaeltacht communities and other relevant agencies”.

C/352/17 PROMOTION OF URBANISATION AND SELF SUFFICIENCY CONFIRMATION THAT MONEY COLLECTED IN AREAS THAT WE ARE PROMOTING WITHIN OUR COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN WILL BE SPENT ON AREAS THAT ARE BEING OVERLOOKED FOR DEVELOPMENT DUE TO POPULATION ON A BALANCED REGIONAL BASIS COUNTYWIDE”.

On the proposal of Cllr Canning, seconded by Cllr O’ Domhnaill the following motion was adopted:-

“As Councillors we are being asked to wear the County Jersey when looking at the County Development Plan but when it comes to the budget we have to wear the Municipal District Jersey. Given that the National Planning Framework and this Government is promoting urbanisation and self sufficiency, can this Council confirm that money collected in areas that we are promoting within our County Development Plan will be spent on areas that are being overlooked for development within our CDP due to population on a balanced regional basis countywide.”

Cllr Canning received a response from the Director of Community, Enterprise and Planning Services in relation to the above.

He said that he was fearful that areas with lesser development would not get a fair share of funding going forward and that only those towns designated for multiple development would flourish. Given that the Council was now half way through the County Development Plan process it was imperative, he said that self sufficiency was actively promoted for all smaller towns and villages.

Cllr O' Domhnaill said that Donegal given its position on the periphery did not fare well. It was a recognised fact, he said, that infrastructure needed to be developed in towns like Letterkenny, but not at the expense of the rest of the County. It was acknowledged that investment was needed in smaller towns together with the development of employment opportunities and dedicated housing provision. The new Draft County Development Plan, he contended, was not particularly supportive of this objective. There was general acknowledgement that a balanced regional economic structure was needed.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community, Enterprise & Planning Services advised that there was flexibility within the Development Contribution Scheme to address the concerns raised. The scheme, he added, set out clearly the types of projects to be supported and developed through the Capital Programme. The 2016 Scheme, he said, had provided for submissions in respect of 15 towns and villages in Donegal i.e. three per Municipal District.

Cllr Canning called for a central funding source to be provided from DCS monies collected. This funding , he stated, would then have to be distributed in a manner which would support the economic development of small towns and villages.

C/353/17

THAT THIS COUNCIL ACKNOWLEDGES THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS THE ENTIRETY OF THE RECENT FLOOD DAMAGE AND CALLS FOR THE IMMEDIATE CLARIFICATION OF AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR DAMAGED SPORTING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND TOURIST AMENITIES,".

On the proposal of Cllr Murray, seconded by Cllr A Doherty the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council acknowledges the Government's commitment to address the entirety of the recent flood damage and therefore calls for the immediate clarification of available funding for damaged sporting and community facilities and tourist amenities, while holding the view that their repairs must be financed in full by humanitarian flood relief monies."

Cllr Murray received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Systems and Emergency Services in relation to the above.

Cllr Murray said he was extremely disappointed at the lack of progress to date as two months on from the recent flooding in Inishowen, little or no funding had been provided.

He said it was imperative that a cross-party delegation meet with the Minister to highlight current funding issues.

Cllr Doherty concurred with this assessment and outlined the need for immediate action given the health and safety issues involved. He alluded to a number of projects which, he said, were being stalled through lack of funding.

Contact, he confirmed, needed to be made with the Department of Education in relation to a number of schools in the County and also further engagement with the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Director of Finance, Information Systems and Emergency Services agreed to follow up in relation to the matter.

Cllr Murray concluding said that he was of the opinion that the best way forward at this stage was for a cross-party delegation to meet with the Minister.

C/354/17

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE DISTRESS, THE CONFUSION AND THE SIGNIFICANT PERSONAL LOSS EXPERIENCED BY HOUSEHOLDERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS IN INIS

EOGHAIN AND DONEGAL FOLLOWING THE DELUGE ON AUGUST 22ND TOGETHER WITH THE RELEVANT INSURANCE ISSUES.

On the proposal of Cllr A Doherty, seconded by Cllr G Doherty, the following motion was adopted:-

“That Donegal County Council acknowledge the emotional distress, the confusion and the significant personal loss experienced by householders and business owners in Inis Eoghain and Donegal following the deluge endured on August 22nd last, and that the council now,

- 1/Engage and work with all affected parties to ascertain the facts regarding extent of losses, damage incurred, numbers involved and particularly each party's insurance or non insurance situation,
- 2/Demand that government ministers insist on insurance companies now, Act with haste and ensure company assessors are on the ground immediately engaging, dealing positively and constructively with their clients,
- 3/Further demand government intervention and action to address insurance issues emerging including,
 - a)Insurance companies abandoning clients,
 - b)Declining premium renewals,
 - c)Returning insurance premiums,
 - d)Punishing compliant householders and business community personnel with the future prospect of increased and exorbitant premium payments and/or refusal to insure et al.”

Cllr Doherty received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Systems and Emergency Services in relation to the above.

He welcomed the response noting that the common denominator in many of the issues raised was insurance.

There were, he confirmed, many householders living in private accommodation, who because of their own individual economic circumstances were unable to afford insurance and thus had been most severely impacted by the recent flooding. He asked that the motion be forwarded to the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty, T.D and the Minister of State at the Department of Finance and the Department of Public

Expenditure and Reform with special responsibility for Financial Services and Insurance, Michael D'Arcy, T.D.

Cllr G Doherty said that householders in the Finn Valley area who had been affected by flooding over two years ago had in the aftermath to contend with increased insurance premiums .The local community, he added, were still awaiting the publication of the CFRAMS Report so that consideration could be given to the flood mitigation measures that needed to be put in place.

He outlined the need for a scheme similar to the Flood Relief Scheme in the UK which ensures that customers at risk from flooding are able to access a more comprehensive range of home insurance policies.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin Director of Finance, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that he would correspond with the relevant Ministers as requested.

Cllr Doherty in conclusion said that home owners affected by the mica issue also needed to be given some consideration.

C/355/17 CALLING ON THIS COUNCIL TO CONTACT THE MINISTER FOR STATE FOR THE OPW KEVIN BOXER MORAN TO MAKE PROVISIONS FOR WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT ON OUR RIVERS AFTER THE SEVERE FLOODS IN DONEGAL
On the proposal of Cllr Mc Dermott, seconded by Cllr Donaghey the following motion was adopted:-

"To call on this Council to contact the Minister of State for the OPW, Kevin Boxer Moran, T. D. to make provisions that work can be carried out on our rivers after the severe floods in Donegal."

Cllr Mc Dermott received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

He paid tribute to the Donegal County Council response both during and in the aftermath of the recent flooding event noting that it had been excellent in all respects.

Many of the rivers and streams affected, he confirmed, were in a worse condition today and would not be able to sustain another

severe weather event. He said that a dedicated staffing complement was needed to carry out the necessary repair works, and that consideration should be given to allowing local farmers clear streams and rivers on their own lands.

Cllr Donaghey supporting the motion said that whilst the OPW had responsibility for the County's rivers, it was imperative that the Minister for State with responsibility for same Kevin Boxer Moran did all in his power to assist the relief effort.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Mc Dermott thanked members for their support and acknowledged the assistance of all who had participated in relief works to date.

C/356/17 THAT THE COUNCIL IMMEDIATELY ADVERTISE FOR EXTRA ROAD WORKERS IN THE AREAS OF THE COUNTY WORST AFFECTED BY THE RECENT FLOODING.

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Guinness, seconded by Cllr Harley the following motion was adopted:-

"In view of the recent flood damage to the roads infrastructure in the county that the Council immediately advertise for extra road workers in the worst affected areas of the County."

Cllr Mc Guinness received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

Recent events, he advised, had highlighted the fact that there was not enough roads surface staff. It would be more prudent, he advised, to have Municipal District panels given that each District had a unique set of needs and requirements. He thus called for the current protocols to be suspended and panels set up at district level to employ people on a temporary basis.

Cllr Harley supporting the motion said that extra staff could be utilised in a number of areas including the eradication of Japanese knotweed and used to progress the LIS Schemes.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr John Mc Laughlin, Director Roads & Transportation said that the normal recruitment process was lengthy but that it was intended to have the new panels in place from next spring.

It was noted that there was a plan in place to resource the work programme arising from the recent flood damage. He agreed also to liaise with the Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services in relation to the forthcoming recruitment programme.

Cllr Mc Guinness said that a number of questions remained unanswered regarding the autonomy of the MDs but that circumstances in Inishowen clearly highlighted the need for panels within each individual district.

He called on the Chief Executive, the Director of Roads and Transportation and the Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services to facilitate same.

The Chief Executive said that there had been a significant challenge recently in the Inishowen MD, but that a sufficient response had been provided overall. Much of the Inishowen work, he noted, was not suitable for direct labour type work.

He was, he confirmed, happy to engage in any discussion regarding the autonomy of the various subsets of the organisation.

The authority, he advised, had to work within department guidelines whilst also being mindful of the overall budgetary/resource implications. The capacity, he added, did not exist at MD level to approve the overall spend on this particular resource issue.

C/357/17

INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE LIS SCHEME

The following motion was proposed by Cllr Mc Daid:-

“In light of the recent announcement of the reintroduction of the LIS Scheme and the possibility of money being allocated to Donegal, I propose that this Council ask for an increased amount of funding given the size, nature and demand in the County. Donegal is a very rural county and so has many LIS roads and will need significant money if we are to make any real difference to road users.”

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Daid, seconded by Cllr Brogan it was resolved to amend the motion as follows:-

“In light of the recent announcement of the reintroduction of the LIS Scheme and the possibility of money being allocated to Donegal, I propose that this Council ask for an increased amount of funding given the size, nature and demand in the County. Donegal is a very rural county and so has many LIS roads and will need significant money if we are to make any real difference to road users, and that this Council discuss the selection process and the funding applied for under LIS 2017.”

The Cathaoirleach asked that the amendment be submitted in writing.

This was unanimously agreed and the motion adopted.

Cllr Mc Daid received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

Cllr Mc Daid said that he had serious concerns in relation to the LIS application process, given that applications to the tune of €23 million had initially been submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development yet they had subsequently confirmed that it was only possible to deliver a programme to the value of €1 million.

The final allocation of €884,000 was, he said, totally inadequate and questions needed to be answered regarding the overall selection process and as to why some of the worst roads in the county had been excluded. The views of the members, he contended, had been completely ignored.

Going forward he outlined the need for consultation with members when the 2018 LIS applications were being considered, advising that this could be facilitated at MD/Workshop level.

Cllr Brogan said that the reintroduction of the LIS Scheme was to be welcomed as it was of huge benefit in rural areas of Donegal. There had, he confirmed, been no attempt made to address the concerns of the members. Concern was expressed also in relation to the manner in which the scheme had been introduced, the short

timeframe for the submission of applications and the scoring mechanism used.

The Cathaoirleach at this juncture opened the debate to the floor.

Cllr Blaney outlined the need for a county-wide set of criteria. He contended that members had been misled in relation to the overall selection process.

A lengthy debate ensued with members raising the following issues:

- That the Department had been at fault in launching the scheme over the holiday period in August when there was only a short window of opportunity available to applicants.
- The allocation for the Stranorlar MD was extremely disappointing.
- Member's powers had been eroded and that the selection process was now purely an executive function.
- Going forward a three year programme was warranted accompanied by a clear and definitive set of criteria.
- Why roads identified at MD level as being prime contenders for funding did not appear on the final listing.
- The overall €10 million budget for the LIS Programme had been taken out of projected Leader funding.
- The fact that the scheme had been reinstated was to be welcomed.
- Condition that works had to be finished by the end of November was unfair and totally impractical.
- Criteria favoured larger schemes whereby larger roads could be done for same price as a smaller one.
- No provision on the form for medical reports etc.
- Query as to the status of those roads that had not been included on the list.

Cllr O' Domhnaill said that whilst over €20 million worth of applications had been made initially a decision had been made to carry out only €1 million worth of works. There was he said no certainty that the allocation would be spent where most needed or on roads in the worst condition. There was an onus on the Council, he said, to leverage as much as they could. It was, he added, nothing short of a disservice to the people of Donegal. He said that

he hoped the Roads & Transportation SPC would have a direction to steer the LIS Programme in future.

Alluding to the success of previous programmes, he said, that answers were needed as to what had changed and as to why there had been no consultation with the members.

Cllr Mc Guinness noted that Donegal had received the third largest allocation in the Country and expressed disappointment at the negative approach taken by some members.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads & Transportation reminded members that there had been numerous calls over the past number of years to reintroduce the LIS Scheme and that when the present scheme was announced in late August a tremendous effort had been made to get in such a large volume of applications.

The DCC application comprising the entire list of schemes and valued at €22.8 million had, he advised, been submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development by the September 14th deadline. This, he confirmed, had indicated that approximately €1 million in LISs were deliverable in 2017. On the 18th September further confirmation was sent to the Department confirming that the Council was now in a position to deliver a larger programme to the value of €2.5 million.

He said that notification had been received on the 21st September that Donegal had received €884,000 out of a €10 million nationwide budget.

It was noted that that there were approximately 1200 lanes which could have benefited from the scheme and that whilst each had been looked at initially by the overseer the overall selection process had taken place centrally.

There was recognition, he said, that certain things had not been included on the application form but the limited window available for selection had entailed specific decisions to be made in the short term. Mr Mc Laughlin, acknowledged member's assistance in completing the LIS forms and proceeded to inform the meeting of the following:-

- Criteria used had been provided by the Department for Local Authorities to apply.
- That it would be possible to discuss members concerns in relation the selection criteria for specific applications.
- Costings had been drawn up quickly on the ground and in response to the tight timeframe allocated.
- There would be more time to assess the scheme in 2018 and to allow for consultation by the SPC.
- It would be possible to look again at the information provided and the manner in which it was released to members.
- A review of the schemes selected would be possible.
- There had been a number of difficulties particularly in Inishowen as a result of the recent flood damage.
- The scheme favoured larger schemes with more houses.
- Local knowledge was needed if medical/disability criteria were to be built into the application form.

Mr Mc Laughlin said that where multiple applications were received for one particular road, these were amalgamated and treated as one submission. Issues relating to the selection process could, he added, be picked up by the Roads & Transportation SPC.

Cllr Mc Daid said he was disappointed that some members had not supported his call for additional clarity given that many people had been left behind because of the unfair selection process. He said that he hoped that the 2018 allocation would be significantly greater and that the Elected Members would have a greater input into the process.

C/358/17 VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was unanimously agreed to vary the order of business to deal with items No 22 and 23.

C/359/17 REQUEST THAT THIS COUNCIL WRITES TO THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE REQUESTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE LPT ACT EXEMPTING PROPERTIES WITH MICA FROM PAYING THIS TAX

On the proposal of Cllr Blaney, seconded by Cllr Mc Bride the following motion was adopted:-

"Due to the reply I received from Revenue re my motion at Letterkenny MD meeting that all householders affected by MICA should be exempt from paying the Local Property Tax, I am asking that this Council writes to the Minister for Finance requesting an amendment to the LPT Act exempting properties with Mica from paying this tax."

Cllr Blaney received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

Cllr Blaney said that he had previously raised this issue at a recent Letterkenny Municipal District meeting. A reply received from the Revenue Commissioners had, he confirmed, stated that this was a matter for the Minister for Finance and his department.

It was imperative, he said, that householders who found themselves in this situation, were treated in a manner similar to those whose homes had been affected by pyrite.

These homes, he contended, were effectively worthless and should not have to pay the Local Property Tax with any monies paid to date in respect of the LPT refunded.

Cllr Mc Dermott outlined his support for the motion.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was thus agreed that a letter would issue to the Minister for Finance requesting an amendment to the LPT legislation so as to exempt properties with mica from paying the tax.

C/360/17

ABOLITION OF THE UNIVERSAL SOCIAL CHARGE

Cllr Mc Bride proposed, seconded by Cllr Blaney the following motion:-

"That Donegal County Council ask the Minister to abolish the universal social charge."

Cllr Mc Bride received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services in relation to the above.

Cllr Mc Bride said that the USC had been introduced as a short term measure during the economic downturn. The general public, he said, had been misled and the matter now needed to be addressed given the increasing uncertainty in terms of third level education cuts, health care increases, increased insurance costs , rising mortgage and interest rates coupled with the uncertainty surrounding Brexit.

People, he said, needed to be able to get mortgages, buy houses etc unhindered by excessive taxation.

Cllr Blaney concurred with this assessment and said that an effective replacement for this unfair form of taxation needed to be found.

Cllr Gallagher said that she could see where Cllr Mc Bride was coming from but did not agree that the abolition of the tax was the most obvious solution. A tax on income, she added, was the fairest way of people paying their dues. She said that those on a low income should be exempted from paying the USC.

Cllr Gallagher thus proposed, seconded by Cllr Murray that a more sensible approach would be to abolish the Family Home Charge (Property Tax.)

Clarity was sought as to exactly what members were being asked to consider.

Cllr Gallagher said that she was opposing the motion as put forward by Cllr Mc Bride.

The Cathaoirleach informed members that they should consider the motion as proposed by Cllr Mc Bride and indicate whether or not they were in favour of same.

Cllrs Brogan, Mc Dermott and Mc Garvey in accordance with Standing Order No 54 asked for a recorded vote.

This was then taken by the meetings Administrator resulting in 6 voting for with 9 against.

Those voting in favour included:-

Cllr Bonner, Brogan, Conaghan, Donaghey, Mc Bride and Mc Dermott. (6)

Those voting against included:-

Cllr Campbell, A Doherty, Gallagher, Glackin, Jordan, Mc Monagle, Murray, Ryan and Slowey. (9)

Cllrs Blaney, Crossan, Harley, and Kennedy, abstained.

The motion was thus defeated.

C/361/17 ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

It was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting until 2pm.

C/362/17 THAT DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL MAKES AN APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT SPECIFICALLY FOR FUNDING TO DEAL WITH ALL BRIDGES IN DONEGAL THAT NEED UPGRADING

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Garvey, seconded by Cllr Crossan the following motion was adopted;-

"That Donegal County Council makes an application to the Department specifically for funding to deal with all bridges in Donegal that need upgrading."

Cllr Mc Garvey received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above

Cllr Mc Garvey said that he had been forced to raise the issue at county level as little or no facility existed at MD level to deal with specific issues such as funding for bridges. The problems were well documented at local level, he added, and something needed to be done as Donegal had been abandoned at national level for far too long. Funding issues, he contended, needed to be addressed at Council, Department and EU level if there was to be any improvement in the situation.

Cllr Crossan supporting the motion said it was timely given the amount of erosion and damage caused by the recent flooding in the County.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr John Mc Laughlin, Director of Roads & Transportation said that the approval of the motion would necessitate an application to the Department with members having to agree a specific list of priorities. He said that this list would also have to include those necessitating upgrade works as a result of the recent flooding.

Cllr Mc Garvey thanked all who had supported the motion. He called for the motion to be acted on in a timely fashion so that many long standing issues could be resolved.

C/363/17

THAT THIS COUNCIL CONSIDERS WIDENING ITS APPROACH TO DEALING WITH JAPANESE KNOTWEED AND PUT A PROGRAMME IN PLACE WHICH DEALS WITH THIS EXTENSIVELY

On the proposal of Cllr Glackin, seconded by Cllr Gallagher the following motion was adopted:-

"That this Council considers widening its approach to dealing with Japanese Knotweed and put a programme in place which deals with this extensively as currently the application to roadsides only is doing little to stop the spread of this invasive plant.

By improving public understanding of the plant and of means of eradicating it.

By educating public and private hedge cutting operations on Japanese Knotweed.

By treating council property infested with Japanese Knotweed.

By eventually working together with private land owners, farms, Inland fisheries Ireland and the forestry to eradicate Japanese Knotweed."

Cllr Glackin received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

He said that he was disappointed with the reply as it did not address the concerns he had raised. There was, he said, a need for a dedicated co-ordinated approach to eradicate Japanese Knotweed as current council policy was totally inadequate.

Cllr Gallagher concurred and said that a dedicated approach was needed county-wide. She alluded to the recent pilot project

undertaken in Dungloe which had seen Japanese Knotweed successfully eradicated from a mile long section along the river. She suggested that the Department be contacted with regard to the need for a National Programme for Invasive Species incorporating a five year eradication strategy. This, she added, needed to be progressed in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife Service backed up by a dedicated funding effort.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Con Mc Laughlin, Senior Engineer, noted members comments and said that funding issues could be explored further.

C/364/17 PROPOSAL THAT THIS COUNCIL HOST A PUBLIC FORUM CALLED "DONEGAL DAY" TO BRING RELEVANT AGENCIES TOGETHER WITH BUSINESS PEOPLE IN THE COUNTY TO HELP TO SHARE STRENGTHS AND IDENTIFY OUR WEAKNESSES IN DONEGAL AND HOW BEST WE CAN TOGETHER MAP OUT OUR FUTURE DONEGAL NEEDS GOING FORWARD

On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Bonner it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"I propose that this Council host a public forum called "Donegal Day" to bring relevant agencies together with business people in the county to help to share strengths and identify our weaknesses in Donegal and how best we can together map out our future Donegal needs going forward together."

Cllr Brogan received a response from the Director of Community Enterprise and Planning Services in relation to the above:-

He outlined the benefits of hosting such a forum, and said that it would provide a platform for the various agencies and companies to come together and look at what they could do for Donegal. Conversations, he said, could take place on a variety of topics of mutual benefit to all and would serve as a guide to the local authority in relation to what was needed to progress the county both economically and socially. It would also be timely, he advised, in the context of the Draft County Development Plan to progress this Donegal model

Cllr Bonner said that he was fully supportive of the project as it had the potential to promote at first hand the advantages of living and working in Donegal.

There was no opposition to the motion

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community, Enterprise & Planning Services said that it was a very worthwhile approach and would provide a forum to address service deficiencies and weaknesses. It could, he advised, be led out by the LEDC under the LCDC structures in early 2018.

C/365/17 THAT THE DEPARTMENT CARRY OUT A FULL REVIEW OF THE TUS PROGRAMME

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Gallagher the following motion was adopted:-

"I would like this Council to request the Department to carry out a full review of the TUS Programme

Cllr Jordan received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services in relation to the above.

Cllr Jordan said that there were many deficiencies within the scheme. He called for payments to be increased in respect of those participating in the programme and the duration to be extended from 1 to 3 years.

Cllr Gallagher said that there was a need to review schemes of this type in general. She outlined the need for a definitive scheme with proper access across the board and a dedicated level of payment for all participants.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Jordan thanked members for their support.

C/366/17 THAT THIS COUNCIL MEET WITH THE E.P.A REGARDING SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM MEASURES REQUIRED TO ADDRESS MUNICIPAL WASTE WATER TREATMENT DEFICITS IN A NUMBER OF LOCATIONS RECENTLY IMPACTED BY SEVERE FLOODS IN DONEGAL.

On the proposal of Cllr Ryan, seconded by Cllr Mc Guinness, the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council meet with the EPA as a matter of urgency to impress upon them, that developments across the county impacted by exceptional flooding be connected to municipal waste water treatment plants to mitigate against further environmental pollution”.

Cllr Ryan received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

Cllr Ryan alluded to a number of estates in the Burnfoot and Bridgend areas all of whom had serious sewerage issues prior to the recent flooding. The severe weather episode in August had, he advised, exacerbated the problems significantly. He said he was of the opinion that it would be better to have Treatment Plants at over capacity and the estates in question connected, rather than a situation whereby sewerage was running down the street.

Cllr Mc Guinness supporting the motion said that there were ongoing problems with Treatment Plants throughout the County and that funding was required immediately to address the situation. The EPA needed to row in behind Donegal County Council, he said, and funding was required to progress the willow bed treatment concept.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Con Mc Laughlin, Senior Engineer said that there was ongoing engagement with Irish Water and the EPA. Both villages, he said, were included in the Irish Water Programme going forward.

The utilisation of willow beds was, being examined and members would be updated when there was more information available.

Cllr Ryan welcomed the response and queried whether the inclusion of a willow plant bed would add any weight to the discussions with the EPA.

Mr Mc Laughlin said, he hoped, that the submission in relation to the use of a willow plant bed would be taken on board.

C/367/17 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:-

- Geraldine Gallagher, formerly Planning Section on the death of her mother, Isobel Mc Connell.
- Rosemary Mc Clafferty, HR on the death of her brother, Danny Mc Clafferty.
- Siobhan Mc Daid, HR on the death of her father, Hughie Mc Cluskey.
- Patrick Mc Clean, Roads, Glenties MD on the death of his mother, Kathleen Mc Clean.
- Martin Molloy, Roads, Dungloe on the death of his mother, Peggy Molloy.
- Andrew Gallagher, formerly County Library & Stranorlar Fire Brigade on the death of his mother Nora Gallagher.
- Marion Mailey, Income Collection Unit on the death of her mother, Alice Mailey.
- The family of the late Pat Shovelin, Donneyloop.
- Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan on the death of his aunt, Bridie Patton.

Launch of Interreg Atlantic Area funded Project Caceres, Spain from 12th -15th September.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that both Barney Mc Laughlin, Head of Tourism and himself had attended the official launch of the Atlantic on Bike Project in Caceres, Spain from the 12th -15th September.

This transnational project, he confirmed, aimed to develop a sustainable tourism cycle route based on the Euro Velo 1 cycle route. Donegal County Council was, he advised, a partner on this project. The project, he said, represented a great opportunity for the county and would no doubt result in a positive economic outcome.

Brexit Report Launch in Brussels – 11th October, 2017

The Cathaoirleach said that he had attended the above launch on the 11th October, 2017 in the Northern Ireland Office in Brussels.

The event , he said , provided an opportunity to review the positives and challenges of Brexit going forward and was well attended by local authority members, regional assembly delegates, MEPs and MLAs.

Official Opening of Pramerica

The Cathaoirleach said that he had been in attendance at the official opening of PRAMERICA in Letterkenny which now had a workforce of over 1500 and was a valued employer in the town.

Tip O' Neill Awards

Tribute was paid to the recipients of the Tip O' Neill Diaspora Awards held on the 20th October, 2017 in An Grianan. The Cathaoirleach complimented the organising committee on the success of the event and said that it had gone from strength to strength over the years providing an excellent opportunity for recognising the Donegal Diaspora.

Severe Weather Event – August 2017

The Cathaoirleach complimented Donegal County Council on their response to the floods of the 22nd August, acknowledging the excellent team effort involved. Tribute was paid also to all the emergency services that had been in attendance.

C/368/17

CHIEF EXECUTIVES MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda and addendum circulated during the meeting in relation to the above.

Members were updated in relation to the following:-

- Response to Flooding in Donegal on 22/23 August.
- Irish Open in Ballyliffen in 2018:
- Irelands Best Young Entrepreneurs Competition.
- Second Level Schools Enterprise Programme and Competition.
- Local Enterprise Office Networking.
- Training Programmes
- Update in relation to the Draft County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024.
- Social Housing Developments.

- House Acquisition Programme
- Social Housing through Turnkey Acquisition.
- 2017 Disabled Person Grant Scheme.
- Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability.
- Creative Ireland Programme.
- Cross Border Arts & Culture.
- Library Service.
 - (1) National Strategy
 - (ii) Library Service Promotional Video.
 - (iii) Wainfest Arts and Book Festival for Children 7th -15th Oct.
- Museum/Archives Service.
- County Donegal Heritage Office.
- 2017 Road Works Programme Update.
- LIS Programme for 2017.
- Bridge Development
 - (i) Tyrconnaill Bridge
 - (ii) Cockhill Bridge
 - (iii) Fintra Bridge
 - (iv) Logue's Bridge
- Major Developments/New Construction on National Roads in 2018
- TEN-T Route Improvement Donegal.
- Existing Route Management and Pavement
- TII National Roads Conference
- High Speed Broadband Announcement by E-Net-SSE
- Litter and Waste Enforcement.
 - (i) Anti Dumping Initiative 2017
 - (ii) Household Hazardous Waste Collection
- Environmental Awareness.
 - (i) Reuse Month-October 2017
 - (ii) The Upcycle Challenge
 - (iii) WEEE Ireland Free Electrical Recycling Dates
 - (iv) Local Agenda 21- Environment Partnership Fund 2017

- Green Schools Seminar
- Recycling Ambassador Programme
- MyWaste.ie
- Bring Bank & Recycling Centre Rebranding
- Coastal Management
- Clean Coasts' Big Beach Clean2017
- Bathing Season
- Clean Coasts Ocean Hero Awards 2017
- Water Framework Directive- River
- Town and Village renewal Scheme 2017
- Ireland 2040- National Planning Framework

Issues Raised

“Ireland 2040” National Planning Framework

Members outlined the need for further debate in relation to the framework and highlighted a number of issues that warranted specific consideration. These included:

- Prioritisation of the Mountcharles and Killybegs Roads
- The A5 a priority for Donegal together with the upgrade of the N15.
- Donegal's position as a maritime county needs to be reflected.
- Development of the Islands a priority.
- Need to redouble efforts to attain city status.
- That Donegal having many rural and diverse places needs to be protected and developed.

It was acknowledged that a special case needed to be made for Donegal and that guidance was required on what members own input would be. Concern was expressed that the rural way of life was fast disappearing in Donegal and cognisance needed to be taken of same going forward.

The Chief Executive acknowledged that there were some considerations within the document that were more nuanced than the previous one and thus did not necessarily meet the needs of Donegal.

The objectives of the NPF, he added, would be applied on a regional basis through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) and new plans would be prepared by the three Regional Assemblies aimed at addressing issues on a regional scale. The onus going forward was, he said, to ensure that what was included in our own County Development Plan regarding population uplift was recognised and accommodated.

It was unanimously agreed to hold a workshop to discuss the “Ireland 2040” National Planning Framework” on Thursday 26th October at 3pm in Donegal Town.

Response to Flooding in Donegal on 22/23 August.

Confirmation requested as to whether the various Government Departments had outlined the level of funding they intended to provide.

Members asked that the Department of Education be included on the list of those supporting the recovery effort in light of the works required at Fintra School.

Members were informed that the Department had set specific limits in relation to funding. It was confirmed that there would be continuing engagement with the Department and arrangements made to recoup monies in the months ahead.

Irish Open in Ballyliffin

Query as to whether capital expenditure would be required and who would be responsible for any works required.

It was noted that there was no specific demand at this point in time.

Cllr Mc Guinness said that provision needed to be made for related road works and in particular for the provision of lay-bys.

Update Draft County Development Plan 2018-2024

It was confirmed that final deliberations would have to be made at the May 2018 Meeting in order to meet statutory deadlines.

Library- Donegal Town

Mr Joe Peoples, Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that Donegal Town Credit Union had approached the Council and a number of other agencies with regard to making a

formal contribution for the development of a building that would incorporate a Library and other service providers. A proposal had been submitted to the Department to secure funding and a response is awaited.

Fintra Bridge

Further information requested in relation to the project proposal and an update on the status of same.

Tyrconnaill Bridge

Update requested in relation to the tender process including the provision of a definitive timeline.

High Speed Broadband

Concern raised that rural areas were being left behind once again.

Repair & Leasing Scheme

Mr Joe Peoples, Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services, informed members that updates in relation to the operation of the scheme could be provided at MD Meetings.

The following questions were noted.

C/369/17

DETAILED ACCOUNT OF PROBLEMATIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS WITH SEWERAGE TREATMENT ISSUES IN THE COUNTY

Cllr Patrick McGowan submitted the following question:-

"Can I have a detailed account of problematic housing developments with Sewerage treatment issues in the County including all public health reports on same.

How many have been taken in charge, is there a plan to take in charge the treatment plants within a realistic time frame and please give details.

How much has the Council been spending every month in emptying tanks what grants are presently available to the Council to undertake these public health issues?"

Cllr McGowan received a response from the Director of Community, Enterprise & Planning Services in relation to the above.

C/370/17

BREAKDOWN OF COUNCIL STAFF

Cllr Patrick McGowan submitted the following question:-

"Can I have a breakdown of all council staff in each Municipal area and HQ and what their role is?"

Cllr McGowan received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/371/17 AVAILABILITY OF FIREFIGHTERS AT EACH STATION IN THE COUNTY

Cllr Micheal Cholm Mac Giolla Easbuig submitted the following question:-

"Cá mhéad trodaí tine atá ar fáil chun teacht amach ar dualgas in achan stáisiún sa chondae, seachas iad siúd atá ar saoire faoi láthair (gan saoire sceidealaithe bhliantúil a bheith san áireamh)."

"How many firefighters are currently available to turnout for duty at each station in the county, excluding those who are currently on leave (except scheduled annual leave)."

Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/372/17 TRAFFIC CALMING SAFETY MEASURES

Cllr Paul Canning submitted the following question:-

"Can this Council give me an update as to why the T.I.I. have not commenced their Traffic Calming Safety measures around the schools that are within close proximity to the National Primary Road, also can you confirm when they plan to start?"

Cllr Canning received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

C/373/17 FUNDING FOR FERRIES

Cllr Jack Murray submitted the following question:-

"Can this Council ensure that any funding for ferries comes from the central county budget as opposed to MD funds and is the executive currently considering this as it prepares the draft budget?"

Cllr Murray received a response from the Director of Community, Enterprise & Planning Services in relation to the above.

C/374/17 COMMUNITY SPORTING AND TOURIST AMENITIES
REPAIR COSTS FROM RECENT FLOODING

Cllr Jack Murray submitted the following question:-

"What is the current estimate of costs to repair community, sporting and tourist amenities damaged by the recent flooding?"

Cllr Murray received a response from the Director of Community, Enterprise & Planning in relation to the above.

C375//17 AGRICULTURAL AND MARINE COMMITTEES

Cllr Bernard McGuinness submitted the following question:-

"What action has the council taken to re-establish the agricultural and marine committees in the County?"

Cllr McGuinness received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/376/17 SEWERAGE CAPACITY FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Cllr Paul Canning submitted the following question:-

"How many towns in Donegal have the sewer capacity to accept a housing development of 20 x 3 Bedroom houses without their own treatment system?"

Cllr Canning received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/377/17 RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cllr Albert Doherty submitted the following question:-

"The draft "River Basin Management Plan" was published by then Minister Coveney on 28th February 2017,

Observations, comments and views were invited up to and until August 31st 2017,

Given the deluge endured by the county, and the North West Region following flooding of August 22nd last,

What response has the Council submitted to the draft report, what are the council views on the table of risk, list of low risk areas identified, and the recommended options? What actions and consultations has Donegal County Council taken recently with DARD and Border Regional Committee with particular reference to the draft "River Basin Management Plans"?

Cllr Doherty received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/378/17 COUNTY MONUMENTS AND CULTURAL SITES
Cllr Albert Doherty submitted the following question:-

"What supervision, protection, assessment and presenting of accurate information plates and protection signage is assured and provided by Donegal County Council for the county's monuments and cultural sites? What support is available and/or sought by Donegal County Council from national government bodies to ensure maintenance, protection and provision of accurate information at the monuments and cultural sites in the County?"

Cllr Doherty received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/379/17 BREAKDOWN NUMBER OF ENGINEERS
Cllr Bernard McGuinness submitted the following question:-

"How many engineers are employed by Donegal County Council within each Municipal District and can I have a breakdown by Directorate?"

Cllr McGuinness received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/380/17 LIS SCHEME
Cllr James Pat McDaid submitted the following question:-

"How many applications were put in for LIS in total for Donegal? and include a breakdown for each MD".

Cllr McDaid received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

C/381/17 TEN-T PROJECT

Cllr James Pat McDaid submitted the following question:-

"Has there been any progress on acquiring funding for the TEN-T Project?"

Cllr McDaid received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

C/382/17 FLOODS

Cllr Ciaran Brogan submitted the following question:-

"Can we as a Council, look at how we can identify centres in the county in event of floods like we had in August this year and in West Donegal a number of years ago, whereby we can have maybe 500 sandbags and supporting equipment, and a senior person in charge in each area of the county to help and support businesses and homeowners?"

Cllr Brogan received a response from the Director of Roads and Transportation in relation to the above.

C/383/17 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Cllr Liam Blaney submitted the following question:-

"Can I have a breakdown per Municipal District of the number of Local Improvement Schemes forwarded to the Department for funding?"

Cllr Blaney received a response from the Director of Roads and Housing Capital in relation to the above.

C/384/17 WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Cllr Ciaran Brogan submitted the following question:-

"Have we a long term strategy on waste management for our county or should we be looking at providing a facility to accommodate the future needs of the county and the north west region that could be of benefit to Donegal County Council?"

Cllr Brogan received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/385/17 IRISH WATER

Cllr Adrian Glackin submitted the following question:-

"From the Environmental Protection Agency's report on Irish Water supplies, could I please have a breakdown on which areas in Donegal that are affected, and what the issues involved are?"

Cllr Glackin received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/386/17 DUMPING OF RUBBISH

Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh submitted the following question:-

"Will the Council consider using CCTV on major routes within the county to help stop the dumping of rubbish from cars?"

Cllr Kavanagh received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/387/17 PROBATION SERVICE

Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh submitted the following question:-

"Have the Council now put in place a formal relationship with the probation service, as per my previous motion?"

Cllr Kavanagh received a response from the Director of Water & Environment in relation to the above.

C/388/17 PUBLIC WIFI HOTSPOTS IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh submitted the following question:-

"Is Donegal County Council making an application under the WIFI4EU scheme, which will provide funding for public WIFI hotspots in towns and villages?"

Cllr Kavanagh received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/389/17 ACTION ON CLLR MCGARVEY'S MOTIONS

Cllr Ian McGarvey submitted the following question:-

"What action has been taken in relation to the many motions I have submitted over the past five years?"

Cllr McGarvey received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/390/17 SI HOUSING PROGRAMME

Cllr Ian McGarvey submitted the following question:-

"Will this Council request that the SI Housing Programme as was be included in the Housing Programme?"

Cllr McGarvey received a response from the Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/391/17 RATES

Cllr John Campbell submitted the following question:-

"Can you provide in tabular form the total rates demand issued to businesses in the renewable energy sector in County Donegal for each of the following years, 2015, 2016 & 2017."

Cllr Campbell received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/392/17 BUNDORAN AND BALLYSHANNON FIRE STATIONS

Cllr John Campbell submitted the following question:-

"Can you provide a comprehensive update on the progress of the 'Review of Bundoran & Ballyshannon Fire Stations' capital analysis report."

Cllr Campbell received a response from the Director of Finance, Information Services & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/393/17 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Cllr John Campbell submitted the following question:-

"Can you provide a breakdown with reference to both Electoral Area and Overseer's Area in tabular form, of the following information: Total number of LIS applications received; Total

number of applications deemed eligible; Total cost associated with eligible applications.”

Cllr Campbell received a response from the Director of Roads & Transportation in relation to the above.

C/394/17 MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS

Members noted the following motion from Monaghan County Council:-

“That Monaghan County Council calls on the Government, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders, to re-assess current legislation regarding school transport with a view to ensuring that the maximum level of primary and secondary students are facilitated”.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach

Dated