

# COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL

Oifig Riarthóir na gCruinnithe  
Aras an Chontae  
Leifear  
19 Márta, 2024

## FÓGRA CRUINNITHE

### DO GACH BHALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

A Chara,

Beidh Cruinniú de Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ar siúl **Dé Luain, 25 Márta 2024** ag **11.00 r.n in Áras an Chontae, Leifear.** Ta clár an chruinnithe leis seo. Seolfar nasc leictreonach chuig an chruinniú i gcomhfhreagras eile.

Beidh Clár Orduithe an Phríomh-Fheidhmeannaigh le feiceáil ag an chruinniú

Mise, le meas



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**Pádraig Ó Laifearaigh**  
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

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## DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Office of Meetings Administrator  
County House  
Lifford  
19<sup>th</sup> March, 2024

### NOTICE OF MEETING

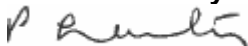
#### TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Councillor,

A Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 at 11.00am in the County House, Lifford. The agenda for the meeting is attached. An online link to join the meeting will issue separately.

The Register of Chief Executive Orders will be available for inspection at the meeting.

Yours sincerely



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**Patsy Lafferty**  
Meetings Administrator

## AGENDA

1. **Confirmation of Minutes**
  - a) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January, 2024.
  - b) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, 2024.
  - c) Confirmation of the Minutes of the January Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January, 2024.
  - d) Confirmation of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February, 2024.
  
2. **Disposal of Land – Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000(as amended)**
  - a) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (As amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (As amended) – to dispose of lands at Ballymagroarty Scotch, Ballintra, to Raymond Scott.
  - b) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (As amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (As amended) – to extend the lease agreement between the Trustees of Culdaff Sports Committee and Donegal County Council in respect of land at Culdaff.
  - c) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (As amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (As amended) – to dispose of office space at former Bunrana Town Council offices, St Oran’s Road, Bunrana to Donegal Digital Innovation CLG (DDIC)
  
3. **Taking of decision pursuant to the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (Part XI), and the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001**
  - a) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of 60 no. social housing units including all associated site development works, at Lifford Common, Lifford.
  - b) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of 30 no. social housing unit units including all associated site development works, at Cois Abhainn, St Johnston.
  - c) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of a pedestrian and cyclist active travel facility adjacent to the L1006 Convent Road, Letterkenny, Co Donegal.
  - d) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of a pedestrian and cyclist active travel facility adjacent to the R229-1,

Kilmacrennan Road from the Hospital Roundabout to Knocknamona in Letterkenny, Co Donegal.

- e) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the erection of a Vehicle Restraint System (VRS) abutting the eastern side of the R238 Regional Road at Three Trees, Quigley's Point.

4. **Corporate**

- a) To approve in accordance with Section 75 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) the twinning of the Lifford/Stranorlar Municipal District with Simancas in Spain.
- b) 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Local Elections.

5. **Roads & Transportation**

To approve the implementation of the 2024 Non-National Roads Bridge Strengthening Programme.

6. **Community Development**

- a) To approve the Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP).
- b) To note the Donegal Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2023.
- c) To approve change in membership of the Donegal Local Community Development Committee.

7. **Finance**

To note report on Irrecoverable Rates for 2023.

8. **Endorsement of Minutes**

To note minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2024.

9. **Attendance at Conference, Seminar or Event**

Authorisation of representation at a seminar, meeting or event under Section 142 (5) of Local Government Act, 2001, S.I. No. 668 of 2006, Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations 2006, S.I. No. 37 of 2010, Guidelines given by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 142) Regulations 2010, and the Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations, 2014 (as amended).

**Training**

- ALLG Annual Training Conference - "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Councillor in Irish Local Government & Local Elections 2024 to be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 in the Arklow Bay Hotel, Wicklow.
- ALLG Members Training Programme Module 2 - "Elected Members Local Election Preparation – A Briefing from the Electoral Commission" to be held in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, 2024.

### Conferences

- “The Rise of Loneliness on the Emerald Isle” – Community Development & Planning Remedies to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in Hannon’s Hotel, Roscommon.
- Local Government Tourism Conference – “Tourism – Leading the Change” to be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April and Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April in Killashee House Hotel, Naas, Co Kildare.

### Travel Abroad

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at an economic development event to be hosted by the Irish Consulate in Edinburgh on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024.
  - Attendance of the CPMR representative at the General Assembly of the Atlantic Arc Commission in Sines, Portugal on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024.
10. Presentation from the Irish Natura and Hill Farmers Association.

## **MOTIONS**

### **GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Planning**

11. Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty

“I’m asking this Council to back my motion calling for the planning objection fee to be raised to a maximum of €500 at least to stop people objecting for no apparent reason.”

### **LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Finance**

12. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

That this Council agree to develop a plan to distribute Council own funding and resources to all towns and villages across the county prior to the next Council Budget in October/November 2024. An agreement similar to 2014 when the then Council agreed to support former Town Councils from a sudden loss in revenue and agreed to top sliced supports in order to lessen the impact on them as they no longer had Town Council status. This agreement by all members saw the former Town Councils continue to grow and benefit from that decision. A new agreement would ensure balance in the way all local towns and villages are supported based on their size so that even the smallest towns & villages receive some main-stream county-wide resources.”

### **INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Community Development**

13. Cllr Terry Crossan

"That the Minister makes available adequate resources to reinstate the status of rural Garda stations, especially those that are in border areas with increasing populations and subject to the impact of urban encroachment."

14. Cllr Albert Doherty

"That Donegal County Council welcome "Coastal Watch" and support the Garda Síochána especially with the revitalisation, relaunch and promotion of vigilance and cooperation in coastal and rural communities in the county with its aim et al to detect and prevent the importation of illegal drugs into local communities,

that Donegal County Council demand from the Minister of Justice and the Garda authorities an end to rural garda station closures and the immediate commitment to the restoration of local Garda community services in the county,

that Donegal County Council offer full assistance, advice and support to An Garda Síochána and related stakeholders to ensure the restoration, early location and delivery of new stations in the county,

that DCC contact and brief, Garda Estate Management, the OPW, Asst. Commissioner NW, recently appointed Chief Superintendent Goretti Sheridan and Superintendent Shaun Grant of the benefits of county towns having a consistent, accessible, and visible community garda presence and of the pressing desire and need for communities to see that this matter is urgently progressed."

**Economic Development**

15. Cllr Jack Murray

"That Donegal County Council calls on the Irish Government to work with the Stormont Assembly to reestablish the Derry to Dublin air link, in recognition of its potential to enhance local tourism, business, and to assist those travelling for medical reasons from the Northwest."

**Corporate**

16. Cllr Rena Donaghey

"That Donegal County Council write to the Department of Justice asking that a Garda Dog Unit be placed in Letterkenny to provide specialist support to Gardaí in the whole of the Northwest Region to try and combat the awful scourge of the use of illicit drugs in our communities". Dogs can do what no human or machine can do."

**Roads & Transportation**

17. Cllr Nicholas Crossan

"That this Council discuss the facilities and arrangements in place for the erection and maintenance of bus shelters in the county and that a report is provided on the number of bus shelters erected since the current contract was agreed in 2016."

### **Defective Concrete Blocks**

18. **Cllr Martin Mc Dermott**

"That this Council write to the Minister for Housing, Darragh O' Brien to ask him to review the ancillary grant application for the Defective Concrete Block Scheme that would allow families to be able to get the €15000 and then send invoices after the purchase as families do not have the money to spend first."

### ***Motion Deferred from January 2024***

19. **Cllr Gary Doherty**

"That Donegal County Council calls on the Minister for Social Protection to re-examine the qualifying criteria for Community Employment Schemes including:

- Reducing the qualifying period on a social welfare payment from 12 months to 6 months.
- Extending the maximum length on the Scheme from 3 years to 4 years.
- Increasing the minimum weekly payment for participants from €259.50 to €300."

20. Cathaoirleach's Business.

21. Chief Executive's Management Report.

## **QUESTIONS**

### **GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### ***Housing***

22. **Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty**

Concrete Products

Following confirmation from Laghey Roadstone that North Donegal is out of their reach to supply concrete mix due to limits on the product, can you advise those preparing to build a house what alternatives they have if they want to observe the Council guidelines to use Roadstone only for supply of this material in their own housing works/construction works?

23. **Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty**

Can you clarify if the Council was already aware that the option, of Laghey Roadstone was not available in North Donegal due to distance and time limits for pouring concrete mix in foundations?

#### ***Roads & Transportation***

24. **Cllr Micheál C Mac Giolla Easbuig**

De réir mar a thuigimse é, tá thart fá 150 cé agus cuan ar fud an chósta i nDún na nGall. Ba mhaith liomsa deimhniú a fháil faoi cá mhéad cé agus cuan acu seo a bhfuil teideal soiléir acu agus atá cláraithe in ainm Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall.

I understand that there are approximately 150 piers and harbours around the coast in County Donegal. I would like confirmation on how many of these piers and harbours have clear title and are registered in the name of Donegal County Council.

25. Cllr Micheál C Mac Giolla Easbuig

Cá mhéad úinéir talún ar scríobh CCDnG chucu ag iarraidh orthu taobh an bhealaigh mhóir a ghearradh le é a dhéanamh níos sábháilte, agus cá mhéad úinéir talún a bhfuil an obair seo curtha i gcrích acu ar iarratas ó CCDnG ón bhliain 2019?

An dtig liom briseadh síos a fháil de réir gach Ceantair Bhardais, le bhur dtoil?

How many landowners has Donegal County Council written to to get them to cut the side of the road to make it safer, and how many landowners have carried out this on request from Donegal County Council since 2019?  
Can I have the breakdown per MD please?

### **LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Corporate**

26. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

Can the Council do some publicity around the " Check the Register " as it is causing some confusion in that you can only check if you are already on the register, not add yourself using this application?

#### **Finance**

27. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

What steps do the Council take to buy Irish made products and support local contractors and their employees?

### **INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

#### **Finance**

28. Cllr Jack Murray

Following the unanimous resolution by Donegal County Council to maintain services in the towns which formerly had town councils, can the council advise what financial supports have been put in place to ensure services such as street sweeping, gardening services and others are maintained as they were prior to 2014?

#### **Corporate**

29. Cllr Albert Doherty

Register of Electors update and inclusivity.

Following the recent referendum and in response to the continued plan to update the Register of Electors,

- What pressing issues have the general public presented for the council staff attention on inclusivity, register update and general related issues

to be highlighted and addressed before the Referendum, Local and European elections in June 2024?

- How can all play an assistive and informative role in the interim?

30. Cllr Terry Crossan

Is there any update on the territorial and jurisdictional status of Lough Foyle?

**Housing**

31. Cllr Albert Doherty

Turnkey Acquisition Attendance & Response - Feb 2024

- How many developers attended the council Feb.2024 publicity/information evenings?
- What was the attendance at each meeting location?
- What commitments/expression of interests were conveyed /received by council since? (To date)?
- What responses, information concerns were indicated by developers regarding,
  - a) Land holdings available or required in municipal areas?
  - b) The council's recent and updated "Specification for Concrete Blocks?

32. **Motions from other Councils/Bodies**

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

I propose that Clare County Council request Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, to consider and implement a policy change that allows participants in Community Employment Schemes (CES), Rural Social Schemes (RSS), and Tus Programme to continue their valuable contributions until the age of 70. This extension would not only acknowledge the dedication and skills of these individuals but also contribute to the overall well-being of our community and enhance the sustainability of these programs. These programmes play a crucial role in fostering community development, providing essential services, and supporting those who may face challenges in securing traditional employment. Currently, participants in these valuable community-based employment programs are required to retire at the age of 66 and considering the changing demographics and the desire of individuals to remain actively engaged in work programmes, I am asking you to make this important change to allow participants the opportunity to continue to contribute to their local communities.

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

"Members agreed to write to the Minister for Finance, An Taoiseach, An Tánaiste and all Cork TDs to ask that the VAT rate for pubs should be reduced down from 23% to 17%. Members also agreed that this letter should be circulated to all Local Authorities."

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

"Recognising the significance of the fact that the Joint Policing Committee represents one of the few useful reforms of Local Government in 2014 this Council opposes the proposed legislation to abolish the JPCs and replace them with repackaged Local Community Safety Partnerships.



That this Motion be sent to all local authorities in the state, all JPCs in County Louth and that a copy be sent to the Minister for Justice for comment.”

#### SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“That this local authority calls on the government to take a serious stance and introduce effective laws to prosecute those who wilfully break the law on bicycles, electric bicycles and electric scooters. A copy of this motion to be sent to every local authority within the State.”

#### SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“To call on Sligo County Council to write to the Minister of Transport and Bus Éireann to add additional bus services from Dublin Airport to Sligo after 11.15p.m. at night for the people in this region as planes continue to come into Dublin airport right through the night.” It was further agreed to circulate this motion to all local authorities.

#### WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

“This Council notes that both the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste have suggested that Israel is committing war crimes in Gaza. Over 10,000 children have been killed in what Minister Simon Harris, has described as “a war on children”.

Leo Varadkar has stated that the failure of Israel to observe humanitarian law can't be inconsequential.”

War crimes also continue in the Occupied West Bank associated with settlements that are illegal under International Law. We note that hundreds of civilians have also been killed there (where Hamas doesn't exist), and a school funded by Irish money was demolished recently. As an Irish local authority, we acknowledge that we can no longer stand by as complacent witnesses to ongoing war crimes and constant breaches of International Law. There must be consequences and Ireland is best placed to lead the way, just as we did with Apartheid South Africa.

This council is requesting that Ireland should also exercise our right as a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to refer the actions in Palestine and Israel to the Prosecutor of the court for the purpose of requesting an investigation into any acts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide that have occurred in Gaza over recent months.

We further support the growing call to invoke the Genocide Convention.

That Wexford County Council re-echoes the call of Dublin Local Authorities in formally supporting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS) against apartheid Israel, as a peaceful campaign for change.

We therefore call for the enactment of the Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill 2018 and the Illegal Israeli Settlements Divestment Bill 2023 as a matter of urgency. We recommend that this motion be circulated to all local authorities.”

**MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 25TH MARCH, 2024 IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD**

**C/71/24      MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllrs M. Harley, Cathaoirleach, L. Blaney, K Bradley, C. Brogan, P. Canning, T. Conaghan, D. Coyle, G. Crawford, N. Crossan, T Crossan, A. Doherty, R. Donaghey, D.M Kelly, N Kennedy, M McBride, M Mc Clafferty, M McDermott, P. McGowan, J McGuinness, M. Mc Mahon, G. Mc Monagle, A Molloy, M Naughton, J S O' Fearraigh, B. Sweeny  
*Online:* Cllrs G Doherty, L Doherty, M Farren, N Jordan, J Kavanagh, J Murray, & J O'Donnell.

**C/72/24      OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

John G McLaughlin, Chief Executive, Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing & Corporate/Meetings Administrator, Bryan Cannon, Director of Roads & Transportation, Richard Gibson, Director of Finance, Liam Ward, Director of Community Development & Planning Services, Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services, Seamus Hopkins, A/Director of Water & Environment, Claire McCallan, A/Senior Executive Architect, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, Seán O' Daimhin, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Róise Ní Laifeartaigh, Rannóg na Gaeilge, William Colvin, Assistant Communications Officer, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

**C/73/24      CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 17<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY, 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Coyle the minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January, 2024 were adopted.

**C/74/24      CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY, 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr Sweeney, seconded by Cllr Bradley the minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, 2024 were adopted.

**C/75/24      CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY, 2024.**

On the proposal of Cllr Donaghey, seconded by Cllr McBride the minutes of the January Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January, 2024 were adopted.

**C/76/24      CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 21<sup>ST</sup> OF FEBRUARY, 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr McDermott, seconded by Cllr Kennedy the minutes of the Special Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February, 2024 were adopted.

C/77/24

**DISPOSAL OF LANDS AT BALLYMAGROARTY SCOTCH, BALLINTRA TO RAYMOND SCOTT**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Sweeney, seconded by Cllr McMahan, it was resolved to disposal of lands at Ballymagroarty Scotch, Ballintra to Raymond Scott in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/78/24

**EXTENSION OF LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TRUSTEES OF CULDAFF SPORTS COMMITTEE AND DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF LAND AT CULDAFF**

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

On the proposal of Cllr McGuinness, seconded by Cllr McDermott, it was resolved to extend the Lease Agreement between the Trustees of Culdaff Sports Committee and Donegal County Council in respect of land at Culdaff, in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

C/79/24

**DISPOSAL OF OFFICE SPACE AT THE FORMER BUNCRANA TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, ST ORAN'S ROAD, BUNCRANA TO DONEGAL DIGITAL INNOVATION CLG (DDIC)**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Donaghey, seconded by Cllr McGuinness, it was resolved to dispose of office space at the former Buncrana Town Council Offices, St. Oran's Road, Buncrana to Donegal Digital Innovation CLG (DDIC) in accordance with the provisions of Section 211 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, (as amended).

Cllr N Crossan queried as to when it was anticipated that staff from the former Town Council office would be able to move back into the building.

Mr Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that the Corporate Area Manager was looking at same and that an update would issue in due course.

Cllr Crossan expressed concern that the staff concerned were presently working in accommodation that did not have suitable access for many of those who wished to avail of the services, and that a quality service was not being provided. Cllr Murray concurred with this assessment and said that people in Buncrana, which was the second biggest town in the county needed proper access to council services.

C/80/24

**CARRYING OUT OF WORKS WITH REGARD TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF 60 NO. SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS AT LIFFORD COMMON, LIFFORD**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr McGowan, the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of 60 no. social housing units including all associated site development works at Lifford Common, Lifford was approved, in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/81/24

**CARRYING OUT OF WORKS WITH REGARD TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF 30 NO. SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS AT COIS ABHAINN, ST. JOHNSTON**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr McGowan, the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of 30 no. social housing units including all associated site development works at Cois Abhainn, St. Johnston was approved, in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/82/24

**TO APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST ACTIVE TRAVEL FACILITY ADJACENT TO THE L1006 CONVENT ROAD, LETTERKENNY**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McBride, the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of a pedestrian and cyclist active travel facility adjacent to the L1006 Convent Road, Letterkenny was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

Cllr Kelly said that in line with his previous request it was imperative that a pedestrian crossing was put in place at Kernan's shop.

C/83/24

**TO APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST ACTIVE TRAVEL FACILITY ADJACENT TO THE R229-1 KILMACRENNAN ROAD FROM THE HOSPITAL ROUNDABOUT TO KNOCKNAMONA IN LETTERKENY, CO. DONEGAL**

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

Cllr Brogan said that he believed more discussion was needed in relation

to this project as concerns had been raised by a number of people including the ambulance service regarding potential issues with traffic volumes in and around the Hospital Roundabout. It was important, he said, that a solution was found to address all of the concerns raised. Cllr Bradley concurred and said this was a vital piece of infrastructure and that cited the need to ensure that proper bus route was put in place. A number of the Letterkenny/Milford MD members were in agreement with this assessment and advised of the need to look again at traffic numbers and access for the emergency services.

Cllr Kavanagh asked that the Active Travel plans for the town in totality be made available to the members.

Cllr Mc Monagle noted that considerable effort had gone into the project to date and suggested that the Letterkenny/Milford members meet and discuss same prior to the end of the meeting.

The need for additional consultation was highlighted.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation, said that Active Travel options were vital for Letterkenny so that people could have alternative options and that there were implications for the main road users i.e. cars. He confirmed that the National Ambulance Service, the Fire Service and Letterkenny University Hospital had all been consulted and submissions sought. There had also been, he noted discussions with the other public sector facilities. By not approving the project, he said, there was a risk that the venture would fall. The 18<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> April was confirmed as the deadline period for approval.

On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Bradley, it was resolved to defer the matter to a future meeting of the Council.

The Cathaoirleach mindful of the timelines involved said that he would be happy to accommodate a Special Meeting of Council to consider same.

C/84/24

**CARRYING OUT OF WORKS WITH REGARD TO THE ERECTION OF A VEHICLE RESTRAINT SYSTEM (VRS) ABUTTING THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE R238 REGIONAL ROAD AT THREE TREES QUIGLEYS POINT**

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

On the proposal of Cllr T Crossan, seconded by Cllr A Doherty, the carrying out of works with regard to the erection of a Vehicle Restraint System (VRS) abutting the eastern side of the R238 Regional Road at Three Trees, Quigleys Point was approved in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

C/85/24 **TO APPROVE THE TWINNING OF THE LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT WITH SIMANCAS IN SPAIN**

On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr McGowan it was resolved in accordance with Section 75 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) to approve the twinning of the Lifford/Stranorlar Municipal District with Simancas in Spain.

C/86/24 **125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST LOCAL ELECTIONS**

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing Corporate & Cultural Services referenced the motion submitted by Cllr Kennedy at the January meeting and which was subsequently agreed to commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first local elections. He noted that members had an opportunity earlier in the morning to view the updated national exhibition detailing the history and development of local democracy in Ireland which had been set up in the foyer of the County House.

Cllr Kennedy thanked Judith Mc Carthy, Museum Curator and her team for organising the exhibition. It would be fitting she said for Donegal to join the national celebrations which were taking place later in the year.

C/87/24 **TO APPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2024 NON-NATIONAL ROADS BRIDGE STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Molloy seconded by Cllr Naughton it was resolved to approve the implementation of the 2024 Non-National Roads Bridge Strengthening Programme.

Cllr Mc Gowan expressed concern that a number of roads county-wide had not been included in the mapping. He alluded in particular to the road at the back of Drumkeen which had a dedicated bridge in situ. He proposed, seconded by Cllr Harley that this project which had been passed for design was not dropped from the schedule and that the matter be looked at again.

The Director of Roads & Transportation agreed to follow-up in relation to same.

Cllr Blaney queried why specific roads had been omitted.

Cllr Mc Mahon said that the Ballyshannon to Beleek Road at Clyhore was in need of immediate consideration given that there had been flooding issues all winter and into Spring. He asked that this be prioritised, and the issues addressed as a matter of urgency.

C/88/24 **TO APPROVE THE LOCAL ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)**

Cllr Kennedy welcomed the plan and said that the journey to produce same had been a good and productive one. She acknowledged the input of all involved and thanked Claire Mc Callan, for all her hard work.

Cllr Brogan noted that there had been a huge level of consultation and engagement across the board. He thanked all concerned for their efforts and outlined the need to incorporate the various elements of same into the new County Development Plan.

Members were appreciative of the level of detail in the plan and noted that there had been excellent collaboration with the Community, Social & Cultural SPC.

Cllr Mc Gowan advised of the need for a specific development plan for Ballybofey/Stranorlar with specific emphasis placed on cross-border community regeneration and collaboration. The plan itself, he contended, was a starting point and could be built on going forward by incorporating the various cross-border initiatives outlined.

On the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by Cllr Brogan the Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) was approved.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services thanked members for their co-operation and said that the plan was a comprehensive document based on results from a wide-ranging consultation process. He thanked Claire Mc Callan, A Senior Executive Architect and Paddy Doherty, Senior Executive Officer, Community Development together with the Economic Development team for their input. He acknowledged also the assistance of O' Neill Associates and Michael Heaney.

He said the next step was to approve the design and produce the plan with images and mapping and then proceed with the Irish translation. Details of the official launch would, he confirmed, be communicated at a later date.

Responding to the comments made by Cllr Mc Gowan, he said, that Donegal County Council were pushing for the development of a Metropolitan Spatial Plan for the Northwest region and the clear indication was that this venture would need to be funded and the appropriate resources made available as there was clear value in pursuing this type of development.

Concluding, he said that there was clear alignment between the LECP and the County Development Plan.

C/89/24

**THE DONEGAL LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023.**

Members noted the Donegal Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2023.

C/90/24

**TO APPROVE CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP OF THE DONEGAL LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

On the proposal of Cllr McGuinness, seconded by Cllr A Doherty, it was

resolved to approve the nomination of Mr Andrew Ward Inishowen Development Partnership as a representative on the Donegal Local Community Development Committee in accordance with Part 6 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and Section 128C 3(b) of the local Government Act 2001.

C/91/24

**IRRECOVERABLE RATES FOR 2023**

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

C/92/24

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> OF JANUARY, 2024**

Members noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, 2024.

C/93/24

**ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE, SEMINAR OR EVENT**

Having noted authorisation of representation at a seminar, meeting or event under Section 142 (5) of Local Government Act, 2001, S.I. No. 668 of 2006, Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations 2006, S.I. No. 37 of 2010, Guidelines given by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 142) Regulations 2010, and the Local Government (Expenses of Local Authority Members) Regulations, 2014 (as amended). On the proposal of Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr McGuinness, it was resolved to authorise any member, if he/she so wished, to attend the following conferences/ events, subject to the normal procedures:

- i. Individual members not exceeding their annual budget for attendance at conferences.
- ii. Payment of expenses for attendance to be conditional on the member furnishing documentary evidence of attendance.
- i. Submission of a Conference Report.

**Training**

- ALLG Annual Training Conference - "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Councillor in Irish Local Government & Local Elections 2024 to be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 in the Arklow Bay Hotel, Wicklow.
- ALLG Members Training Programme Module 2 - "Elected Members Local Election Preparation – A Briefing from the Electoral Commission" to be held in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, 2024.

**Conferences**

- "The Rise of Loneliness on the Emerald Isle" – Community Development & Planning Remedies to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in Hannon's Hotel, Roscommon.
- Local Government Tourism Conference – "Tourism – Leading the Change" to be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April and Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April in Killashee House Hotel, Naas, Co Kildare.



### Travel Abroad

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at an economic development event to be hosted by the Irish Consulate in Edinburgh on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024.
- Attendance of the CPMR representative at the General Assembly of the Atlantic Arc Commission in Sines, Portugal on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024.

C/94/24

### **CALL FOR THE PLANNING OBJECTION FEE TO BE RAISED TO A MAXIMUM OF €500**

Cllr McClafferty proposed, seconded by Cllr Kelly that the following motion be adopted:

*“I'm asking this Council to back my motion calling for the planning objection fee to be raised to a maximum of €500 at least to stop people objecting for no apparent reason.”*

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

Cllr Mc Clafferty said that he received numerous representations from people who had planning applications rejected on foot of objections from people outside the county. He said he believed the current fee for objecting was far too light and encouraged serial objectors. He said that he wanted nothing other than fairness for local people. It was sad, he said that people from outside the county can object to development in Donegal.

Cllr Kelly said that people from as far away as Cork were objecting to permissions for slatted sheds and other agricultural developments and that this was uncalled for. He said that the process needed to be tightened up to prevent this happening.

Cllr Kennedy said that she could not agree with the motion as she believed it was premature and that the suggested increase would have a detrimental impact on small community groups. A €500 fee was, she contended, a significant amount for small community groups but insignificant for the larger multinational companies.

She proposed that Cllr Mc Clafferty amend or defer the motion pending further clarification and direction at national level. This was seconded by Cllr Mc Monagle who said that he could appreciate the frustration that existed, but that local communities needed to retain the right to object to developments that would damage and constrain everyday life in their communities.

A number of members outlined the need for a balanced approach going forward and suggested that the motion be amended, and a compromise agreed in terms of the wording as it was important that the right message went out to the public.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that the amendment of planning fees was a matter for the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, and that with the ongoing wider review of the planning acts there would most likely be a significant review of planning fees.

A lengthy debate ensued after which the Cathaoirleach asked Cllr Mc Clafferty to consider amending the wording and writing a note to the minister with regards to the amendment of the fee. The other option, he said, was to take a vote on the matter.

Cllr Mc Clafferty contended however that he wanted the motion to go forward as originally proposed.

Cllr Mc Dermott suggested that no specific fee be mentioned and that the Minister be asked to review the fee in light of the issues raised.

After further consideration and on foot of a suggestion by Cllr Crawford the following motion was unanimously agreed.

*"That we write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage asking him to take into account the problems being experienced by applicants in relation to planning objections and in particular difficulties arising from objections by serial objectors". It was further agreed to forward same to An Bord Pleanála for their attention.*

C/95/24

#### **PRESENTATION FROM THE IRISH FARMERS ASSOCIATION**

The Cathaoirleach informed members that he wished to suspend Standing Orders and accept a delegation from the Irish Farmers Association who wanted to update the Council on the anger and frustration among the farming community with regard to the ever-increasing administrative burden being placed on farmers and the subsequent impact on farming incomes. This was duly proposed by Cllr Blaney and seconded by Cllr Donaghey.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr Joe Sweeney, Chairman of the IFA in Donegal, Mr Frank Brady, Ulster North Leinster Chairman and Mr Adrian Gallagher the National IFA Sheep Committee Chairman.

Mr Joe Sweeney addressing members advised that the following were some of the key issues impacting on the farming community and as such were generating growing anger and frustration with the political system. These included,

- Transformation of CAP away from supporting food production towards actually reducing farm output.
- Failure of the EU to properly compensate farmers under CAP and that farmers are being to do a lot more to receive a lot less funding.
- The proposed Mercusor Trade deal has the capacity to devastate the Irish beef sector.

- The fact that the EU have a policy of devising overly complicated farm schemes thus creating a bureaucratic burden for the Department of Agriculture thus contributing to widespread delays in payments.
- There has been a complete systems failure on farm investment grant aid (TAMS) scheme.
- Agri Consultants finding it increasingly difficult to administer farm schemes.
- Reductions to the Nitrates derogation from 250kg organic Nitrate to 220 organic Nitrate has been imposed by the European Commission with no element of flexibility.
- Nature Restoration Law places further restrictions on farmers, particularly on designated lands with no compensation.
- The current revised industrial emissions directive proposal excludes bovines but will require a huge amount of additional pig and poultry farmers to acquire an EPA license. The EU approach to classify farms under an industrial directive show a clear lack of regard for farming.
- Tillage farmers have been struggling to meet the “3 Crop Rule” due to the autumn weather conditions and an immediate support package is needed for tillage farmers in the 2024 growing season.
- Agriculture emissions are not being measured fairly and need to be reflective of Irish conditions.
- Poor management of Irelands forestry policy with only 1650 ha planted for forestry in 2023.

Mr Sweeney informed the meeting that there were several issues that impacted on the farming community at local government level, namely,

- Delays in the planning process which is hindering on-farm investment.
- Residential Zoned Land Tax is an unfair tax on farmers with land on the outskirts of towns and villages. Advised of the need to ensure that all genuinely farmed land is made exempt.
- Clear protocol needs to be put in place regarding farm inspections. Outlined the need for a dedicated code of practice.
- Councils need to have a strategy for the removal of trees suffering from ash dieback on rural roads.
- Lack of dog wardens to deal with dog attacks on sheep.
- Proposed increase on water charges will place an unfair burden on farmers.

Mr Adrian Gallagher alluding to the sheep farming industry said that the 2021 campaign with regard to keeping dogs away from farmland and livestock had been quite successful, but the fact was that there were still a considerable number of sheep being killed by dogs. The Minister had intervened at a point, he noted, and promised 30 additional dog warden positions.

Donegal, he added, was a big sheep county and urgently needed two more wardens at least. All dogs, he said, should be registered and microchipped and to do same would, he contended be self-financing in the long-term.

Continuing, he advised of the fact that there had been zero value for wool in the last five years and that the current price being offered was 5c per kilo. He urged the Council to look at the situation in Scotland whereby all new local authority builds were obliged to use wool insulation. This use, he said would benefit all concerned and prevent wool from ending up in landfill.

Mr Frank Brady updated members on the importance of agriculture in Donegal and the fact that it contributed in the region of €900m to the local economy. The county, he noted had a total of circa 813,000 acres of agriculture land which was predominately grassland. The agriculture sector, he advised directly and indirectly employed in the region of 15,600 with 20% of the population in Donegal employed in the sector. It was he added the most important industry in the county. Food prices, he said, were escalating and there was a scarcity of food in the pipeline due to over regulation.

Irish farmers, he stated produced the cleanest carbon friendly food in the world and farming was the most important industry that this country has.

Cllr Blaney welcomed the informative presentation and alluded to the fact that there had been delays with the ACRES Scheme. This, he contended, had been due to the fact that all applicants had been taken on board and not just the initial tranche of applicants. Delays in payment were directly related to the fact that all applicants had been taken on board.

He acknowledged that there were delays in the planning process and that this was due in part to issues with serial objectors.

In relation to the increasing number of inspections on farms, he said that it had been agreed that the Environment Section would give a presentation at the next Agricultural Committee meeting. There was a clear protocol, he noted, and this could be worked on as all farming organisations were represented on the Agriculture Committee.

He said that he was in agreement that all dogs should be microchipped.

Thanking the IFA members for their presentation, he said that he looked forward to working with them under the auspices of the Agriculture Committee and had no issue in supporting the resolution put forward in the presentation.

Cllr Mc Guinness acknowledged that the Agricultural Committee was an excellent platform and provided for effective representation from the farming community. He commended all concerned for the presentation but

noted that it was beyond the Council's capability to effect change in a number of the issues outlined. He was, he said, supportive of an index linked payments system for farmers.

The Mercursor Deal, he contended, did not really effect any great change as it simply exported the carbon footprint to another part of the world.

The Acres Scheme, he said, had to be welcomed, and given the level of uptake it was important that all teething problems were ironed out. It was acknowledged, he said, that there were bureaucratic aspects to all the individual farming schemes.

Cllr Mc Guinness highlighted the fact that Irish farmers had not been afforded a proper method for calculating the number of carbon units were sequestered from the environment.

He outlined the need for a carbon market which would allow farmers to trade carbon credits and be adequately rewarded.

The local authority, he advised, had little impact in terms of the Residential Zoned Land Tax but would continue to make representations on the issues concerned.

He advised of the need for defined pay dates for the farming community and greater co-operation from the lending authorities in relation to cash flow issues.

It was noted that the Irish National Sheepdog trials would be held in Clonmany from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2024 and congratulations was extended to all involved.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the Sinn Féin grouping shared a lot of the concerns that had been raised and were supportive of the "Enough is Enough Campaign". Claire Kerrane the Sinn Fein spokesperson on Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, he advised, had been particularly vocal in relation to the promotion and marketing of Irish Wool products.

He said he was supportive of the comments in relation to the dog wardens.

Sinn Fein representatives had raised issues and concern at every level, he added, in relation to the Mercursor trade deal.

Water charges, he said, were outside of the Council's remit and the responsibility of Uisce Eireann.

Claire Kerrane, he said had been in contact with the Minister for Agriculture regarding an action plan for dealing with ash dieback. There was a need also for a dedicated forestry policy, he added, as many of these had been left barren with no follow-up replanting.

Sinn Fein, he said would continue to raise and lobby on the various issues highlighted in the presentation.

Cllr N Crossan said that Irish farmers produced the best beef in the world, and this needed to be protected. In relation to the production of wool and the poor prices at present, he called for the use of wool as natural insulation fibre to be looked into and utilised. Farmers are the backbone of the county, he added, and there needed to be due recognition of the numbers employed in the industry.

The RZLT was one of the biggest issues at the minute, he said and alluded to the fact that once land was built on it was gone for ever. It was unfair, he said, to ask farmers on the outskirts of towns to give over their land. He encouraged all concerned to keep an eye on developments as it was effectively theft by default.

Farmers, he contended, needed to be protected as retailers, supermarkets etc will control the price of food.

The independent grouping, he said, were supportive of the issues raised.

Cllr Mc Clafferty supported the call for additional dog wardens and effective regulation of the number of dogs in the county.

The Council and the IFA, he said, needed to be united on the whole issue of rural housing and access issues onto the N56. It was important, he added, that civil servants in Dublin were made aware of the impact of the various planning policies in rural counties such as Donegal. Serial objectors, he contended, created havoc for rural communities and something needed to be done to alleviate the situation.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services agreed to follow up in relation to the additional dog warden posts alluded to in the presentation.

On the proposal of Cllr Blaney, second by Cllr it was resolved to approve the following resolution:

*“Donegal County Council supports the IFA ‘enough is enough’ campaign. The Council recognises the significant contribution that farming, and the Agri-sector makes to the Irish and local economy. The Council acknowledges the income challenge on Irish farmers arising from the significant increases in the cost of doing business, regulatory costs and cuts in Basic Income support for farmers. The Council calls on the Government to introduce no further regulations on farmers or any measures that may increase costs on farms without full negotiation and agreement with the Irish Farmers Association (IFA). The Council calls on the European Union and the Irish Government to provide additional stand-alone funding, separate to the Common Agricultural*

*Policy (CAP), to support farmers to undertake climate and biodiversity measures”.*

Mr Frank Brady said that the IFA had great respect for the Minister for Agriculture, but wanted to highlight the fact that delays in payments were impacting farming families on a daily basis.

Concluding the presentation, he noted, that there were now over 6000 additional people in Donegal and that often farmers were blamed for environmental issues when in fact sewerage/water systems did not have the capacity to deal with the increased numbers.

The organisation, he said, had no problem with a tax on land that had planning permission, but the issue was that there should be no tax for farmers who wanted to farm the land that they owned.

Ash dieback, he advised, needed to be addressed otherwise there would be serious implications for road users.

Farmers, he contended, were the solution and not the problem. A major problem, he said at present was the fact that many of the policies advocated by the Green Party were not in the best interests of rural Ireland.

He thanked members for their attention and observations.

C/96/24

**ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING**

It was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting until 2.15pm.

C/97/24

**PRESENTATION FROM THE IRISH NATURA AND HILL FARMERS ASSOCIATION**

Members welcomed Mr Vincent Roddy, President of the Irish Natura Hill Farmers Association and Mr Pheilim Molloy, INHFA Donegal Representative.

Mr Vincent Roddy outlined the fact that 14% of the Irish countryside had specific SAC, SPA and NHA designations impacting significantly on western seaboard counties. There was, he said currently no direct payment for the burden of designations as they were part of the CAP conditionality. The ECJ ruling IN May 2023 had, he advised cast major doubt over the legality of SAC designations. He proceeded to update members on the impact of current designations and the fact that they were giving some people and NGOs the opportunity to object to any development.

He provided an overview of the background to the Nature Restoration Law developed from a recommendation in the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The law, he contended, would provide for legally binding restoration targets to restore ecosystems especially those contributing most to the capture and storage of carbon.

In Ireland the areas targeted, would, he confirmed, be predominately peatlands, blanket bogs on hills, raised bogs, cut-away bogs and drained farmed peatlands together with sandy banks and machair grasslands. The Nature Restoration Law, he noted was a permanent law and not a voluntary farm scheme. It would, he advised impact rural areas and be a consideration for County Development Plans.

Alluding to the current position, he confirmed that the law had been passed by the EU Parliament on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February and would become law when signed off by the Council of Ministers. Member States would then, he confirmed, be required to develop their own national plan. The restoration and re-establishment of Annex 1 Habitats was one of the most significant elements, he noted, and that under this law there was a requirement to improve to good condition those habitat areas and also to put in place restoration measures for the re-establishment of areas. It was acknowledged that concessions had been made on the targeted area for rewetting but that it was possible to achieve all of the original targets and more under Article 4.

He advised that the Nature Restoration Law would impact farming activity under a number of headings namely,

- On our hills which are predominately peat based, the restoration of these areas to favourable status will take precedence over farming.
- There will be a reduction in farming activity and the removal of some or all livestock to facilitate rewilding.
- In lowland areas the re-establishment of these habitat areas will impact on existing farming activity and force rewetting.
- Significant impact on CAP payments and the areas concerned will be recognised as habitat areas not agricultural.
- Farmers will have their CAP subsidies pulled if they do not implement the law yet the designation will ultimately ensure that the lands will not be eligible for CAP subsidies thus creating a catch-22 situation.
- Major implications for food produced by Irish farmers as non EU countries will be able to undermine food produced on our hills based on the premises that they are produced on a damaged ecosystem.
- Will have an impact for County Development Plans, and planning applications emanating from Annex 1 habitats.
- There will be a direct cost associated with restoring and re-establishing habitats with no recompense to farmers and landowners for lost income.
- No specific funding option or budget agreed to assist farmers replace income lost from current farming activity.

Mr Pheilim Molloy, following on from the presentation drew attention to the details of a motion circulated to members for consideration and said that the INHFA were now appealing to members for their support.



There had been, he said, a clear lack of consultation on the matter and the issue warranted more public scrutiny. The EU Council of Ministers, he advised, had failed to reach a consensus on the matter and it did not augur well when the EU was clearly circumventing procedure. Three committees of the EU, he stated, could not agree on the composition of the law and this clearly indicated that there were issues with the legislation.

The vast majority of farming land in Donegal would, he advised, fall into the category of areas of natural constraint and as a result generates considerable income for the county. Taking this type of land out of use would, he confirmed, put a greater burden on food production and lead to more intensification.

From an environmental perspective, he noted that Donegal had over 60 different types of habitat that benefitted from current farming practices on these type of lands. Concern was expressed that there was no socio-economic impact assessment carried out in relation to the issue.

The four replacement options outlined, he affirmed, were not suitable for Donegal and it was not normal farming options that had caused the problem. Forestry and clearance had been a huge issue, he said and land which had been farmed naturally was being targeted the most.

This law, he added, would be far more restrictive in terms of its operation thus creating major problems for flood relief works.

Cllr Blaney said that he agreed with a lot of what had been said but that it was the Irish EU representatives that would be making the decisions. He said that it was his belief that it was hill ground that was not in use that would be looked at first and that this is what would cover the majority of the designation. He said that more clarity was needed as to what role the Irish Government actually had.

Cllr Sweeney said that there were a lot of unknowns and that it was something that the relevant SPCs could debate further or possibly that the new Biodiversity Officer could may want to get involved in. He suggested that there might be opportunities going forward in terms of farm diversification.

Cllr Mc Monagle said it was clear that Europe had an impact in terms of new legislation and regulations. He noted that Ireland had only a small number of MEPs and this was not helpful to the situation. He said that he could accept much of what had been discussed but noted the need for farmers to be on board in terms of dealing with climate change. He said that the Sinn Fein grouping were supportive of the motion and queried if the INHFA wanted to put additional wording to the motion around the protection of their livelihood and lands.

Cllr N Crossan acknowledged that the EU had an overarching control on regulations and that local authorities had very little impact. He was, he said, appreciative of the presentation and noted that the farming organisation had little or no input to the Nature Restoration Law in the first instance. He said it was a good idea for the Council to call on the government to reject the proposals and that the adoption of the motion would provide an opportunity to update party members on all sides as to the frustration and confusion at ground level.

Mr Roddy responding said that there was general confusion as to what the options were and to individual interpretations which would come into play when assistance would be required from Brussels. There was still time, he said, to have this kicked out and to show that Minister Ryan did not speak for all elements of society in Ireland. In terms of climate change, he accepted the points raised by members, but said that consideration needed to be given to the fact that once you try to stop the level of carbon emission from peatlands by bringing the water table to the surface methane takes off. The Nature Restoration Law, he said was rushed and did not recognise new scientific updates as they relate to the Irish situation.

Mr Molloy said that many of the alternative options outlined were not practical in this country and had not been properly thought out. There was little or no room, he advised for diversification on mountainous farmland, and it was simply either cattle or sheep. The INHFA were, he said, were prepared to be part of the process leading to a nature restoration law but that up until now their input had been ignored.

It was thus unanimously agreed to adopt the following motion:

*“Donegal County Council call on the Irish government to reject the Proposed Nature Restoration Law in its current form due to the very serious impact that the law will have on farming and associated economic activity within the county”.*

It was further agreed to circulate a copy of same to the MEPs in the Midlands Northwest Constituency.

C/98/24

### **CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS**

#### *Votes of Sympathy*

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Neil Farren, Housing & Corporate, Inishowen MD on the death of his father, Neil Farren.
- Tommy Doherty, Roads, Stranorlar on the death of his mother, Mary Doherty.
- James Curran, Road Design on the death of his father, Jim Curran.
- Jack Mc Ginley, Library Service on the death of his mother, Frances Mc Ginley.

- Katriona Patton, Finance on the death of her mother, Margaret Patton.
- Noel Patton, Housing on the death of his mother, Margaret Patton.
- Anne Mc Elchar, Chief Executive's Office on the death of her father Edwin Patton.
- Martina Tuffy, Corporate Services on the death of her father, John Prunty.
- Eunan Kelly former Area Manager Housing & Corporate and Jenny Kelly, former Planner on the death of their daughter, Lorna.
- The family of the late Vincent Sherry.

#### *Visit by Minister Jack Chambers*

Members were informed that Minister Jack Chambers Minister of State at the Department of Transport and at the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications would be visiting the county on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> of April to open a number of Active Travel and Greenway projects. *US Trip March 2024.*

#### *St Patrick's Day Events in the USA*

The Cathaoirleach updated members in relation to the events and meetings that he had attended during his visit to the USA for the 2024 St Patrick's Day celebrations.

He said that he was very grateful for the opportunity to meet with the members of the Donegal Diaspora in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. It was vital, he said, that connections were maintained and nurtured as these vibrant communities offered many possibilities in terms of fostering economic and business links both now and in the future.

There was also, he added, the necessity of ensuring that these communities are kept updated and included in developments within the county. It was a privilege he said, to see at first hand the work carried out by the various Donegal associations and highlighted the importance of maintaining and enhancing these links going forward.

The plight of the undocumented was still a pressing issue, he said, and pressure needed to be maintained to ensure that this sorted once and for all.

He thanked the members of the various Donegal associations for their hospitality and co-operation.

C/99/24

#### **TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO DISTRIBUTE COUNCIL OWN FUNDING AND RESOURCES TO ALL TOWNS AND VILLAGE ACROSS THE COUNTY PRIOR TO THE NEXT COUNCIL BUDGET IN OCT/NOV. 2024**

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

*"That this Council agree to develop a plan to distribute Council own funding and resources to all towns and villages across the county prior to*

*the next Council Budget in October/November 2024. An agreement similar to 2014 when the then Council agreed to support former Town Councils from a sudden loss in revenue and agreed to top sliced supports in order to lessen the impact on them as they no longer had Town Council status. This agreement by all members saw the former Town Councils continue to grow and benefit from that decision. A new agreement would ensure balance in the way all local towns and villages are supported based on their size so that even the smallest towns & villages receive some main-stream county- wide resources.”*

He received a response from the Director of Finance in relation to the above.

Cllr Mc Gowan said that he had discussed the matter with the Director of Finance and welcomed the response provided. A new Council, he said could look at the options for maximising resources thus ensuring balanced development county-wide.

Towns such as Ballybofey/Stranorlar, he noted, relied on voluntary groups and committees which carried out great work. There was, he advised considerable bureaucracy involved in maintaining these committees and often people were put off by the level of accountability involved. For this reason, he said a dedicated funding initiative was required and there was he added a certain amount of discretion within the Council's own funding resources. It was, he contended, about having an equal level of service county-wide. Alluding to the response and the fact that good budget management required resources to be allocated based on need, equity and achieving strategic objectives, he called for funding options to be reviewed by the incoming Council as part of the 2025 budget preparations.

Cllr Brogan supporting the motion said that the abolishment of the Town Councils had been a backward step. It was imperative, he added, that the Municipal District budgetary process was looked at again and additional funding options provided at MD level together with increased powers and resources. He called on the executive to look again at the financial model in place and assess the options for improvement.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance stated that the annual revenue budget was drafted with the objective of protecting and where possible enhancing and improving services and based on need, equity and with the aim of achieving strategic objectives. Further discussion on a different model could, he advised, be discussed by the CPG.

Cllr Mc Gowan said it was important that no one was left behind, and that fair distribution and service delivery should be the strategic objective county-wide.

C/100/24

**THAT THE MINISTER MAKES AVAILABLE ADEQUATE RESOURCES FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF RURAL GARDA STATIONS**

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

*"That the Minister makes available adequate resources to reinstate the status of rural Garda stations, especially those that are in border areas with increasing populations and subject to the impact of urban encroachment."*

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

Cllr Crossan alluded to the large number of rural stations that had closed in recent times, and the ongoing lack of resources to An Garda Síochána. Increased population numbers and urban sprawl together with the development of huge housing developments, he noted, had brought a range of social problems. There was, he said, a clear increase in drug activity and drug related criminality. He welcomed the update provided at the recent Joint Policing Committee meeting on drug activity and the associated impact. Congratulations was also extended to the three new Garda recruits from Inishowen who had recently passed out.

Cllr A Doherty acknowledged the fact that updates in relation to Garda resources and the status of rural Garda Stations were discussed regularly by the JPC. It was important, he added, that adequate resources were put in place given our proximity to the border.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development and Planning Services said that a copy of the motion would be forwarded to the Minister for Justice. He alluded to the fact that the JPC was a useful forum for raising concerns and that these were conveyed through this mechanism to the Chief Superintendent of the Donegal Division.

Cllr Crossan welcomed the response and noted that it had been confirmed at the last JPC meeting that extra resources were to be allocated to Donegal.

C/101/24

**COASTAL WATCH**

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

*"That Donegal County Council welcome "Coastal Watch" and support the Garda Síochána especially with the revitalisation, relaunch and promotion of vigilance and cooperation in coastal and rural communities in the county with its aim et al to detect and prevent the importation of illegal drugs into local communities,*

*that Donegal County Council demand from the Minister of Justice and the Garda authorities an end to rural garda station closures and the immediate commitment to the restoration of local Garda community services in the county,*

*that Donegal County Council offer full assistance, advice and support to An Garda Síochána and related stakeholders to ensure the restoration, early location and delivery of new stations in the county,*

*that DCC contact and brief, Garda Estate Management, the OPW, Asst. Commissioner NW, recently appointed Chief Superintendent Goretti Sheridan and Superintendent Shaun Grant of the benefits of county towns having a consistent, accessible, and visible community garda presence and of the pressing desire and need for communities to see that this matter is urgently progressed.”*

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

Cllr Doherty welcomed the introduction of “Coastal Watch” and said that a response was now needed from Government in relation to rural policing.

He cited the example of Carndonagh and the fact that station there had been deemed unfit for purpose back in 2018, yet there was still no sign of a new station being prioritised. Gardai, he contended, needed to be more active in rural communities and if that meant reopening stations then that should happen. It was imperative, he said, that security was improved in rural areas. He called for the motion to be circulated to the Minister for Justice, Helen Mc Entee, TD, the Minister for the Office of Public Works, Mr Patrick O’ Donovan, T.D and the office of An Taoiseach.

Cllr Crossan noted that the “Coastal Watch” Programme had been a great success and urged the public to keep an eye out for any unusual activity.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development and Planning Services said that the motion would be forwarded to the relevant ministers as requested. It was confirmed that the issues raised would be followed up through the County Donegal Joint Policing Committee.

Cllr Doherty asked that a prompt reply be sought from all concerned and that reference be made in particular to North Inishowen, Carndonagh and in respect of other rural stations in the county.

The Cathaoirleach advised that he had to leave the meeting and that the chair was taken by the Leas-Cathaoirleach for the remainder of the meeting.

C/102/24

**THAT DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL CALLS ON THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TO WORK WITH THE STORMONT ASSEMBLY TO RE-ESTABLISH THE DERRY TO DUBLIN AIR LINK**

On the proposal of Cllr Murray, seconded by Cllr McMonagle it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That Donegal County Council calls on the Irish Government to work with the Stormont Assembly to reestablish the Derry to Dublin air link, in recognition of its potential to enhance local tourism, business, and to assist those travelling for medical reasons from the Northwest."*

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

Cllr Murray cited the importance of the Derry to Dublin link given that Donegal lacked major road and rail links. This route which had operated in the past, had, he said, been of major benefit to the Northwest. He noted Conor Murphy, MLA, Minister for Economy was supportive of the Derry to Dublin PSO and cited the benefit of same for those travelling for medical needs or tourism purposes.

Cllr Mc Monagle said the motion was timely and it was important that all aspects of connectivity were utilised and availed of.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that the motion was timely given that PSOs were due to be renewed again for 2026. He noted that the reestablishment of flights from City of Derry Airport to Dublin would be of major benefit in enhancing accessibility to Donegal.

Cllr Murray welcomed the response and said it was heartening that all were on the same wavelength.

C/103/24

**PLACEMENT OF A GARDA DOG UNIT IN LETTERKENNY**

On the proposal of Cllr Donaghey, seconded by Cllr Kelly it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That Donegal County Council write to the Department of Justice asking that a Garda Dog Unit be placed in Letterkenny to provide specialist support to Gardaí in the whole of the Northwest Region to try and combat the awful scourge of the use of illicit drugs in our communities". Dogs can do what no human or machine can do."*

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

Cllr Donaghey said that the menace of drugs was one of the biggest scourges on society at present and was prevalent in every town and village in Ireland. The situation, she contended, had spiralled out of control, and was causing havoc for families all across the county. The full rigour of the law needed to be applied, she contended, as unscrupulous drug dealers were making a lot of money out of the misfortune of others. She alluded also to the burden that drug addiction placed on medical and social services. She said that as far as she was aware there was no dog unit above the Galway/Dublin line. The "Coast Watch initiative, she said, was to be welcomed and commended the efforts of the Gardaí to date who often had to work with inadequate resources.

Cllr Kelly supporting the motion said that the problem was widespread and that the supply and availability of drugs across the county was staggering. A dog unit, he stated, would be most beneficial and he alluded also to the fact that vaping had become a massive issue and young people were buying vapes with cannabis oil in them.

There was no opposition to the motion.

The Leas-Cathaoirleach said that the issue had come up a number of time at the JPC meetings and that it had been confirmed that a unit would be set up in Donegal.

Cllr Donaghey welcomed this development and said it would be a step in the right direction.

C/104/24

**DISCUSS THE FACILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS IN PLACE FOR THE ERECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF BUS SHELTERS IN THE COUNTY**

On the proposal of Cllr N Crossan, seconded by Cllr Kennedy it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*"That this Council discuss the facilities and arrangements in place for the erection and maintenance of bus shelters in the county and that a report is provided on the number of bus shelters erected since the current contract was agreed in 2016."*

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

Cllr Crossan said that he was anxious to know how many bus shelters had been erected in the county. He noted that 6 shelters had been provided in Inishowen and that these had been provided by a local private company who had an additional ten in stock.

People all over the county were standing in the rain waiting on public transport, he added, and thus queried how many shelters JCDecaux had erected in Donegal from 2016 until 2024.



Cllr Kennedy alluded to the situation in Bruckless and the difficulties encountered there, when the request for a bus shelter was made. She said that many people used buses including children and the elderly and it was unfair to leave them standing on the side of the road.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation advised that the National Transport Authority were responsible for the funding and maintenance of bus shelters and bus stops nationwide. He said that a trial had been undertaken in the Inishowen MD over the past few years that resulted in the erection of a number of bus shelters at various locations.

As part of the trial, he confirmed, the Council undertook the civil works and procured the electrical connection at their own expense with a private entity providing the bus shelters.

It was not possible, he added, to confirm the number of shelters that JCDecaux had erected but that the question could be asked.

Cllr Crossan said it was imperative that there was consistency in the approach taken and asked again how many shelters had been erected in Donegal over the last ten years.

The Director of Service advised that the answer could not be provided today as the Council were not responsible for the erection of bus shelters or bus stops.

Cllr Crossan expressed disappointment with the reply and said that it was a shame that people had to stand in the rain when there was a company in Inishowen willing to supply bus shelters.

C/105/24

#### **DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS**

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

*"That this Council write to the Minister for Housing, Darragh O' Brien to ask him to review the ancillary grant application for the Defective Concrete Block Scheme that would allow families to be able to get the €15000 and then send invoices after the purchase as families do not have the money to spend first."*

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

Cllr Mc Dermott said that a number of elderly people in the last few months were having difficulty in getting financing to cover the cost of a mobile home etc and this was causing great anguish. There was an anomaly also in that there was no provision for a refund if the mobile home etc was bought by a son/daughter or other family member. They did not, he advised, have the money at the outset to pay out without access to

the ancillary funding. He said that the Council had a role to play and a responsibility also to ensure that problems such as these were overcome.

He alluded to the fact that there was a certain element of control in that a final payment could not issue until all documentation was submitted. It was, he said, within the Council's control to allow people in this predicament access to funding. He asked that some form of resolution be found.

Cllr Canning supporting the motion said that the motion was self-explanatory and asked if the €15k ancillary payment could be frontloaded as companies were looking for money up front.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that it would be possible to engage with the Department as to how it might be practical to implement same.

Cllr Mc Dermott said that it needed to be made clear to the Department that the Council were willing to facilitate payment in advance to homeowners in this predicament.

C/106/24

**MOTION DEFERRED FROM JANUARY 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr G Doherty, seconded by Cllr Murray it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

*“That Donegal County Council calls on the Minister for Social Protection to re-examine the qualifying criteria for Community Employment Schemes including:*

- *Reducing the qualifying period on a social welfare payment from 12 months to 6 months.*
- *Extending the maximum length on the Scheme from 3 years to 4 years.*
- *Increasing the minimum weekly payment for participants from €259.50 to €300.”*

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

Cllr Doherty said that as a local representative he was well aware of the work that people in community employment schemes carried out. Their contribution was invaluable, he contended, to a range of community projects and community organisations. There was a need, he added, to highlight the inefficiencies in the scheme and for the qualifying criteria to be amended as outlined above.

Cllr Murray outlined his support and said that it was essential that the Minister looked again at the qualifying criteria.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was agreed that a copy of the motion would be circulated to the Minister for Social Protection.

C/107/24

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above and noted the following items:

### **1. Community Development & Planning Services**

- A. Community Development
  - (i) *Local Economic & Community Plan: LECP 2023-2029*
  - (ii) *Community Recognition Fund 2024*
- B. Planning Services
  - (i) *e-Planning*
  - (ii) *Planning Policy*
  - (iii) *Projects funded under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund 2024*
- C. Urban & Rural Regeneration & Development
  - (i) *Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF)*
  - (ii) *RRDF – Fifth Call for Category 1 Applications*
  - (iii) *Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF)*
  - (iv) *Croi Conaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Scheme*
  - (v) *Compulsory Purchase Order Activation Fund / Survey of Vacant Properties*
  - (vi) *Capital Projects Delivery Unit*
- D. Ukrainian & International Protection Accommodation & Integration Unit
  - (i) *Commercial Accommodation*
  - (ii) *Offer a Home*
  - (iii) *Community Integration Forum*

### **2. Water and Environment**

- A. Climate Action
  - (i) *Adoption of the Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029*
  - (ii) *Community Climate Action Fund*
  - (iii) *Sustainable Energy Communities Programme – Financing for Energy Master Plans*
  - (iv) *Climate Heroes Community Challenge 15<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024*
  - (v) *Meeting of Energy Performance Officers*
- B. Waste & Litter Management
  - (i) *Big Donegal Clean-up Campaign 2024*
  - (ii) *The Stop Food Waste Challenge*

C. Central Laboratory

- (i) *Water Quality – Agriculture*
- (ii) *Septic Tanks – National Inspection Plan*
- (iii) *Deco Paints Regulations*

**3. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services**

A. Housing Capital

- (i) *Housing for All*
- (ii) *Land Acquisition*
- (iii) *Social Housing through Turnkey Acquisition*

B. *Housing Municipal Districts*

- (i) *Affordable Housing Scheme*

C. *Cultural Services*

- (i) *Creative Ireland*
- (ii) *Regional Cultural Centre*
- (iii) *County Donegal Heritage Office*

**4. Economic Development, I.S. & Emergency Services**

A. Fire Service

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

B. Information Systems

- (i) *Defective Concrete Blocks*
- (ii) *National Broadband Plan*

**5. Finance**

- A. Grant Aid for Businesses – Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) Grant

**6. Roads & Transportation**

A. Roads Areas

B. Central Technical Services

The Chief Executive said that he would respond directly if there were any queries in relation to the report.

Cllr Mc Gowan expressed concern that there was an issue with regard to the checking and repair of fire hydrants and that the Fire Service had indicated that they were not responsible. This was a matter of life and death, he added, and said that it needed to be sorted as a matter of urgency.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services responding to the query from Cllr Mc Gowan in

relation to recent events in Castlefin said that there were issues with the water mains which was the responsibility of Uisce Éireann, and that problems with the electricity supply had escalated the situation. He said that Uisce Éireann was the utility for water services and that the Council was no longer responsible for any aspect of same.

There was, he advised, a structured system in place with Uisce Éireann and the Council was unable to force or give specific timelines and therefore could not go beyond its legal responsibilities.

Cllr Sweeny asked how the Community Recognition fund would be apportioned and if it would be shared out in recognition of those MDs that had more new arrivals. He was informed that previously the proposal had been brought to the LCDC and expressions of interest sought, which were then evaluated by an evaluation committee using a stated set of criteria.

The Director of Roads & Transportation in response to a query on road signage from Cllr O' Fearraigh said that he would on receipt of the specific data work through the issues with the MD teams.

Cllr Kennedy asked that representation be made in relation to expanding the Croí Conaithe criteria to accommodate buildings with living accommodation on the first floor and commercial space on the ground floor.

C/108/24

**CONCRETE PRODUCTS**

Cllr McClafferty submitted the following question:

*Concrete Products*

*Following confirmation from Laghey Roadstone that North Donegal is out of their reach to supply concrete mix due to limits on the product, can you advise those preparing to build a house what alternatives they have if they want to observe the Council guidelines to use Roadstone only for supply of this material in their own housing works/construction works?*

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

C/109/24

**CLARIFY IF THE COUNCIL WAS AWARE OF LAGHEY ROADSTONE WAS NOT AVAILABLE IN NORTH DONEGAL DUE TO DISTANCE AND TIME LIMITS FOR POURING CONCRETE MIX IN FOUNDATIONS.**

Cllr McClafferty submitted the following question:

*Can you clarify if the Council was already aware that the option, of Laghey Roadstone was not available in North Donegal due to distance and time limits for pouring concrete mix in foundations?*

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

C/110/24

**CONFIRMATION ON HOW MANY OF OUR PIERS AND HARBOURS HAVE CLEAR TITLE AND ARE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig submitted the following question:

*De réir mar a thuigimse é, tá thart fá 150 cé agus cuan ar fud an chósta i nDún na nGall. Ba mhaith liomsa deimhniú a fháil faoi cá mhéad cé agus cuan acu seo a bhfuil teideal soiléir acu agus atá cláraithe in ainm Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall.*

*I understand that there are approximately 150 piers and harbours around the coast in County Donegal. I would like confirmation on how many of these piers and harbours have clear title and are registered in the name of Donegal County Council.*

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

C/111/24

**BREAKDOWN OF HOW MANY LANDOWNERS HAVE BEEN WRITTEN TO CUT THE SIDE F THE ROAD TO MAKE IT SAFER AND HOW MANY HAVE CARRIED THIS OUT.**

Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig submitted the following question:

*“Cá mhéad úinéir talún ar scríobh CCDnG chucu ag iarraidh orthu taobh an bhealaigh mhóir a ghearradh le é a dhéanamh níos sábháilte, agus cá mhéad úinéir talún a bhfuil an obair seo curtha i gcrích acu ar iarratas ó CCDnG ón bhliain 2019?  
An dtig liom briseadh síos a fháil de réir gach Ceantair Bhardais, le bhur dtoil?*

*How many landowners has Donegal County Council written to to get them to cut the side of the road to make it safer, and how many landowners have carried out this on request from Donegal County Council since 2019?  
Can I have the breakdown per MD please?*

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

C/112/24

**CHECK THE REGISTER**

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:

*Can the Council do some publicity around the " Check the Register " as it is causing some confusion in that you can only check if you are already on the register, not add yourself using this application?*

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

C/113/24 **WHAT STEPS DO THE COUNCIL TAKE TO BUY IRISH MADE PRODUCTS AND SUPPORT LOCAL CONTRACTORS AND THEIR EMPLOYEES**

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:

*What steps do the Council take to buy Irish made products and support local contractors and their employees?*

He received a response from the Director of Finance in relation to the above.

C/114/24 **WHAT FINANCIAL SUPPORTS HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE SERVICES SUCH AS STREET SWEEPING, GARDENING SERVICES AND OTHERS ARE MAINTAINED IN THE FORMER TOWN COUNCILS**

Cllr Murray submitted the following question:

*Following the unanimous resolution by Donegal County Council to maintain services in the towns which formerly had town councils, can the council advise what financial supports have been put in place to ensure services such as street sweeping, gardening services and others are maintained as they were prior to 2014?*

He received a response from the Director of Finance in relation to the above.

C/115/24 **REGISTER OF ELECTORS UPDATE AND INCLUSIVITY**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:

*Register of Electors update and inclusivity.*

*Following the recent referendum and in response to the continued plan to update the Register of Electors,*

- What pressing issues have the general public presented for the council staff attention on inclusivity, register update and general related issues to be highlighted and addressed before the Referendum, Local and European elections in June 2024?*
- How can all play an assistive and informative role in the interim?*

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

C/116/24 **ANY UPDATE ON THE TERRITORIAL AND JURISDICTIONAL STATUS OF LOUGH FOYLE**

Cllr T Crossan submitted the following question:

*Is there any update on the territorial and jurisdictional status of Lough Foyle?*

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

C/117/24

**TURNKEY ACQUISITION ATTENDANCE & RESPONSE – FEB 2024**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:

*Turnkey Acquisition Attendance & Response - Feb 2024*

- *How many developers attended the council Feb.2024 publicity/information evenings?*
- *What was the attendance at each meeting location?*
- *What commitments/expression of interests were conveyed /received by council since? (To date)?*
- *What responses, information concerns were indicated by developers regarding,*
  - a) Land holdings available or required in municipal areas?*
  - b) The council's recent and updated "Specification for Concrete Blocks?*

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

C/118/24

**MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES**

Members noted the motions from other councils.

**CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL**

I propose that Clare County Council request Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, to consider and implement a policy change that allows participants in Community Employment Schemes (CES), Rural Social Schemes (RSS), and Tus Programme to continue their valuable contributions until the age of 70. This extension would not only acknowledge the dedication and skills of these individuals but also contribute to the overall well-being of our community and enhance the sustainability of these programs. These programmes play a crucial role in fostering community development, providing essential services, and supporting those who may face challenges in securing traditional employment. Currently, participants in these valuable community-based employment programs are required to retire at the age of 66 and considering the changing demographics and the desire of individuals to remain actively engaged in work programmes, I am asking you to make this important change to allow participants the opportunity to continue to contribute to their local communities.

**CORK COUNTY COUNCIL**

"Members agreed to write to the Minister for Finance, An Taoiseach, An Tánaiste and all Cork TDs to ask that the VAT rate for pubs should be reduced down from 23% to 17%. Members also agreed that this letter should be circulated to all Local Authorities."



#### LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

“Recognising the significance of the fact that the Joint Policing Committee represents one of the few useful reforms of Local Government in 2014 this Council opposes the proposed legislation to abolish the JPCs and replace them with repackaged Local Community Safety Partnerships.

That this Motion be sent to all local authorities in the state, all JPCs in County Louth and that a copy be sent to the Minister for Justice for comment.”

#### SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“That this local authority calls on the government to take a serious stance and introduce effective laws to prosecute those who wilfully break the law on bicycles, electric bicycles and electric scooters. A copy of this motion to be sent to every local authority within the State.”

#### SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“To call on Sligo County Council to write to the Minister of Transport and Bus Éireann to add additional bus services from Dublin Airport to Sligo after 11.15p.m. at night for the people in this region as planes continue to come into Dublin airport right through the night.” It was further agreed to circulate this motion to all local authorities.

#### WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

“This Council notes that both the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste have suggested that Israel is committing war crimes in Gaza. Over 10,000 children have been killed in what Minister Simon Harris, has described as “a war on children”.

Leo Varadkar has stated that the failure of Israel to observe humanitarian law can't be inconsequential.”

War crimes also continue in the Occupied West Bank associated with settlements that are illegal under International Law. We note that hundreds of civilians have also been killed there (where Hamas doesn't exist), and a school funded by Irish money was demolished recently. As an Irish local authority, we acknowledge that we can no longer stand by as complacent witnesses to ongoing war crimes and constant breaches of International Law.

There must be consequences and Ireland is best placed to lead the way, just as we did with Apartheid South Africa.

This council is requesting that Ireland should also exercise our right as a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to refer the actions in Palestine and Israel to the Prosecutor of the court for the purpose of requesting an investigation into any acts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide that have occurred in Gaza over recent months.

We further support the growing call to invoke the Genocide Convention. That Wexford County Council re-echoes the call of Dublin Local Authorities in formally supporting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS) against apartheid Israel, as a peaceful campaign for change.

We therefore call for the enactment of the Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill 2018 and the Illegal Israeli Settlements Divestment Bill 2023 as a matter of urgency. We recommend that this motion be circulated to all local authorities.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.