

**MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED MAY MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY
COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 14TH JUNE, 2021 (ONLINE)**

C/117/21 MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs R Donaghey (Cathaoirleach), L Blaney, K Bradley, C Brogan, P Canning, T Conaghan, D Coyle, G Crawford, N Crossan, T Crossan, A Doherty, G Doherty, L Doherty, M Farren, M T Gallagher, M Harley, N Jordan, J Kavanagh, D M Kelly, N Kennedy, M C Mac Giolla Easbuig, F Mc Brearty Jnr, M Mc Bride, M Mc Clafferty, M McDermott, I Mc Garvey, N Mc Garvey, P Mc Gowan, B McGuinness, M McMahan, G Mc Monagle, A Molloy, J Murray, M Naughton, J O'Donnell, J S Ó Fearraigh, and B Sweeny.

C/118/21 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

John McLaughlin, Chief Executive, Joe Peoples, Director of Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services / Meetings Administrator, Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services, Brendan O'Donnell, A/Director of Roads & Transportation, Richard Gibson, Head of Finance, Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services, Michael Mc Garvey, A/Director of Water & Environment, Eunan Quinn, Senior Planner, Paul Christie, Senior Executive Planner, Seán O'Daimhin, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer, Corporate. John McFeely, Executive Planner.

C/119/21 RECORDING OF THE MEETING

On commencement of the meeting, the Cathaoirleach asked all attendees to ensure that their mute button had been selected and reminded all present that under Standing Orders recording was not permitted without the prior approval of the Council.

Cllr Mc Brearty called for the suspension of Standing Orders to facilitate debate on the purchase of 5 mica affected properties in Buncrana. He said that it imperative that the full paper trail on the initial leasing and subsequent sale of the properties was made available. He alluded to the fact that he had written to the Cathaoirleach on the 3rd June regarding the holding of a Special Meeting to discuss same. He advised that he had written also on the 12th June to all members and the executive regarding the suspension of Standing Orders at the Adjourned Meeting so that a motion under urgent business could be taken in relation to the matter. Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig was the only member, he noted, who had responded and offered support for same.

Cllr Mc Brearty thus proposed, seconded by Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig that the motion be taken and debated as it was in the public interest to clarify the Council's position in relation to mica affected houses procured in Buncrana.

The Chief Executive said that he had received the correspondence late on Saturday night, and that it was wide ranging in nature with specific reference made to staff, former staff and a number of elected members.

On this basis, he said, he was recommending that legal advice be sought prior to the consideration of same.

He said that a report would be prepared on the purchase of houses in Buncrana.

Cllr Mc Brearty queried this interpretation and said that stalling tactics were being employed here. He said this was a matter of public interest and cited the need for full accountability. He thus called for the matter to be put to a vote.

Responding to Cllr Mc Brearty's call for a vote, the Cathaoirleach alluded to the fact that the Chief Executive had already advised of the need for legal advice in relation to the motion before any discussion could take place.

She proceeded to move on to Item No 7 on the agenda,

C/120/21 **APPROVAL OF GROSS EXPENDITURE FIGURE OF €205,217,824 AS SET OUT ON TABLE 3, PAGE 3 WHEN COMPARED TO THE REVISED BUDGET OF €205,188,861 (ADOPTED BUDGET AS AMENDED BY NET INCREASES IN FUNDING RECEIVED FOR 2020) FOR ALL DIVISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION 7 OF SECTION 104 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2001, AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ACT, 2014**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

Mr Richard Gibson, Head of Finance provided an overview of the report and informed members that:-

- There had been significant government support in 2020 which had impacted positively on the overall financial outturn.
- There was uncertainty with regard to the overall financial situation going forward.
- There was a need to create additional capacity going forward so that additional projects could be developed.
- The Council needed to be in a position to take advantage of any opportunities that would help mitigate the impact of Brexit and recover from Covid-19 and thereby assist with the overall economic recovery.

He said that the income and expenditure return represented a net improvement (surplus) of €851,197 for the year ended 31st December, 2020. It was noted that the general revenue deficit had been slowly decreasing over the past number of years and had reduced from €17.8 m in 2013 to the current figure of €6,882,639, a remarkable achievement for the period.

He confirmed that over €50m additional income had been received in 2020. This funding which had been provided centrally had been in respect of (1) Business Restart Grants €24.3 m, (2) Rates Waiver €15m, (3) Additional Roads Grants €7.8m, and (4) Works to Vacant Houses €1.2m.

Tribute was paid to Ms Eimear Mc Dermott, Administrative Officer and the income collection team for their hard work and efficiency during the year. He acknowledged the budgetary and financial discipline shown by line managers and their colleagues. It was noted that the exceptional extra expenditure and lost income incurred in 2020 arising from Covid-19 had been recouped by central government. This amounted to €3.55m

Monies had also been boosted, he said, by greater than expected income from NPPR charges and the recoupment of central management charges through the SLA with Irish Water resulting in additional income of €0.533m. He alluded also to the savings on pensions and gratuities together with savings from reduced travel and subsistence.

Members were also advised of the fact that an additional €1.364m had been added to the Project Development Fund Reserve and that this had included a sum of €500,000 generated from the increase in the Local Property Tax in 2020. A breakdown was also provided in relation to the additional supports provided to facilitate additional tourism infrastructure.

A lengthy debate ensued with members raising the following:-

- Acknowledgement of the financial support provided by central government in 2020.
- Services which have been scaled back due to Covid -19 need to get up and running again.
- Further enhancement of existing services a priority and discussion needed prior to consideration of the LPT for 2022.
- Query as to the amount of co-funding that would be required for capital projects.
- Business Restart Grant a lifeline for many businesses and must be continued.
- Smaller maintenance works need to be prioritised such as repairing cracked footpaths, and the carrying out of general maintenance in towns and villages.
- Acknowledged that many of the public conveniences throughout the county were no longer fit for purpose and that funding was needed urgently for the facility in Ballyshannon.
- Housing maintenance needs to be prioritised.
- Further investment needed for sports facilities and sports playing fields.

Cllr Naughton proposed, seconded by Cllr Sweeny that €50,000 be allocated per MD to facilitate maintenance work on the smaller bridge network.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the work of the Head of Finance and his team together with the members of the Senior Management team who had all ensured that there was no budgetary overspend. He thanked the elected members for taking prudent budgetary decisions to achieve this outcome. He cited the need for continued government support and the need to look at the various co-funding mechanisms.

It was important, he added, that this approach was maintained going into the 2022 budgetary process. Funding for small bridge maintenance, it was noted, could be further explored through the local area fund and as part of the budget process for 2022.

Concluding the Head of Finance confirmed that a report would be brought to a future meeting outlining the financial challenges and level of ambition going forward. He alluded to the €800,000 provided in the 2021 budget for co-financing requirements and said that this would need to be increased to accommodate the projects currently approved. He said that it was hoped to repeat the €700,000 tourism provision in 2022.

On the proposal of Cllr Kavanagh, seconded Cllr Harley it was resolved to approve the gross expenditure figure of €205,217,824 as set on Table 3, Page 3 when compared to the revised budget of €205,188,861 (Adopted Budget as amended by net increases in funding received for 2020) for all divisions in accordance with Subsection 7 of Section 104 of the Local Government Act, 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.

C/121/21 **PRESENTATION BY MICHAEL TUNNEY, HEAD OF DONEGAL LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE ON SERVICES AND SUPPORTS PROVIDED THROUGH THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE**

Mr Michael Tunney, Head of Enterprise, delivered a presentation on the services and supports provided by the Local Enterprise Office.

He provided a background analysis and an overview of the assistance provided to LEO assisted firms over a three year period. The key aim, he said, had been to maximise the level of enterprise activity at local level with the LEO acting as a facilitator of access to enterprise services. Key areas of activity it was noted were:-

- Business Information and Advisory
- Enterprise Support Services
- Entrepreneurship Support Services
- Local Enterprise Development Services

An overview of the current support and current programme structure was also provided. Members were informed that in the period 2017 to May 2021 the following outcomes had been achieved:-

- €3,335,089 approved in grant aid to 179 projects.
- 712 businesses approved Trading Online Vouchers to the value of €1,780,107

- 9,821 participants had availed of 382 training programmes/workshops.
- Mentoring/support provide to 507 recipients.
- A total of €917,560 approved in respect of 574 business continuity vouchers.

Concluding, he said, that it was intended to deliver on the key actions within the 10 year Strategic Enterprise Plan for Donegal and to design and deliver a range of pre-accelerator and accelerator programmes targeted at key sectors. The aim, he added, was to drive innovation within the enterprise community and the scaling and internationalisation of a cohort of indigenous enterprises within Donegal.

Members welcomed the comprehensive report and said that it was reflective of the skills set and level of entrepreneurship that existed in Donegal.

Cllr Mc Brearty enquired as to why there had been no comprehensive follow-up on the county's links with Glasgow. He outlined the importance of ongoing engagement at council level with the elected members.

Members highlighted the following:-

- That the LEO provided excellent support in light of the challenges presented by both Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The need to explore the supports if any that could be put in place to support the entertainment/performance industry in light of the current Covid-19 restrictions.
- That the positivity and development of businesses locally was to be warmly welcomed.
- Information needs to be collated from businesses in the county as to how successful the online trading voucher scheme had been.
- Consideration must be given to developing business clusters and the most suitable location for same.
- Small business activity must be prioritised as it is an important component of the county's tourism product.

Mr Tunney concluding noted that the Scottish connections had been established through a contact in Scotland who had identified same from a range of sectors. He said that his office was willing to speak to anybody who could assist with development and enterprise in Donegal.

He advised that there were particular difficulties in providing assistance to the entertainment industry and efforts given the complexity of the criteria involved. It was hoped, he said, to provide information in relation to the online trading voucher scheme and that this would be circulated to members.

It was noted that the Cathaoirleach now sat on the LEO Evaluation and Approvals Committee and that there was ongoing collaboration with the Economic Development Section.

He outlined the need for more and more ambitious businesses in Donegal and asked members to direct any interested parties to the LEO office where support and mentoring would be provided.

C/122/21 **NOMINATION OF ANDREW WARD TO FILL THE CASUAL VACANCY ON THE DONEGAL LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

They noted the nomination of Mr Andrew Ward to fill the casual vacancy on the Donegal Local Community Development Committee.

C/123/21 **SIGNING OF THE COVENANT OF MAYORS FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Cllr N Crossan, seconded by Cllr Farren it was resolved that the Cathaoirleach be mandated to sign the adherence document on behalf of Donegal County Council and that an online Decarbonising Zones Workshop be held on Wednesday 23rd June, 2021 at 11am.

C/124/21 **ENDORSEMENT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 22ND MARCH, 2021.**

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Mc Clafferty, members endorsed the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 22nd March, 2021.

C/125/21 **ENDORSEMENT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 7TH APRIL, 2021.**

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Mc Clafferty, members endorsed the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 7th April, 2021

C/126/21 **REVIEW THE CURRENT EARNINGS THRESHOLD FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO AVAIL OF SOCIAL HOUSING**

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Manage, seconded by Cllr McGowan it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"That this Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage DARRAGH O'Brien TD. to review the current earnings threshold set by his department for applicants trying to avail of social housing, with a view to increasing those thresholds and recognise the difficulties the current thresholds are posing for working families looking to access social housing".

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

He said that the threshold needed urgent review as many people were in a position where they earned too much to be considered for local authority housing but not enough to apply for a mortgage. This, he said, was causing undue hardship and preventing people from getting on the property ladder. There was general acknowledgment that the situation was keeping people in the private rented sector and forcing them to pay increasingly high rents.

Cllr Gallagher supporting the motion said that thresholds were too low and that it sent out the wrong signal that people were better off not working.

She alluded to the fact that the council mortgage system was not working effectively and was in need of urgent review. There were many families, she added who were paying rent and could pay a mortgage but were unable to either get a mortgage or apply for social housing.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Concluding Cllr Mc Monagle said that many families were being penalised for going and getting a job and then left to the mercy of the private rented sector. He cited the need for continuing engagement with the Department.

Mr Joe Peoples, Director Housing, Corporate & Corporate Services said that the matter could be included on the agenda for the forthcoming meeting with the Minister.

C/127/21 **THAT THIS COUNCIL COMMITS TO A “PLACE-BASED” APPROACH FOR THE REGENERATION OF OUR TOWNS AND VILLAGES**

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

"That this Council commits to a “place-based” approach to the regeneration of our towns and villages and strives to undertake appropriate Action Plans, Village Design Statements and Town Centre Health Checks across our towns and rural settlements in Donegal with regard to our rural future".

Cllr Sweeny received a response from the Director of Community Development & Planning Services in relation to the above. He said that a place based approach was the key to successful regeneration. This community informed response could be used, he said, to acquire funding and deliver projects that maintained a connection with local communities. He outlined the importance of pursuing this ethos which was championed in the policy document “Our Rural Future”.

A strategic approach, he said, was needed in terms of an appropriate design statement for the smaller towns and villages.

Cllr Harley seconding the motion noted that projects in smaller towns and villages could only be delivered with the assistance of the Council. He

acknowledged the ongoing commitment of the Community Development team and suggested that a community based person be put in place to liaise and follow-up on this approach.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Planning & Community Development informed members that significant work was ongoing in all Municipal Districts and that Place Making is a national policy priority, with rural and urban regeneration work programmes a key goal for the Council.

Cllr Sweeny welcomed the response and outlined the need for action plans which would include village design statements and town centre health checks. He noted that the current round of Rural Programme workshops had helped ensure that a definitive structure was put in place as there were many towns and villages that could benefit from the progress made to date. He reiterated the need for a community liaison person.

C/128/21 **SMALL WORKING PIERS APPLICATIONS**

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr O'Fearraigh it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"I am asking that the taskforce for the Brexit Adjustment Fund look favourably on our small working piers applications alongside our major projects to protect our fishermen's livelihoods".

Cllr Jordan received a response from the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

He acknowledged the team in Donegal County Council were doing an excellent job but that the funding was nowhere near enough to ensure the completion of works on the smaller piers and harbours. Recent funding for Greencastle was, he acknowledged, a huge boost for the community there. Small working piers were, he contended, the soul of the fishing industry with fishermen working often in treacherous conditions.

Alluding to Port Pier in Inver, he cited the need for immediate remediation works given the unique fishing methods used at this location. Ring netting practiced here, he advised, was not carried out in any other pier along the coast and allowed fish to be harvested in a 100% sustainable way. It was acknowledged however that an ongoing lack of support together with poor landing and berthing facilities meant that boats had to land their catch in Killybegs. This, he advised, was an unsafe practice for small boats that were heavily laden with fish.

He referred to the fact that this pier had been included in the Capital Plan for a considerable period of time but never received any funding. A huge amount of work, he advised, had gone into the project which was more or

less shovel ready. Acknowledging that some of the studies may have to be updated, he asked that this and other piers in the south of the county be looked on favourably. He asked that contact be made with the Seafood Sector Taskforce in relation to the funding aspect.

Cllr O' Fearraigh supporting the motion said that a dedicated plan was required to ensure the survival of all small piers and harbours, with adequate funding in place to remedy years of neglect. He advised of the need for remedial works at Magheroarty Pier.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services noted that a high level of investment was needed to support and maintain rural communities including fishing and coastal communities and that this was consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan.

Cllr Jordan welcomed the response and said that recognition was needed for these small working piers which were effectively the heart and soul of the fishing industry

C/129/21 **THE TREATMENT OF THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THE BALLYMURPHY 10**

On the proposal of Cllr McMahon, seconded by Cllr T Crossan it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"That this Council make serious representation to An Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs as regards the treatment of the families and friends of the Ballymurphy 10, who were shot dead by the parachute regiment. After 50 years waiting for justice, let the British Government treat these people with humanity and dignity and apologise to the family and friends of the innocent lives that they took".

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

He said that the relatives of those involved in the atrocity had been badly treated by successive British Governments. Those killed, he advised, were unarmed and ordinary working people whose lives had been cut short by the shoot to kill policy employed by the paratroopers at the time.

A 50 year campaign for justice, he said, had been conducted with compassion and dignity and the result had been a half baked apology from the British Prime Minister, Boris Johnston.

He thus called on the Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs to press forward with a request for a clear and unequivocal apology.

Cllr T Crossan supporting the motion said that the families of those involved deserved an apology similar to that to that issued to the people of Derry in respect of Bloody Sunday.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Mac Mahon thanked members for their support and asked that it be circulated to all local authorities for their consideration.

C/130/21 **DONEGAL COMMUNITY STADIUM**

It was unanimously agreed to deal with items 19 and 20 collectively given the similar nature of the content.

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

"In light of the recent funding allocation of €3.991 million for the Donegal Community Stadium, and the fact that the project is on Council owned land, I am calling on this Council to take the lead role in order to ensure the completion of the project. In this regard, I am calling on this Council to ensure that the required matching funding is put in place as a matter of urgency by sourcing same in conjunction with the F.A.I and any other relevant funding agency".

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

The following motion submitted by Cllr Gary Doherty was proposed by Cllr Gallagher and seconded by Cllr L Doherty.:-

"This Donegal County Council recognises the strategic importance of the proposed Donegal Community Stadium to sport in the County and commits to:

- taking a lead role in project management,*
- working with the stadium committee and other stakeholders to ensure timely progress,*
- working with other stakeholders to source the necessary funding to complete the project".*

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

Cllr Harley welcomed the response and noted that Donegal County Council had in the interim met with representatives of Finn Harps Football Club. He outlined the excellent range of facilities available at the club and the important role played by the Finn Harps Academy in promoting under-age football in Donegal. The development of such a facility would, he confirmed, provide young people with a specific focus and encourage them to aspire to playing in a state of the art venue.

Match funding, was, he said, critical to ensure the progression of the project and he called on the Council to take a lead role in completing the project. The design team, he noted, were in place to oversee the works as soon as funding was available.

Cllr Mc Gowan supporting the motion alluded to the fact that this project had been 20 years in the making and that the Council had been responsible for providing the land in the first instance. It was, he said, an important facility which needed to be progressed and would in the long run contribute to an overall county-wide sporting ethos.

Cllr Mc Brearty on a point of order said he had a difficulty with the motion with regard to the building work carried out to date on the project. He asked whether any checks had been carried out with regard to the quality of the building material used.

Cllr Gallagher said that this was a community stadium open to all and that the facility fitted in perfectly with the designation of Ballybofey/Stranorlar as a sporting hub in the county. The motion, she said, called for the Council to take a leading role and was similar to projects that had taken place in other counties. It was vital, she added, that there was unanimous support for the stadium and that all funding avenues were explored.

Cllr L Doherty seconding the motion concurred with the previous speakers and outlined the importance of the project not just for the Finn Valley but for the county as a whole.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Planning & Community Development said that he had set out in his response an outline of the support provided to date and that the Council was happy to continue in this vein. He alluded to the €3,991m funding provided to date under the Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund and the fact that the development of the Donegal Community Stadium was a centre piece in achieving the overall aims and objectives of the County Development Plan 2018/-2024 and the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Local Area Plan 2018-2024.

He confirmed that a meeting had taken place with Finn Harps representatives and that a detailed outline had been provided in relation to the work carried out by Finn Harps in the wider community, the work of the academy and the focus of the current youth programme.

The request for Donegal County Council to take a lead role in facilitating the completion of the stadium was something, he said, that needed further consideration.

He said that clarification had been sought at the meeting as to what the committee's expectations were in terms of the Council taking a leading role and that discussion had taken place regarding the current funding gap.

Finn Harps representatives had, he said, recognised that there was still some work to do in identifying this funding gap and that further consideration was warranted in terms of the role of the Council going forward. It was hoped, he added, to get an update from Finn Harps in the next two to three weeks in relation to these issues and the specific co-funding requirements. This was needed, he said, before any decision could be made on the Council's part. He was, he confirmed, happy to continue the conversation with Finn Harps and noted that when the joint Finn Harps/FAI funding application was being made a letter of support had been provided by Donegal County Council.

He said that it would be advisable to await the presentation from Finn Harps and consider the matter again before any commitment was entered into.

Responding to Cllr Mc Brearty's query, he said, that to the best of his knowledge the department engineers were not aware of any issues regarding defective blocks. The design team in place for the project had engineers dealing with mica issues and these would be addressed, he said, prior to any works on the project.

Concluding, he advised, that there was an opportunity here for a return for the Council if a management company was put in place.

Cllr Harley thanked the Director for his response and said that he appreciated the fact that a decision could not be made at this juncture.

C/131/21 **OLD AGE PENSIONERS- 6 MONTHS WAIVER/GRACE ON THEIR ROAD TAX**

On the proposal of Cllr L Doherty, seconded by Cllr A Doherty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"I am calling on the Donegal County Council to approach the Government to give the old age pensioners 6 months waiver/grace on their road tax, due to the fact that they had to follow public health guidelines to stay at home for numerous periods since March 2020".

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

He said that he had been inundated with queries from elderly citizens who had not left the house for over a year and it was unfair that they should have had to pay for their vehicles when public health regulations forced them to stay at home. This waiver/grace would be some compensation for people who had abided by all the guidelines, he added.

Cllr A Doherty seconding the motion said that this would be an excellent gesture for citizens who had been most significantly impacted by the pandemic.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was agreed to write to the Department of Transport in relation to same.

C/132/21 **TAKING IN CHARGE OF UNFINISHED ESTATES**

On the proposal of Cllr McGowan seconded by Cllr Canning it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"That a report is presented to this Council detailing the progress with the taking in charge of unfinished estates and that a detailed plan is given outlining a timeframe as to when estates can expect to be taken in charge".

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

He welcomed the reply and noted that a comprehensive report had been issued at MD level in relation to the takeover of estates in the Lifford/Stranorlar Municipal District. He thanked Paddy Mullen, Senior Executive Engineer and his team for their work to date.

He alluded to the lengthy delay in taking over certain estates and referred in particular to Lawnsdale in Ballybofey.

Clarity was needed, he said, with regard to the following:-

- Who owned the parcels of land in many of these estates? Was it the residents or the receivers?
- Whether it was possible for Donegal County Council to tender out sewerage and water works or was this Irish Water's responsibility.

Cllr Canning supporting the motion acknowledged also the work carried out Paddy Mullen and his team.

He noted that many of the estates had treatment systems which had come of age and queried how these were to be remediated under the SLA with Irish Water.

It was acknowledged that mica would also be in issue in many of these developments and that a proactive approach was needed to establish whether or not green areas in these estates could be used for infill housing. He cited the need for dedicated management plans going forward.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services acknowledged the request for a detailed report, but said however that it would be prudent to continue with the current updates at MD level after which a more comprehensive report could be provided.

There were, he noted, complexities involved in the takeover of these estates namely issues with way leaves, delays in getting sign off by Irish Water and obstacles in terms of the relevant funding.

He informed members that the existing takeover policy did not include the maintenance of green areas and that funding was a major difficulty. He agreed to bring a detailed report to each Municipal District before year end.

Cllr Mc Gowan said that it was imperative that a fully staffed dedicated team was put in place to progress the taking in charge of unfinished estates.

C/133/21 **TRIALLING THE USE OF AN AIR AMBULANCE**

On the proposal of Cllr McClafferty, seconded by Cllr N Mc Garvey it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"I propose that this Council ask the HSE to explore the possibility of trialling the use of an Air Ambulance here in Donegal, given the size of our county and the fact that many areas are a considerable distance from a hospital in an emergency situation".

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

He said that use of an Air Ambulance could be trialled over six months to establish the effectiveness of the service for Donegal. He noted that this type of service was used extensively in the UK and in Northern Ireland and that given the geographical location of Donegal and its remoteness that a similar initiative would work well here. Such a service with a dedicated team on board would be ideal, he added, where there were particular challenges in getting to a hospital. The coastguard helicopter, it was acknowledged, did an excellent job but was not in a position to deliver the same level of service.

Cllr N Mc Garvey seconded the motion and said that it was something that should be explored given that it could take an ambulance up to two hours to get to Letterkenny from certain areas in the county.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/134/21 **DISGUST AT THE SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENT CIVILIANS AND CHILDREN IN GAZA**

On the proposal of Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig and seconded by Cllr McBrearty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"Go n-iarrfaidh Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ar Rialtas Bhaile Átha Cliath ambasadóir agus foireann Iosrael in Ambasáid Iosrael a dhíbirt d'fhonn náire mhuintir na hÉireann a léiriú maidir le marú sibhialtaigh agus

leanaí neamhchiontach i nGaza agus sa Bhruach Thiar atá faoi fhorghabháil.

Go dtacaímid mar Chomhairle go hiomlán le feachtas idirnáisiúnta BDS (Baghcatáil, Dífheistiú agus Smachtbhannaí).

Tugann an Chomhairle seo cuireadh d’Ambasadóir na Palaistíne go hÉirinn, an Dr Jilan Wahba Abdalmajid ionnas gur féidir leis cur síos cruinn a dhéanamh dúinn mar bhaill tofa an rialtais áitiúil i gContae Dhún na nGall ar chúrsaí i nGaza agus sna críocha gafa”.

"That Donegal County Council calls upon the Dublin Government to expel the Israeli Ambassador and staff in the Israeli Embassy in order to demonstrate the Irish people’s disgust at the slaughter of innocent civilians and children in Gaza and the occupied West Bank and that we as a Council:-

- fully support the international campaign of BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions).*
- and that this Council invites the Palestinian Ambassador to Ireland, Dr Jilan Wahba Abdalmajid, to address this chamber so that we, the elected local government representatives in County Donegal may learn at first hand of the situation in Gaza and the occupied territories".*

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

He said that infrastructure in the West Bank was in tatters and that the atrocities going on there were being overlooked globally. It was imperative, he added, that Irish people supported the BDS campaign and did not purchase any products from those responsible for the terror in Palestine.

Palestine was now effectively, he said, an apartheid state and he thus called for the Palestinian Ambassador, Dr Jilan Wahba Abdalmajid to be invited to the chamber to address members on the situation there. Cllr Mc Brearty seconded the motion and said that the people of Palestine deserved justice. He said that the UN needed to step in and put a peace keeping force in place to protect the people of Palestine. We in Ireland with a shared history of injustice needed to show solidarity, he contended.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig thanked members for their support and asked that the motion be circulated to all local authorities for their consideration.

C/135/21 CREATION OF A “DONEGAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION”

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher seconded by Cllr Mc Monagle it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"That this Council establish a working group within the housing division to investigate the possibility of creating a "Donegal Housing Association" similar to established Housing Associations to develop and plan social and affordable homes for Donegal".

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

She said that a conversation needed to be started in relation to the provision of affordable/social housing, as the housing crisis was worsening and urgent intervention was necessary.

The provision of social housing, she advised, was far too slow and the affordable homes legislation more applicable to a city environment than West Donegal. It was critical, she added, that the best possible team was put in place to ensure the provision of homes for families in Donegal. She said that a dedicated liaison person should be located in each MD to progress this initiative.

A wider discussion, she said, was needed as to what was suitable for towns and villages in Donegal and funding acquired to build schemes that accommodated the needs of families in Donegal.

Cllr Mc Monagle supporting the motion said that the Council needed to do all it could to assist and house people in lands readily available to it. A focus group in Donegal, he contended, could concentrate on sourcing and drawing down monies to develop social/affordable housing in Donegal. He said that there was insufficient housing in towns like Letterkenny to meet demand and that a Donegal Housing Association was one possible way of remedying this.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Joe Peoples, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the motion was timely as there had already been discussion at the Housing SPC on the matter and that there needed to be exceptional arrangements for Donegal.

The Council, he said, could build on its own land but that a decision would have to be made on the appropriate mix of social/ affordable homes and possibly rental accommodation on such sites. It was important, he said, to engage with the Government in the short-term with regard to the funding possibilities and then to look at the best possible way of satisfying the needs of a variety of people who need different types of housing solutions. This, he advised, could be explored further by the Housing SPC.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Gallagher reiterated the fact that there was a massive urgency to address the situation and to get the mix right. She said that the way forward was to buy land in small rural villages and build small settlements of 6-10 houses thus sustaining and developing communities from the ground up.

C/136/21 **PROVISION OF GOOD QUALITY WATER IN ALL AREAS OF DONEGAL**

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

"I propose that Donegal County Council support the applications to Irish Water to provide adequate and good quality water in all areas of Donegal".

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

He said that poor water supply and quality issues were a major concern in the Ardara area. He noted that the Maghera area had no water over a three day period last week and that this was a usual occurrence at that location. He called on the Council to put pressure on Irish Water to take over the Group Water Scheme in the area and allow people proper access to an adequate water supply.

Cllr Brogan supporting the motion acknowledged the efforts of the Senior Management Team to date in bringing about meetings with Irish Water. He contended however that more frequent interactions were needed and that there was an onus on Irish Water to be more accountable. A strong message, he said, needed to be relayed that investment in water and sewerage infrastructure should be prioritised. Irish Water, he added, needed to be pro active rather than reactive.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Molloy said that the issues raised in relation to Maghera were ongoing and that a resolution was needed sooner rather than later.

C/137/21 **TO MAKE PATISIRAN DRUG AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE IN THE 26 COUNTIES**

On the proposal of Cllr T Crossan seconded by Cllr A Doherty it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"I propose that Donegal County Council write to the Minister of Health, Stephen Donnelly, Chief Clinical Officer, Colm Henry and HSE Director General Paul Reid, calling on them, as a matter of urgency, to make Patisiran available to everyone in the 26 Counties who require this life-changing drug. Furthermore, I ask Donegal County Council to circulate this motion to all other County Councils in the 26 Counties to ask them for their support in this matter".

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

He said that there were many heartbreaking stories out there with regard to those suffering from amyloidosis, a life threatening condition which could be successfully treated with patisiran.

This drug he advised was readily available in the EU, the UK and Northern Ireland, yet was denied to patients in the 26 counties. The HSE Drugs group, he noted, were ultimately responsible for the approval of this medication in Ireland and to date had failed to recommend its use.

Cllr A Doherty supported the motion and noted that the Donegal County Council representatives on the Regional Health Forum had already demanded that a decision be made. This decision, it was acknowledged, was still pending. He outlined the need for a decision to be made sooner rather than later given the high incidence of the disease in Donegal.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Crossan thanked members for their support and said it was critical that a decision was made in relation to the availability of patisiran sooner rather than later.

C/138/21 **ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING GROUP ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**

On the proposal of Cllr A Doherty seconded by Cllr McMonagle it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"That this Council will establish a working group on Local Government and Constitutional Change to give a voice to the Council and to communities in the debate on constitutional change and Irish unity and to address the policy implications for Local Government North and South, particularly here in the North-West of such changes.

That the newly established sub-committee begin a process of engagement on the issue of Irish Unity with civic, business and other stakeholders, including interacting with the Shared Island Unit in the Department of the Taoiseach".

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

Addressing members he said that Donegal's 140km border and particular location put it in an ideal position to embrace political and constitutional change. There had been excellent cross-border engagement to date, he said, and this had been reflected in the work of the North West Region Development Group. Collaboration on issues such as the North West Cancer Centre, the joint cross-border Brexit Committee had, he advised, clearly indicated that economic and health issues did not adhere to any boundaries.

He acknowledged the excellent work carried out in conjunction with local authorities across the border and the fact that this promoted the North West on a regional basis.

Projects such as the North West Greenway and the N2-A5 road works, the Wild Atlantic Way tourism initiative and the current education memorandum of understanding between Magee University and the Letterkenny Institute of Technology he stated, were prime examples of the interdependencies that existed along the border region. Local authorities on both sides of the border, he said, were faced with many similar challenges and the establishment of a designated working group would set the scene for a debate on the constitutional change required to facilitate an All Island announcement by An Taoiseach.

Cllr Mc Monagle supporting the motion said that the Good Friday agreement in 1998 had drawn the line on political conflict and thus became the model for change. This, he added, had clearly stated that there would be no referendum on Irish Unity without ample discussion in relation to the format of this initiative.

The working group referred to would, he contended, address all aspirations and seek to address the issues raised. It was time he said to up the dialogue and deal with constitutional issues in a reconcilable way.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Joe Peoples, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that further consideration would be needed with regards the composition and membership of the committee and that this could be brought back to a future meeting of the Council for approval.

Cllr Doherty thanked members for their support and said that the working group as well as looking at the implications of constitutional change could also act as a forum for greater collaboration with authorities in the six counties.

C/139/21 **CARRY OUT A SURVEY OF ALL TOWNS THAT HAVE THE OLD WOODEN ESB POLES STILL IN PLACE**

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

"I would ask this Council to carry out a survey of all the towns that have the old wooden ESB poles still in place with a view to removing and replacing them with up to date lamp stands".

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

He said that the old telegraph poles were an eyesore and that a survey was required initially so that a replacement campaign could be put in

place. Such a campaign would, he advised, help to invigorate main streets in these towns and villages and contribute to the overall development in the long run.

Cllr Brogan supporting the motion noted that this was an issue in many of the larger towns also and suggested that the ESB be invited to engage with Councillors at MD level.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Brendan O' Donnell, Director Roads & Transportation confirmed that it was not just a matter of moving the old poles as considerable works would then be necessary to move the lines underground and that this was a matter for the ESB. He said that it would be possible to liaise with the ESB to see what their plans were for the overhead lines in question.

Cllr Canning thanked members for their support. He said that the removal of these poles was necessary, particularly in towns and villages where renewal works had taken place. Newtowncunningham, he said, was a prime example of where this needed to take place.

C/140/21 **CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS**

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended and a minutes silence was observed in respect of the following:-

- Cllr Martin McDermott on the death of his father, John.
- Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh on the death of his brother, Páidín.
- Frankie McGinley, Rural Water Services, on the death of his father, Patsy.
- Paul Earley, Information Systems, on the death of his mother Noreen.
- Sean Devenney, Retired Water Works Inspector, on the death of his mother Polly.
- The family of our former colleague Denis McBride, Stranorlar Roads Area.
- The family of our retired colleague Sally Flood, Motor Tax Office.
- Marie Murphy, HR on the death of her father, Peter.
- Marie Martin, Housing, Dungloe on the death of her mother, Mary.
- The family of the late Kevin Mc Carron, St Johnston.
- The family of the late Annie Lichtenfeld, Kilmacrennan.

Covid-19

The Cathaoirleach noted that up to 3 million people had at this stage received their first vaccination and that pharmacists were now involved in the vaccination programme. Given the threat of the new delta variation it was extremely important now, she said, that people did not let their guard down and continued to abide by the public health guidelines. Donegal County Council it was noted continued to meet with other essential services on a weekly basis to review the situation.

Cancellation of Services- Donegal Airport

The Cathaoirleach said that the cancellation of services was a bitter blow for Donegal and the aviation sector in general. She said that her thoughts were with the 480 staff employed by Stobart who now faced redundancy. Donegal County Council, she advised, had been in contact with the management committee at Donegal Airport and would work and support them in their endeavours to secure an alternative service. She outlined the need for temporary measures in the interim given the significance of its Glasgow link for the people of West Donegal and the importance of the Donegal – Dublin link for hospital patients and those travelling onward to other destinations.

Cllr Marie T Gallagher in her capacity as the Cathaoirleach of the Glenties Municipal District invited the Cathaoirleach to attend the forthcoming Airport Committee board meeting with the Minister given the urgency of the situation and the need to resume services as soon as possible.

2021 EY Entrepreneur of the Year Ireland Programme

Congratulations was extended to Michael Mc Kinney, Inishowen Engineering and to Karl Mc Hugh, Atlantic Dawn on reaching the final of the 2021 EY Entrepreneur of the Year Ireland Programme.

Launch of Donegal Place Brand

The Cathaoirleach informed members that she had attended the launch of the Donegal Place Brand on the 30th April. This, she said, was a new branding for the county which aimed to promote Donegal as a great place to live and work, invest, study and explore. She thanked the Director of Economic Development, the Head of Finance and their team for the excellent work in bringing about this initiative.

Mica

The Cathaoirleach noted that the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, T.D had visited Donegal on the 10th of June and with the Minister for Agriculture, Charlie Mc Conalogue, T.D had visited and met with homeowners affected by mica. She noted that meaningful discussion had taken place in relation to all aspects of the problem and that the Taoiseach was aware of the agony and heartache for the families concerned. This, she acknowledged, was the single biggest issue affecting Donegal and that nothing less than 100% redress was acceptable.

Cllr Mac Mahon noted that the President of Sinn Fein , Mary Lou Mc Donald had also visited mica affected homes to see the devastation for herself.

RRDF Scheme

There was warm welcome for the recent announcement in relation to rural regeneration funding and the fact that Donegal County Council was to receive over €21m in funding.

Capital Investment Package

Cllr Donaghey referred to the recent €38.8m Capital Investment Package announced by the Minister for Agriculture, Charlie Mc Conalogue, T.D. for the marine sector and said that this would be of major benefit to Donegal. She welcomed the €12m allocated to complete the breakwater at Greencastle Harbour and the €200,000 investment in Leenan Pier.

Military Museum- Dunree

It was noted that €12.5m had been allocated to develop Dunree Fort and Museum under the Failte Ireland Platform for Growth Programme with 25% match funding being provided by Donegal County Council. This, she said, would transform and enhance the current facilities. She thanked all involved in making this possible.

Congratulations

Congratulations was extended to Cllr John O' Donnell and his partner Alison on the birth of their baby daughter.

C/141/21 **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda and addendum dated 14th June, 2021 in relation to the above. An update was provided in relation to the following:-

1. Community Development & Planning Services

A. Regeneration & Development Team Update

- (i) *Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)*
- (ii) *Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)*

B. Rural Funding Programmes 2021

C. Section 28 Guidelines Concerning the Regulation of Institutional Investment

2. Economic Development, Emergency Services and Information Systems

A. Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

- (i) *Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme*
- (ii) *SCALE -X accelerator*
- (iii) *Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)*

B. Emergency Services – Civil Defence

C. Emergency Services – Fire Service

- (i) *Operations*
- (ii) *Fire Prevention*

D. Economic Development

- (i) *New Donegal Place Brand*

- (ii) *Outdoor Seating & Accessories for Tourism & Hospitality Scheme*

3. Roads & Transportation

A. Central Technical Services Division Update

- (i) *Greencastle Breakwater*
- (ii) *Greenways Projects*

B. Roads Areas Update

C. National Roads Office Update

- (i) *Pavement, Safety and Bridges update May 2021*
- (ii) *Construction*
- (iii) *Design*

4. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services

A. Cultural Services

- (i) Creative Ireland Programme
- (ii) Library Service
- (iii) Arts Service
- (iv) Regional Cultural Centre
- (v) Donegal Heritage Office
- (vi) Colmcille 1500

5. Water and Environment

A. Litter and Waste Management

- (i) Donegal Recycling Centres
- (ii) WEEE Recycling
- (iii) Twin Towns New Bring Bank Sites
- (iv) Brown Food Waste Bins
- (v) Your County Your Waste' Awareness Campaign
- (vi) Mywaste.ie – Resources for Businesses

B. Coastal Management

- (i) *Beach Lifeguard Recruitment*
- (ii) *Beach Preparatory Works*
- (iii) *New Seasonal Public Conveniences*
- (iv) *Beach Works – Inishowen MD*
- (v) *Beach Works – Letterkenny MD*
- (vi) *Inishowen Coastal Erosion Risk Management*
- (vii) *Respect the Dunes Awareness Campaign*
- (viii) *Beach Works – Glenties MD*
- (ix) *Coastal Erosion and Flooding Risk Management*

(CFERM)

- (x) *Dooley Dune Protection*
- (xi) *Beach Works – Donegal MD*
- (xii) *Rossnowlagh Dune Protection and Awareness Campaign*

Addendum to Management Report

1. Donegal Outdoor Summer Assistance allocation
2. Donegal County Council submission to EirGrid ‘Shaping Our Electricity Future’
3. Local Property Tax Update
4. Platforms for Growth- Fort Dunree
5. Capital Project Delivery Team

He drew member’s attention to the fact that Donegal County Council had made a submission to the EirGrid “Shaping our Electricity Future” consultation process and referred to the copy circulated with the report.

The Chief Executive alluded to the fact that changes had been made to the Local Property Tax Regime with the public consultation process now scheduled to take place from the 25th June, 2021 to the 9th July, 2021. Thus, he advised, the Council would have to make a decision on whether or not to vary the rate of LPT for 2022 by the 31st August, 2021.

Cllr Mc Brearty contended that property owners affected by mica should not have to pay the Local Property Tax. He proposed, seconded by Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig that a refund of monies be made to all mica affected homeowners.

The Chief Executive confirmed however that the issue at hand was the selection of a date to discuss the matter nothing more or nothing less.

Cllr Mc Brearty said that he had made a counter proposal and that in his opinion this should go to a vote.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that this was something that would have more relevance on the day that the LPT was actually being discussed. Cllr Mc Brearty expressed dissatisfaction with this assessment and again asked that his counter proposal be dealt with.

Cllr Mc Monagle thus proposed, seconded by Cllr Kennedy that the Local Property Tax consideration be included on the agenda for the July Council Meeting.

C/142/21 **MOTION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that there were two items remaining to be dealt with under urgent business.

She called on the Chief Executive to reiterate his comments in relation to the motion submitted by Cllr Mc Brearty under urgent business.

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had received the motion on Saturday night 12th June and that given the content of the motion which named staff, former staff and councillors it was necessary to get legal advice regarding the role of the Council.

He said that the Council had empathy for the many homeowners affected and that it had a duty to assist in finding an effective solution. There were, he noted, questions in relation to the role of Donegal County Council around block manufacture and the use of same going back to the 1980s. It would take a bit of time, he said, to get clarity in relation to the role of the Council and the relevant government standards involved.,

Continuing, he confirmed, that he had no issue in providing a report on the five houses bought in Buncrana over a year ago, but that this would take a few weeks to collate.

Cllr Mc Brearty expressed concern in relation to the treatment of his emergency motion. He said that he had written to the Cathaoirleach on the 3rd June and the 12th June requesting a Special Meeting to discuss same. Having received no reply, he said, that he had no option but to put forward an emergency motion as this was a serious matter of public interest. The response from the Executive, he contended, was not legally correct.

The Cathaoirleach informed Cllr Mc Brearty that she had an obligation to bring the matter to the members of the Inishowen Municipal District initially and that this had only recently taken place. The members of the Inishowen Municipal District had, she confirmed, been happy with the manner in which the houses concerned had been procured.

Cllr Blaney said that the allegations made were of a serious nature and that it was imperative that the executive had time to prepare the report referred to by the Chief Executive. He proposed, seconded by Cllr Kennedy that the Chief Executive's recommendation be accepted.

Cllr Mc Brearty said it was critical that the matters raised in his motion came before Council and called on the executive to investigate same as a matter of urgency.

Cllr Mc Garvey seconded the following proposal from Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig in relation to the cancellation of passenger services to Donegal Airport:-

"That the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan, T.D and the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, T.D.be contacted in relation to the restoration of services to Donegal Airport following the collapse of Stobart Air"

He said that this was bitter blow for West Donegal and the overall economic and social impact was devastating for those who depended on this service

Cllr Noreen Mc Garvey seconding the motion alluded to the fact that the airport had been in operation over 35 years and employed 30 staff. Approximately 70,000 people used the airport every year, she noted, and for the last 14 years the Donegal – Dublin service had been an important link for local businesses and cancer patients travelling to Dublin. She cited the need to have a new PSO in operation as soon as possible.

Mr Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that this was a vital service for Donegal and the withdrawal of the PSO a threat to the airport. The Department, he advised, were looking at the legal implications of putting in place an interim operation.

Every effort, he said was being made to address the situation.

The following questions were noted:-

C/143/21 **ILLEGAL DUMPING AND LITTERING IN DONEGAL**

Cllr Mc Monagle submitted the following question:-

How many prosecutions/fines have been issued in relation to illegal dumping/littering in the County since 2019 and in what MDs and what steps are we taking to reduce illegal dumping/littering at secluded areas?

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

C/144/21 **HOW MANY DISFUNCTIONAL MECHANICAL WATER/SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS ARE THERE ACROSS THE COUNTY**

Cllr Mc Monagle submitted the following question:-

How many Mechanical Water/Sewage Treatment Plants servicing private estates are now dysfunctional or at the end of use across the County and how many in each Municipal District?

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

C/145/21 **MONITORING DONEGAL LIFE BUOY RINGS**

Cllr Kavanagh submitted the following question:-

Could the Council look into using smart technology to monitor Donegal's life buoy rings, so that they can be immediately informed of missing rings and replace them ASAP?

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

C/146/21 **LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME APPLICATIONS**

Cllr Coyle submitted the following question:-

Local Improvement Scheme applications

- a).How many Local Improvement Scheme applications for the county have been received by the Council?.
- b) How many of the applications have been deemed valid?
- c) What is the approximate budget needed for applications that have been deemed valid?

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

C/147/21 **MICA REDRESS SCHEME**

Cllr Blaney submitted the following question:-

Can I get an update on how many Stage 1 applications have been received for the MICA Redress Scheme and a breakdown of how many applications are approved, how many Stage 1 further information requests to date, the number and value of Stage 1 Fees- Payments to date, and also how many Stage 2 applications received, how many Stage 2 approved/decided, how many Stage 2 are awaiting further information or being assessed and what is the value of Stage 2 applications?

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

C/148/21 **FAST TRACKING HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

How many projects has this Council proceeded with under the new powers given to them last year that allows them to advance housing projects locally and avoiding Stage 4 Department approval, therefore fast tracking housing developments up to €6m?

He received a response from the Director or Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services in relation to the above.

C/149/21 **REVIEW OUR LEGAL SERVICES**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we get an updated report on what steps this Council has taken in order to review our legal services as agreed by the Council?

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

C/150/21 **UPDATED REPORT ON THE COUNCIL PROJECTS IN DONEGAL**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we have an updated report on the council projects in Donegal and the monies allocated to each of them, the proposed matching funding and the management of and the timeframe for them?

He received a response from the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/151/21 **LINK THE NEW GIS SYSTEM FOR LIFEBOUYS TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES SYSTEMS**

Cllr Sweeny submitted the following question:-

Can DCC liaise with our emergency services to link the new GIS system for lifebuoys to their systems to help location of emergency situations?

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

C/152/21 **HOW MUCH INCOME DID DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL BRING IN FOR CASUAL TRADING OVER THE LAST 2 YEARS**

Cllr Harley submitted the following question:-

How much income did Donegal County Council bring in over the last 3 years 1) 2018/ 2) 2019 and 3) 2020 from casual trading in the county in each of 5 designated towns?:-

Ballyshannon, Bundoran, Buncrana, Killybegs and Letterkenny.

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

C/153/21 **HOW MANY COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTIES HAVE MICA**

Cllr Mc Brearty submitted the following question:-

How many council houses and properties owned and purchased by Donegal County Council have Mica?

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

C/154/21 **HOW MANY HOMES WHICH HAVE BEEN PURCHASED BY SITTING TENANTS HAVE MICA**

Cllr Mc Brearty submitted the following question:-

How many homes which have been purchased by sitting tenants have Mica and was the Council aware they had Mica when sold?

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

C/155/21 **HOW MANY LA HOUSES HAVE BEEN TESTED FOR MICA**

Cllr G Doherty submitted the following question:-

How many of our local authority houses have been tested for Mica and can I also have this breakdown per MD?

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

C/156/21 **HOW MANY FAMILIES PRESENTLY HOUSED UNDER HAP HAVE CHOSEN TO REMAIN ON THE COUNCIL WAITING LIST**

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:-

How many families presently housed under the HAPs Scheme have chosen to remain on the Council waiting list and can I have a breakdown per Municipal District?

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

C/157/21 **THE PRIOR SCHOOL BUILDING**

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:-

What action has been taken to include the Prior School building as part of the County Archive Section?

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

C/158/21 **WHAT WILL THE CHANGES IN THE LATEST NEW REGULATIONS TO ASSIST RESTAURANTS AND CAFES TO TRADE OUTDOORS MEAN TO SUCH TRADERS?**

Cllr Crawford submitted the following question:-

What will the changes in the latest new regulations to assist restaurants and cafes to trade outdoors mean to such traders?

He received a reply from the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/159/21 **CONFIRM THAT ALL INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL'S COMPUTER IT SYSTEM IS ENCRYPTED.**

Cllr Mc Gowan submitted the following question:-

Can the Council confirm that all information on the Council's Computer IT System is encrypted, along with other boards/agencies that this Council shares information with on a regular basis?

He received a response from the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/160/21 **HOW MANY RECYCLING SCHEMES TO DISPOSE OF LARGE ITEMS WILL THE COUNCIL RUN THIS YEAR**

Cllr Mc Gowan submitted the following question:-

What if any recycling schemes will the Council run this year for the public to dispose of large items such as mattresses, used paint tins etc?

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

C/161/21 **BREAKDOWN OF ALL HOUSING PROJECTS DELIVERED OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS**

Cllr N Mc Garvey submitted the following question:-

Can you please provide a breakdown of all housing projects delivered over the last 5 years and the land acquired to accommodate housing need going forward?

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

C/162/21 **WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR HOUSING CAPITAL SECTION TO DEVELOP A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Cllr Gallagher submitted the following question:-

What is the process for our Housing Capital Section to develop a housing development from start to finish, and could I have specifics on regulations and criteria needed for the Department to get permission for the development of a housing scheme?

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

C/163/21 **HOW MANY SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOMES HAS DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPED OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS**

Cllr Gallagher submitted the following question:-

How many social and affordable homes has Donegal County Council developed over the past five years, and how many social and affordable homes are planned for the next five years?

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

C/164/21 **UPDATE REPORT ON WHAT HOUSING CONSTRUCTION HAS DELIVERED IN THE LAST 5 YEARS AND CONFIRM PLANS FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS**

Cllr Molloy submitted the following question:-

Can I have an updated report of what housing construction has delivered in the last 5 years and confirm their plans for housing for our areas for the next 3 years?

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

C/165/21 **WHAT LAND IS IN COUNCIL OWNERSHIP SUITABLE TO BUILD HOMES PER MD**

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig submitted the following question:-

An féidir le DCC a chur in iúl dom cén talamh atá faoi úinéireacht na Comhairle atá fóirsteanach chun tithe a thógáil agus é sin a dhéanamh do gach ceantar bardasach sa chontae?

Can Donegal County Council let me know what land is in council ownership suitable to build homes per MD?

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

C/166/21 **WHAT IS DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL'S POLICY IN RELATION TO DOG FOULING**

Cllr Mc Clafferty submitted the following question:-

What is Donegal County Council's policy in relation to dog fouling as it has become a major problem in our towns, along footpaths and on our beaches, piers and harbours etc?

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

C/167/21 **ENFORCE ALL DOG OWNERS TO HAVE THEIR DOGS MUZZLED**

Cllr Mc Clafferty submitted the following question:-

Can the Council do anything to enforce all dog owners to have their dogs muzzled as dog to dog attacks are becoming more and more common and incidences of smaller pets being mauled and killed are on the increase?

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

C/168/21 **CURRENT STATUS ON ANY LEISURE CENTRE FACILITY WHICH IS CURRENTLY BE PROGRESSED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr Murray submitted the following question:-

What is the current status of any leisure centre facility which is currently being progressed with the assistance of, and commitment to financial support, from Donegal County Council?

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

C/169/21 **CAPITAL PROGRAMMES PLANNED BY IRISH WATER IN DONEGAL THIS YEAR**

Cllr Canning submitted the following question:-

What Capital Programmes are planned by Irish Water in Donegal this year?

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

C/170/21 **ADAPT, PURSUE AND PROMOTE THE "20 MINUTE ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCEPT"**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

Within RRDF, URDF, Town & Village funding announced and funding applied for, will Donegal County Council work cross sectorally and adapt, pursue and promote the "20 Minute accessible neighbourhood concept" which supports the provision of inclusive, healthy, vibrant and attractive cycle and walking towns and villages and reduces carbon footprint?

He received a response from the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/171/21 **AUDIT OF COUNCIL OWNED PLAYGROUNDS, PARKS AND ASSAULT COURSES INCLUDING ACTIVITY WALLS**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

Will the Council ensure that a priority audit of Council county playgrounds, parks and assault courses including "Activity Walls" is undertaken immediately, that damaged and dangerous defects to equipment are rectified and or the equipment is replaced with haste, that all damaged signage is replaced, that appropriate number bins are in place and that community signs welcoming visitors and requesting park users to "Enjoy and Take Care" of the park are erected?

He received a response from the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services in relation to the above.

C/172/21 **HOW MANY FULL TIME STAFF ARE WORKING ON THE MICA REDRESS SCHEME**

Cllr Canning submitted the following question:-

How many members of staff are working full time on the mica redress scheme?

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

C/173/21 **HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE AVAILED OF THE TENANT PURCHASE AND COUNCIL MORTGAGE SCHEMES**

Cllr T Crossan submitted the following question:-

How many people have availed of the tenant purchase and Council mortgage schemes since they were initiated?

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

C/174/21 **UPDATED REPORT ON OUR HOUSING CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME FOR DONEGAL IN THE LAST 5 YEARS AND PROPOSAL FOR NEXT 3 YEARS**

Cllr McDermott submitted the following question:-

Can I get an updated report on our housing construction programme for Donegal in the last 5 years, and our proposals for the next 3 years, including acquiring lands for housing, Specific Instance S.I cottage, Housing Acquisition Programme, Design/construction, Turnkey development and approved housing bodies and the resources we have available to deliver the programme in each area?

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

C/175/21 **MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES**

Members noted the following motions from other Councils.

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Clare County Council write to the Department of Health and to Minister Stephen Donnelly requesting that Victims of Domestic, sexual and gender-based violence have access to free psychological support and counselling during and after the legal process as required. We request this support be provided bearing in mind that convicted perpetrators have access to these services at least over the duration of sentence. If passed we ask that this motion is shared with all other local authorities for support.”

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Clare County Council ask the HSE and the “Connecting for Life” initiative to pilot a community Psychiatric Care service in the County. This has been successfully piloted by the NHS in London. The Mental Health

Joint Response Car (MHJRC) involves having a Community Psychiatric Nurse and Emergency Medical Technician on call 24/7. The rationale is that people in mental health crises in the community do not often require admission to hospital, rather to address their issues with trained personnel in their own homes.”

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

“I am asking Clare County Council to write to the Taoiseach, Minister for Finance and the Minister for Social Protection, to prioritise that the carers allowance is no longer means tested after the 2021 budget. Given that the majority of carers are female and the fact that carer’s allowance is means tested a huge amount of women don’t receive any money due to their partners earnings.”

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

“To request that the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage would re-examine the current suitability of the maximum household income thresholds in the three banded areas. We further request circulation to all other local authorities and Oireachtas Members.”

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Cork County Council will send a letter of support which condemns the racial and misogynistic abuse being inflicted on the Lord Mayor of Dublin Cllr. Hazel Chu.”

DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council supports the campaign of Epilepsy Ireland to address long-standing issues that continue to impact on people with epilepsy and their families in Ireland today, namely;

1. Access to free travel.
2. Provision of Reasonable Accommodation for State Examinations for students with epilepsy.

The motion to be sent to the Minister for Health, the Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Disability Matters, and to other Local Authorities for correspondence purposes.”

DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

“This Council write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O’Brien TD and An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin TD calling for the immediate termination of the current Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Developments) Regulations 2017. We ask that copy of this letter be sent to each local authority, the AILG and LAMA.”

FERMANAGH & OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

“Given Fermanagh & Omagh District Council’s commitment to the All-Ireland Pollinator Scheme, and noting previous Council decisions taken in relation to reducing the use of harmful pesticides, reducing grass and

hedge cutting and encouraging protection and promotion of natural habitats for our bee population, this Council calls on the British Government, and on the relevant Stormont & Dáil Ministers, to oppose the importation of Italian honeybees onto this island, and to move to completely ban such actions in future.

The recently publicised move by a Kent bee keeper to avoid the import ban by importing 15 million Italian bees into Britain, via the island of Ireland, poses a serious potential threat to thousands of hives, to our native bee population and to its future viability.

The Ulster Beekeepers Association and Low County Native Irish Honeybee Association have expressed serious concern in relation to the small hive beetle and to the potential threat posed to native black Irish honeybees (which academic studies have established as the “best gene of black bees in Europe”). These worries have been echoed by beekeepers in Britain.

Mindful of such risks, FODC calls on the British & Irish Government, as well as on the relevant Ministers in Stormont, Dáil Éireann & Westminster, to stop the import of Italian bees into Britain via the North of Ireland, as well as onto the island of Ireland, North and South, with or without the intent of forward exportation.”

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

“I call on Galway County Council to make a formal submission to the Minister for Housing Local Government & Heritage outlining our complete opposition to the proposed provisions of the Development Agency Bill 2021.”

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Leitrim County Council ask the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage when the report into the tenant purchase scheme will be published, and if the issues relating to income from social welfare, and persons over the age of seventy, being allowed to purchase a Local Authority, house will be addressed?”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That, Limerick City and County Council, recognising the scale of the Housing crisis, reaffirm its commitment to work with Government and all relevant agencies towards delivering new housing units and, in particular, ensuring that sufficient Social and Affordable housing is built for those in need of same.

Recognising, however, its duty to use Limerick City and County Council property in the best interests of society, this Council reject the provisions contained in the Land Development Agency Bill, 2021, published by the Government, removing the role of the Elected Members of Local Authorities in approving the transfer or sale of lands to the Land Development Agency.

The Council further agrees to write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage urging a removal of that provision and to ensure that Elected Councillors retain the right to control such sales or transfers and be able to prepare and plan for appropriate housing delivery on Council-owned lands.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Limerick City & County Council call on Mr Darragh O’Brien, TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to retain the existing policies in relation to one-off rural housing as per the adopted Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (Section 3.9 Rural Settlement Policy and including the Rural Settlement Strategy Map) in the emerging Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That, Limerick City and County Council request Iconic Newspapers Ltd., to recognise the National Union of Journalists and engage with the NUJ worker representatives to address concerns of their employees working in the Limerick Leader Newspaper.”

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

“Calling on the Minister of Housing and or the Oireachtas members to amend the LDA Bill to remove s.49 and 56 of the bill as it is ‘ultra vires’ the programme of Government and is a direct stripping of Local Government Councillors executive powers.”

MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL

“Mayo County Council wishes to formally outline its complete opposition to the proposed provisions of the Land Development Agency Bill 2021. The proposed removal of the Section 183 reserved function of Elected Members in relation to the disposal of local authority held land to the LDA as provided for in Part 7 Section 56 of the bill is unacceptable and an affront to Local Democracy. As advocates for the empowerment of local government, we can never support or accept any diminution in the reserved functions and powers of Elected Councillors.”

MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

“That this Council records its support for the World Health Organisation’s plea for the equitable global distribution of all vaccines, treatments and therapies developed to combat the coronavirus scourge, and further notes:

- That some 130 countries across the world have yet to receive a single vaccine;
- That some countries have made arrangements for the delivery of vaccines far in excess of their populations need;
- That multiple voices have raised concern that some of the world’s poorest countries are unlikely to receive an adequate delivery of

vaccines to meet their populations need until late 2023 or even into 2024;

- The failure of the pharmaceutical companies behind the current batch of developed vaccines to share their research and findings with equally competent pharmaceutical manufacturers across the world to help speed up the production and distribution of vaccines and thereby the defeat of this global pandemic;
- The European Commission's approval of an application by concerned citizens to secure one million signatures of EU citizens to compel the Commission to consider the steps it can take, including legislation, to address this global inequality."

ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

"It was agreed to write to the Taoiseach and Minister Heather Humphreys at the Department of Rural and Community to immediately establish an Annual Fund for necessary capital works projects at our nations cemeteries to specifically address the deterioration of payments, boundary walls, overgrown trees and other similar capital works requirements in the interest of health and safety, stimulating local economies, pride of place at their sacred public spaces, but most importantly in deference to the memory of our deceased loved ones throughout the county. I was further agreed to circulate the motion to all Local Authorities."

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

"For this Council to write to the Minister for Finance Paschal Donohue following his recent remarks stating that taxes will rise after Covid and ask him not to increase taxes but instead borrow money to stimulate the economy over the next decade.

History shows that we cannot tax our way out of recession. The ECB are prepared to lend billions to allow the country to get back on track. An infrastructure plan including a massive house building programme should be included. In a decade, taxes will increase incrementally due to job creation therefore strengthening the economy and increasing our ability to repay the ECB".

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

"I propose that Sligo County Council write to An Tánaiste and ask him to intervene on the crisis facing our community sector in relation to insurance."

This concluded the business of the meeting.