

Agenda Item No 1(b)

MINUTES OF ADJOURNED MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY
COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD
ON 15TH APRIL, 2019

C/103/19 MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs S Ó'Domhnaill (Cathaoirleach), L Blaney, E Bonner, C Brogan, P Canning, T Conaghan, G Crawford, N. Crossan, A Doherty, L Doherty, R Donaghey, E Gallagher, M T Gallagher, A Glackin, M Harley, J Kavanagh, N Kennedy, F McBrearty Jnr, M Mc Bride, JP McDaid, I Mc Garvey, P McGowan, G McMonagle, M Naughton, J S O' Ferraight, and T Slowey,

C/104/19 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Seamus Neely, Chief Executive, Joe Peoples, Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services / Meetings Administrator, John McLaughlin, Director of Roads & Transportation, Liam Ward, Director of Community & Planning Services, Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Emergency Services and Information Systems, Michael McGarvey, A/Director of Water & Environment, Richard Gibson, A/Head of Finance, Anne Marie Conlon, Communications Officer, Sean O'Daimhin, Oifigeach na Gaeilge, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/105/19 SUPPORT THE SPEEDY PASSAGE OF THE "NO CONSENT, NO SALE BILL"

On the proposal of Cllr Glackin seconded by Cllr Mc Monagle the following motion was adopted:-

"That Donegal County Council calls on Oireachtas members in Donegal and across the State to support the speedy passage of the "No Consent, No Sale Bill" through the Houses of the Oireachtas to protect home owners from having their mortgage sold on to vulture funds without their consent."

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

A root cause analysis of the situation, he said, clearly indicated that banks had deployed an aggressive mortgage and loan policy in this country during the Celtic Tiger years. The crash, he noted, had

been caused by these very institutions with the ordinary people of Ireland paying the ultimate price in the long term.

There was, he contended, a loophole in the existing legislation which afforded protection to the banks and the vulture funds and not the ordinary mortgage holders. He called for the speedy passage of the “No Consent, No Sale Bill” as the current situation was causing much stress and anxiety for the families concerned. The non payment of mortgages, he advised, could not be condoned but the banks needed to be much more accommodating.

Cllr Mc Monagle supporting the motion said that people needed to have the right to negotiate with the vulture funds and called on all the Oireachtas members to support the bill.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Glackin thanked members for their support and said that it was imperative that the legislation was enacted on behalf of the people of Ireland.

It was further agreed to circulate a copy of the motion to all the members of the Oireachtas.

C/106/19 THAT THE COUNCIL STRIVES TO ADOPT A ROBUST AND ADAPTABLE SOCIAL HOUSING BUILDING STRATEGY

On the proposal of Cllr McMonagle and seconded by Cllr Gallagher the following motion was adopted:-

“That this Council strives to adopt a Robust and Adaptable Social Housing Building strategy that delivers adequate social housing to meet the growing demand for social and affordable housing right across our County.”

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

He alluded to the fact that there had only been 75 houses built in Donegal over the past five years yet there were still 2346 people recorded as being on the housing waiting list. With the private housing market maxed out at present, he said that it was becoming more and more difficult to obtain both private and local authority housing. The Housing Assistance Programme, he advised, had failed to meet the demand for social housing.

He queried why plans for social housing in the Long Lane area of Letterkenny had not progressed despite relevant funding being allocated in 2016.

The need for a robust and adaptable housing strategy was identified including the necessity of looking again at the overall tendering process and the methodology of obtaining funding from the Department. It was imperative also, he said, that houses were built in such a way as to accommodate the housing need of the day including the provisions of downstairs bedrooms and bathrooms. The rural housing building programme, it was noted, needed improving and a comprehensive review carried out of the housing need going forward.

Cllr Gallagher asked that the motion be amended as follows:

“That this Council strives to adopt a Robust and Adaptable Social Housing Building strategy that delivers adequate social housing to meet the growing demand for social and affordable housing right across our County and in doing so pursues an aggressive policy of acquiring land, streamlines the tendering process, including a review of the turnkey process so as to accommodate a simpler methodology for the provision of social housing.

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Monagle, seconded by Cllr M T Gallagher this was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Gallagher suggested that suitable land be acquired in the smaller towns and villages for the provision of social housing.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Joe Peoples, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services informed members that more detailed information would be provided at the Special Meeting later in the afternoon. He acknowledged the fact there was a need to accelerate the delivery of the programme. It was noted that there was ongoing collaboration with the Department in terms of streamlining particular processes including design standard.

A substantial number of houses, it was noted, had been bought and every effort had been made to ensure that this did not impact on the

supply of housing for those seeking to get on the property ladder. There had also been careful consideration, he said, in relation to the value for money aspect.

Efforts were ongoing, he advised to ensure that where possible vacant houses were put to productive use.

The Housing Department, he informed members, currently had a significant body of work ongoing in terms of housing construction and the acquisition of turnkey properties.

Concluding, he said, that a concerted effort would be made to meet the Housing need and to increase the annual output.

Cllr Mc Monagle, thanked members for their support. Current work programmes were, he advised, not going to address the current crisis and a suitable methodology for building social and affordable houses needed to be found. Tenant's rights, he advised, needed to be protected and ongoing imbalances corrected.

C/107/19 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following;-

- Pauric Mc Glinchey, Laghey Roads Depot on the death of his wife, Loretta Mc Glinchey.
- Gerry Keeney, Water Services, Letterkenny MD on the death of his sister, Pasqueline Blake.
- Leona Curran, Parking Section, Letterkenny PSC on the death of her father, William Fullerton.
- Charlie Devlin, Housing & Corporate, Carndonagh PSC on the death of his father, Neil Devlin.
- Patsy Devlin, Roads, Carndonagh PSC on the death of his father, Neil Devlin.
- Michael Ryan, Water & Environment, Inishowen on the death of his brother, Dermot Ryan
- Patsy Lafferty, Housing on the death of his sister-in law Breige Sweeney.
- Frank Sweeney, Planning on the death of his father Frank Sweeney.

Motion on Human Trafficking

Members unanimously agreed the following motion:-

1). This Council calls on the Irish government to ratify, as soon as possible, The Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs which was adopted by the Council of Europe on 9 July 2014 in order to criminalize illegal organ transplantations. The Irish Government has already signed this Convention, but is yet to ratify it.

and

2). This Council calls on the Irish Government, as a matter of urgency to emphatically demand the Chinese Government to cease the persecution of Falun Gong and release immediately all Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience from detention.

Events in the USA – March 2019

Members were informed that the attendance of the Cathaoirleach and the Leas- Chathaoirleach at events in Philadelphia, Boston and New York had provided an excellent opportunity to liaise with members of the extended Donegal Diaspora. It was noted that there had been specific engagement with Boston City Council including meetings with Councillor Frank Baker and Councillor Matt O' Malley. A further meeting had also taken place with Senator Nick Collins, Boston State Senate. The delegation it was confirmed had also met with the Mayor of Boston, Martin J Walsh who has been a great supporter and champion of Donegal. Every effort it was noted had been made to enhance and encourage connections and linkages between Donegal and the various community groupings in Philadelphia, New York and Boston.

There was acknowledgement also of the need to further develop such linkages going forward.

Opening of the Visitor Centre at Slieve League

Members were informed that the official opening of the Visitor Facility at Slieve League would take place at 3pm on the 13th May, 2019.

Civic Reception

It was unanimously agreed to host a joint Civic Reception for John Mc Ginley and Feda O' Donnell in recognition of their commitment to the delivery of services to the people of Donegal.

Local Elections

The Cathaoirleach extended best wishes to outgoing members, Barry O' Neill and Terence Slowey who were not contesting the 2019 Local Elections. He thanked them both for their commitment and service to Donegal County Council.

Concluding he wished members every success in the forthcoming Local Elections.

Roads Projects

Members were informed that details in relation to the official opening of Tirconaill Bridge and the N56 Coolboy to Kilmacrennan Road would be confirmed and circulated in due course.

C/108/19

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MANAGEMENT REPORT

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above and were updated in relation to the following:-

1. Corporate Matters

- A. Donegal County Council Highlights: 2014-2019
- B. Special Recognition Award for Councils response to Inishowen Floods

2. Economic Development, Emergency Services & Information Systems

- A. Donegal Connect
- B. Flood Emergency Response Plan
- C. SIRO High Speed Broadband Project
- D. WiFi4EU
- E. DigiWest Project – BASE Centre
- F. Donegal Tourism Brochure

3. Community Development & Planning Services

- A. CLÁR Funding
- B. Community CCTV in Donegal
- C. Historic Towns Initiative for Church Lane, Letterkenny
- D. Workshops with Architects/Agents
- E. Older Persons Council AGM
- F. Seachtain na Gaeilge 2019

4. Water & Environment

- A. Waste Awareness
 - (i) Big Donegal Clean Up '19

- B. Coastal Management
 - (i) Marine Litter
 - (ii) Tullan Water Safety
 - (iii) Beach Lifeguards
 - (iv) Clean Coast Roadshow

C. Buncrana Leisure Centre

The Chief Executive thanked members for their engagement over the past Council term noting that a number of significant milestones had been achieved with over €1 billion being administered and invested in the past 5 years.

Cllr Bonner was informed that there were plans to utilise the Old Army Barracks in Lifford for office accommodation, but that any considerations in relation to new Council Chamber would be a matter for the incoming Council.

Cllr Mc Gowan asked that contact be made with the Northern Ireland Authorities in relation to restrictions being placed on lorries travelling from Donegal into Clady. He queried what consultation if any had taken place in relation to the matter.

C/109/19 SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL –
HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

It was unanimously agreed to hold a Special Council Meeting of Donegal County Council on Monday 15th April, 2019 to consider the following items:-

1. Taking of a decision pursuant to the Planning & Development Act 2000 (Part XI), and the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 Part 8 in relation to works for social housing purposes at Cottage Road, Dunfanaghy, Co Donegal.
2. To adopt the Preferred Route Corridors for the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project in Donegal.
3. Housing Capital Programme
4. Presentation by the Irish Natura & Hill Farmers Association.

The following questions were noted.

C/110/19 MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL GRAVEYARDS IN THE
COUNTY

Cllr Kennedy submitted the following question:-

" Can I have an update/progress report on my motion regarding multi-denominational graveyards for the county?"

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

C/111/19 POLICY ON BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Cllr Kennedy submitted the following question:-

"Do we have a policy on the protection of our society on bullying and harassment including online bullying and harassment?"

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

C/112/19 REPAIR OF STREET LIGHTING AND NEW LIGHTING

Cllr McBrearty submitted the following question:-

"I am seeking clarification on why it is taking so long to repair street lighting in different towns, villages, townlands and new lighting that has been waiting for months to be turned on?"

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

C/113/19 WHAT TIME FRAME HAS IRISH WATER GIVEN TO REPAIR ROADS AFTER WORKS ARE CARRIED OUT

Cllr McBrearty submitted the following question:-

"What time frame has Irish Water been given to bring roads back to the standard they were in before any works were carried out?"

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

C/114/19 CAN THIS COUNCIL IDENTIFY THE TEN HIGHEST COLLISION LOCATIONS COUNTYWIDE

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:-

"Can this Council identify the ten highest collision locations countywide?"

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

C/115/19 WHAT ROLE HAS THE COUNCIL IN ENSURING AN ADEQUATE AND AFFORDABLE WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE IN THE COUNTY

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:-

"Please outline the role this Council has in ensuring an adequate and affordable waste collection service in urban and rural parts of the County and how will competition be encouraged and regulated to prevent a monopoly starting in the County."

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

C/116/19 UPDATE IN RELATION TO SOCIAL HOUSING IN THE COUNTY

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:-

“Can I be provided with an update in relation to social housing in the county to include?”

- a) The number of families currently awaiting social housing.
- b) The longest period spent by any one family on the waiting list.
- c) Clarification as to how many of the families on the list are not receiving HAP.

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

C/117/19 WHY IS THIS COUNCIL NOT SETTING ASIDE SUFFICIENT FUNDING FROM RENTS COLLECTED FROM TENANTS IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT ESSENTIAL REPAIRS

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:-

Why is this Council not setting aside sufficient funding from rents collected from tenants in order to carry out essential repairs to Council owned houses, items such as kitchen upgrades, window and door replacements etc and please give a breakdown of rents collected and how this rent revenue is spent year by year?

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

C/118/19 PROVIDE OF INFORMATION IN RELATION TO HOUSE PURCHASES FOR THE TERM OF THE CURRENT COUNCIL

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig submitted the following question:-

"Iarr ar an Stiúrthóir Tithíochta agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha an t-eolas thíos a bhaineann le tithe a cheannaigh an tÚdarás Áitiúil thar theárma na Comhairle reatha a chur ar fáil agus an t-eolas sin a chur ar fáil i bhfoirm tábla:

- 1) Suíomh an tí (eastát, baile/sráidbhaile nó baile fearainn)?
- 2) Líon na seomraí codlata sa teach?
- 3) Cineál tí (scoite/leathscoite, árasán, srl)?
- 4) Dáta ar ceannaíodh an teach (mí agus bliain)?

- 5) Luach ceannaigh an tí?
- 6) Costas ar oibreacha feabhais a rinneadh sula ligeadh an teach ar cíós?
- 7) Rátáil Fuinnimh Foirgníochta an tí
- 8) Cá fhad a ghlac sé ón t-am ar ceannaíodh an tí go dtí go ligtear é ar cíós?

“To ask the Director of Housing and Corporate Services to provide in tabular form the following information relating to house purchases by the Local Authority over the term of the current Council:

- 1) Property location (estate, town/village or townland).
- 2) Number of bedrooms in property.
- 3) Property Type (detached/semi detached, flat, etc).
- 4) Date of Purchase of property (month & year).
- 5) Property Purchase Price.
- 6) Cost of subsequent remedial works carried out on property prior to being let.
- 7) Building Energy Rating of the property.
- 8) Length of time taken from purchase of property to letting of property?"

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

C/119/19 WILL THIS COUNCIL SET OUT ITS HOUSING CAPITAL PROPOSALS FOR EACH MD

Cllr Gallagher submitted with following question:-

Will this Council set out its Housing Capital proposals for each MD including a proposal to buy land for development in small villages to develop public housing into the future?

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

C/120/19 TOWNS AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2018

Cllr Gallagher submitted the following question:-

Could this Council provide me with the number of applications applied for, for towns under the village renewal scheme in 2018, how much was applied for in each application and how much was granted to each application?

Cllr Gallagher received a response from the Director of Community & Planning Services.

C/121/19 SPEED LIMITS

Cllr Canning submitted the following question:-

What is the procedure to review and change speed limits on our regional and county roads?

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

C/122/19 RESULTS FROM THE COUNCIL REVIEW (UPGRADED) OF COUNTY COUNCIL HARBOURS AND PIERS

Cllr A Doherty has submitted the following question:-

What implications and recommendations regarding slipway safety, harbour congestion, crew safety measures required, government marine investment necessary have resulted from the Council review (upgraded) of county council harbours and piers?, and have review findings and recommendations been published and forwarded to government departments, shared with councillors and relevant stakeholders in the fishing industry yet?

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

C/123/19 HOW MANY LIS APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN EACH MD

Cllr McGuinness submitted the following question:-

How many LIS applications have been received in each Municipal District and how many of these are duplicates?

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

C/124/19 UNOCCUPIED COUNCIL HOUSES IN EACH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Cllr Murray submitted the following question:-

How many houses are in the Council's possession but unoccupied for more than 3 months in each Municipal District?

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

C/125/19 WHAT IS THE CURRENT LEVEL OF HOUSING NEED IN EACH MD INCLUDING HAP AND SUPPORT FROM OTHER AGENCIES

Cllr Murray submitted the following question:-

What is the current level of housing need in each Municipal District, including those families receiving HAP and support from other housing agencies?

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

C/126/19 PERSONNEL CHANGES AND PLANNING WORKSHOPS

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

What are the personnel and relevant post of responsibility changes made within the Council Planning Section and what number of planning workshops for agents and relevant stakeholders have been organised by Donegal County Council for end of March, 2019? (Response to Jan motion)?

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

C/127/19 COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE STAFFING COMPLEMENT

Cllr McGuinness submitted the following question:-

How many dedicated staff members are working in Community & Enterprise and can I have a breakdown per Municipal District?

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

C/128/19 MEETINGS BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND IRISH WATER REGARDING THE IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN SMALL TOWNS

Cllr Canning submitted the following question:-

"What meetings have taken place between the Council and Irish Water with a view to improving the infrastructure within our small towns?"

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

C/129/19 NUMBER OF SOCIAL HOUSES BUILT IN DONEGAL OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

Cllr McMonagle submitted the following question:-

"How many Social Houses have been built in Donegal over the last 5 years and where have they been built?"

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

C/130/19 LIST AND LOCATION OF LAND BANKS CURRENTLY OWNED BY DCC

Cllr McMonagle submitted the following question:-

Can I have a list of the Land Banks currently owned by Donegal County Council and their locations?

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

C/131/19 MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS

Members noted the following motions from other Councils.

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

"That Cork County Council asks the government , both TDs and Senators, to bring the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measure) Bill before the Dáil for consideration such that in this time of climate emergency it may be considered for passing into legislation , with or without

appropriate amendments, without delay.”

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Laois County Council request funding from the Department of Justice & Equality to facilitate the operational expenses of the County Morgue & Coroner.”

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“I will ask the elected members for support in calling on the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, T.D. and the Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh, T.D. to work together in providing Speech Therapy in our Primary and Post Primary Schools for children with special needs.”

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Laois County Council contact the Minister for Health, the HSE and the National Office for Suicide Prevention and ask what are their current practices, policies with regard to funding Regional Suicide Prevention Groups as opposed to National Groups.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“I will move at the next full Council Meeting that this Council calls on the Department of Housing to consider a grant aid scheme for persons on the housing list where agreement is reached with the house owner and the applicant.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.

