

1st October, 2024

TO ALL MEMBERS OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

The Adjourned September Meeting of Donegal County Council, will recommence on Monday 7th October, 2024 at 12 noon in the Council Chamber, County House, Lifford to consider the unfinished business listed below:

- Items No. 8 to 50

Documents can be accessed in the current meeting folder on eCouncil.

An online link to join the meeting will issue separately.



Patsy Lafferty
Meetings Administrator

**MINUTES OF ADJOURNED SEPTEMBER MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY
COUNCIL HELD ON 7TH OCTOBER, 2024 IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD**

C/321/24 MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs N Kennedy, Cathaoirleach, J Beard, M Boyle, F Bradley J Brogan, D Coyle, T Crossan, TS Devine, A Doherty, A Farren, M Farren, DM Kelly, M MacGiolla Easbuig, M McBride, M McClafferty, P McGarvey, D McGee, P McGowan, G McMonagle, D Meehan, JS Ó Fearraigh, M Scanlon.
Online: Cllrs L Blaney, C Brogan, P Canning, G Doherty, N Jordan, J Kavanagh, F McBrearty, M McDermott, M Mc Mahon, D Nic Mheanman, A Molloy, J Murray.
Apologies: M Harley.

C/322/24 OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

John G McLaughlin, Chief Executive, Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing & Corporate/Meetings Administrator, Liam Ward, Director of Community Development & Planning Services, Richard Gibson, Director of Finance, Anne Marie Conlon, Head of Economic Development, Deirdre Harte, Project Officer, Economic Development, Stephen Flynn, Senior Engineer, Roads & Transportation, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, William Colvin, Clerical Officer, Róise Ní Laifearthaigh, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Dónall MacGiolla Choill, Tacaíocht do Sheirbhísí Aistriúcháin, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/323/24 ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

On the proposal of Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr M Farren it was resolved to adjourn the meeting to later in the afternoon to facilitate the completion of the Special Plenary Housing Meeting.

**C/324/24 TO CONSIDER AND ENDORSE SUBMISSIONS TO THE REVIEW OF
THE NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

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

Ms Anne Marie Conlon, Head of Economic Development gave a detailed presentation on the submission to the review of the National Planning Framework which had been compiled in conjunction with Derry City & Strabane District Council. She acknowledged the input of Ms Deirdre Harte, Project Manager, Shared Island Project, the Planning Section of Donegal County Council and Planning Staff in Derry City & Strabane District Council. The key element of the submission, she said, was to ensure that the Northwest City Region realised its potential as a net contributor to the economy of the island and to address regional balance.

This it was acknowledged took into consideration the following:

1. Recognition of the Derry-Letterkenny City Region within the national hierarchy of city regions.

2. Further strengthening of the role of Letterkenny as a key Regional Growth Centre in the Northern & Western Region.
3. Identification and prioritisation of enabling and critical infrastructure for the NWCR.
4. Supporting the establishment of a dedicated Economic Taskforce for the NWCR.

She said that if regional development was weakened in the NPF First Revision then there would be wider repercussions for future priorities, strategies, and investment potential.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services informed members that Donegal County Council had also made a submission which was very much aligned with the submission from the Northwest City Region. The Members of the Northwest Development Group were, he said, were aware that at a session in late November last year, Donegal County Council were invited as a city region with Derry City & Strabane. District Council to make an early submission which was forwarded in January 2024. It was disappointing, he added, that many of the asks in this document were not reflected in the first draft revision document.

He said that it had well outlined in the presentation as to what was required with additional back up information and evidence provided. The importance of this revision, he added, should not be underestimated in terms of its significance for the region and its future infrastructural needs. He encouraged all who had access to any political influence to use it so that the submissions as outlined could be reflected in the final draft revision document when published.

Cllr Mc Gowan welcomed the fact that the anomaly in relation to the inclusion of the remaining section of the N15 Ballybofey to Lifford section had been included. He said that there was an issue in that the Lifford/Stranorlar MD was in the Northwest region but not part of the ICBAN area and as a result was not party to the relevant updates. These, he said, needed to be provided at MD level.

The Lough Mourne extension, he added, was a massive project requiring major funding and needed to be actively pursued.

He was, he said, concerned that several terms were being used from the Northwest Metropolitan Area to the City Region/Growth Centre and that this had created confusion. It was imperative, he added, that the overall terminology to be used was clarified and all concerned clear as to what areas were included. This was, he confirmed, a region in transition and lagged behind the rest of the country in terms of overall development.

Cllr A Doherty said that time was of the essence here and that cognisance had not been taken of the fact that the Northwest City Region had the fourth largest population in the country. The draft revision, he contended, had removed references to regional development together with the risks for not achieving stated targets. He noted that the National Planning Revision Framework review occurred every six years and that there would not be another opportunity to influence the process until 2030. He alluded to the fact that this extended beyond the planning process and was tied in with several mechanisms all striving for regional balance. He cited the necessity of getting the message out that the Northwest City Region to be a vibrant and attractive region needed to be included in the National Planning Framework.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the concept of the Northwest City Region had developed over the last ten years given the clear lack of investment in the NW region. There was clear acknowledgement that the only way achieve this status was through cooperation with Derry City & Strabane District Council and with the assistance of various stakeholders in the education, tourism, health sectors etc. He said that the region was nearly on par with Cork City, and it would be remiss of any government to exclude its potential.

Projects such as the A5 and the TEN-T, he added, needed to be progressed with both acting as a definitive catalyst for the Northwest City Region.

The skill set developed within the region was, he contended, as good, if not better than any other region. A lot of work, he said, had been done and the aim was that the Northwest City Region would become a net contributor.

Cllr Mc Bride said that it was imperative that all possible was done to ensure that this status was recognised. The presentation, he said, had referenced various aspects that needed investment, yet these had been caused by, lack of investment over the past number of years. He cited the need to ensure that everything possible was done to retain city status for the Northwest Region.

Cllr C Brogan said that all concerned needed to take credit for what had been achieved to date. The Northwest City Region was, he said, a role model and the collaboration between Donegal County Council and Derry City & Strabane District Council clearly showed what could be achieved. The Irish Government, he said, had invested €46m in Magee University, and a good working relationship had been established between the University of Ulster and the Atlantic Technological University. A lot of good things, he said, were happening and referenced the €600m to be provided by the Irish Government for the A5. All of these, he added, would help the

Northwest City Region get on a level playing field and receive the investment that it needed.

Cllr Boyle alluded to the fact that there ports had not been referenced in the submission and that there was no recognition of the marine economy despite Killybegs having the deepest water in Ireland. He cited the need to promote wind energy and said that this was something that could be pursued by both Councils creating jobs and boosting the economy in the long run. The N56 Inver to Killybegs Road, he added, required immediate upgrade works to facilitate industrial traffic coming from Killybegs.

Cllr Canning concurred with the above and welcomed the fact that Minister Mc Conalogue was positively disposed to the submission. He advised of the need for ongoing collaboration and the fact that this had a positive impact for the entire Northwest.

It was unanimously agreed to endorse the submissions to the review of the National Planning Framework.

C/325/24 **TO NOTE CHANGE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE DONEGAL LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above and it was unanimously agreed to approve the nomination of Ms Eve Anne McCarron and Ms Anne McAleer as representatives of Letterkenny ATU and the Health Service Executive on the Donegal Local Community Development Committee.

C/326/24 **TO NOTE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 15TH JULY, 2024.**

On the proposal of Cllr McBride, seconded by Cllr Meehan, members noted the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 15th July, 2024.

C/327/24 **ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE, SEMINAR OR EVENT**

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

Training

- AILG Autumn Seminar held on the 11th and 12th September, 2024 in the Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan.
- AILG Elected Members Autumn Training Programme
- AILG & Office of the Planning Regulator Seminar “*Overview of the Planning System*” in the Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore on the 28th September, 2024.
- LAMA Autumn Seminar to be held on the 17th & 18th October, 2024 in the Newgrange Hotel, Navan, Co Meath.

Other

- Attendance of the Mayor of Letterkenny at the 78th Independence Day of India event at India House, Foxrock, Dublin on the 15th August, 2024.
- Attendance & participation of ICBAN members on the ICBAN Capacity Building Programme 2024-2025

Travel Abroad

- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the Dúiche Workshop “Capitalising on Culture, Competing the Difference” in Leuven, Belgium from the 14th to the 18th October, 2024.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the Golden Bridges Events in the USA from the 11th to the 14th November, 2024.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the EMA Forum in Amsterdam on the 20th and 21st November, 2024.
- ICBAN Members Study visit to the Borderlands Region of Scotland at the end of November 2024.
- Attendance of the Cathaoirleach at the 135th anniversary celebrations for the Donegal Association of Philadelphia in Philadelphia from the 6th to the 8th December, 2024.

Cllr J Brogan queried the cost of foreign travel and whether all of the trips outlined were necessary. The Cathaoirleach advised that detail in relation to these was included with the agenda and an approximate costing outlined.

Cllr Mc Gowan proposed the adoption of the above and said that it was imperative that the Council always looked where savings could be made and ensured that the value for money aspect was adhered to. Cllr Bradley seconded the proposal.

C/328/24

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Members noted the report submitted by Cllr McMonagle in relation to his attendance at the 78th Anniversary of India’s Independence Day Event at India House, Foxrock, Dublin.

C/329/24

EXTENSION OF LOUGH MOURNE RESERVOIR

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

"That this Council write to Uisce Éireann, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and to Minister Darragh O' Brien unanimously calling for Lough Mourne Reservoir to be extended to include the Letterkenny MD and to include outlying areas not covered, upgrading all existing networks and upgrading reservoirs within the existing Lifford/Stranorlar MD".

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

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig suggested that the motion be amended to include reference to "Throughout Donegal".

Cllr Mc Gowan said that he appreciated that many small towns and villages were suffering and that he was supportive of the extension in a measured capacity. This extension, he said, needed to be provided for within the confines of the National Development Framework otherwise nothing would happen. This project, he said, needed to go ahead regardless and many towns and villages in rural Donegal were in need of immediate assistance.

Cllr Kelly supporting the motion outlined the need for an adequate water supply in Letterkenny and said he could appreciate that there were issues in terms of water capacity throughout Donegal. It was, he said, an excellent motion and essential that it was included in the National Development Plan.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/330/24

ROLL OUT NATIONWIDE OF THE HEALTHY AGE FRIENDLY HOMES PROGRAMME

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

"That this Council welcomes the roll out nationwide of the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme, particularly confirmation of the placing of co-ordinators in each of the 31 local authorities, Calls now on Donegal County Council to continue to provide and assist the network of support dedicated to helping all citizens live well as they age and ensure that older people receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place".

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

Cllr Doherty welcomed Donegal County Council's involvement on the Older Person's Council and said it was recognised that Donegal was an age friendly county which recognised diversity among older people.

He cited a number of issues impacting on older people in Inishowen. These included:

- The fact that eye treatment was now only available in Sligo which was lengthy journey for many elderly people.
- Additional supports needed to encourage older people to move to smaller and more compact accommodation.
- Housing Adaptation issues and application process needed more dedicated personnel.
- Clerk of Works position in Inishowen has not been filled and this is holding up housing adaptation applications.

Cllr Doherty asked for an update in relation to the new Age Friendly Strategy which was to be delivered through a multi-agency approach. He queried also how this would be presented to the public.

Cllr Crossan said he concurred with this assessment and was happy to support the motion.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services drew attention to the fact that An Age Friendly Co-ordinator had been appointed in each of the 31 local authorities with Donegal being allocated two. These would, he said, would provide increased resources to older people and would be able to make representations on their behalf. The Housing Section, he noted worked with its elderly tenants and the Council itself was very proactive in several age friendly initiatives. Members, he said, would get an opportunity to have an input into the overall strategy.

It was acknowledged that the Council worked in partnership with the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older Persons Council and that the Chief Executive and the Cathaoirleach were strongly committed to supporting this work. He said that an update would issue in relation to the problems with the Housing Adaptation Grant process.

Cllr Doherty welcomed the fact that there were two Age Friendly Co-ordinators in the county and the efforts were being made to promote active age equality.

C/331/24

INSTALLATION OF SPEED CAMERAS AT SPECIFIC LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY

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

"In light of the fact that 14 people, to date, have died on our Donegal roads, I propose that permanent speed cameras are installed at specific locations throughout the county. As a precursor to this, a pilot scheme, at least, should be initiated to evaluate the potential success and impact of such a scheme".

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

Cllr Crossan cited the need for an increased Garda presence and fixed cameras at specific locations. He noted that a lot of accidents involved young people and that drivers of all ages were using mobile phones whilst driving. More Garda resources, he said, needed to be employed to ensure an increased level of enforcement and hopefully reduce the deaths on our roads.

Cllr A Doherty alluded to a number of tragic deaths that had taken place recently in Inishowen and said that prevention was the key. This, he said, should involve the general road network, Council Housing Estates etc so that road traffic accidents could be reduced or removed.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Stephen Flynn, Senior Engineer, confirmed that An Garda Siochana were progressing the installation of nine static speed cameras around the country and that these were due to be installed by the end of 2024 and chosen on the basis of fatal and serious injury data over the last seven years. These, he said, were in addition to the 58 new mobile safety cameras operated by GoSafe and that An Garda Siochana were developing a business case for the introduction of another 100 static speed cameras.

C/332/24

THAT WE ENGAGE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT IN RELATION TO ACCIDENTS ON A NUMBER OF REGIONAL ROADS

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

"That Donegal County Council engage with the Department of Transport in relation to the Regional Roads in parts of Donegal where a number of accidents have occurred".

He received a reply from the Director of Roads & Transport in relation to the above.

Cllr Farren said that the Department had not taken on board members representations and that accidents were occurring regularly in specific locations. He referred in particular to Clar Corner and the stretch of road on the Redcastle side up to the Ballyrattan Road, where a number of accidents had taken place over the years. He noted that there had been plans back in 2008 to carry out works but that these not materialised due to lack of funding. He said that he had asked on a number of occasions for a counter to be put down at this location and requested that this be progressed as a matter of urgency.

This, he contended, was a dangerous location and drivers were not adhering to the speed limit.

Cllr Mc Dermott supporting the motion said that this was a busy stretch of road and funding was needed to progress the necessary safety works.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Stephen Flynn, Senior Engineer alluded to the response provided by the Director of Roads & Transportation and to the fact that the Department of Transport invites applications for safety improvement works on Regional and Local Roads annually in the last quarter of each calendar year. He outlined the specific allocation process and said that there would be further engagement with the Elected Members regarding same over the coming months.

Cllr Farren asked that this stretch of road be kept under consideration when making the funding application and said that he would welcome a meeting with the local roads engineer to discuss same.

C/333/24

RAISED TABLES IN AREAS THAT ARE WITNESSING HIGH TRAFFIC SPEED

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

"Given the success of the raised tables in Newtowncunningham, I would ask that the road safety team and the roads engineers within this county put in place a proper low-cost safety plan that includes raised tables in areas that are witnessing high traffic speed in built up areas".

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

Cllr Canning cited the need to put physical restraints in place given the serious issue with speeding on roads in Inishowen. He noted that the raised tables installed in Newtowncunningham had been very successful and that in other areas ramps had been beneficial. Going forward, he advised of the need for a low-cost safety plan with adequate provision for raised tables.

Cllr C Brogan said that the issue was a serious one and noted that the Newtowncunningham model had worked very well. There had been issues in some areas, he said, where ramps had been too high and caused problems. He advised of the need for a clear policy and specific proposal in relation to traffic calming. He said that it was unacceptable that the Members Infrastructure Fund would be used to fund the installation of ramps in some Municipal Districts.

There had been much talk, he said, over the last number of years about traffic calming measure but little had been done.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Stephen Flynn, Senior Engineer, said it was recognised that the measures in Newtowncunningham had been very successful but that raised tables were part of a wider suite of interventions including wider footpaths, crossing points etc.

C/334/24

THAT THE COUNCIL AMEND ITS EXISTING CIVIL DEFENCE PLAN TO PROVIDE REST CENTRES FOR ALL AFFECTED HOMEOWNERS DURING SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

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

With the winter storm season fast approaching, it is imperative that those homeowners who feel unsafe living in properties affected by the presence of defective concrete, or temporary accommodation such as static caravans while remediation work is taking place, have a place of refuge during severe weather events.

“This motion calls on Donegal County Council to amend its existing Civil Defence Plan to provide rest centres for all affected homeowners when a red weather warning has been issued by Met Eireann”.

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

Cllr Beard said that homeowners living in unsafe houses and in mobile homes were living in fear of severe weather events. She said she was not

happy with the reply and the fact that the Civil Defence Plan would not be reviewed until 2026. The situation, she contended, was extremely serious and represented a real emergency. It was imperative, she added, that rest centres were provided for families in such circumstances given that the vast majority of homeowners affected were not yet included in the Scheme. She called on the Council to provide people with a rest centres given that a red weather alert effectively meant damage to life.

Cllr Mc Gee supporting the motion said that Donegal County Council had a responsibility to help and that it was not enough to wait for an increase in the ancillary grant to be approved. He said that people needed to have confidence in the Council and to see that they had their best interests at heart.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Ms Anne Marie Conlon, Head of Economic Development, said that it was important to give confidence and comfort to homeowners. She said that there was provision in the Civil Defence Plan and especially when faced with a red weather alert or any emergency incident to provide emergency housing. Civil Defence, she said, worked with the local housing teams in instances where individual families needed assistance. Community facilities were also identified, she added, as part of the Civil Defence Plan and it was important that people were aware that Civil Defence provided this assistance.

Cllr Beard said that it was essential that community facilities were advertised prior to severe weather alerts and communicated through all available social media channels.

C/335/24

PROVISION OF SOCIAL HOUSING FOR THOSE WITH SEN, AEN AND PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Cllr Bradley proposed that the following motion be adopted:-

"That this Council will adopt a policy to provide housing in every new social housing development in the county for those with SEN, AEN and physical disabilities".

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

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig asked if the motion could be amended to include a reference to the provision of independent living facilities in new estates. Cllr Bradley accepted the amendment and thus on the proposal of Cllr Bradley, seconded by Cllr Canning it was resolved to adopt the following motion:

"That this Council will adopt a policy to provide housing in every new social housing development in the county for those with SEN, AEN and physical disabilities and to facilitate the inclusion of independent living facilities in new estates".

He said that this was an issue that came up again and again. He acknowledged that there were many excellent organisations providing assistance but the one element that was missing was adequate housing provision for people with additional needs. People, he said, had come to Inishowen where there was a centre of excellence for those with special needs. Within the next decade, he said, there would be a marked increase in the number of children and adults who needed this type of accommodation. He cited the need for forward planning to facilitate this demand.

Cllr Canning supporting the motion said that he had submitted a motion previously calling for a policy to be put in place guaranteeing that 5% of all social houses constructed in the next five years would be built for the sole purpose of accommodating residents with special needs. He referenced also the fact that there were a lot of green areas that the Council were not maintaining and that these could be utilised for accommodation purposes with access to water and sewerage facilities already in place.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services advised that Donegal County Council was the lead agency of Donegal's Housing Disability Steering Group (HDSG) and worked closely with the HSE and other sectoral groups to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities were met through the housing delivery programme. He noted that in line with the County Development Plan 2024-2030 it was a requirement that all new multiple housing developments comprising seven or more units had to contain a minimum of 30% residential units built to universal design standards and in accordance with the requirements of the National Disability Authority. A minimum of one unit was to be built to these standards in developments of 2 to 6 units.

Welcoming the discussion, he said that the Council would continue with its approach which was consistent with the discussions at the steering group.

Cllr Bradley thanked members for their support and said he appreciated that there was a lot of work going on behind the scenes.

THAT DCC PURCHASE THE HOMES OF FAMILIES WHO ARE IMPACTED BY BOTH DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS AND FLOODING IN AREAS OF HIGH RISK OF FLOODING

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

“I propose a motion that Donegal County Council agrees to purchase the homes of families who are impacted by both defective concrete blocks and flooding in areas where OPW and Donegal County Council are developing flood relief schemes. This would allow families whose homes were knowingly built in flood plains by the Donegal County Council planning department to be relocated out of these dangerous areas. Currently families on these flood plains cannot move forward on the enhanced defective block scheme because of the high risk of flooding impacting on the remediated home again. None of these families can obtain flood insurance and will therefore be unable to reinstate their remediated home when it does flood again. This proposal would allow these families to either purchase a new home or rebuild one on land that is safe to do so. Currently they are in limbo waiting for flood relief schemes that are going to take far too long to deliver and they do not have the time to wait because of the increasing structural damage that is being caused by defective blocks to their homes”.

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

Cllr Farren alluded to the 9 houses which comprised the Elm Park Development in Buncrana and said he would like the Council to commit to purchasing these homes which were at high risk of flooding and return the lands in question to the floodplain as part of the Buncrana-Ludden Flood Relief Scheme.

These he said had been impacted by the floods in 2019 and there has been significant work carried out to date in relation to the catchment flood risk management plan for that area. Data had indicated, he said, that Lower Elm Park was at high risk of flooding. The homeowners concerned, had, he advised, indicated that rather than go through the Defective Concrete Block Scheme, they would be prepared to relocate out of this high risk area and had communicated this to the CFRAMS Unit. All but one, he confirmed, were eligible for the DCB Scheme. It was noted that the residents concerned were unable to get insurance and even if they could avail of the Scheme and rebuild it would be six or seven years before the Flood Relief Scheme became operational. He said that the cost of rebuilding coupled with the cost of the necessary flood relief measures needed to be taken into consideration.

He thus called on the Council to open discussion with all Government Departments and the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage regarding the possibility of funding this proposal. This he said was a viable option and would allow the lands to return to the floodplain whilst giving peace of mind to the homeowners concerned.

He estimated that the overall cost of rebuilding would be €6 to €8m and that would be better spent on allowing the residents to relocate.

Alluding to the response and the confirmation that the Council did not provide funding for DCB affected homes or for the relocation of home sin flood risk areas, he said that the proposal made perfect sense and warranted consideration by the relevant agencies concerned.

Cllr Mc Gee said he wanted further clarification as the Council gave the initial planning permission for these homes. It was, he said an sensible and logical proposal and needed to be followed up on.

There was no opposition to then motion.

Cllr Mc Bride said that he was against the Council buying houses with mica and that it was the Department who should step in and purchase the properties.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said he was aware that the issue affected a small number of families but that there was no provision under the DCB Scheme to acquire housing units in this type of situation. He said that the OPW had responsibility for flood relief schemes and in other situations would have addressed issues where houses were in floodplains. The matter, he noted, had been raised recently at the recent delegation to the Department of Housing. The Council, he confirmed, were happy to follow-up with both the Department and the OPW.

C/337/24

REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING TO DISCUSS THE DELAYS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DCB REMEDIATION SCHEME

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

"That this Council seek an immediate meeting with Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD to discuss the delays in the implementation of the DCB Remediation Scheme, the mental and physical health impacts that these delays are having on hundreds of families forced to continue to live in these deteriorating houses and impress upon him the importance that this scheme be implemented

without further delay, furthermore call on this council to initiate a quick repair scheme on the worse affected homes until such times that the DCB Scheme for social houses is implemented”.

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

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the ongoing mental and physical impact on families should not be underestimated. He noted that the reply referenced the fact that a DCB Scheme for Social Housing was imminent but insisted that a meeting with the Minister was still required at this stage. He called on the Minister to visit Donegal and see for himself the hardship being experienced. The need to look at modular housing options was also highlighted.

Cllr A Doherty alluded to the lengthy and ongoing efforts to come up with a suitable scheme Members, he said, were told that it was imminent, but a robust scheme had not materialised.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that there had been considerable discussion, and that the Council was anxious to move as soon as the Social Housing Remediation Scheme was approved.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that he appreciated that a considerable amount of work had been done to get to this stage. He asked if it was possible to free up monies so that the demolition of some of these properties could proceed. He was informed by the Director of Service that it was the preferred option to wait until Departmental approval was received before commencing demolition works and rebuild. He confirmed however that preventative works could be carried out in emergency situations.

C/338/24

REVIEW OF THE HEDGE CUTTING POLICY

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

"That the hedge cutting policy currently in place be reviewed as it is not working for farmers, bus operators or contractors at present”.

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

Cllr Mc Bride said it was generally accepted that the present policy was not working. He called for an extension of the hedge cutting season to

include the last two weeks in August. This he advised would suit many of the hedge cutters as their busiest period was September and October. This would assist the Council also in that hedges, junctions etc could be tidied up and ready for the start of the new school. He asked that this be brought to the Roads & Transportation SPC for consideration and that the motion be circulated to all other local authorities.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig supporting the motion said it was an excellent idea and would address many of the safety issues arising from hedges and verges. Councillors, he said, received numerous representations on this matter and anything that helped streamline the process was welcome.

Mr Stephen Flynn, Senior Engineer said that the response outlined the current policy in place. It was he said a matter for the members to bring it back to the Roads and Transportation and work through the issues in that forum. He informed the members the hedge cutting season dates were set by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

C/339/24

THAT THE COUNCIL INSTALL ASD (AUSTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER) PARKING BAYS THROUGHOUT DONEGAL

On the proposal of Cllr D M Kelly, seconded by Cllr Bradley, it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"That this Council look into installing ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) parking bays throughout Donegal please as it has been brought to my attention that ASD parking permits do not permit families with children with autism/additional needs to park in Disabled Parking Bays therefore we have no allocated parking bays available in Donegal to facilitate such families". It is vitally important that such families have the option of allocated bays particularly at Schools, Hospitals, Shopping Centres, and also on the main streets of our towns and villages please.

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

Cllr Kelly said that families, Autism Support Groups and Springboard had all highlighted the need for greater accessibility and the introduction of dedicated parking bays to facilitate families with autistic children. These families, he said, were not able to park in Disability Bays. He informed the meeting that there was a company called ASD Ireland who provided such bays in other counties and would be willing to do the same in Donegal if the relevant permissions were granted. He called on the Council to reach out to ASD Ireland regarding the possibility of providing these in Donegal . It was imperative, he said, that this information was put into the public domain and other bodies and organisations encouraged to come on board.

The process, he advised, was simple with yearly permits issued for a fixed fee. Parking was an issue and stressful, he advised, for many families and the current anomalies needed to be addressed and obstacles overcome.

Cllr Bradley said that there were a number of these parking bays in Inishowen outside local amenities and these seemed to be working very well.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Stephen Flynn, Senior Engineer, thanked Cllr Kelly for highlighting the fact that ASD Parking permits did not allow families with children with autistic/special needs to park in Disabled Parking Bays. He said that the matter could be followed-up with ASD Ireland.

Cllr Kelly welcomed the response and asked that the matter be progressed with ASD Ireland.

C/340/24

CIRCULATION OF PRESENTATIONS BY EMAIL PRIOR TO COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

"Can the Council support my motion in that all presentations be forwarded by email before council meetings while I respect and appreciate the amount of work goes into this work, I do believe they take up too much time at council meetings plus it would give councillors time to read over and ask questions if need be". I do believe we need to use the time we have at meetings to discuss the issues that affect the people that elected us.

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

Cllr Devine said it would be helpful if presentations could be circulated in advance of meetings. This would allow members, he said, to use the allocated meeting time in a more constructive way. Cllr Beard concurred with this assessment and said it would also allow members to be better prepared for meetings.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that he appreciated the sentiment expressed in the motion and noted that presentations were an effective mechanism for communicating issues in a structured manner at meetings. By and large, he said that reports and presentations were available prior to meetings in eCouncil. He said that

and effort would be made to have presentations circulated prior to or on the morning of the meeting.

C/341/24

THAT DCC PRIORITISE ITS CORE SERVICES, I.E. HOUSING, ROADS AND RECREATION AMENITIES IN THIS NEW COUNCIL TERM

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

"I propose that Donegal County Council prioritises its core services, i.e. Housing, Roads and Recreation Amenities in this new council term".

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

Cllr Brogan said that he was aware that a review of the various Council Directorates was ongoing but cited the necessity of having a separate Housing Directorate and actively targeting areas where there was a deficit in delivery. He cited the need to actively consider and progress the following :

- The level of service that people expected.
- The carrying out of an audit on all existing housing stock.
- More hands-on approach adopted in respect of housing maintenance.
- Tourism and Roads signage needs replaced where damaged by vandalism.
- Service delivery strengthened to augment the huge effort that has been made in delivering a strong tourism brand.
- Machinery Yard model outdated and should be reviewed.

It was now time, he added, to strengthen the brand and take a fresh look at the challenges facing the organisation. This was something, he advised, which should be done prior to the 2025 budget to ensure that all basic services are fully resourced.

Cllr Kelly supporting the motion said that the detail had been well outlined by Cllr Brogan and agreed that service delivery should be prioritised in forthcoming the budgetary preparations.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance, said that the motion was timely and not just a finance issue. The Council, he advised provided a wide range of services and the budgetary process was simply more than an exercise on putting value on the level of work that needed to be done.

It was, he added, about prioritising services and resources in order to achieve the best outcome for the county. The core services, he confirmed, were still the biggest areas of spend with the spend on roads and housing increasing by 29% and 21% respectively over the term of the last Council. Capital expenditure in housing had grown by 114% in the same period with Road's capital expenditure increasing by 25%.

He said that as part of the ongoing budgetary process members were engaging in relation to the bread-and-butter issues and that there would be more discussion in advance of the Plenary Budget.

The Chief Executive said that an organisation wide review was being carried out looking at the level of business across the county with the aim of matching the necessary resources. He alluded to the fact that many of the ongoing issues in housing had not been factor ten years ago.

The ongoing Corporate Plan process would, he confirmed provide members with an opportunity to shape the core basic service and the associated work programmes. He was, he said, happy to work with the members to prioritise what was best for Donegal. Attention was drawn to the fact that the Council's own resource options were confined and that the balance of monies had to be sourced from grant and match funding.

Cllr Brogan noted that there had been huge investment from Government over the last number of years but that the issues were with discretionary funding. He cited the need to go back to basics and focus on the needs of the customer. This, he contended, warranted review and engagement across all the Public Service Centres.

C/342/24

THAT ALL MEETINGS OF THE DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS COMMITTEE BE PUBLICLY STREAMED

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

"That this Council will facilitate online public streaming of all meetings of the Defective Concrete Blocks Committee".

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

Cllr Meehan said that the defective concrete blocks issue and the difficulties being encountered were one of the biggest issues facing people in Donegal at present. He noted that the role of the Council was limited in relation to the scheme itself and there was very little it could do in shaping or directing the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme. The DCB meetings, he said, allowed the Elected Members to hold the DCB office to

account and were a useful forum for gathering operational data on the operation of the scheme . It also, he acknowledged, was a mechanism whereby updates from other relevant bodies such as the Housing Agency could be circulated and debated.

The streaming of DCB Committee meetings, he advised, was essential as it would give transparency to the process and facilitate public access.

Cllr Beard said that it was vital that the meetings were streamed as property owners needed to be kept updated. She said that they needed to be party to what was being discussed at these meetings and kept in the loop as to ongoing developments.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services drew attention to the fact that the Council's policy was to provide online streaming of Plenary meetings of Council. Any change to this policy, would, he advised, require additional resources in terms of equipment, staffing and increased cost implications. Policy amendments would, he advised, have to be brought initially to a future meeting of the Corporate Policy Group.

Cllr Meehan said, he was mindful that the next CPG meeting was on the 18th November and that a DCB Committee meeting was scheduled to take place prior to this date.

A decision to stream the meetings, he said, was crucial in the interest of transparency and accountability.

C/343/24

THAT THE COUNCIL CONDEMNS AND REJECTS THE SELECTIVE USE OF THE EXTRADITION PROCEDURE AGAINST RESIDENTS OF THE 26 COUNTIES

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

“Cáineann agus diúltaíonn an Chomhairle seo an úsáid roghnaitheach den nós imeachta eiseachadta i gcoinne áitritheoirí an chontae seo agus in aon chuid eile de na 26 contae, imeachtaí arna n-agairt ag oifigigh na Breataine sna 6 chontae áitithe, bunaithe ar fhianaise a deirtear a bailíodh agus a tiomsaíodh na blianta fada ó shin ag Constáblacht Ríoga Uladh agus a bhfuil a chlú millte le fada an lá.

Fórsa atá iomráiteach as a pháirteachas, a sheicteachas, a chlaonpháirteachas coiriúil agus an droch-chóireáil brúidiúil ar líon mór daoine atá faoina choimeád. Ina theannta sin, fórsa a theip orthu minic go

leor fianaise ríthábhachtach a choinneáil maidir le gníomhartha dílseoirí, ach is cosúil go bhfuil fianaise curtha ar fáil acu anois maidir leis na daoine sin.

Ní próiseas cuí an dlí é an rud atá ag tarlú anseo leis na himeachtaí eiseachadta seo, ach a mhalairt air sin, is mí-úsáid polaitiúla é chun aird a tharraingt ar shiúl ó fhoréigean stáit na Breataine. Iarraimid, mar ionadaithe tofa ar Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall, ar an rialtas i mBaile Átha Cliath críoch láithreach a chur leis na himeachtaí scannalacha seo”.

"This Council condemns and rejects the selective use of the extradition procedure against residents of this county and any other part of the 26-Counties, proceedings invoked by British officials in the occupied 6 counties based on so-called evidence supposedly collected and collated many decades ago by the long-discredited Royal Ulster Constabulary.

A force notorious for its partisanship, sectarianism, criminal collusion and brutal maltreatment of countless people in its custody. A force, moreover, that failed so often to retain crucial evidence in relation to loyalist actions yet apparently has now produced evidence in relation to these individuals.

What is happening here with these extradition proceedings is not the due process of law but is instead the misuse of power for crass political purpose in order to distract from British state violence.

We as elected representatives to Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall therefore call upon the government in Baile Átha Cliath to order a halt to these outrageous proceedings immediately”.

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

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that he could not support the selective use of the extradition procedure and asked that his motion be circulated to all other Local Authorities for their attention and consideration.

Cllr Mc Gee supported the motion and said that a ban on extradition was warranted. He commended Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig on bringing the motion forward as the process led to people being held in inhumane conditions.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the motion would be circulated to all other Local Authorities as requested.

Cllr Mc Giolla Easbuig thanked members for their support and said that as a republican he could never agree to Irish Republicans being extradited.

C/344/24

PROVISION OF TEST RESULTS - TESTING OF QUARRIES IN DONEGAL

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

"I propose the motion that Donegal County Council provide test results from the testing of quarries throughout the county that were done according to the IS EN 12620 standard for raw aggregate as adopted in 2002 by the Irish state".

This information needs to be forthcoming at the earliest opportunity as the public should have confidence that the products that they are buying is of the recommended standard. Donegal County Council have a duty of care to every citizen of the county to ensure that any building products are of the highest standard.

He received a response from the Director of Community Development & Planning Services.

Cllr Mc Gee said it was extremely important that this information was circulated for the benefit of local communities. It was important, he added, not only for social housing but for all those building private houses so that they can be assured that the blocks they are using are fit for purpose.

Cllr A Farren said the motion was very relevant and those rebuilding DCB affected houses had concerns in relation to the standard of the blocks.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that the thrust of the motion was clear and articulated the fact that people wanted to be assured that the test results from quarries in the county met the recommended standards.

Alluding to the response provided, he said that it was important to point out that the first section of the reply stipulated the fact that all quarries producing aggregates for concrete were obliged to produce to the standard set out in IS EN 1260. Manufacturers and Quarry owners, he advised, were obliged to have a CE control system in place before the product went on the market.

It was, he said, a matter for manufacturer of the products to ensure that they met the required standards and allowed a declaration of performance to be made setting out the essential characteristics of the product.

He said that it was important for those constructing private homes and through the process that is laid down to comply including the appointment of Assigned Certifiers that the responsibility existed to ensure that the products specified in the design are fit for purpose and for the conditions for which they are intended to be used.

The Council in its own capacity, he advised, as the Market Surveillance Authority or as a customer purchasing such products did hold results from tests that had been carried out by the Council or by the quarries themselves. He said that there was a challenge in making results held by the Council available in the public domain as there was a need to balance the need for transparency and public interest against contractual and legal obligations. It was noted that where contractual or legal obligations mitigated against the release of test results, legal advice would be required to guide the decision process.

Cllr Mc Gee said this was a serious situation give the level of building that was taking place again and that people needed to be confident that the products they were using were up to standard. He called on the Council to take charge of the situation.

C/345/24 **CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS**

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Brian Mc Brearty, Environment on the death of his mother, Patricia Mc Brearty.
- Damien Mc Dermott, National Roads Office on the death of his father Seán Mc Dermott.
- Fergal Tinney , Reprographics Section on the death of his mother, Kathleen Tinney.

Events Attended

- The Cathaoirleach advised members of her attendance at the following events:
- London Irish Vintage Club Day, London on the 8th September, 2024.
- Filming with the Big O in Letterkenny Business Park on the 11th September, 2024 regarding the upcoming marketing campaign around promoting Donegal as a great place to live, work, study, invest and do business.
- Northwest Greenway Celebration Event in The Innovation Centre, Derry on the 12th of September 2024.

- Photocall for national Public Library Day in Bundoran Library on the 18th of September.
- Launch of Wainfest in Donegal Castle on the 19th of September 2024.
- Spanish Armada Event at Killybegs Harbour on the 19th of September 2024.
- Opening of the Smooth Point Quay Extension, Killybegs Harbour on the 20th of September 2024.
- Meeting with Delegation from Plymouth County, MA in Donegal Town on the 25th of September 2024.
- Attendance at “The Disrupt by the Sea” Event in Rathmullan on the 26th of September 2024.
- Ulster Talks Event hosted by Professor Paul Moore with the 2024 Tip O’ Neill Diaspora Awardees – Ulster University, Derry on the 26th of September 2024.
- Tip O’ Neill Awards Irish Diaspora Awards in The Inishowen Gateway Hotel on the 26th of September 2024.
- Older Persons AGM IN Bunbeg on the 2nd of October 2024.

Donegal Camino.

The Cathaoirleach said that it was proposed to designate the first Sunday of September as Donegal Camino Day in recognition of all the excellent fundraising efforts that have taken place in aid of Cancer Care West and place and their hard work in bringing Donegal to the world stage. She said that it had shone a light on the beauty of the county and drew attention to the Cancer Care Centre in Letterkenny which served the whole county and has been used by many people over the past number of years. The initiative, she confirmed, had attracted nationwide attention from a number of television and media companies. It was, she added, a prime example of how a body of people could bring about positive change for their community.

Thus, it was resolved on the proposal of Cllr Kennedy, seconded by Cllr Mc Monagle that the first Sunday in September be designated as Donegal Camino Sunday.

The Chief Executive said that Donegal County Council would going forward contribute to the promotion of the event.

C/346/24

CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S MANAGEMENT REPORT

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

1. Finance

- *Provision for Abatement of Commercial Rates in Respect of Vacant Properties*
- *DETE Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) grant scheme*

Update

2. Community Development & Planning Services

- *Community Development*
- *Measure 3 – Project Development Measure-Town Centre First Suite of Supports 2024*
- *Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards*
- *Urban & Rural Regeneration & Development*
- *Croi Conaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Scheme*
- *Major Projects Update*
- *Ukrainian and International Protection Accommodation and Integration Unit Update*

Planning Services Update

3. Water and Environment

Climate Action

- *DCC Inaugural Climate Action Team Meeting*
- *Community Climate Action Fund*
- *UN Sustainable Development Goals Week-20th to 29th September 2024*
- *Climate Action Works Engagement Fund*

Environment

- *Public Service Announcements (PSA's) – Water Quality*
- *National Agricultural Inspection Plan*
- *Bathing Waters 2024 Season*
- *Faulty Septic Tanks*
- *Septic Tank Grants*
Defective Concrete Blocks – Update.

4. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services

- *Housing for All*
- *Land Acquisition*
- *Social Housing through Turnkey Acquisition*
- *Summary of Social Housing Assessments (SSHA) 2024*
- *Donegal County Council Engagement with Approved Housing Bodies (AHB)*

- *Room for a Student – Local Authority Tenancies Scheme*
- *Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan*

Library Service

Arts Service

Regional Cultural Centre

Heritage Office

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

- *Economic Development & Tourism Unit*
- *Fire Service*

6. Roads & Transportation

- National Roads Office Update
- Central Technical Services Update
- Roads Areas Update

The Chief Executive said he was happy for members to contact him in relation to any of the issues outlined.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that it was a positive report and welcomed the update from the Ukrainian and International Protection Accommodation & Integration Unit. He drew attention however to the fact that there were no figures provided in relation to the number of new arrivals into the county. It was imperative, he said, that these were provided in terms of implementing the relevant strategies and planning for future service delivery. He alluded also to the pressure that this was causing on the private rented sector.

The Chief Executive advised that Donegal County Council were not the primary driver here but would possibly have more of a role in the future. He acknowledged that there was excellent support from all the relevant stakeholders.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that the Council's role was now predominantly on the integration side and that the Migration and Integration teams had been established and were working with the Community Integration Forum and the associated agencies involved. The issue raised by Cllr Mc Monagle, had, he confirmed, been raised, and discussed at a recent meeting of the Forum arising from the challenges that it presented. It had been, he said, identified as a key issue and a commitment was made to write to the Department of Children, Youth and Integration. It was further confirmed that the Head of the Integration Unit had met Department officials in relation to the matter.

He said that formal correspondence would issue to the Department regarding this issue and other wider concerns that had been raised given that some of the people in the new arrival category could possibly be classed a vulnerable.

The following questions were noted.

C/347/24 **REQUEST FOR A FACE TO FACE MEETING WITH NBI (NATIONAL BROADBAND IRELAND)**

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:-

Can this Council request a face-to-face meeting with NBI (National Broadband Ireland) to discuss how the Fibre Network is being rolled out in the County and what role if any is being played by the existing provider?

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

C/348/24 **TO ENSURE THAT THE N15 IS INCLUDED IN ANY REVIEW OF THE GOVERNMENTS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:-

Can the Council ensure that the county's N15 is included in any review of the Government's National Development Plan especially the remaining uncompleted section to Lifford?

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

C/349/24 **AHBS IN DONEGAL**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

How many AHBs in Donegal are presently in contact with DCC and developers, requesting housing need confirmation from DCC confirming an interest in providing additional Social Homes in Donegal and finalising agreements with housing developers?

What are the current timelines between receipt by DCC and response of queries to AHBs on this matter?

In what DCC municipal areas are the current AHB housing provision proposals located?

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

C/350/24 **WHAT PLANS OR PROVISIONS ARE BEING MADE TO REHOUSE PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY**

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

To ask the Director of Housing what plans or provisions are being made to rehouse those who have a disability and who live in one of our social houses which has DCB while their home is being remediated, when a social housing remediation scheme is established?

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

C/351/24 **WHAT CONTRIBUTION AND SUBMISSION HAS DCC INCLUDED IN THE RECENT PROJECT IRELAND 2040 REVIEW THAT SUPPORTS AND DEMANDS REGIONAL EQUALITY IN DONEGAL AND THE NW**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

NWRA have called for "Urgent Investment" in infrastructure in the region, pointed out that the region received less than 10% of investment in large projects and stated that a policy of positive discrimination is needed to deliver regional equality in the region.

What contribution and submission has DCC included in the recent Project Ireland 2040 review that supports and demands regional equality in Donegal and the Northwest area?

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

C/352/24 **HOW MANY QUARRIES HAVE BEEN CLOSED DUE TO ENFORCEMENT ACTION BY THE COUNCIL**

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

Since the council executive first became aware of the defective concrete products being supplied by manufacturers in Donegal, how many quarries have been closed due to enforcement action by the council?

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

C/353/24 **THAT DCC WRITE TO MINISTER O'BRIEN TO APPLY PRESSURE TO ENSURE THAT THE 10% INCREASE IN THE CAP THAT WAS ANNOUNCED UNDER THE "ENHANCED DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCK SCHEME" WILL BE APPLIED RETROSPECTIVELY.**

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

Could the council write to Minister Darragh O'Brien to apply pressure to ensure that the 10% increase in the cap that was announced under the "Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Scheme" will be applied retrospectively? As stated by Minister O'Brien during the Dail debate on Thursday 20 June 2022 - "Existing applicants under the current scheme will not be disadvantaged from being early movers and will benefit retrospectively from the increased grant amounts and allowances that will be available under the enhanced scheme."

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

C/354/24 **HOW MANY SOCIAL HOUSES ARE NOW VACANT DUE TO DCB**

Cllr McMonagle submitted the following question:-

How many social houses are now vacant due to DCB, and where are they located?

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

C/355/24 **WILL THE COUNCIL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP OF THE AIR TO WATER HEATING SYSTEMS IN OUR SOCIAL HOUSING SCHEMES**

Cllr McMonagle submitted the following question:-

With the roll out of Air to Water heating systems across our social housing schemes around the county will the Council be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these systems going forward or will it be the responsibility of the tenant?

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

C/356/24 **WHAT EMERGENCY PLAN IS IN PLACE FOR COUNCIL TENANTS LIVING IN APPALLING CONDITIONS**

Cllr TS Devine submitted the following question:-

We have council tenants living in appalling conditions due to defective concrete, cracks, black mould, and dampness rodents etc. What emergency plan is in place for these people, and can the council not go into estate agents throughout the county and buy homes as there are 100s for sale? We are steady being told that the money is not an option from the housing minister, surely this is a fast option to rehouse people plus sort our housing problem.

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

C/357/24 **CAN THE COUNCIL PUT IN PLACE A PLAN TO CARRY OUT REMEDIAL REPAIR WORKS 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, 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/358/24 **FAST TRACK THE TAKING OVER OF UNFINISHED ESTATES**
Cllr TS Devine submitted the following question:-

Can Donegal County Council please fast-track the taking over of unfinished estates as there are people living in appalling conditions between roads and water outages on a regular basis and also on the basis that numerous promises have been made that these issues would be fixed over the past number of years?

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

C/359/24 **WHEN WILL THE WEEKLY PLANNING MEETINGS BE FULLY REINSTATED**
Cllr McBride submitted the following question:-

When do we plan to have our weekly planning meetings fully reinstated around the county?

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

C/360/24 **UPDATE REPORT ON APPLICATIONS MADE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND TO THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IRELAND**

Cllr C Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we get an updated report on applications made to the Department of Transport and to Transport Infrastructure Ireland on our behalf for Donegal, and the progress of 2023 and 2024 allocations to date?

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

C/361/24 **TO REVIEW THE CURRENT COMMENCEMENT DATE TO CUT HEDGES**
Cllr D M Kelly submitted the following question:-

Can this Council write to the relevant departments requesting that the current commencement date to cut hedges be reviewed and pulled forward as the current date September 1st is too late in the year and causing serious havoc particularly on our roads in relation to vision lines and a number of other safety concerns, please?

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

C/362/24 **EXTENDING THE WINTER GRITTING PROGRAMME**
Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

Will this Council consider the extension of the winter gritting programme to include public transport routes across the county, to allow for the efficient and dependable operation of public transport in Donegal?

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

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

C/363/24 **WHAT STEPS CAN DCC TAKE TO REMOVE AND PREVENT SABOTAGING AND DAMAGE DONE WITH RED PAINT**
Cllr C Brogan submitted the following question:-

What steps can Donegal County Council take to remove and prevent sabotaging and damage done with red paint causing huge reputational damage to our tourism market and our county brand of Donegal despite the huge efforts by so many people to invest in and promote our true potential in the last number of years in both private and public investment?

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

C/364/24 **REVIEW OF THE TENDERING PROESS**
Cllr McBride submitted the following question:-

When will the review by Donegal County Council regarding the tendering process for those wishing to tender for council work be complete?

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

C/365/24 **WHAT MEASURES HAVE DCC IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH BUILDING REGULATIONS ENFORCEMENT**

Cllr D McGee submitted the following question:-

Donegal County Council is a Building Control Authority under the Building Control Acts 1990 to 2014. It has the role of monitoring compliance with Building Regulations and has strong powers of inspection and enforcement under the Acts. In the case of situations where homeowners are concerned that the building professional and or engineer that is engaged with the remediation of their home is in breach of current building regulations, what measures has Donegal County Council in place to deal with such situations, given its role of Building Control Authority as its requirement to review and monitor the implementation of the Enhanced Grant Scheme? Donegal County Council has a duty of care to protect all its citizens in these situations.

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

C/366/24 **MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES**

Members noted the motions from other Councils/Bodies.

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Finance, Jack Chambers to reduce the VAT rate from 13.5% to 9% for the hospitality sector. With the amount of cafes, restaurants and pubs shutting due to increased operating costs, the cost-of-living impacting visitors and footfall, and inflation impacting prices, this sector is being significantly and badly impacted. I ask for this motion be approved and sent to other County Councils for their consideration and support.”

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Leitrim County Council call on the Minister for Finance, and the Government to again look at reducing the VAT rate from 13.5% back to 9% for the food and restaurant sector. Restaurants & cafes are finding it extremely difficult to survive with the current rate of VAT.”

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Leitrim County Council write to Eamon Ryan, Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications expressing our deep concern and disappointment with government plans to build a Strategic Gas Emergency Reserve in Ireland in the form of a Fracked Gas Import Terminal as per action 17 of the Energy Security in Ireland to 2030 (Energy Security

Package) published November, 2023. We ask him to change the new policy and instead ban LNG terminals in Ireland, in policy and in line with the May 2021 Policy Statement on the Importation of Fracked Gas without conditions and in line with the Programme for Government.”

ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

It was agreed to write to the Minister for Environment seeking the imposition of tougher and increased new fines to deter illegal dumping.

ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

It was agreed to send a letter to the Taoiseach calling for a reduction in match funding requirements for major capital projects applied for by Roscommon County Council.

Roscommon County Council recognises the current percentage reduction in match funding requirements for the North - West. However, in light of increasing construction costs and consultancy costs, the current percentage required of circa 10% is not sustainable going forward for smaller local authorities.

ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

It was agreed to send a letter to the Minister for Finance Jack Chambers and Minister for Tourism Catherine Martin seeking the reintroduction of the 9% VAT rate for the hospitality sector.

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Sligo County Council writes to the Minister for Social Protection to request a review of existing community employment schemes in place in the state with a view to putting in place an ambassador/caretaker scheme for every village in Ireland, that a person, or persons be paid accordingly to support tidy towns and community development groups with maintaining and enhancing their communities. For example, a village with a settlement of 100 or less, may be eligible for one worker, 1000 plus two workers etc. That this motion be forwarded to the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and all other Local Authorities for consideration.”

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“To call on Sligo County Council to develop and rollout a scheme to build rural housing to support rural families and the rural communities and to seek funding from government for staff to implement the scheme.”

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Wexford County Council write to Minister Helen McEntee and An Taoiseach Simon Harris to ask the Government to adopt a zero-tolerance approach toward gender based violence and ask that mandatory minimum sentencing be introduced in every conviction of sexual, domestic or gender based violent assault.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.