

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL

Oifig Riarthóir na gCruinnithe
Aras an Chontae
Leifear
23 Meán Fómhair 2025

FÓGRA CRUINNITHE

DO GACH BHALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

A Chara,

Beidh Cruinniú de Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ar siúl **Dé Luain, 29 Meán Fómhair 2025 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



Pádraig Ó Laifearthaigh
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Office of Meetings Administrator
County House
Lifford
23rd September 2025

NOTICE OF MEETING

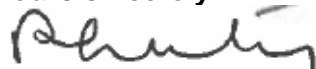
TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Councillor,

A Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on **Monday 29th September 2025 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



Patsy Lafferty
Meetings Administrator

AGENDA

1. Confirmation of Minutes

- a) Confirmation of the Minutes of the July Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 21st of July 2025
- b) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 25th of July 2025.

2. Disposal of Land – Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000(as amended)

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 a plot of land at Shore Road, Ramelton to the adjoining property owners, Monsignor Anthony Mc Daid and Mrs Rosemaria Kennedy.

3. Taking of decision pursuant to the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) (Pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001

- a) To approve the carrying out of works in relation to the provision of a Social Housing Development at Fintragh Rd Killybegs consisting of the demolition of 1 no. existing shed and construction of 2 no. 1-bed apartments and 16 no. 2-bed apartments (Total 18 no.units), complete with new vehicular entrance onto Fintragh Road, with connection to existing services & all associated site development works at New Row, Killybegs, Co. Donegal.
- b) To approve the carrying out of works in relation to the construction of 172 no. Social Housing units including all associated site development works at Ballymacool, Letterkenny, Co Donegal.
- c) To approve the carrying out of works in respect of a new shared use pedestrian facility adjacent to the existing R245 between Mulroy Woods Hotel and the LIDL retail unit and adjacent retail complex between the towns of Milford and Ramelton.

4. Community Development

To approve the nomination of Marie Little, ICTU to fill the vacancy on the Donegal Local 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.

5. Planning

- a) To approve the publication of the Draft Development Contribution Scheme 2025-2030 for a 6-week period of public consultation.

- b) To note update regarding the Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2025 relating to the National Planning Framework and Housing Growth Requirements.
- c) To approve the holding of a workshop to discuss the County Development Plan 2025-2030. (Date to be agreed).

6. **Finance**

- a) To agree date for the 2026 Revenue Budget Meeting.
- b) To agree Overdraft Accommodation of Ten Million Euro (€10,000,000) for full year ending 31st December 2026.
- c) To consider the draft Donegal County Council Anti-Fraud and Corruption policy drafted in accordance with the CCMA approved template for the Local Authority Sector.
- d) To consider a report on the Internal Audit Report on Council's use of Purchasing Cards.

7. **Endorsement of Minutes**

To note minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 14th July, 2025.

8. **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 - 2025 (as amended).

Training

- AILG/DHLG Training for SPC Chairs held on the 2nd September, 2025 in the Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise, Co Laois.
- LAMA Autumn Training Seminar to be held on the 16th & 17th October, 2025 in the Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey, Co Wexford.
- AILG-MU Micro Credential Course for Members – The Planning System in Ireland. (12 week course commencing 15th November 2025)

Other

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach/Leas - Cathaoirleach at the National Age Friendly Awards in the Galmont Hotel, Galway on the 23rd October 2025.
- Attendance of Cllrs Mac Giolla Easbuig and Scanlon at Oireachtas na Samhna in Belfast from the 30th October to the 2nd November 2025.

Abroad

- Attendance of the Leas - Cathaoirleach at the London Irish Vintage Day Event in London on the 7th September, 2025.

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the “Working Over By” Launch in Glasgow on the 23rd September, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Niamh Kennedy as a panel speaker at the International Meeting of Local Elected Women in Palma, Majorca on the 6th and 7th November 2025. (Travel and accommodation costs to be covered by Fons Mallorquí)
- Participation of the Cathaoirleach or Leas - Cathaoirleach on the North-West City Region Golden Bridges and US Trade and Investment Mission 2025 in the USA from the 10th to the 14th November, 2025.

9. **Conference Reports**

- Attendance of Cllr Donal Coyle at the IBCI Conference on the 12th and 13th March 2025 in Little island, Cork.
- Attendance of Cllr Donal Kelly at the IBCI Conference on the 12th and 13th March 2025 in Little island, Cork.

MOTIONS

LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Housing

10. **Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle**

“That this Council Calls on the Minister for Housing James Browne TD to move Donegal from Band Three of the Social Housing Income Limits to Band One. Donegal since the income limits were set has experienced a massive rise in private sector rents, an increase in house prices all of which is leading to more and more people needing to apply for Social Housing as they cannot afford the high rents and are unable to meet the criteria set by banks and lending institutions to qualify for mortgages. Unfortunately, more and more of these social housing applicants are being turned down for social Housing due the threshold on income limits set by Government. I would now ask that we call on the Minister to develop a new social housing income eligibility model in line with the “Housing For All” Action Plan that will give the people of Donegal parity.”

Defective Concrete Blocks

11. **Cllr Donal Coyle**

" That this Council provide an update on what is now being done to expedite the process regarding payments to applicants, who submit invoices while their homes are being rebuilt under the Defective Concrete Blocks Grants Scheme."

Roads & Transportation

12. **Cllr Ciaran Brogan**

“I propose that we have a Special Meeting to discuss the TEN - T Project and the timeframe with the process moving forward so that we as a Council are fully up to speed on the statutory process.”

Community Development

13. Cllr Tomás Seán Devine

Again, I would like to submit my previous motion regarding the council takeover of the site in Creeslough after several meetings with the families they want this to happen regarding the last meeting where it was agreed to hold a workshop. This hasn't happened to date while the families are in full support of all the regeneration work being carried out in the village. None of it relates to this site which the motion is in relation to as we are approaching the 3rd anniversary, please help in giving these families some relief in taking control of this site.

"That this Council support my motion in this Council by purchasing the land site of the Creeslough Tragedy by a way of negotiation with the owner or CPO, if need be, and sit down with the families and design a memorial garden in memory of all those affected."

Cultural Services

14. Cllr Declan Meehan

"That Donegal County Council calls on the Government to ensure the continuation and expansion of the Basic Income for the Arts Scheme as part of Budget 2026, recognising the vital contribution of artists and arts workers to our cultural, social, and economic life here in Donegal, as well as nationally.

Further, that this Council writes to the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan TD, and the Minister for Public Expenditure, Jack Chambers TD, urging them to provide for sustained funding for a Basic Income for Artists scheme in Budget 2026, and to ensure its accessibility and fairness for artists across all disciplines and regions, including those living and working in rural counties like Donegal."

DONEGAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Emergency Services

15. Cllr Niamh Kennedy

"That this Council imminently seeks funding from the Department to purchase necessary equipment in relation to an "Emergency Household Response Package" for vulnerable households during the winter months, where storms and flooding may occur, leaving people without power, heating and no ability to access hot food.

That this council should have sufficient provisions in stock and in good time to help citizens.

That this motion be presented to all local authorities."

Environment

16. **Cllr Noel Jordan**

"I am asking that this council intervene and engage with the ISPCA and the Department due to the closure of its centre in Letterkenny and I am asking that we provide assistance to the smaller pet rescue centres throughout the county due to the pressures they now face."

Roads & Transportation

17. **Cllr Michael Mc Mahon**

"That this council call a meeting with the Office of Public Works as soon as possible in relation to flooding that is happening all over the constituencies. This needs to be arranged as soon as possible because the flooding is causing a lot of damage and this needs to be looked at."

LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Housing

18. **Cllr Frank Mc Brearty**

"That DCC discloses to the elected members the test results on all their social housing stock that have been tested by Petrolab in the UK, to date, (especially the 8 properties at Railway Park, St Johnston), and that this disclosure includes the costs of coring, engineers reports and Petrolab testing to date, and that it includes the number of DCC properties that have been cored and tested to date, and the number of properties that have been identified visually as being possibly affected by defective concrete (all properties on their books) and how many have been remediated and repaired to date, including any that have been condemned as unsafe to date, and how many tenants have been rehoused in new or temporary accommodation".

Corporate

19. **Cllr Gary Doherty**

"That this Council:

- Abhors and condemns the ongoing genocide in Gaza and Israeli military operations in the West Bank;
- Calls on the Irish Government to lobby for international sanctions on Israel;
- Calls on the Government once again to pass the Occupied Territories Bill in full;
- Writes to our friends in Bani Zeid outlining the strong support and solidarity of the people of Donegal for the people of Palestine."

INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Environment

20. **Cllr Fionán Bradley**

"That this Council prioritise investment in infrastructure at our beaches, piers and harbours which is used by swimmers in advance of the 2026

Summer Season. This would be done in an effort to ensure that we fully utilise our natural environment to advertise Co Donegal as a place both accessible and welcoming to those who enjoy sea swimming.”

Community Development

21. **Cllr Albert Doherty**

“Donegal County Council welcomes recent funding announced for projects under the CLÁR Programme (Measure 2).

Mindful of the current Programme for Government "Securing Ireland's Future" and its commitment to conduct a comprehensive review within 6 months with a view to expand the CLÁR Programme to rural areas which are currently ineligible for funding,

Donegal County Council now urges Minister Calleary and the government to deliver on commitments made, designate, include and extend the number of electoral areas enabling additional communities' eligibility to apply and secure funding from the CLÁR Programme.”

Defective Concrete Blocks

22. **Cllr Martin Mc Dermott**

“That this Council write to Minister James Browne requesting that he explore a mechanism to provide homeowners on the Defective Concrete Block Scheme with access to upfront costs, as the lack of such supports is a major stumbling block for many homeowners.”

Planning

23. **Cllr Joy Beard**

“That this Council requests the National Building Control and Market Surveillance Office, with the support of the Geological Survey of Ireland, to revisit Donegal as soon as possible to conduct a further market surveillance audit of all quarries in the county.

This Council notes that recent peer-reviewed and government-funded research, commissioned by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, has confirmed the presence of pyrrhotite and framboidal pyrite as the primary causes of concrete failure in Ireland, through the mechanism of internal sulphate attack.

This Council further recognises the critical need to ensure full compliance with I.S. EN 12620:2002 + A1:2008 Aggregates for Concrete and the associated S.R. 16:2016, to safeguard construction quality and protect the structural integrity of newly-built or remediated properties.

Accordingly, this Council calls on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to authorise a full and comprehensive audit of every quarry in Donegal to ensure that all materials supplied to the market are fully compliant with all relevant legislation and free from risk of internal sulphate attack.”

Water & Environment

24. **Cllr Jack Murray**

"That Donegal County Council expresses it's deep, ongoing frustration with Irish Water, shares the concerns of those in our communities impacted by regular water outages, calls for greater recruitment of staff in water services, with better working conditions for water staff and a significant increase in investment in our current water infrastructure."

Roads & Transportation

25. **Cllr Terry Crossan**

"That Donegal County Council take immediate action to ensure that necessary dredging is facilitated to keep D.C.C controlled harbours free of silt accumulation to enable berthing at all stages of the tides."

26. Cathaoirleach's Business.

27. Chief Executive's Management Report.

QUESTIONS

LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

28. **Cllr Ciaran Brogan**

Can we have an updated report on the ongoing review of all the council services and when the outcome of that will be presented to the elected members of the Council?

29. **Cllr Ciaran Brogan**

What steps have taken place regarding our legal services with a view to employing our own council solicitor in-house in order to streamline much of the workload by all our different directorates?

30. **Cllr Tomás Seán Devine**

Can I get confirmation if any councillors in the chamber receive the answers to motions many days in advance of the meetings (Chairs of Committees or MDs) and if is so why aren't all members treated the same with responses to the motions?

Housing

31. **Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle**

Can I have an update on any recent information we have received from the Minister of Housing in relation to the Defective Concrete Block Scheme for Social Housing and when it might be passed and started?

32. **Cllr Tomas Sean Devine**

Can I get an update on how many people are on the housing list waiting for a wheelchair accessible home and how many are being built in our new social housing stock?

33. Cllr Declan Meehan

Can the Housing Directorate put in place a plan to carry out remedial repair works internally and externally, including painting, addressing mould, and crack-filling ahead of the autumn and winter seasons, for Council-owned DCB houses across the county, in lieu of the much-anticipated, long-delayed Social Housing Remediation Programme for Defective Blocks?

Roads & Transportation

34. Cllr Declan Meehan

What is the current status of the proposed TEN-T road projects in Donegal, including projected timelines and commitments to funding from the government?

LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

35. Cllr Gary Doherty

Can I have a breakdown of the numbers of staff working within each directorate of DCC and per Municipal District?

Finance

36. Cllr Gary Doherty

Can I have a breakdown of total grant funding received by DCC in each of the last five years together with the amounts spent on matched funding for each project?

INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Housing

37. Cllr Fionán Bradley

To ask the Director for Housing how the new rent pressure zones will affect the rents we charge people on our own housing stock? Furthermore, what impact will they have in relation to the properties we lease but don't own? Will those properties be subject to the new legislation also? If so from what date? If a property owner was in the process of negotiating a new lease with the Council before the announcement of the RPZ will that lease be subject to the RPZ legislation?

38. Cllr Albert Doherty

What were the homeless numbers recorded in each municipality in DCC from Sept 1st 2024 until Sept 1st 2025 and what are the current results following works by DCC Homeless Presentation Officer(s) to secure/identify available properties for refuge provision in the county?

39. Cllr Albert Doherty

What AHBs are currently working/and or have expressed an interest to work (Sept 2025) with Donegal County Council in each municipality to deliver much needed social and affordable homes and what are the current timelines agreed for the delivery of these projects?

40. Cllr Joy Beard

Why did Donegal County Council deem it necessary to devise its own bespoke standard for concrete used in the construction of social homes, rather than relying on the existing national and European standards?

Roads & Transportation

41. Cllr Fionán Bradley

To ask the Director for Roads and Director for Environment what Bye Laws, if any, within the county, pertain to horses and ponies accessing public roads, beaches, walkways, greenways, trails, forests or any other public space. Are there areas where horses and ponies are banned (for example Blue Flag beaches), if there are does this ban relate to all animals or exclusively horses?

42. Cllr Joy Beard

Can the Council provide an itemised breakdown of how the revenue generated from current car parking charges in each of the designated towns is being spent?

43. Cllr Terry Crossan

What arrangements are being made to appoint additional engineering staff in respect of our main harbours so that all necessary surveys, reports and applications are completed to facilitate the development of the harbours?

Water & Environment

44. Cllr Jack Murray

Is this Council currently engaged in discussions with Causeway Coast and Glens Council regarding a Shared Ireland application for funding in Leisure Centres in both council areas, and, if so, what is the current status of such discussions?

45. Motions from other Councils/Bodies

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Carlow County Council agrees to write to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and to the Taoiseach, expressing this Council's opposition to any increase in college fees and the Government to ensure to maintain the Grant in the upcoming budget.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Galway County Council reaffirms its strong support for Portiuncula University Hospital, as recognised under Special Policy Objective H4 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and acknowledges

PUHs long term strategic importance in the county and beyond as a provider of essential healthcare services and also as a major employer and economic driver in Co. Galway.

Galway County Council calls on the Minister for Health and CEO HSE to support PUHs critical role in maternity care provision in the county and to recognise Portiuncula UHs strategic location as the most accessibly located maternity unit in the country just 800 meters off the M6 in providing crucial timely accessible maternity care for mothers infants and families across a wide and rural catchment in County Galway and to communities in Roscommon, Westmeath, Longford, Leitrim, Offaly, North Tipperary and beyond. Restriction of maternity services poses serious risks to women and infants, especially those in rural and socioeconomically disadvantaged areas with poor transport where they are now facing much increased travel times and reduced local access to crucial maternity services.

Galway County Council calls on the Minister for Health and CEO HSE to seek development of an immediate plan for reinstatement of high quality safe maternity services at PUH, with allocation of the necessary funding and resources for full implementation.

Galway County Council asks the Minister for Health if she will commission a fully independent external review of maternity services across the county and comprehensively examine risk assessments and consequence of any maternity care downgrade in the wider area served including the ability of receiving maternity units to safely absorb additional patient load, given capacity, staffing, and infrastructure challenges.

A copy of this motion is sent to the Oireachtas Joint Health Committee, all Oireachtas Elected Representatives for the area, and all local authorities.

I would be obliged if you could consider and revert to me with your views on the above motion so that I can advise the Elected Members.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

“It was proposed that a letter of support issue in relation to the motion passed by Donegal County Council calling to safeguard the Triple Lock component of Irish neutrality. It was further agreed to circulate same to all authorities for their consideration.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“I will move at the next meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council write to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, James Lawless, stating that this District condemn any future attempt by the Government to reinstate the €3,000 college contribution fee for students given the increased financial burden that this will place on students and their families.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That, Limerick City and County Council agrees to and calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to relax the current ribbon development rules to allow for the construction of 6 dwellings in a

linear arrangement and, where appropriate, that restrictions be set aside entirely for sites within 1km of an existing settlement boundary once the development is located on a non-regional road with available appropriate sightlines.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Limerick City and County Council provide a liaison/link to Community Welfare where support is necessary to enable newly allocated tenants move in speedily.”

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

“That this Council asks the Minister for Housing to include Part 5 houses in the “Tenant Purchase Scheme.”

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

Given the huge success of the Love Sligo Gift Card since its launch in 2024 and it having achieved over €1m in sales in Ireland, driving an estimated 150,000 in-store customers across the country:

That Sligo County Council writes to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment and the Minister for Rural Affairs to ask them to consider supporting the Town and Gift Card rollout across every county.

WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“Carers Allowance and Benefit Reform

That the members of Waterford City and County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection Mr Dara Calleary, to abolish means testing for Carers Allowance in Budget 2026. We further call on the Minister to introduce a fair and adequate payment for recipients of Carers Allowance and Carers Benefit one which truly reflects the time, dedication and compassionate care that carers provided everyday across Ireland.”

<p align="center">MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2025 IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD</p>
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C/317/25

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs P Canning, Cathaoirleach, J Beard, J Brogan, D Coyle, T Crossan, T.S Devine, A Doherty, G Doherty, A Farren, M Harley, N Jordan, D. M Kelly, N Kennedy, M McDermott, P McGarvey, D McGee, M McMahon, G McMonagle, D Meehan, A Molloy, J Murray, M Naughton, M Scanlon.

Online: Cllrs L Blaney, M Boyle, B Carr, M Farren, J Kavanagh, M MacGiolla Easbuig, F McBrearty, M McBride, M McClafferty, P McGowan, D NicMheanman, JS O Fearraigh.

C/318/25

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

John G McLaughlin, Chief Executive, Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing, Corporate & Culture/Meetings Administrator, Liam Ward, Director of Community Development & Planning Services, Bryan Cannon, Director of Roads & Transportation, Michael McGarvey, Director of Water & Environment, Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, IS & Emergency Services, Tanya Kee, SEO, Finance, John Gallagher, Sen. Eng. Housing, Claire Burke, Sen. Ex. Architect, Housing Capital, Killian Smith, Ex. Planner, Eunan Quinn, Senior Planner, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, William Colvin, ASO, Róise Ní Laifeartaigh, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Clíona Ní Ghallachóir, Tacaíocht do Sheirbhísí Aistriúcháin, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/319/25

VOTE OF SYMPATHY

Cllr Kennedy proposed, seconded by Cllr Mc Garvey a vote of sympathy for the late Kevin Mc Cluskey a well-known and respected fisherman from Killybegs. A minute's silence was then observed by all present.

C/320/25

FORMAT OF THE MEETING

The Cathaoirleach advised that he intended to deal with items on the agenda initially requiring a proposer and seconder, followed by consideration of the motions. Statutory items warranting debate would then be considered, he added. This was unanimously agreed.

C/321/25

**CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY MEETING OF
DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 21ST JULY, 2025**

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr McGarvey, the Minutes of the July Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 21st July, 2025 were adopted.

C/322/25

**CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 25TH JULY, 2025**

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Canning, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 25th July, 2025 were adopted.

C/323/25 **DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF LAND AT SHORE ROAD, RAMELTON TO MONSIGNOR ANTHONY MCDAID AND MRS ROSEMARIA KENNEDY**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr McGarvey, it was resolved to disposal of a plot of land at Shore Road, Ramelton to Monsignor Anthony McDaid and Mrs Rosemaria Kennedy 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/324/25 **TO APPROVE THE NOMINATION OF MARIE LITTLE, ICTU TO FILL THE VACANCY ON THE DONEGAL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

On the proposal of Cllr McMahon, seconded by Cllr Meehan it was resolved that Marie Little, ICTU fill the vacancy on the Donegal Local 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/325/25 **TO NOTE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 14TH JULY, 2025.**

Members noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 14th July, 2025.

C/326/25 **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 -2025(as amended).

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr Scanlon attendance at the following was approved.

Training

- AILG/DHLG Training for SPC Chairs held on the 2nd September, 2025 in the Midlands Park Hotel, Portlaoise, Co Laois.
- LAMA Autumn Training Seminar to be held on the 16th & 17th October, 2025 in the Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey, Co Wexford.
- AILG-MU Micro Credential Course for Members – The Planning System in Ireland. (12 week course commencing 15th November 2025)

Other

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach/Leas - Cathaoirleach at the National Age Friendly Awards in the Galmont Hotel, Galway on the 23rd October 2025.
- Attendance of Cllrs Mac Giolla Easbuig and Scanlon at Oireachtas na Samhna in Belfast from the 30th October to the 2nd November 2025.

Abroad

- Attendance of the Leas - Cathaoirleach at the London Irish Vintage Day Event in London on the 7th September, 2025.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the "Working Over By" Launch in Glasgow on the 23rd September, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Niamh Kennedy as a panel speaker at the International Meeting of Local Elected Women in Palma, Majorca on the 6th and 7th November 2025. (Travel and accommodation costs to be covered by Fons Mallorquí)
- Participation of the Cathaoirleach or Leas - Cathaoirleach on the North-West City Region Golden Bridges and US Trade and Investment Mission 2025 in the USA from the 10th to the 14th November, 2025.

C/327/25

CONFERENCE REPORTS

On the proposal of Cllr McGarvey, seconded by Cllr Scanlon the following conference reports were noted.

- Attendance of Cllr Donal Coyle at the IBCI Conference on the 12th and 13th March 2025 in Little island, Cork.
- Attendance of Cllr Donal Kelly at the IBCI Conference on the 12th and 13th March 2025 in Little island, Cork.

C/328/25

THAT THE COUNCIL CALL ON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING JAMES BROWNE TD TO MOVE DONEGAL FROM BAND THREE OF THE SOCIAL HOUSING INCOME LIMITS TO BAND ONE

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

"That this Council Calls on the Minister for Housing James Browne TD to move Donegal from Band Three of the Social Housing Income Limits to Band One. Donegal since the income limits were set has experienced a massive rise in private sector rents, an increase in house prices all of which is leading to more and more people needing to apply for Social Housing as they cannot afford the high rents and are unable to meet the criteria set by banks and lending institutions to qualify for mortgages. Unfortunately, more and more of these social housing applicants are being turned down for social Housing due the threshold on income limits set by Government. I would now ask that we call on the Minister to develop a new social housing income eligibility model in line with the "Housing For All" Action Plan that will give the people of Donegal parity."

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

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the massive rise in rents and the increase in house prices in Donegal had created a situation whereby people were being pushed to apply for social housing. Generally, he said that both parents in a household were working to make ends meet and the result was that they were pushed over the social housing limits. These families, he noted could not afford the high rents and were unable to meet the criteria for a mortgage laid down by the various lending agencies.

He said he was aware that the Housing Agency were carrying out a review but that it was imperative that Donegal was moved to Band 1 of the scale from Band 3 as soon as possible given the ongoing housing crisis in the county.

Cllr A Doherty said that it was essential that the issues preventing access to social housing were dealt with and noted that Minister Browne in his recent visit to Donegal had seen at first hand the issues and stumbling blocks facing applicants. He said that the widening of the thresholds would be of major benefit. On point of concern, he noted, was the fact that the defective concrete block crisis had not been mentioned.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services advised that the income eligibility thresholds for Social Housing supports were last increased with an effective date of the 1st January 2023 with the baseline limits raised by €5000 across all bands and certain counties moved between bands. Donegal, he stated, had at that juncture remained within Band 3 of the national income limits. He confirmed that a copy of the motion as adopted would be forwarded to the Minister for Housing, Mr James Browne T.D, requesting the reclassification from Band 3 to Band 1 for Donegal considering the prevailing market conditions.

C/329/25

UPDATE ON EXPEDITING THE PAYMENT PROCESS - DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS – ACCESS TO UPFRONT COSTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

The Cathaoirleach informed members that motions 11 and 22 would be taken together given that they were similar in nature.

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

" That this Council provide an update on what is now being done to expedite the process regarding payments to applicants, who submit

invoices while their homes are being rebuilt under the Defective Concrete Blocks Grants Scheme.”

He received a response from the Director of Water Services, Environment and Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme in relation to the above.

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

“That this Council write to Minister James Browne requesting that he explore a mechanism to provide homeowners on the Defective Concrete Block Scheme with access to upfront costs, as the lack of such supports is a major stumbling block for many homeowners.”

He received a response from the Director of Water Services, Environment and Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme in relation to the above.

Cllr Coyle highlighted the need to expedite the payment process and alluded to the fact that once the first invoice had been processed then it should be possible to deal with any ensuing documentation in a timely manner.

Cllr Mc Dermott said that cashflow was a major stumbling block for most homeowners and impacted not only the applicant but the builder/contractor and all associated suppliers. He said that a system similar to that in place for the rent element of the scheme was warranted. This was something he added, which had been discussed previously with Department officials, and he thus called for correspondence to be issued as soon as possible to the Minister’s office outlining the immediate need for a mechanism to provide access to upfront costs.

There was no opposition to either of the motions.

Mr Michael Mc Garvey, Director Water & Environment said that he appreciated that there were cashflow issues and noted that the Council had paid out over €120 million to date with payments totalling €15m paid out in August 2025. These, he said reflected the significant number of applicants that had requested payment. He noted that there had been issues with payments but that the process was being streamlined, and resources utilised to progress same. There was acknowledgement also that the submission of incomplete and incorrect data also impacted the payment process. He cited the need to comply with GDPR requirements and to ensure that the necessary checks and balances were in place. Every effort, he advised, was being made to improve the processing times and to reduce waiting times. He committed to writing to Minister Browne as requested.

Cllr Coyle welcomed the response and the commitment to simplify the payment claims process and reduce turnaround times for the payment of claims.

Cllr Mc Dermott concluding said that both motions worked hand in hand and the payment process needed to be reviewed as the current process was preventing people from engaging with the scheme.

C/330/25

TEN-T PROJECT

Cllr Coyle proposed, seconded by Cllr McDermott that the following motion submitted by Cllr C Brogan, be adopted. This was unanimously agreed.

“I propose that we have a Special Meeting to discuss the TEN - T Project and the timeframe with the process moving forward so that we as a Council are fully up to speed on the statutory process.”

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

Cllr Coyle said that this was one of the largest projects ever undertaken in Donegal and all were aware of the need for same to progress. Huge investment was needed, he said, to bring to fruition projects such as the Ballybofey, Stranorlar Bypass, Lurgybrack Project, the construction of the bridge over the River Swilly and the upgrading of the Letterkenny to Lifford road. The overall cost at this juncture, he contended, would be over €1 billion with much preliminary work completed to date. He cited the need for a special meeting given that the process was moving forward, and that detail and a timeframe was needed where there were homes to be demolished and also in respect of farms/farmland etc landlocked over the past seven to eight years because of the route design implications.

Cllr Kelly supporting the motion said it was imperative that people were informed and kept up to date in relation to the project.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation said that the Donegal TEN-T Priority Route Improvements Project included three distinct sections of National Road on which significant improvements were planned, namely the N15/N13 Ballybofey to Stranorlar Urban Section, the N56 Letterkenny to Manorcunningham Section which includes a bridge over the Swilly at Bonagee, and the N14 Manorcunningham to Lifford Section encompassing a link to the A5. Works also, he added, included the provision of Active Travel facilities at key locations. Final preparations, it was noted were ongoing for the publication of the Environment Impact Assessment Report and the Compulsory Purchase Order process. Publication of same, he noted,

was expected by year end. He said that the Executive would welcome an opportunity to update the Elected Members in relation to the project.

Cllr Coyle welcomed the response and asked that the update be provide as soon as practical.

C/331/25

SITE OF THE CREESLOUGH TRAGEDY

The Cathaoirleach welcomed a number of the Creeslough families to the meeting.

Cllr Devine proposed, seconded by Cllr Mc Gee that the following motion be adopted:-

Again, I would like to submit my previous motion regarding the council takeover of the site in Creeslough after several meetings with the families they want this to happen regarding the last meeting where it was agreed to hold a workshop. This hasn't happened to date while the families are in full support of all the regeneration work being carried out in the village. None of it relates to this site which the motion is in relation to as we are approaching the 3rd anniversary, please help in giving these families some relief in taking control of this site.

"That this Council support my motion in this Council by purchasing the land site of the Creeslough Tragedy by a way of negotiation with the owner or CPO, if need be, and sit down with the families and design a memorial garden in memory of all those affected."

Cllr Devine received a copy of the response as circulated at the July Plenary Meeting.

Cllr Devine noted that a number of families concerned were present at the meeting. He said that nothing had changed in the interim only an indication that there was a workshop to discuss same on the 20th October. He said that he had discussed the issue with several of the families and what was now required was for the Council to take over the site by negotiation or CPO if necessary. There had been, he stated, mention of a memorial being located at other areas in the town. This, he contended, was not acceptable to the families in the chamber today. He called on the Council to start proceedings for the acquisition of the site and to talk to the families concerned in relation to the way forward. He asked also that contact be made with the Department in relation to the funding aspect.

Cllr Mc Gee supporting the motion noted that this was the second time that the matter had been raised and noted that the workshop as proposed at the July meeting was to be held in October. He called on members to come together to support the families concerned and allow the families concerned move on.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services addressing the family members in attendance said that the Council was fully aware of their ongoing pain and suffering. He said that a very detailed reply had been given at the July meeting and that the position remained the same. That response, he noted, had outlined in detail why the Council was not acquiring the site and how it was not best placed to make such a decision. The position, he advised, had not changed and a workshop had been arranged for the 20th October to consider same.

He said that he had to date met with some family members and had also been in contact by email with others and had consistently offered all concerned an opportunity to meet and discuss the need for an appropriate memorial on the site of the new regeneration project in Creeslough being led by the Council. It was, he stated, an emotive and sensitive issue for all concerned but the Council position remained unchanged.

The Chief Executive said that the path forward was not obvious and that no one could have anticipated the journey ahead. He cited the need for all involved to work together and noted that this also included the landowner. It was acknowledged that the three year anniversary was coming up and that the Director of Service and other Council staff had worked tirelessly to assist in every way possible to provide assistance. He said that the workshop would offer an opportunity to discuss the matter further and was the appropriate forum to work through the issues concerned.

The Cathaoirleach informed Cllr Mc Brearty that procedures were the same for all motions and that he was not opening the motion to the floor. He said that the motion as submitted by Cllr Devine had been proposed and seconded and a response received from the executive. It was now a matter for members, he said, to confirm whether they were in favour of the motion or not.

Cllr Mc Brearty contended, that the Council did not want to discuss the matter thus denying the families present proper justice. He said that the motion if passed put an onus on the Council to purchase the property. The Council, he said, had serious questions to answer, in that planning permission had been given to a property that was not fit for purpose. He reiterated the need for a public enquiry.

The Cathaoirleach said the motion as submitted was now carried. Cllr Mc Monagle at this juncture, seconded by Cllr Meehan proposed that a Liaison Officer be appointed to work with the families and to keep them informed of developments. This, he advocated, would allow the grieving families to see that their loved ones had not been forgotten.

Cllr Devine said that now that the motion had been passed it was essential that a guarantee was given that the Council would purchase the site.

He said he was happy for this to be discussed at the workshop on the 20th October and cited the need for the families concerned to be present on the day as they should be at the centre of any proposal going forward.

Concluding, the Cathaoirleach noted the request to create an environment whereby a Liaison Officer could be appointed to work with the families, and as outlined in the motion the purchase of the site at Creeslough was being requested. He queried whether the option to purchase same could in fact be progressed.

The Chief Executive said that acceptance of the motion gave the Council a difficulty in that it involved a CPO being placed on a site which was not required for Council business. It had been outlined clearly in July, he said, the reasons as to why this could not be progressed and that remained the position. The way forward, he advised was to work together and find the common ground.

Cllr Devine was informed that a CPO required departmental approval and possibly a hearing with full justification and reports to back up same. An Bord Pleanála, he said, would for any application require considerable detail and the full rationale prior to considering same.

The Cathaoirleach said that there were sensitivities with the matter and for that reason would not be opening the meeting to the floor. He proceeded to adjourn the meeting for a short recess.

C/332/25

CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION OF THE BASIC INCOME FOR THE ARTS SCHEME

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

“That Donegal County Council calls on the Government to ensure the continuation and expansion of the Basic Income for the Arts Scheme as part of Budget 2026, recognising the vital contribution of artists and arts workers to our cultural, social, and economic life here in Donegal, as well as nationally.

Further, that this Council writes to the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan TD, and the Minister for Public Expenditure, Jack Chambers TD, urging them to provide for sustained funding for a Basic Income for Artists scheme in Budget 2026, and to ensure its accessibility and fairness for artists across all disciplines and regions, including those living and working in rural counties like Donegal.”

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

Cllr Meehan said that a scheme had been in place for a number of years and the overall effect had been a positive one in terms of creativity and economic output. He said that the cost benefit analysis had been clear for all to see with €1.39 going back into the economy for every €1 invested by the government. Overall, he advised, participation in the scheme had reduced financial burdens on the applicants and allowed artists to focus on creativity which was a benefit to themselves and society in general. He called on the government to invest further in the scheme given its successful implementation to date. It had been he noted particularly successful in Donegal and had given rise to a creative boost. He cited the need for some improvements to the scheme including greater access for people with disabilities. It was essential, he said, that the scheme was expanded across the country.

Cllr Beard supporting the motion said it was really about providing a basic income for artists and building on the success of the scheme over the last three years. It was, she confirmed, about sustaining artists, strengthening communities and boosting local economies. Acknowledging that there was a vibrant artist community in Donegal, she said that the thrust of the motion was that Donegal valued its artists community and valued their social and economic importance.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the Council would write to the relevant ministers as requested.

C/333/25

EMERGENCY HOUSEHOLD RESPONSE PACKAGE

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

“That this Council imminently seeks funding from the Department to purchase necessary equipment in relation to an "Emergency Household Response Package" for vulnerable households during the winter months, where storms and flooding may occur, leaving people without power, heating and no ability to access hot food.

That this council should have sufficient provisions in stock and in good time to help citizens.

That this motion be presented to all local authorities.”

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

Alluding to previous storms she noted that generators and dehumidifiers had to be sourced from various suppliers. The majority of the council's housing stock, she added, was now using the air to water system and thus electricity dependent.

Cllr Kennedy said the council should have sufficient provisions in stock to deal with weather emergencies as they arose. This, she said, might include a stock of items such as gas cookers, heaters, battery torch etc.

The impact was greater she stated for vulnerable people living in rural locations. Going forward she cited the need for the council to have such items in stock.

Recognising that supports had been put in place after Storm Eoghan, it was noted however that there had been some difficulty in accessing same.

Cllr Mc Garvey said that the case for an emergency package had been well outlined and that government support was needed to put the initiative in place.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that the Department of Housing, Local Government, & Heritage would be contacted in relation to the matter.

Concluding Cllr Kennedy asked that the motion be circulated to all local authorities for consideration.

C/334/25

CLOSURE OF THE ISPCA CENTRE IN LETTERKENNY

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

I am asking that this council intervene and engage with the ISPCA and the Department due to the closure of its centre in Letterkenny and I am asking that we provide assistance to the smaller pet rescue centres throughout the county due to the pressures they now face."

He received a response from the Director of Water Services, Environment, DCB Scheme & Facilities Management in relation to the above.

Cllr Jordan said that there were a number of aspects to his motion and also the fact that the closure of the centre was putting a huge strain on other smaller centres throughout the county. The closure was, he contended, a major setback for animal welfare in the county with local animal welfare centres already operating at full capacity.

The centre in Letterkenny had, he added, been established through local funding raising efforts and the receipt of voluntary and legacy donations , with the facility then signed over to the ISPCA. The closure of same, he advised, had occurred with very little consultation and with no regard for the intention of the original donors. Donegal SPCA had outlined a moral case for action and for the return of the facility to the local owners.

The need for an adequate safety net was outlined as the situation was at crisis point for vulnerable animals.

He called on Donegal County Council to show leadership and engage with the Minister to secure a viable future for the centre or ensure that it is returned to the Donegal SPCA. It was important, he added, that there was transparency regarding the financial basis for the closure.

Reference was made to a recent cruelty case where animals ended up being transported to Longford.

A call was made also for increased funding for the many smaller shelters.

Cllr Mc Monagle outlined his support for the motion and said that there was in the post-covid years an increasing demand for these services. He said that the ISPCA should be invited in to give a briefing and outline their plans for the future. There were issues also, he said, with the withdrawal of the dog warden service in Donegal.

Mr Michael Mc Garvey, Director Water & Environment said that the council had been engaging with the ISPCA since the notice of their intention to withdraw the dog warden service in 2026. The closure of the Letterkenny Centre had been discussed and would be brought up again in future meetings. He confirmed that it would be possible to write to the ISPCA and ask for clarity on the plans for Letterkenny and to the Department regarding the implications of the closure for other pet rescue centres. It was hoped, he said, to provide an update at the November meeting.

Cllr Jordan said it was imperative that assurance was given that the centre would transfer back to the Donegal SPCA and that supports would be put in place for the smaller centres in the county.

C/335/25

FLOODING EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY

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

“That this council call a meeting with the Office of Public Works as soon as possible in relation to flooding that is happening all over the constituencies. This needs to be arranged as soon as possible because the flooding is causing a lot of damage and this needs to be looked at.”

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

Cllr Mc Mahon said that there were serious flooding issues and outlined in particular problems in Pettigo and Ballyshannon. He welcomed the assistance provided by the Council and their cross-border colleagues in Pettigo during recent flooding events which had saved a number of properties. There were cross-border issues here, he noted, and advised of the need to be proactive going forward. Additional works were also needed, he said, in respect of the drain at the industrial estate at Portnason where there were problems with flash flooding.

He referenced also the need to attend to an issue that had arisen where water was flowing from the public road onto a property in Clyhore owned by an elderly occupant. He said that the Office of Public Works should be invited to meet with members to discuss ongoing works.

Cllr Jordan said that an update had been requested at MD level in relation to the various flood relief schemes and that this was hopefully to proceed shortly. He supported the call for the OPW to come in and address members. It was essential, he said, that they were asked to include flood relief measure for Pettigo in their capital spend.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation advised that the OPW were responsible for co-ordinating Ireland's national flood risk management policy. The Council, he said, through its Flood Relief Schemes Unit is working with the OPW to deliver schemes at Burnfoot, Castlefin, Na Dunaibh, Glenties, Kerrykeel, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Buncrana, Ludden, Ramelton and Lifford with further pilot schemes being progressed in Donegal Town and Letterkenny. The OPW was, he added, leading the delivery of the scheme in Raphoe. Detail was also provided on the direct funding received from the Department of Transport in respect of drainage improvements on Regional and Local roads. This, he advised, amounted to €1,188,000 in 2025. He was, he confirmed, familiar with the issue at Clyhore and that the Council had worked with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and the Rivers Agency in Northern Ireland to address the problem in Pettigo. Options had been considered to address the problem at Clyhore and efforts were being made to source the required funding.

He said that a meeting could be sought with the OPW and a mutual agenda agreed.

Cllr Mc Mahon welcomed the response and asked that the issue at Clyhore be addressed in a timely fashion.

TEST RESULTS ON ALL THE COUNCIL SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK

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

“That DCC discloses to the elected members the test results on all their social housing stock that have been tested by Petrolab in the UK, to date, (especially the 8 properties at Railway Park, St Johnston), and that this disclosure includes the costs of coring, engineers reports and Petrolab testing to date, and that it includes the number of DCC properties that have been cored and tested to date, and the number of properties that have been identified visually as being possibly affected by defective concrete (all properties on their books) and how many have been remediated and repaired to date, including any that have been condemned as unsafe to date, and how many tenants have been rehoused in new or temporary accommodation”.

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

Cllr Mc Brearty said that the Council had failed to give the information which he as an elected member had been mandated to seek.

He said that he had an issue with the fact that the response referred to “if the motion is passed” which showed an element of contempt for the request.

Petrolab, he advised, had carried out the testing on the housing stock yet mica was not the cause of the structural defects. There were he added, three categories of reactive minerals which were the cause of these defects and reclassified as total sulphates, in a sulphate attack analysis because of the presence of pyrrhotite. The answer provided, he contended, did not deal with the motion as submitted. Alluding to the eight houses in St Johnston tested by Petrolab, he said that they showed a visual estimate of true cause of the problem. If the Council was serious about addressing the situation, they would, he stated, ask Petrolab to conduct a sulphate attack analysis on the core samples concerned. The response provided, he added, clearly indicated that Donegal County Council was not serious about dealing with its social housing stock. A public enquiry had still not been established he noted, and the state had failed to police the industry responsible for this crisis.

Cllr Devine supporting the motion said that he could see no detail as to how many people had been moved out of their homes to other properties and asked when this would be made available.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services responding said that the Council had set up a Social Housing Remediation team a number of years ago with a view to addressing the issue of social homes affected by deleterious materials. As the Social Housing Remediation Scheme had not yet commenced, remediation

works had not yet commenced. Repair works where necessary had been carried out and visual surveys carried out on all social homes. He said that it was estimated that 1000 homes approximately were affected (including 80 vacant homes) and that the potential existed at present for another 1000 properties. Testing had been carried out to date; he confirmed on 200 homes in preparation for a remediation scheme. This had been carried out by a number of companies, he stated, and the test results, costs and data could be collated and arrangements made to circulate the details to the Elected Members.

Cllr Mc Brearty said that he was not happy with the response and that the Department needed to be made aware of the exact cause of the structural defects in social housing properties so that a proper scheme could be put in place. He said that a sulphate attack analysis should have been carried out on the 200 houses referenced. It was a disgrace, he said, that after 14 years the Council were still unwilling to call the matter a defective concrete block crisis clearly backed up by current forensic evidence. Concluding, he said, he was extremely concerned that the Council was not treating this as an emergency.

C/337/25

CONDEMNATION OF THE ONGOING GENOCIDE IN GAZA AND SOLIDARITY FOR THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE

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

“That this Council:

- Abhors and condemns the ongoing genocide in Gaza and Israeli military operations in the West Bank;*
- Calls on the Irish Government to lobby for international sanctions on Israel;*
- Calls on the Government once again to pass the Occupied Territories Bill in full;*
- Writes to our friends in Bani Zeid outlining the strong support and solidarity of the people of Donegal for the people of Palestine.”*

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

Cllr Doherty alluded to the unspeakable horror that was taking place in Gaza and said there was an onus on all to voice and highlight the atrocities that were taking place. An independent United Nations Commission had, he said, delivered a grave and historic conclusion in the last week that Israel has committed and continues to commit genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza. The international commission of Enquiry established by the UN Human Rights Council, he said, had found that Israeli authorities and security forces had committed four of the five acts that are defined as genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention. The acts committed, he stated, were not random and carried out with clear genocidal intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a group. It was clear, he added, that continuous acts of genocide were being carried out and that these meet

the criteria established by the Genocide Convention . He said that such acts were being carried out by the highest levels of Israeli authority.

It was acknowledged that there had been unprecedented killings, starvation of civilians, the blocking of humanitarian aid, the destruction of healthcare and education services, sexual and gender based violence and the targeting of children. This he added was combined with an assault on religious and cultural foundations and the barbaric use of starvation as a method of warfare all indicating that genocide was being carried out.

Continuing Cllr Doherty said that the Israeli President, the Prime Minister and the then Minister for Defence had incited genocide with no accountability pursued. Israel, he said, had flagrantly ignored various warnings and appeals by the International Court of Justice and other member states together with appeals from civil society and persisted with its campaign of destruction.

This humanitarian emergency, he contended, was beyond apocalyptic with starvation, malnutrition, denial of water and medicine being used to annihilate a defenceless population. It was, he said, a holocaust inflicted in full view of the world and with western governments, the UK the USA, Germany and the EU all complicit.

The Hague Group Summit in Bogota, had outlined, he confirmed the concrete multi-lateral measures that states could and must adopt including full arms embargos, the levying of political and economic sanctions and the freedom to provide full humanitarian aid. The siege, he said, had to end together with the harsh and unethical treatment afforded to the various aid flotillas on which there were a number of Irish representatives. Israel, he said, was an outlaw state acting with impunity.

He thus called on the Irish Government to lobby aggressively for sanctions and for sporting organisations such as UEFA, FIFA and the International Olympic Committee to expel Israeli athletes. We in Ireland, he stated, need to do all in our power to highlight the fact that a genocide and a man made famine was taking place before the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank were extinguished. Those with the greatest power, he added, had the greatest responsibility given that silence in the face of genocide amounts to complicity.

Cllr Mc Monagle seconding the motion said that Cllr Doherty had outlined well the gravity of the situation. Benjamin Netanyahu had, he said, been found guilty of committing genocide in Gaza and an arrest warrant issued, yet with the complicity of the USA he was allowed to attend the UN and boast about what he was doing to the Palestinian people. Pillars of society in Palestine, were being targeted daily

together with mothers, fathers, children, doctors, medics, ambulance drivers, and reporters, while the world watches on.

Ireland, he said, needed to call out other EU leaders to react to the situation and to ensure that Israel was punished for its actions. He called on Donegal County Council to look at where it was buying its products from and where they were supplied from. Purchasing should desist, he said, where there were Israeli links.

It was time, he said, to stand up to the bullying from Israel and all complicit in the obliteration of Gaza. He reiterated the need to write to Bani Zeid as a symbol of solidarity.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Culture said that correspondence would issue to the Tánaiste's office and to Bani Zeid.

Cllr Doherty thanked members to for their support and said it was incredibly important that members used their voices to highlight what was going on.

C/338/25

ADJOURNMENT FOR LUNCH

On the proposal of Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was resolved to adjourn the meeting until 1.45pm

C/339/25

INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE AT OUR BEACHES, PIERS & HARBOURS

It was unanimously agreed to defer the following motion submitted by Cllr Fionán Bradley.

"That this Council prioritise investment in infrastructure at our beaches, piers and harbours which is used by swimmers in advance of the 2026 Summer Season. This would be done in an effort to ensure that we fully utilise our natural environment to advertise Co Donegal as a place both accessible and welcoming to those who enjoy sea swimming."

C/340/25

CLAR PROGRAMME

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

"Donegal County Council welcomes recent funding announced for projects under the CLÁR Programme (Measure 2). Mindful of the current Programme for Government "Securing Ireland's Future" and its commitment to conduct a comprehensive review within 6 months with a view to expand the CLÁR Programme to rural areas which are currently ineligible for funding, Donegal County Council now urges Minister Calleary and the government to deliver on commitments made, designate, include and

extend the number of electoral areas enabling additional communities' eligibility to apply and secure funding from the CLÁR Programme."

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

Cllr Doherty welcomed the reply but contended that a stronger case needed to be made. He highlighted a number of projects on which members had been lobbied for support particularly in relation to supports for adults with disabilities. Accessible transport was identified as being of enormous importance and barriers to same was preventing such people from engaging in meaningful activities and accessing community services. He alluded to the fact that a named application had been denied as it was not in a Clár designated area.

Numerous examples, he said, could be highlighted in the Inishowen area. Answers from previous motions at Plenary and MD level, had, he advised, indicated that a review was progressing. Promises had been made nationally in relation to Disability Service provision but nothing significant had materialised. He called on the executive to be more forceful in their demands for a review of Clár funding and the extension of designated areas. He cited the need for greater emphasis on people with disabilities and outlined the necessity of having a level playing field to access funds.

Cllr Crossan supporting the motion said that there were a number of projects in his own area that he wanted to see include and highlighted the need to expand the programme in Inishowen and throughout the county.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services acknowledged that Cllr Doherty had been a long-time advocate of extending the programme. He noted that 16 applications had been submitted under Measure 1 by the Council. He said he appreciated the call for more forceful action and confirmed that the Council did meet with Department officials on an ongoing basis. The issues raised, he said, would be followed up and the motion forwarded as requested to Minister Calleary.

Cllr Doherty acknowledged the response and called on members to actively pursue the matter with the relevant government representatives.

C/341/25

MARKET SURVEILLANCE AUDIT OF ALL QUARRIES IN THE COUNTY

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

“That this Council requests the National Building Control and Market Surveillance Office, with the support of the Geological Survey of Ireland, to revisit Donegal as soon as possible to conduct a further market surveillance audit of all quarries in the county.

This Council notes that recent peer-reviewed and government-funded research, commissioned by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, has confirmed the presence of pyrrhotite and framboidal pyrite as the primary causes of concrete failure in Ireland, through the mechanism of internal sulphate attack.

This Council further recognises the critical need to ensure full compliance with I.S. EN 12620:2002 + A1:2008 Aggregates for Concrete and the associated S.R. 16:2016, to safeguard construction quality and protect the structural integrity of newly-built or remediated properties.

Accordingly, this Council calls on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to authorise a full and comprehensive audit of every quarry in Donegal to ensure that all materials supplied to the market are fully compliant with all relevant legislation and free from risk of internal sulphate attack.”

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

Cllr Beard called for the National Building Control Market Surveillance Office with the Geological Survey of Ireland to carry out a full audit of all quarries with deep and random testing across the quarry face. This , she said, needed to include testing for pyrrhotite and pyrite, issuing the results and holding all operators accountable. This , she added, would restore confidence and ensure that each home, remediation, and community facility presently being built was free from the risk of failure.

Cllr Devine, in support of the motion said that the testing practice was lax and need to be more comprehensive and regular. He cited the need for the Market Surveillance Office to come in and address members in relation to the situation.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that the thrust of the motion was clear and well set out. His reply, he said, had set out the background to what was happening and detailed the work of the National Building Control & Market Surveillance Office and their role in Donegal. He was, he advised, happy to forward the request for a further market surveillance audit and to write to the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage as requested.

Concluding Cllr Beard said that motion requested a new and comprehensive audit of all quarries, and the results released and

identified. She said it needed to be kept in mind that the GSI had confirmed that acid digestion method for total sulphur is not fit for purpose. Current inspections, she added, did not guarantee long-term quality. She called for ongoing vigilance and for repeated audits to be carried out to safeguard public confidence.

C/342/25

IRISH WATER – SERVICE ISSUES

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

“That Donegal County Council expresses it's deep, ongoing frustration with Irish Water, shares the concerns of those in our communities impacted by regular water outages, calls for greater recruitment of staff in water services, with better working conditions for water staff and a significant increase in investment in our current water infrastructure.”

He received a response from the Director of Water Services, Environment, DCB Scheme & Facilities Management in relation to the above.

Cllr Murray said that there was increasing frustration with Uisce Éireann in relation to outages and bursts in the Inishowen area in particular. He said that there was a valid case for the service to be handed back to the local authorities as lack of funding was preventing Uisce Éireann from addressing infrastructural deficits. There was also, he noted, an associated impact on staff morale.

Cllr Mc Monagle supporting the motion advised of the need for capital investment in water infrastructure as this impacted also on the overall housing strategy. The motion, he said ,was timely and asked that it be referred to the Minister for Finance , Mr Pascal Donohoe, T.D considering the impending 2026 budget.

Mr Michael Mc Garvey, Director Water & Environment said that he would write to Uisce Éireann as requested and forward a copy of the motion to the minister as directed.

C/343/25

KEEPING DCC CONTROLLED HARBOURS FREE OF SILT ACCUMULATION

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

“That Donegal County Council take immediate action to ensure that necessary dredging is facilitated to keep D.C.C controlled harbours free of silt accumulation to enable berthing at all stages of the tides.”

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

Cllr Crossan advised that there were number of harbours where dredging had become problematic and referred to Greencastle Harbour in particular. He acknowledged the fact that there had been huge investment in Greencastle to date and that this would be wasted if nothing was done in relation to the accumulation of silt.

Greencastle, he noted, had been reduced to a landing harbour only and berthing options had become limited as larger craft were no longer able to access the port except for a short period on either side of high water. He alluded to the fact that it extra costs were being incurred when high tides occurred overnight.

Cllr Doherty said that Greencastle users have expressed concern at the delays with dredging. Referring to the response, he said, that it was alarming the number of steps and permissions that had to be taken to allow dredging take place and all before final approval from the Department. He noted that a new designated maritime plan might delay the works further. It was essential, he added, that additional funding was allocated for dredging works and for some of the smaller projects that required attention including:

- Coastguard Station affected by defective blocks needs to be replaced.
- Lease of another small area of land to the school entrance.
- Need for better parking and access facilities.
- New slipway layout to accommodate the new Coastguard building.

There was need also, he said, for further engagement with the Foyle Port Authorities in relation to matters of mutual interest.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Bryan Canon, Director Roads & Transportation said the report set out on a general basis what is needed for the Council to carry out dredging works and the range of consents needed. He alluded to the fact that consents were not everlasting and had to be reviewed on a regular basis with significant levels of work involved. The consultants were now in place, he said, to prepare the applications for Greencastle, Buncrana and Portmore Pier at Malin Head.

The Council, he noted, funded an ongoing programme of dredging with €250,000 provided on an annual basis in respect of a number of locations around the county. In relation to Greencastle, he said, that the executive did meet with the Greencastle users' group on a periodic basis and held monthly meetings with the Piers and Harbour team on site and were aware of the ambitions and aspirations of the group. €16m had been spent, he said, on extending the breakwater and this needed to be capitalised on.

Concluding Cllr Crossan welcomed the response and acknowledged that considerable investment that had been made in terms of the breakwater at Greencastle. If the issues with silt continued, this investment would have been in vain. He asked that the matter be given urgent attention so as to mitigate ongoing issues at the harbour.

C/344/25

**CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO
THE PROVISION OF A SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT
FINTRAGH ROAD, KILLYBEGS TOTAL 18NO. UNITS**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by Cllr Naughton, the carrying out of works in relation to the provision of a Social Housing Development at Fintragh Road, Killybegs consisting of the demolition of 1no. existing shed and construction of 2no. 1-bed apartments and 16no. 2-bed apartments (total 18no. units) 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 Kennedy welcomed the development which she said was much needed.

C/345/25

**CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RELATION TO THE
CONSTRUCTION OF 172 NO. SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS AT
BALLYMACOOL, LETTERKENNY**

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

On the proposal of Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr Coyle, the carrying out of works with regard to the construction of 172 no. social housing units at Ballymacool, 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 noted that there had been considerable discussion on the matter and that several workshops had also taken place. He said that he personally had raised a number of concerns in relation to the development

He thanked John Gallagher, Senior Engineer and his team for addressing a number of the issues that had been raised together with David Mc Elwaine, A/Senior Executive Engineer and Michael Canning Road Safety Engineer for their input on road safety issues. There had been recognition also, he stated of the need for a bus service and in addressing issues raised by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

He welcomed the assurance that Uisce Éireann was committed to providing the necessary water and sewerage infrastructure and that

traffic would not be emerging out onto the R250 and would instead come out onto the existing entrance at the roundabout. There was acknowledgement also of the commitment to upgrade the roads and cycle paths into the town and the assurance that there would be engagement with Inland Fisheries in relation to the River Swilly. The inclusion of a five bed group home was also to be welcomed, he said.

It was important, he added, that engagement with the residents continued and that an adequate bus service was be put in place. With 1300 on the waiting list in Letterkenny, this was a most welcome development in a prime location, he added.

Cllr Mc Monagle said the development was much needed and complimented all involved in getting it off the ground. He noted that the Active Travel project would work in conjunction with this development and that new cycleways and footpaths would be put in place as soon as the development was coming to completion. He said it was a positive development that Uisce Éireann had committed to the site given the infrastructural deficits that had existed previously.

Cllr Coyle welcomed the preparatory work that had been undertaken and noted that this was one of the biggest building projects that the Council would deliver. He said that 8 such schemes were needed to deal with the housing waiting list in Letterkenny.

Cllr Mc Gee said that he was not against the houses being developed but that it was a case once again of putting the cart before the horse.

Cllr Devine said that he welcomed the development and the inclusion of the five bed group home. His concern, he said, that houses were not being built for people with disabilities and queried if any were included in the scheme.

Cllr Mc Bride welcomed the works and said that housing needed to be developed at scale and in tandem with the private market. High rents and homelessness were, he said, a contributing factor to the demand for social housing. It was imperative, he said, that the proposed development at the old Fire Station in Letterkenny was progressed and that consideration was given to looking at other sites in the town for the development of housing on a similar scale.

C/346/25

CARRYING OUT OF WORKS IN RESPECT OF A NEW SHARED USE PEDESTRIAN FACILITY ADJACENT TO THE EXISTING R245 BETWEEN MULROY WOODS HOTEL AND THE LIDL RETAIL UNIT BETWEEN THE TOWNS OF MILFORD AND RAMELTON.

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

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr McGarvey, the

carrying out of works in respect of a new shared use pedestrian facility adjacent to the existing R245 between Mulroy Woods Hotel and the Lidl Retail unit between the towns of Milford and Ramelton 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 Meehan thanked the roads team for the work carried out to date. He said that there were road safety issues along this busy stretch of road with pedestrians having to walk on the grass verge in an unsafe manner. He welcomed the fact that €125k had been secured for the commencement of construction and outlined the need to secure remaining monies in 2026. Cllr Mc Garvey welcomed the works and thanked the roads staff for taking on board members concerns.

C/347/25

TO APPROVE THE PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION SCHEME 2025-2030 FOR A 6 WEEK PERIOD OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

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

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Monagle, seconded by Cllr Meehan it was resolved to approve the publication of the Draft Development Contribution Scheme 2025-2030 for a six-week period of public consultation in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Cllr Kennedy alluded to the fact that the €20k charge for holiday home accommodation seemed excessive.

Cllr Naughton referenced the need for camper van sites and said that special incentives were required to facilitate this type of development.

Cllr A Farren said he believed the €2000 charge for caravans/mobiles was too high together with the €3000 fee for carparking. Donegal, he stated, was a holiday destination and these charges would restrict development. There was, he added, the need for a more proactive approach in terms of the tourism product.

Cllr Mc Dermott concurred and said that the mindset needed to change in relation to rural tourism and that the ten berth restriction for carparking/campervan facility was unviable.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that what had been sought today was permission to allow the Development Contribution Scheme to go out to public consultation.

Alluding to the number of concerns raised, he said, that the adoption of the scheme would come before members again following the period of public consultation and the preparation of a Chief Executive's report on

the submissions received. The issue of the ten berth restriction was, he advised, a separate policy matter and not part of the Development Contribution Scheme proposals. He thanked Mr Killian Smyth, Executive Planner for his work on the scheme to date and said that amendments could be made when the scheme came back to members for approval.

C/348/25

TO NOTE UPDATE REGARDING THE GUIDELINES UNDER SECTION 28 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000-2025 RELATION TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND HOUSING GROWTH REQUIREMENTS

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

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services alluded to the documentation circulated and said that the preparation of a report on the guidelines was underway and would be completed as soon as a tool kit was received from the department.

He said that work on Variation No 1 to the County Development Plan 2024-2030 was progressing and would be presented to members in November.

Cllr A Doherty highlighted the fact that the baseline housing growth requirement figures for Donegal made reference to the period 2023 and from 2023-2040. He asked for clarity in relation to the intervening years.

The Cathaoirleach said it would be possible to have a workshop to look at issues arising in relation to the County Development Plan and advised of the need to include the following issues:

- Unfinished Estates
- Issue arising in the Inishowen MD as a follow on from the previous Development Plan.
- The Tourism Policy.
- Marina at Fahan.

C/349/25

TO APPROVE THE HOLDING OF A WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025-2030

It was unanimously agreed to hold a Plenary Planning Workshop on Wednesday 5th November at 10am in the County House, Lifford.

C/350/25

TO AGREE DATE FOR THE 2026 REVENUE BUDGET MEETING

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr McGarvey it was resolved to hold the 2026 Revenue Budget Meeting on Friday 21st November, 2025 at 10a.m. in the County House, Lifford.

C/351/25

TO AGREE OVERDRAFT ACCOMMODATION OF TEN MILLION EURO (€10,000,000) FOR FULL YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2026.

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

It was noted that the Bank had made, and was continuing to make, available to the Council and overdraft facility (the facility) for the purposes of the working capital needs of the Council as may be required from time to time.

After due consideration, it was resolved on the proposal of Cllr M Farren, seconded by Cllr Scanlon, and in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, and subject to the sanction of the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage that:

“It is in the best interests of the Council and in line with its statutory rights and obligations to avail of the Facility and provide the Guarantee up to an amount of ten million euro (€10,000,000).

Accordingly, the Council agrees to avail of the Facility and provide the Guarantee.

Each of the persons undertaking the roles of Donegal Chief Executive and the Director of Finance from time to time be authorised, together and separately, to negotiate the terms of each of the facility letters put, and to be put, in place to document the Facility (each, a “Facility Letter” and together, the “Facility Letters”), together with any amendments or variations to the Guarantee or replacement Guarantee, and to sign each such Facility Letter and Guarantee by way of acceptance of the terms of such document (including, without limitation, all terms and conditions referred to in each such Facility Letter) and that each such signed Facility Letter and Guarantee shall be fully binding on, and enforceable against, the Council; and

The Council ratifies the availing of the Facility by the Council, within the limits specified, and confirms the execution of all Facility Letters together with the Guarantee”.

C/352/25

TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY DRAFTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CCMA

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

On the proposal of Cllr G Doherty, seconded by Cllr Scanlon the Draft Donegal County Council Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy drafted in accordance with the CCMA was approved.

TO CONSIDER A REPORT ON THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON COUNCIL'S USE OF PURCHASING CARDS

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

The Chief Executive noted that the internal audit report in question was available on the Council's website for the public to view. A number of reports were available at this location, he said, in the interest of overall transparency. This report, it was noted, had been selected for specific media attention.

It had been published, he stated, with no right of reply and thus an unbalanced interpretation had appeared. The article in question, he stated, had been selective and had not told the full story. This, he said, had mislead people in relation to all the facts and had given a poor impression of the Council.

There had been a backlash, he said, in that businesses were now hesitant to accept the purchase cards as the impression had been given that these were being used in an irresponsible manner. This type of payment method was, he advised, of great benefit to the Council and to the community in general given that it allowed quick access to products/services and was a speedy and efficient way of doing business. It was noted that Purchasing Cards provided users with a more flexible and immediate method of carrying out low value and frequent purchases.

They were not, he advised, credit cards but rather low value purchase cards used for day to day expenditure and the system itself provided excellent tracking information. It was clear from the audit report, he added, that there had been no wrongdoing and that there was no evidence of purchases being made that were not required. The overall total expenditure using these cards was, he said low in terms of overall expenditure amounting to less than 1%.

The report, he said, had flagged the need for greater discipline in terms of documenting purchases and strengthening internal controls. Average expenditure, it was acknowledged, was €138 and the vast majority of transactions benefitted local shops and businesses.

This report had been considered, he said, by the Senior Management Team and the Council's Audit & Risk Committee prior to inclusion on the website.

There was a need, he contended, to review the policy itself given that it had been in place now for a number of years and there were areas that needed modernising and specific rules changed to suit present day requirements.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Services and Emergency Services said that there had been an intimation that the cards were being used to buy fuel and this was incorrect. Specific fuel cards existed, he said, for all vehicles in the Council fleet and that these were well monitored and strong checks and balances in place overseen by line management.

Cllr G Doherty acknowledged the work of the Internal Audit Department and said it was important that members were familiar with same. It was essential, he added, that the conclusions and recommendations were acted upon. It was clear, he said, that certain practices had to change. He cited the need for the purchasing and procedures policies to be updated and for members to be provided with a briefing when this was carried out. In relation to toll charges, he highlighted the fact that most organisations required expenditure on these to be reclaimed through their travel systems.

Members raised a number of queries namely:

- What is the excess limit on the purchasing cards?
- Are all 250 needed and how many of these displayed usage?
- What is the annual cost and fees associated with the cards?
- Is it possible to reduce the number of cards in circulation?

Cllr Beard advised of the following:

- That the media should be contacted with a comprehensive reply.
- The policy and procedure documentation should be updated as soon as possible.
- Progress report should be provided within three months of the implementation of the audit recommendations.
- Independent audit needed to verify that the recommendations and improvements had been implemented all in the interest of public accountability and transparency.

Cllr A Farren said, he was of the opinion that the cards offered efficiency in terms of day to day activity and that the availability had to be there. He cited the importance of replying to the media at the earliest opportunity as responses often issues too late and the damage had been done. Cllr Mc Dermott concurred and noted the importance of acting quickly and responding in a timely manner when contentious issues arose. It had happened far too many times in the past, he said and particularly in relation to defective concrete block issues.

Cllr Kelly said that no staff member should be targeted with abuse in relation to this matter as unfortunately the message had been delivered too late in the day. The Corporate Policy Group, he noted, had received a detailed response on the matter. It was unfortunate, he added, that the Council did not get the time to respond and clarify same. CPG had also, he stated, forwarded the report to the Value for Money

Committee. Purchasing cards, he added, enabled each transaction to be clearly accounted and offered overall savings in the long-term. He said that he hoped that the correct message would now go out and be delivered by the various media outlets.

Concluding the Chief Executive said that he was happy for a workshop to take place. The Council he noted was a large organisation with 1000s of transactions occurring and that all were checked and pursued by Finance. Alluding the backlog of transactions referenced in the media report, he said, that each and every one had been checked, verified and accounted for.

The report itself, he said, had gone to the Audit & Risk Committee on the 14th April as part of the normal governance procedures.

These relatively low value cards, were, he said, good for local businesses. He accepted that the response had been late in issuing given the holiday period but that there was an expectation that the organisation would be contacted before an article appeared in the paper.

C/354/25

CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Glenn Doherty, Planning, on the death of his mother, Margaret.
- Tony Browne, HR, on the death of his mother Susan.
- Eva Browne, Library Service, on the death of her mother, Susan.
- Martina Mc Brearty, formerly Housing, Letterkenny PSC, on the death of her mother, Siobhan.
- The family of the late former A/County Secretary, Sean O' Donnell.
- Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh on the death of his brother, Danny.
- Anne Mc Elchar, Chief Executive's Office on the death of her mother, Margaret.
- Cllr Ciaran Brogan on the death of his father, Philip.

Local Democracy Taskforce

The Cathaoirleach read into the record correspondence from Cllr Kieran Hanlon, AILG President in relation to the Taskforce on Local Government.

Civic Reception

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Clafferty seconded by Cllr Molloy it was resolved to afford a civic reception to the Cloughaneely Senior and Junior Bands in recognition of their outstanding success to date. Cllr Mc Clafferty said this would allow for formal recognition of the hard work and dedication of all the band members and also recognise their achievements to date.

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

Community Development

- Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2025

Capital Projects Delivery Unit & Taking in Charge of Housing Estates Division

- Major Projects Update

Refugee Response Unit Update

- Number of Refugees
- Commercial Accommodation
- Offer a Home
- Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT)

Planning Services

- Development Applications Unit
- ePlanning
- Enforcement
- Planning Policy
- Casual Trading-Review of Policy and Byelaws
- Review of Development Contribution Scheme
- Conservation Services

Regeneration and Development Team

- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)
- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)
- Croi Conaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Scheme
- Addressing Vacancy and Dereliction

2.Water and Environment

Climate Action

- Climate Action Week 2025 13th-19th October
- Inishowen Is Ours – PEACEPLUS Programme
- Community Climate Action Fund – Phase 2
- Launch of the People's Transition for Carndonagh Action Plan

Flood Relief Schemes

Defective Concrete Blocks - Update

- Background

3. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services

Social Housing

Social Housing Delivery Pipeline 2022-2030

Social Housing Second-Hand Acquisitions Programme 2025

Library Service

- National Public Library Open Day-September 27th
- Fáilte Isteach Language Classes
- Europe Direct Letterkenny
- ChangeMakers
- Wainfest 2025

Arts Office

- Culture Night
- Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival

County Donegal Heritage Office

- Working Over By Exhibition
- Glasgow Corporation Transport & The Donegal Connection
- Heritage Week in County Donegal
- The Laurels, Glenties Historic Towns Initiative
- Ballyshannon Historic Towns Atlas

Biodiversity Office

Biodiversity Office events for National Heritage Week

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

Fire Service

- Operations
- Fire Prevention
- Major Emergency Management

Information Systems

- eGovernment Award Finalist
- Digital Maturity Assessment
- Economic Development Division
- National AI Challenge
- TBEX Donegal 2025
- Nighttime Economy Action Plan Launch

- #LoveDonegal Day
- London Vintage Day

Local Enterprise Office

- Progress Against Targets
- Developing Female Entrepreneurship
- Digital for Business
- Blas na hÉireann Irish Food Awards
- SuperValu Food Academy
- Business Support Clinics
- Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)

5. Roads & Transportation

National Roads Office Update

- N56 Glenties to Kilraine Project Phase 2
- N56 Letterkenny Traffic Management and Active Travel Project – Polestar to Creamery Roundabout
- Pavement Asset Repair and Renewal (PARR) 2025
- Barnesmore Gap Greenway Outline Program
- TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Donegal
- A5 Western Transport Corridor and Access to the Northwest

Roads Areas Update

- Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance
- Local Improvement Scheme – Additional Funding Received
- TII Emergency Pavement Scheme
- Interim Agreement on Road Openings by Uisce Éireann to 30th June 2026
- Winter Maintenance
- ROBUST – Electric shaRed mOBility hUbS Trail

Retirement of Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services .

The Cathaoirleach offered his best wishes and thanks for his outstanding service to Donegal County Council. This was followed by a round of applause from all in the chamber.

Tribute was paid to Mr Liam Ward who was due to retire from Donegal County Council on the 10th October 2025 after 42 years of service with Donegal County Council. It was noted that he had worked across various Council Departments including Roads, Finance, Corporate, Information Technology, Human Resources, Housing, Community & Enterprise, and Planning Services over this period. His appointment as

Director of Service in 2010 was testament to his work ethic and the wide range of experience gained within these various departments. This role also saw him take on the role of Director of Services with responsibility for the Letterkenny/Milford Municipal District.

Liam represented the Council on many national boards and committees, serving with distinction and made a considered and valued contribution to each and every one.

It was acknowledged that he had been a truly valued member of staff who had gained the respect of all who came in contact with him. Members were informed that he had at all times displayed the highest order of public service and had represented the Council in an exemplary fashion.

The Chief Executive thanked him for his service and for the manner in which he had carried out the role of Deputy Chief Executive for the past 5 years.

Best wishes were extended to Liam and his family for a healthy and enjoyable retirement. It was noted that an event to recognise these achievements would be held on Friday 3rd October where members would have an opportunity to speak and pay tribute to Liam on his retirement.

Water Tanker Redeployment

Cllr Mc Monagle raise concerns in relation to the redeployment of a water tanker from Letterkenny to Buncrana. He said that he believed that the Fire Service management had superseded their powers and had operated outside of Section 26 of the Fire Services Act. He contended that a commitment had been given at the recent Emergency Response Committee meeting to discuss the matter at the meeting today.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that he had not been at the meeting in question but would follow up on same and organise an early workshop in relation to the matter. He said he was satisfied that the Fire Service were not operating outside of Section 26 and that the matter had a lot of detail which was more suited for discussion in a workshop format. Cllr Mc Monagle contended that under Section 26 it was the responsibility and the preserve of the elected members to make a decision on an operational matter. It was, he said, a reserved function of the members and the decision had been made without consultation, and thus proper procedure had not been followed.

He was, he said, disappointed that no one from the Fire Service was present and noted that this had been recorded in the minutes of the ERC meeting.

The Director of Service reiterated the fact that the matter given the detail involved was more suited to the workshop format and committed to organising same in a timely manner and that a report was already being prepared on the matter.

Cllr Mc Monagle again contended that the issue was a matter for the elected members and that a decision had been made without consultation and in opposition to the wishes of the Letterkenny members.

Mr Martin said it had to be remembered that it was a county-wide fire service and that the Senior Officers need to determine where the best location was for a piece of equipment and as to how resources needed to be aligned. New appliances were received from time to time and it was noted that there had never been a custom or practice of bringing notification of same to the Chamber. It was intended, he added, to look at in the workshop where the legal requirement lay versus the day to day operational requirements.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that if the right decision was to relocate the tanker to Buncrana then that was something the members were well capable of doing. He said that a conversation was now required as to what the reserved functions of the members under Section 26 actually entailed and clarity as to what the actual responsibilities were.

Concluding the Director of Service noted that a Section 26 Plan had been brought to Council in 2018 and had been rejected by the members arising from the fact that there was a clash between the national policy in relation to the Islands and the practice in Donegal.

The following questions were noted.

C/356/25 **UPDATE REPORT ON THE ONGOING REVIEW OF ALL THE COUNCIL SERVICES**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we have an updated report on the ongoing review of all the council services and when the outcome of that will be presented to the elected members of the Council?

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

C/357/25 **EMPLOYING OUR OWN IN-HOUSE SOLICITOR**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

What steps have taken place regarding our legal services with a view to employing our own council solicitor in-house in order to streamline much of the workload by all our different directorates?

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

C/358/25

ANSWERS TO MOTIONS IN ADVANCE OF MEETINGS

Cllr Devine submitted the following question:-

Can I get confirmation if any councillors in the chamber receive the answers to motions many days in advance of the meetings (Chairs of Committees or MDs) and if is so why aren't all members treated the same with responses to the motions?

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

C/359/25

DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS SCHEME FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

Cllr McMonagle submitted the following question:-

Can I have an update on any recent information we have received from the Minister of Housing in relation to the Defective Concrete Block Scheme for Social Housing and when it might be passed and started?

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

C/360/25

UPDATE ON HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE ON THE HOUSING LIST WAITING FOR A WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOME

Cllr Devine submitted the following question:-

Can I get an update on how many people are on the housing list waiting for a wheelchair accessible home and how many are being built in our new social housing stock?

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

C/361/25

REMEDIAL WORKS INTERNALLY & EXTERNALLY FOR COUNCIL OWNED DCB HOUSES

Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

Can the Housing Directorate put in place a plan to carry out remedial repair works internally and externally, including painting, addressing mould, and crack-filling ahead of the autumn and winter seasons, for Council-owned DCB houses across the county, in lieu of the much-anticipated, long-delayed Social Housing Remediation Programme for Defective Blocks?

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

C/362/25 **CURRENT STATUS OF THE PROPOSED TEN-T PROJECTS**

Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

What is the current status of the proposed TEN-T road projects in Donegal, including projected timelines and commitments to funding from the government?

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

C/363/25 **BREAKDOWN OF THE NUMBER OF STAFF IN EACH DIRECTORATE AND PER MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

Cllr G Doherty submitted the following question:-

Can I have a breakdown of the numbers of staff working within each directorate of DCC and per Municipal District?

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

C/364/25 **BREAKDOWN OF THE TOTAL GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr G Doherty submitted the following question:-

Can I have a breakdown of total grant funding received by DCC in each of the last five years together with the amounts spent on matched funding for each project?

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

C/365/25 **RENT PRESSURE ZONES**

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

To ask the Director for Housing how the new rent pressure zones will affect the rents we charge people on our own housing stock? Furthermore, what impact will they have in relation to the properties we lease but don't own? Will those properties be subject to the new legislation also? If so from what date? If a property owner was in the process of negotiating a new lease with the Council before the announcement of the RPZ will that lease be subject to the RPZ legislation?

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

C/366/25 **HOMELESS NUMBERS RECORDED FROM SEPT 1ST 2024 UNTIL SEPT 1ST 2025**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

What were the homeless numbers recorded in each municipality in DCC from Sept 1st 2024 until Sept 1st 2025 and what are the current results following works by DCC Homeless Presentation Officer(s) to secure/identify available properties for refuge provision in the county?

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

C/367/25

APPROVED HOUSING BODIES

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

What AHBs are currently working/and or have expressed an interest to work (Sept 2025) with Donegal County Council in each municipality to deliver much needed social and affordable homes and what are the current timelines agreed for the delivery of these projects?

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

C/368/25

BESPOKE STANDARD FOR CONCRETE USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF DCC SOCIAL HOMES

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

Why did Donegal County Council deem it necessary to devise its own bespoke standard for concrete used in the construction of social homes, rather than relying on the existing national and European standards?

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

C/369/25

BYE LAWS PERTAINING TO HORSES AND PONIES ACCESSING PUBLIC ROADS, BEACHES, WALKWAYS, GREENWAYS ETC

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

To ask the Director for Roads and Director for Environment what Bye Laws, if any, within the county, pertain to horses and ponies accessing public roads, beaches, walkways, greenways, trails, forests or any other public space. Are there areas where horses and ponies are banned (for example Blue Flag beaches), if there are does this ban relate to all animals or exclusively horses?

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

C/370/25

HOW IS THE REVENUE FROM CURRENT CAR PARKING CHARGES BEING SPENT

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

Can the Council provide an itemised breakdown of how the revenue

generated from current car parking charges in each of the designated towns is being spent?

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

C/371/25 **ADDITIONAL ENGINEERING STAFF IN RESPECT OF OUR MAIN HARBOURS**

Cllr Crossan submitted the following question:-

What arrangements are being made to appoint additional engineering staff in respect of our main harbours so that all necessary surveys, reports and applications are completed to facilitate the development of the harbours?

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

C/372/25 **SHARED IRELAND APPLICATION FOR FUNDING IN LEISURE CENTRES**

Cllr Murray submitted the following question:-

Is this Council currently engaged in discussions with Causeway Coast and Glens Council regarding a Shared Ireland application for funding in Leisure Centres in both council areas, and, if so, what is the current status of such discussions?

He received a response from the Director of Water Services, Environment, DCB Scheme & Facilities Management in relation to the above.

C/373/25 **MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES**

Members noted the motions from other Councils.

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Carlow County Council agrees to write to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and to the Taoiseach, expressing this Council's opposition to any increase in college fees and the Government to ensure to maintain the Grant in the upcoming budget.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

"Galway County Council reaffirms its strong support for Portiuncula University Hospital, as recognised under Special Policy Objective H4 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and acknowledges PUHs long term strategic importance in the county and beyond as a provider of essential healthcare services and also as a major employer and economic driver in Co. Galway.

Galway County Council calls on the Minister for Health and CEO HSE to support PUHs critical role in maternity care provision in the county

and to recognise Portiuncula UHs strategic location as the most accessibly located maternity unit in the country just 800 meters off the M6 in providing crucial timely accessible maternity care for mothers infants and families across a wide and rural catchment in County Galway and to communities in Roscommon, Westmeath, Longford, Leitrim, Offaly, North Tipperary and beyond. Restriction of maternity services poses serious risks to women and infants, especially those in rural and socioeconomically disadvantaged areas with poor transport where they are now facing much increased travel times and reduced local access to crucial maternity services.

Galway County Council calls on the Minister for Health and CEO HSE to seek development of an immediate plan for reinstatement of high quality safe maternity services at PUH, with allocation of the necessary funding and resources for full implementation.

Galway County Council asks the Minister for Health if she will commission a fully independent external review of maternity services across the county and comprehensively examine risk assessments and consequence of any maternity care downgrade in the wider area served including the ability of receiving maternity units to safely absorb additional patient load, given capacity, staffing, and infrastructure challenges.

A copy of this motion is sent to the Oireachtas Joint Health Committee, all Oireachtas Elected Representatives for the area, and all local authorities."

I would be obliged if you could consider and revert to me with your views on the above motion so that I can advise the Elected Members.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

"It was proposed that a letter of support issue in relation to the motion passed by Donegal County Council calling to safeguard the Triple Lock component of Irish neutrality. It was further agreed to circulate same to all authorities for their consideration."

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

"I will move at the next meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council write to the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, James Lawless, stating that this District condemn any future attempt by the Government to reinstate the €3,000 college contribution fee for students given the increased financial burden that this will place on students and their families."

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

"That, Limerick City and County Council agrees to and calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to relax the current ribbon development rules to allow for the construction of 6 dwellings in a linear arrangement and, where appropriate, that restrictions be set aside entirely for sites within 1km of an existing

settlement boundary once the development is located on a non-regional road with available appropriate sightlines.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Limerick City and County Council provide a liaison/link to Community Welfare where support is necessary to enable newly allocated tenants move in speedily.”

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

“That this Council asks the Minister for Housing to include Part 5 houses in the “Tenant Purchase Scheme.”

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

Given the huge success of the Love Sligo Gift Card since its launch in 2024 and it having achieved over €1m in sales in Ireland, driving an estimated 150,000 in-store customers across the country:

“That Sligo County Council writes to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment and the Minister for Rural Affairs to ask them to consider supporting the Town and Gift Card rollout across every county.”

WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

Carers Allowance and Benefit Reform

“That the members of Waterford City and County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection Mr Dara Calleary, to abolish means testing for Carers Allowance in Budget 2026. We further call on the Minister to introduce a fair and adequate payment for recipients of Carers Allowance and Carers Benefit one which truly reflects the time, dedication and compassionate care that carers provided everyday across Ireland.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach:_____

Dated:_____