

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL

Oifig Riathóir na gCruinnith
Aras an Chontae
Leifear
20 Bealtaine, 2025

FÓGRA CRUINNITHE

DO GACH BHALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

A Chara,

Beidh Cruinniú de Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ar siúl **Dé Luain, 26 Bealtaine 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 Laifearaigh
Riathóir Cruinnithe

DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Office of Meetings Administrator
County House
Lifford
20th May 2025

NOTICE OF MEETING

TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Councillor,

A Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on **Monday 26th May 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 Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 27th of March, 2025.
- b) Confirmation of the Minutes of the March Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 31st of March, 2025.
- c) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 28th of April, 2025.

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

- a) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of a plot of land at St Mary's Terrace, Ramelton to Ramelton Community Garden Committee.
- b) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of a plot of land including two storey building under construction at Ailt an Chorráin Enterprise Centre, The Harbour, Ailt an Chorrain by way of lease to Donegal 2040 Strategic Development DAC.
- c) Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose by way of lease a plot of land and including a 270m² building as constructed thereon at Island House, Killybegs to Donegal 2040 Strategic Development DAC.
- d) 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 by way of lease a plot of land at 14 Ballyduff Terrace, Lifford, Co Donegal together with the provision of a Right of Way in favour of Nuala Quinn.

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 2000and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001

- a) To approve the change of use of and the extension and modification of a Protected Structure, namely Letterkenny Courthouse (Ref. RPS 40502279) and its attendant lands to provide flexible space with a multifunctional capacities for : (i) a tourist/visitor attraction and integrated Tourist Information Point, (ii) interpretation, exhibitions, conferences, education & learning, (iii) multi-purpose civic, cultural,

community use and social gatherings and events, (iv) café, (v) retail/gift shop and ancillary offices, storage and public conveniences.

- b) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the Letterkenny Active Travel - R940 Ballyraine Road Project.
- c) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the Letterkenny Active Travel – L1007 Circular Road Project.
- d) To approve the carrying out of works with regard to the R267 Donegal Town Safe Routes to School Active Travel Project.
- e) To approve the construction of 19 no. social housing units at Machaire Gathlán/Ard na gCeapairí, Doire Beag, Dún na nGall to include all associated site development works in two phases with Phase 1 comprising 12 no. units being developed initially and Phase 2 to be completed at a later date.

4. **Corporate**

- a) To approve the Donegal County Council nominee on the Board of Comhar na nOileán CTR.
- b) To fill casual vacancy on the Defective Concrete Blocks Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh.
- c) To approve the appointment of Cllr Michael Boyle to the Board of Ballyshannon Leisure Centre.
- d) To approve the nomination of Cllr Jimmy Brogan and Cllr Michael Boyle to Coiste na Gaeilge. (final nomination from the Donegal MD).
- e) To fill three remaining vacancies on the Working Group on Local Government and Constitutional Change.
- f) To agree date for the 2025 Annual General Meeting – (Monday 30th June at 11.30am)

5. **Economic Development**

- a) To approve the Donegal County Council Tourism Strategy 2025-2030.
- b) Tourism Presentation on TBEX – Europe (Travel Blog Exchange)

6. **Finance**

To approve the actual gross expenditure figure of €217,549,832 as set out on Table 3, Page 3 when compared to the Revised Budget of €212,186,413. (Adopted Budget as amended by net increases in funding received for 2024) for all Divisions in accordance with Subsection 7 of Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

7. **Endorsement of Minutes**

To note minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 3rd March 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 Elected Member Induction Day Training to be held on Thursday 29th May 2025 in the Athlone Springs Hotel, Athlone (For newly co-opted Councillors since the June 2024 Local Elections)

Other

- Attendance of Leas-Cathaoirleach at the National Enterprise Awards in the Mansion House on Thursday 22nd May, 2025.

Conferences

- Attendance at the Irish Planning Institute Conference 2025 in the Salthill Hotel, Galway from the 9th to the 11th April, 2025.
- Buildings Action Coalition 2025 Summit from the 17th to the 19th June 2025 in the Riverside Park Hotel, Enniscorthy, County Wexford.

9. **Conference Reports**

- Attendance of Cllr Martin Harley at the Lonely Planet Awards in London on the 6th November, 2023.
- Attendance of Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan at the Association of Irish Regions (AIR) Conference in the Radisson Blu, Athlone on the 5th and 6th February, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan at the Irish Building Control Institute Conference in the Radisson Hotel, Cork on the 12th and 13th March, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Kavanagh at St Patrick's Day events in Philadelphia and New York from the 13th to the 18th March, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Jack Murray at the CPMR Political Bureau Meeting in Bari , Italy from the 27th to the 28th March 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh at Diaspora Events in Glasgow on the 28th and 29th March 2025.

MOTIONS

LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Defective Concrete Blocks

10. **Cllr Frank Mc Brearty Jnr**

“Calling on the current Government to establish an Independent Judicial Statutory Public Inquiry into the Irish Defective Concrete Scandal, which has been labelled incorrectly as the Mica Freeze Thaw Scandal as being the cause of this disaster.”

Corporate

11. **Cllr Dakota Nic Mheanman**

That this Council calls on the Government to take action and provide capital investment for childcare facilities to create additional capacity as waiting lists grow in Donegal, as well as providing for childcare facilities with defective blocks.

INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Roads & Transportation

12. **Cllr Fionán Bradley**

"That this Council writes to the Department of Rural & Community Development seeking an immediate increase in the amount of Local Improvement Scheme funding that this County receives."

Community & Planning

13. **Cllr Albert Doherty**

Donegal County Council notes the current Government's aim and ambition of driving balanced regional development and supporting rural communities in its "Programme for Government - Securing Ireland's Future".

"Donegal County Council now calls on the Government to,

- Remove the matching funding requirements for the Urban Regeneration Fund (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration Fund (RRDF) for Local Authorities located in the Northern and Western Region of Ireland,

and

- Ensure that more than half of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is ringfenced for the Northern and Western Region of Ireland for the next EU funding period (2028-2035)".

Environment

14. **Cllr Joy Beard**

"In support of the efforts of the county's 'Tidy Town' volunteers in helping keep our communities clean and litter free, this motion calls on Donegal County Council to adopt a three-part strategy comprising:

- 1) A roll out of a targeted public awareness campaign on littering, utilising social media platforms to educate and engage the public on the importance of keeping our towns and villages clean, and promoting respect for public spaces.
- 2) To put up clear and visible signage in town centres and other high-footfall areas encouraging people to keep these areas litter-free and reminding them of their responsibility to dispose of waste properly.

- 3) A pilot of the installation of litter bins in selected locations specifically designed to accommodate pizza boxes, with the aim of addressing the recurring problem of pizza boxes jamming standard bins, thereby reducing overall street litter and improving the efficiency of waste collection.”

Community

15. **Cllr Terry Crossan**

“That Donegal County Council formulate and adopt an Anti - Racism Charter similar to the recently developed North-West Anti - Racism Charter as a matter of urgency.”

LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Emergency Services

16. **Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle**

“That this Council calls on the Management of Donegal Fire Service to enter into meaningful discussions with our Firefighters in Letterkenny and that no changes be made to the operational capacity of Letterkenny Fire Station Service including the removal of the Second Fire Engine, Incident Command Vehicle and Water Tanker until a comprehensive Business Case and Risk Assessments are carried out in relation to Letterkenny Fire Station and its capacity to deal with any eventuality that may arise in the Town of Letterkenny and surrounding district serviced by Letterkenny Fire Station and that the Firefighters and their representatives be included in all future decisions and discussions that impact on their working conditions and operational effectiveness.”

Corporate

17. **Cllr Tomás Sean Devine**

“Can this Council support me in my call that all DCC meetings being held in Lifford are streamed live to members of the public again, as in recent times we have been strongly criticised for not showing these meetings and most recently for the discussion around the recent protests, streaming was turned off. We believe it’s only fair and right that those who elected us can watch what we do in representing them.”

18. **Cllr Declan Meehan**

That this Council is gravely concerned that the Central Bank of Ireland is regulating the Israel Bonds Issuance Programme and, thereby, facilitating the sale throughout Europe of bonds which are funding genocide in Gaza.

This Council notes that,

(i) the bonds, known as Israel Bonds, have, since 1951, raised funds for the Israeli Treasury for use across the Israeli economy including the financing of the apartheid system, the Israeli military and illegal settlements

(ii) the bonds are now being advertised as war bonds and are funding the genocide in Gaza.

Council further notes that,

(i) in January 2024 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed the plausibility of the charge of genocide against Israel

(ii) in June 2024 the UN's International Commission of Inquiry on Palestine found that Israel's actions in Gaza "constitute the war crimes of wilful killing and mistreatment, and the crime against humanity of extermination"

(iii) in July 2024 an ICJ ruling declared that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid and its entire regime of military occupation of Palestinian territories is illegal and must end immediately

(iv) all institutions are under obligation under international law to prevent genocide and abuse of human rights.

Council believes that the Central Bank of Ireland must end all complicity in genocide. Council, therefore, calls on the Central Bank of Ireland to immediately end the regulation of the Israeli Bond Issuance Programme."

19. Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh

That the Council write to Government requesting that they introduce a new annual Bank Holiday in the month of July in honour of St. Colmcille.

DONEGAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Planning

20. Cllr Micheál Naughton

"I am asking Donegal County Council to allocate €5 million in the revenue budget for 2026 to deal with derelict sites and buildings to support the revitalisation and regeneration of our towns and villages."

Information Systems

21. Cllr Noel Jordan

"I am asking that this Council call on the Department of Telecommunications to add a number of villages in the county that are not included in the national rollout of fibre broadband."

GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Planning

22. Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty

"I am asking this Council to support my motion for the introduction of a higher planning fee in the region of €500 per objection and that we also write to the Government seeking such a rise in fees for objections etc. as

I feel that that currently the €20 charge is not fair on applicants as it is too low and really is open to abuse by objectors."

I would also like this motion passed around the country to all other Councils for consideration.

Corporate

23. Cllr Brian Carr

Noting recent studies and increased media coverage, including the impact of the Netflix documentary Adolescence, which highlight the growing concerns around early access to smartphones and social media among young people,

"That Donegal County Council write to the Minister for Education, Norma Foley, and the Minister for Children, Helen McEntee, to express our concern regarding the rising use of smartphones and social media among early teenagers, and to request information on what plans or policies the Government intends to implement to address these issues and protect the wellbeing of children and young people."

24. Cllr Micheál C Mac Giolla Easbuig

"Do Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall, mar mheabhrúchán gur ghlac Comhairle na hEorpa le Dearbhú Seville i mí an Mheithimh 2002, rud a dheimhnigh nach raibh aon bhagairt ar neodracht na hÉireann mar thoradh ar Chonradh Nice, tugtar le fios gur dheimhnigh an Taoiseach a bhí ann ag an am, an tUasal Ahern, do Theach Laighean :

"Athdhearbhaíonn an Dearbhú Náisiúnta ceangal na hÉireann le beartas neodrachta agus dearbhaíonn sé: nach bhfuil Éire páirteach in aon ghealltanais comhchosanta: go ndéanfaimid ár gcinneadh ceannasach féin maidir le ar cheart d'fhórsa cosanta na 26 Contae páirt a ghlacadh i dtascanna daonnúla nó bainistíochta géarchéime arna gcur ar bun ag an AE bunaithe ar an Ghlas Triarach ceadaithe ag na Náisiúin Aontaithe, cinneadh an Rialtais agus glactha leis ag Teach Laighean ".

Tá Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall sásta gur bhain an Dearbhú Náisiúnta Sollúnta le hlonstraimí daingniúcháin de chuid na hÉireann a bhain le Conradh Nice agus gur cláraíodh é ina dhiaidh sin ag na Náisiúin Aontaithe, agus gur athdhearbhaigh rialtas Cowan na gealltanais ina dhiaidh sin tar éis diúltú do Chonradh Liospóin ar dtús in 2008.

Mar sin féin, is mian le Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall a ndíomá a chur in iúl maidir le rún agus polasaí an Rialtais deireadh a chur leis an Ghlas Triarach, ina ndearna an Taoiseach, an tUasal Martin, cur síos air roimhe seo mar "croílár neodrachta na 26 contae".

I bhfianaise an rúin an riachtanas maidir le sainordú ó na Náisiúin Aontaithe a bhaint, aithníonn an Chomhairle seo freagracht na Náisiúin Aontaithe maidir le síocháin agus slándáil idirnáisiúnta a choinneáil agus tosaíocht Chairt na Náisiúin Aontaithe mar dhoiciméad bunúsach de

chuid an dlí idirnáisiúnta. Léiríonn an Glas Triarach gealltanais dlíthiúil agus polaitiúil ó stát na hÉireann i leith phrionsabail na Náisiún Aontaithe. Ag am ina bhfuil méadú ar éagobhsaíocht dhomhanda, iarrann an Chomhairle seo ar rialtas an tSaorstáit an Glas Triarach a chosaint mar chuid lárnach de neodracht na hÉireann agus brú a chur ar iarrachtaí chun síocháin agus taidhleoireacht a chur chun cinn.

Mar sin de tá Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall go láidir i gcoinne polasaí den chineál seo agus geallann siad go ndéanfar teagmháil le gach Comhairle Contae láithreach ag iarraidh orthu seasamh linn agus leis na forais rialtais cuí chun iad a chur ar an eolas faoina bhfreasúra.”

Má cheadaítear an rún go ndéanfar é a scaipeadh ar chomhairlí eile taobh istigh den stát –

“Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall, recalling that in June 2002 the European Council adopted the Seville Declaration, which confirmed that the Nice Treaty posed no threat to Ireland’s neutrality, notes that the then Taoiseach Mr Ahern confirmed to Teach Laighean that: “ The National Declaration reaffirms Ireland’s attachment to a policy of neutrality and confirms that: Ireland is not party to any mutual defence commitment: that we will take our own sovereign decision on whether 26 Counties defence force should participate in humanitarian or crisis management tasks mounted by the EU based on the Triple Lock of UN endorsement, Government decision and Teach Laighean approval”.

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall is satisfied that the Solemn National Declaration was associated with Ireland’s Instruments of ratification of the Nice Treaty and subsequently registered at the UN, while the undertakings were subsequently reiterated by the Cowan government following initial rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in 2008.

However, Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall now wishes to express its dismay at the stated intention and policy of the Government to dismantle the Triple Lock, which the Taoiseach Mr Martin previously described as “the core of 26 counties neutrality”.

In light of the intention to remove the requirement for a UN mandate, this Council recognises the responsibility of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security and the primacy of the UN Charter as a foundational document of international law. The Triple Lock represents a legal and political commitment by the Irish state to the principles of the UN. At a time of heightened global instability, this Council calls on the Freestate government to safeguard the Triple Lock as a core component of Irish neutrality and to redouble efforts to promote peace and diplomacy.

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall therefore states its forceful opposition to such a policy and pledges to immediately contact all County Councils

requesting them to join us in this course of action and to inform the appropriate government organs of their opposition.”

If motion is approved that it is circulated to other councils within the state.

Environment

25. Cllr John S O' Fearraigh

“With regards to the inspection of septic tanks that these inspections are open to all areas within the County of Donegal.”

26. Cathaoirleach's Business.

27. Chief Executive's Management Report.

QUESTIONS

LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Environment

28. Cllr Dakota Nic Mheanman

What efforts have been made to engage with Uisce Éireann to install more public water refill stations in outdoor areas i.e. Greenways, Parks?

INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Environment

29. Cllr Fionán Bradley

How many life buoys does this Council have in the County? Do we know the condition and location of all them?

30. Cllr Fionán Bradley

How many lifeguards have been employed for the summer season? How many are employed in each MD?

31. Cllr Terry Crossan

Who is responsible for investigating problematic Septic Tank Run-Off that could present as a public health issue and what powers are there to enforce remedial action to resolve this?

32. Cllr Terry Crossan

Has there been monitoring of our waterways for the emergence of Blue Green Algae in light of the prolonged warm dry spell of weather?

Community Development

33. Cllr Albert Doherty

County Donegal Motorhome Facilities, Upgrades and Maintenance.

How many Council based Motorhome facilities are in the county, where are they located and will the council ensure that facilities currently in situ are retained, serviced, maintained and upgraded with newer models where required?

Housing

34. Cllr Albert Doherty

What funding has been granted and/or sought from the Department to enable further social homes in Donegal access works under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme in 2025 and will the Council confirm areas and housing schemes that will have works carried out this year?

35. Cllr Joy Beard

Could you provide an update on any discussions with companies specialising in 3D construction printing (3DCP)?

LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

36. Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh

What plans are in place to improve the accuracy of the electoral registers in the County?

37. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we have an update and timeframe of the current review being undertaken by management of our Directorates of Services and of the current council model to meet the current demands on our services moving forward?

Housing

38. Cllr Tomás Sean Devine

Can I get a breakdown of the average cost to build a 2/3 bed housing unit for the Council's own stock and a breakdown what they can pay for a house from a housing body?

Environment

39. Cllr Declan Meehan

Can we be provided with information relating to the number of Litter Wardens at work in the county per MD and can we be provided with the number of litter fines and dog fouling fines issued in the county per MD over the past five years?

Housing

40. Cllr Declan Meehan

Can we be provided with a breakdown of all communication, including in-person meetings, between this Council and the Department and Minister for Housing in relation to the Social Housing Remediation Scheme for those social houses affected by Defective Blocks? A timeline with efforts

or proposals made by this Council would be helpful to illustrate the work done by Council.

Roads & Transportation

41. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we a timeframe for the cross-party working group to explore and review the current costing model being used by our Machinery Yard while hiring plant to our Municipal Districts as agreed at our plenary workshop on 7th April?

Emergency Services

42. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we a timeframe for the business case to be carried out in our Fire Service and a commitment that no service will be downgraded while this study is being carried as agreed at our plenary meeting in Letterkenny on 7th April?

DONEGAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Housing

43. Cllr Micheál Naughton

How many houses has Donegal County Council built in each Municipal District for the last 10 years?

Can I receive the final department stage approval for the Council's own direct scheme:

e.g., The 30 units in Letterkenny?

The 43 units in Dungloe?

The 54 units in Buncrana?

GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Environment

44. Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty

When will the new Dog Warden be appointed in the County and have, we any retirements in the current Dog Warden Section pending and if so are replacements imminent?

Environment

45. Cllr John S O' Fearraigh

Under the national inspection on septic tanks how many personnel have the Council in place to carry out these inspections county wide?

Economic Development

46. Cllr Brian Carr

What measures, such as byelaws, designated parking areas, enforcement policies, or signage are currently in place or planned to manage campervan parking across the county, and are there any plans or incentives to support the development of appropriate campervan

facilities either directly by the Council or through private or community-led initiatives; furthermore, is the Council developing an overall strategy to address related issues such as waste disposal and sewage management in a sustainable and coordinated manner?

Roads & Transportation

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

Cé mhéad cé, cuan agus fána a bhfuil an Chomhairle freagrach astu laistigh den chontae? As na céanna, cuanta agus fánáin a bhfuil an Chomhairle freagrach astu, cé mhéad acu a bhfuil fodhlíthe acu? As na céanna agus na cuanta agus na fánáin nach bhfuil fodhlíthe acu ach a bhfuil freagracht orainn astu, cá huair a chuirfear fodhlíthe i bhfeidhm iontu ar fad?

How many piers, harbours and slipways does the Council have responsibility for within the county? Out of all the piers, harbours and slip ways that the Council have responsibility for, how many of them do have byelaws? Of the piers and harbours and slipways that do not have byelaws but that we have responsibility for, when will there be byelaws put in place in them all?

Community Development

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

Maidir leis an mórshiúl frith-inimirce a bhí ar siúl i Leitir Ceanainn ar an 3 Bealtaine 2025, iarradh go n-eagrófaí cruinniú éigeandála leis an Ard-Cheannfort mar gheall ar imní mhór shlándála an phobail, na nGardaí agus ar ár gComhairleoirí. D'aontaigh na Comhairleoirí go léir leis seo, agus tá mé ag fiafraí cén fáth nár cuireadh an t-iarratas seo faoi bhráid an Ard-Cheannfoirt?

In relation to the recent anti-immigration march in Leitir Ceanainn on the 3rd of May 2025, it was asked that an emergency meeting would be organised with the Chief Superintendent due to the massive security concerns of the public, Garda and also us Councillors. This was agreed by all Councillors, and I am asking why this request was not submitted to the Chief Superintendent.

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

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

That the Chief Executive introduce a ban on fox hunting on Council owned lands in Fingal."

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

"Leitrim County Council calls on the Department of Transport to secure funding for the removal of those huge Ash trees along local and regional roads, that are decaying from Ash Die Back. We are all aware of how dangerous those trees are to road users."

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

“Noting that a home is a moral human right, this local authority calls on the Government to start a process to have the right to housing enshrined in the constitution. A copy of this motion to be sent to all local authorities within the state.”

<p align="center">MINUTES OF MAY MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 26th MAY, 2025 IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD</p>
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C/163/25

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs N Kennedy, Cathaoirleach, J Beard, L Blaney, M Boyle, F Bradley C Brogan, J Brogan, P Canning, B Carr, T Crossan, TS Devine, A Doherty, A Farren, M Harley, N Jordan, D. M Kelly, M C Mac Giolla Easbuig, M McBride, M Mc Clafferty, M McDermott, P McGarvey, D McGee, P McGowan, G McMonagle, D Meehan, A Molloy, M Naughton, D Nic Mheanman, J.S Ó Fearraigh, M Scanlon.

Online: Cllrs D Coyle, G Doherty, M Farren, J Kavanagh, and F Mc Brearty,

C/164/25

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs T Crossan and J Murray who were unable to attend the meeting.

C/165/25

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, Richard Gibson, Director of Finance, Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services, Michael McGarvey, Director of Water & Environment, Tanya Kee, SEO, Management Accounts, Mary Daly, SSO Economic Development, Joy Browne, SSO Economic Development, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, William Colvin, ASO, Martina Tully, SO, Róise Ní Laifeartaigh, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Clóna Ní Ghallachóir, Tacaíocht do Sheirbhísí Aistriúcháin, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/166/25

ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING AS A MARK OF RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO DIED IN THE INISHOWEN DROWNING TRAGEDY

Cllr Fionán Bradley alluded to the recent tragedy in Buncrana where two young men had lost their lives in tragic circumstances in Lough Swilly. He said that Emmanuel Familola and Matt Sibanda were new community members and that their deaths had shook the town of Buncrana which has borne more than its fair share of tragedies. He commended the local community who had rallied around in the circumstances and had provided ongoing support for the grieving families. He thanked the emergency services, the coastguard, the RNLI volunteers and the many local boat owners who had helped in the search and recovery operation. He paid tribute to Fr Frances Bradley, P.P, Buncrana who was present that day and who had given great support and comfort to the families of Emmanuel and Matt, and also to the members of the refugee community in Buncrana.

On the proposal of Cllr Bradley, seconded by Cllr A Doherty, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting for a short period as a mark of respect for the two teenagers who had perished in the tragedy.

- C/167/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 27TH MARCH, 2025**
On the proposal of Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr Meehan, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 27th March, 2025 were adopted.
- C/168/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 31ST MARCH, 2025**
On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr Harley, the Minutes of the March Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 31st March, 2025 were adopted.
- C/169/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 28TH APRIL, 2025**
On the proposal of Cllr Harley, seconded by Cllr Boyle, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 28th April, 2025 was adopted.
- C/170/25 **DISPOSAL OF A PLOT OF LAND AT ST MARY'S TCE, RAMELTON TO RAMELTON COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE**
Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Cllr McGarvey, seconded by Cllr Meehan, it was resolved to disposal of a plot of land at St. Mary's Tce, Ramelton to Ramelton Community Garden Committee 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/171/25 **DISPOSAL OF A PLOT OF LAND INCLUDING TWO STOREY BUILDING UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT AILT AN CHORRAIN ENTERPRISE CENTRE, THE HARBOUR, AILT AN CHORRAIN BY WAY OF LEASE TO DONEGAL 2040 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT DAC.**
Members considered the report circulated with the agenda in relation to the above.

On the proposal of Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr O Fearraigh, it was resolved to disposal of a plot of land including two storey building under construction at Ailt An Chorrain Enterprise Centre, The Harbour, Ailt An Chorrian by way of lease to Donegal 2040 Strategic Development DAC 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/172/25 **DISPOSAL BY WAY OF LEASE A PLOT OF LAND AND INCLUDING A 270SQ.M. BUILDING AS CONSTRUCTED THEREON AT ISLAND HOUSE, KILLYBEGS TO DONEGAL 2040 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT DAC.**

Cllr Jordan asked that consideration be given to allowing the Killybegs Tourist Information take control of the building. He noted that the committee had made a presentation and that a business plan had been drawn up. He said that this made sense given the success of Slieve League and the need to cater for upwards of 160,000 visitors.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services noted that this had been discussed at a recent workshop in the Donegal Municipal District. He said that to approve the disposal with the specific condition outlined would cause a difficulty for the Donegal 2040 Strategic Development DAC as it contravened the terms and conditions under which DAC had been established and would effectively curtail its ability to review submissions. He recommended that the members proceed with the original proposal as agreed by the Donegal MD.

Cllr Jordan reiterated the fact that the Tourist Information company had a good business plan in place which would work for that building.

Cllr J Brogan said he was of the belief that it should be kept in the hands of the public and not end up being utilised for private business opportunities.

Mr Martin said that he was not aware of the business plan and that information presented to date made it difficult to make any judgement. It would be premature, he advised, to give the building to one entity or to a stand-a-lone business and would contravene the objectives of DAC. Donegal 2040 Strategic Development DAC was, he added, a fully owned Council company established to manage and deliver these types of buildings. He strongly advised members to go with the original proposal as it was a benefit to have DAC act in an advisory capacity and as a buffer entity.

It was thus resolved to defer the matter to later in the meeting.

C/173/25

DISPOSAL BY WAY OF LEASE OF A PLOT OF LAND AT 14 BALLYDUFF TERRACE, LIFFORD TOGETHER WITH THE PROVISION OF A RIGHT OF WAY IN FAVOUR OF NUALA QUINN

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

On the proposal of Cllr Harley, seconded by Cllr Nic Mheanman, it was resolved to dispose by way of lease a plot of land at 14 Ballyduff Terrace, Lifford together with the provision of a right of way in favour of Nuala Quinn 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/174/25

TO APPROVE THE CHANGE OF USE OF AND THE EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF A PROTECTED STRUCTURE, NAMELY LETTERKENNY COURTHOUSE AND ITS ATTENDANT LANDS TO PROVIDE FLEXIBLE SPACE WITH A MULTIFUNCTIONAL CAPACITIES.

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

On the proposal of Cllr McBride, seconded by Cllr Brogan, the change of use of and the extension and modification of a Protected Structure, namely Letterkenny Courthouse (Ref. RPS 40502279) and its attendant lands to provide flexible space with a multifunctional capacities for: (i) a tourist/visitor attraction and integrated Tourist Information Point, (ii) interpretation, exhibitions, conferences, education & learning, (iii) multi-purpose civic, cultural, community use and social gatherings and events, (iv) café, (v) retail/gift shop and ancillary offices, storage and public conveniences 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 A Doherty asked what correspondence had been received from the Courts Service in relation to this process and how positive this had been in relation to the Council's involvement.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning confirmed that the property had come into the Council's ownership from the Courts Service in 2018.

C/175/25

TO APPROVE THE CARRYING OUT OF WORKS WITH REGARD TO THE LETTERKENNY ACTIVE TRAVEL – R940 BALLYRAINE ROAD PROJECT AND THE LETTERKENNY ACTIVE TRAVEL – L1007 CIRCULAR ROAD PROJECT

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

Cllr McMonagle, proposed, seconded by Cllr Meehan, that the carrying out of works with regard to the Letterkenny Active Travel – R940 Ballyraine Road Project be 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 C Brogan noted that there had been considerable discussion on the matter by the Letterkenny/Milford Municipal District and that it had been suggested that the project be deferred given that the single biggest issue in Letterkenny was traffic congestion. As a result, he said, it was premature to go ahead with this project and proposed that approval of same be deferred pending further consideration. He alluded to the fact that a motion had been recently debated by the Letterkenny/Milford MD calling for a dedicated meeting at which the Chief Executive, the Director of Service, Roads Management and the T.I.I could sit down, carry

out a root and branch review and look at ways of getting a viable solution for the traffic model in Letterkenny. To proceed with the project as outlined, was, he said, simply putting good money into bad. He cited the need for a Town Bus Service together with dedicated bus lanes. Cllr Kelly seconded the proposal to defer given that the project was premature and cited the need to start on the outskirts of the town and work inwards.

Cllr Mc Monagle noted however that traffic congestion was due to the lack of significant investment and that what was being done here was to try and put in place an Active Travel Programme which would encourage people to leave their cars behind and walk and cycle to work. He said that if the money was sent back then it would be allocated to other towns. By and large, he said, local business-people were in favour of the project. He alluded to the increased usage of eScooters especially in the context of Letterkenny's status as an university town. It was acknowledged that there would be some delays on a temporary basis, but that the finished product would benefit the entire community. Letterkenny as a modern town, he said, needed this project and it would be a step backwards if this money had to be returned.

Cllr Meehan concurred with Cllr Mc Monagle and cited the need to avail all funding opportunities. There was, he advised, an embarrassing lack of active travel opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists in and around Letterkenny. He acknowledged that these projects would not solve all the problems and that there was no one easy solution, with a suite of improvements needed to improve accessibility. Improved infrastructure was needed, he added, to control the traffic coming into the town encompassing a range of initiatives including a town bus service in conjunction with the active travel projects. An end goal, he added, was the possible introduction of an e-bike scheme when the necessary resources were in place. This would, he confirmed, tie in with Letterkenny's status as a university town. He acknowledged that there would be an issue with temporary disruption which was on par with any capital investment programme. It was imperative, he said, that there was continual liaison with the Chamber of Commerce to mitigate any of the challenges that arose.

Cllr Devine said that he was supportive of the project and highlighted the need for inter-linkage and the development of a "Park & Ride" System to facilitate increased traffic management.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig noted that there were no active travel projects in the Glenties Municipal District and expressed concern that there was also no dedicated plans for footpath provision. Given the level of congestion in Letterkenny, he said, that he was in agreement with Cllrs Mc Monagle and Meehan that active travel was the way forward in this instance.

Cllr Kelly said that he acknowledged that the footpath network was not

in place to accommodate e-scooters and said that the issue was in building confidence for the people that he represented. He said that concerns in relation to active travel had been raised at all the public consultation events. He referenced also the fact that his own party had opposed the Four-Lane project and that there had been issues with the impact of the works and the overall success of the project.

Cllr Mc Bride noted that much work had been done on this project over the last number of years and that a couple of the sections had been completed. These, he said, had been a massive improvement from what was already there and had significantly improved the footpath network. Donegal County Council, was, he said in the process of building 150 houses in Ballymacool and there was an urgent need there for more footpaths.

These projects, he said, needed to progress to ensure that a viable transport network was put in place and that the funding allocations were retained. . He said that he was in agreement with the fact that some areas needed transportation hubs and that a dedicated town bus service was essential. He said that he had not received any negative feedback and alluded to the fact that the business community wanted the Circular Road project to go ahead and that the ATU had indicated that they were supportive.

Cllr Kavanagh said it was strange that opposition was being voiced in relation to active travel on the basis that there was too much traffic. It would, he advised, not solve the problem but would be part of the over-all solution. He said that he could not see the logic in scraping a scheme that would inevitably take cars off the road. He said that impact of Active Travel would only be seen when the entire programme was completed and amalgamated. To abandon now would, he added, render works done to date useless. He seconded the proposal by Cllr Mc Monagle to proceed with the Letterkenny Active Travel – R940 Ballyraine Road Project and the Letterkenny Active Travel – L1007 Circular Road Project.

Cllr Coyle cited the need to look at what was already there and alluded to the fact that the cycle lane on the Four Lane roadway was not being used. He said that there was no town bus service or park and ride facilities and that there was no point in going ahead with active travel projects until these were in place. He called for a realistic approach and supported the proposal to defer the Letterkenny Active Travel projects.

Cllr Canning said that he was not against active travel but that the timing was not right. His party had, he noted, not supported the Four Lane project at the time and that there had been a number of issues in relation to this project. There were, it was acknowledged two issues, namely the absence of a proper traffic management plan and the fact that Uisce Éireann did not want anybody building over their infrastructure.

Traffic congestion was a major issue, he advised, and people were going to Derry rather than travel into Letterkenny.

Cllr C Brogan said that there was a solution, and that this did not involve scrapping the project and would ultimately be a good fix for the Glencar area. He noted that there were plans in place for the Windy Hall Road which included new cycle lanes and that the development of same would take the pressure off the Circular Road which has effectively become a relief road. The Windy Hall Road, was, he stated, on the Active Travel Plan and if developed would take away a considerable amount of traffic.

He encouraged members to deliver the Windy Hall Road project. He said that two members of the business community on the Circular Road had indicated that the recovery period for the previous round of works on the sewerage network had been in the region of three years.

He alluded to his motion as submitted to the Letterkenny/ Milford MD which had advocated a common sense approach and the need to look at easing the traffic congestion through the development of the Windy Hall Road.

Cllr Mc Gee outlined the need for additional clarity and said that the new members required more time to assess same as there were implications for the whole of the county given the strategic element involved. There were implications also, he advised for the business community.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that it was not a case of scrapping this and proceeding with the Windy Hall road as this would not solve all the problems on the Circular Road. This, he said, provided for a network of cycle lanes and that more and more people were using the cycle lane on the Four Lane. It was about working together, he added and building the network. He said that the money was there, and the work was ready to start. It was acknowledged that there was a need to look at the bigger picture in order to ensure that Letterkenny had a workable traffic management system.

The Chief Executive noted that traffic congestion in the town was a serious issue. He alluded to the fact that the transport policy had changed under Minister Eamon Ryan and that Donegal County Council had been one of the main beneficiaries of that policy decision similar to other Local Authorities. Letterkenny, he advised, had fared well and that there were changes in that where there were previously requests to widen roads, a shift in policy now required the sharing of space with all road users. The emphasis now, he stated, was to achieve the correct balance in line with national policy. He alluded to the fact that there had been considerable consultation and that it was now a matter for the members to decide. It was noted that there had been a change in the Part 8 process and that projects had to be approved within a dedicated

timeframe otherwise they became redundant. It was not possible, he said, to move the allocated monies to other projects and he urged members to approve the Letterkenny Active Travel Projects. Huge investment, he said, was needed to ensure that Letterkenny had all necessary infrastructural links. It was imperative, he said, that all worked together to ensure that these vital links were provided.

A recorded vote was then taken by the Meetings Administrator in relation to the approval of the Letterkenny Active Travel – R940 Ballyraine Road Project and the Letterkenny Active Travel – L1007 Circular Road Project.

This resulted in 20 voting to proceed with Part 8 approval and 13 voting against.

Those voting in favour included:

Cllrs Beard, Boyle, J Brogan, Carr, Crossan, Devine, A Doherty, G Doherty, A Farren, Harley, Jordan, Kavanagh, Mac Giolla Easbuig, Mc Bride, Mc Garvey, Mc Monagle, Meehan, Nic Mheanman, O' Fearraigh and Scanlon. (20)

Those voting against were:

Cllrs Blaney, Bradley, C Brogan, Canning, Coyle, M Farren, Kelly, Mc Clafferty, Mc Dermott, Mc Gee, Mc Gowan, Molloy, and Naughton. (13)

Cllrs Kennedy and Mc Brearty abstained.

It was thus resolved to approve the Letterkenny Active Travel – R940 Ballyraine Road Project and the Letterkenny Active Travel – L1007 Circular Road Project in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)

C/176/25

TO APPROVE THE CARRYING OUT OF WORKS WITH REGARD TO THE R267 DONEGAL TOWN SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECT

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

On the proposal of Cllr J Brogan, seconded by Cllr Jordan, the carrying out of works with regard to the R267 Donegal Town Safe Routes to School Active Travel Project 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). This was approved subject to the carrying out of an assessment of the volume and capacity of traffic in the area at the far end of the scheme.

Cllr Brogan noted that there were issues with the traffic lights at the

school. Cllr Naughton asked that consideration be given to the best way of managing the traffic flow at the junction at the old road.

C/177/25

TO APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF 19 NO. SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS AT MACHAIRE GATHLAN/ARD NA GCEAPAIRI, DOIRE BEAG, DUN NA NGALL

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

On the proposal of Cllr McGiolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr O Fearraigh, the construction of 19no. social housing units at Machaire Gathlan/Ard na gCeapairi, Doire Beag, Dun nan Gall to include all associated site development works in two phases with Phase 1 comprising 12no. units being developed initially and Phase 2 to be completed at a later stage 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 Mac Giolla Easbuig said that he had concerns in relation to the sewerage aspect and asked what the provision was in respect of independent living facilities at this location. He asked why the development could not proceed as one phase and asked if it was possible to apply for monies to put in the sewerage scheme and extend the scheme up to Carrickataskin.

Cllr O' Fearraigh welcomed the scheme and said that it was important that the Council did the necessary infrastructure works and did not wait for its inclusion on the Uisce Éireann work programme.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services confirmed that a site had been set aside for independent living accommodation and that discussions had taken place with an Approved Housing Body and the HSE to firm up on the detail. It was intended, he advised, in the initial stage to go with phase 1 and the progression of the treatment plant which would then allow the remaining phases to be completed.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig reiterated his call for the project to be completed in on phase and said that it should not have to wait on approval from Uisce Éireann.

The Director of Services said that it was possible to move forward with certainty on the first twelve units and that the Council would work with the other relevant agencies to ensure that the project was completed in its entirety.

Cllr Mc Clafferty welcomed the development and outlined the need for Uisce Éireann to make a serious commitment to improving sewerage infrastructure in the Glenties Municipal District.

Cllr Mc Gee said he was supportive of completing the project in one phase and outlined the need for sewerage issues in Carrickataskin to be resolved.

Cllr O' Fearraigh said it was important that the project moved forward with no unnecessary delays.

C/178/25

TO APPROVE THE DCC NOMINEE ON THE BOARD OF COMHAR NA NOILEAN CTR.

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

Cllr C Brogan proposed, seconded by Cllr Mc Dermott that Cllr Anthony Molloy be nominated as the Donegal County Council representative on to the Board of Comhar na nOileain CTR.

Cllr J Brogan proposed, seconded by Cllr Meehan that Cllr Micheál Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig be nominated as the Donegal County Council representative onto the Board of Comhar na nOileain CTR.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that he had considerable support on the Islands and had worked with the Islanders on a range of projects. He was, he advised, very familiar with the issues on the ground and would be a dedicated and committed representative for all the Islands.

Cllr Molloy said that as the outgoing representative he had been delighted to be part of the process which saw significant monies approved for the Donegal Islands with €400,000 allocated under the 2023-2027 programme. He had been, he said, a strong voice for the Islands and was happy for his name to be put forward as there was considerable work to be done going forward.

A recorded vote was then taken by the Meetings Administrator resulting in 20 votes for Cllr Molloy and 10 votes for Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig.

Those voting for Cllr Molloy were:

Cllrs Blaney, Boyle, Bradley, C Brogan, Canning, Carr, Coyle, M Farren, Harley, Jordan, Kavanagh, Kelly, Mc Clafferty, Mc Dermott, Mc Garvey, Mc Gowan, Mc Monagle, Molloy, Naughton and O' Fearraigh.
(20)

Those voting for Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig were:

Cllrs Beard, J Brogan, Devine, A Farren, Mac Giolla Easbuig, Mc Brearty, Mc Bride, Mc Gee, Meehan and Scanlon.(10)

Thus, Cllr Anthony Molloy was selected as the Donegal County Council representative to the Board of Comhar na nOileain CTR

- C/179/25 **TO FILL CASUAL VACANCY ON THE DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS COMMITTEE ARISING FROM THE RESIGNATION OF CLLR JIMMY KAVANAGH**
On the proposal of Cllr Harley, seconded by Cllr Kavanagh, it was resolved that Cllr Boyle fill the casual vacancy on the Defective Concrete Blocks Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh.
- C/180/25 **TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF CLLR MICHAEL BOYLE TO THE BOARD OF BALLYSHANNON LEISURE CENTRE**
On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Naughton it was resolved to appoint Cllr Michael Boyle to the Board of Ballyshannon Leisure Centre.
- C/181/25 **TO APPROVE THE NOMINATION OF CLLR JIMMY BROGAN AND CLLR MICHAEL BOYLE TO COISTE NA GAEILGE (FINAL NOMINATION FROM THE DONEGAL MD)**
On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Meehan it was resolved that Cllrs Jimmy Brogan and Michael Boyle fill the remaining vacancies on Coiste na Gaeilge.
- C/182/25 **TO FILL THREE REMAINING VACANCIES ON THE WORKING GROUP ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**
Cllr A Doherty, Chair of the Working Group on Constitutional Change noted that there were three vacancies to be filled on the committee.

On the proposal of Cllr Beard, seconded by Cllr A Farren it was resolved that Cllr Tomás Sean Devine be appointed to the Working Group on Constitutional Change.

On the proposal of Cllr Boyle, seconded by Cllr A Farren it was resolved that Cllr Martin Harley be appointed to the Working Group on Constitutional Change.

It was agreed that further discussion would take place in relation to the remaining vacancy.
- C/183/25 **TO AGREE DATE FOR THE 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – (MONDAY 30TH JUNE, 2025 AT 11.30a.m.).**
It was unanimously agreed to hold the 2025 Annual General Meeting on Monday 30th June, 2025 at 11.30a.m.
- C/183A/25 **ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING**
On the proposal of Cllr Bradley, seconded by Cllr Scanlon it was resolved to adjourn the meeting for lunch.
- C/183B/25 **DISPOSAL BY WAY OF LEASE A PLOT OF LAND AND INCLUDING A 270SQ.M. BUILDING AS CONSTRUCTED THEREON AT ISLAND HOUSE, KILLYBEGS TO DONEGAL 2040 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT DAC.**

On resumption of the meeting, it was resolved on the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr J Brogan to dispose by way of lease a plot of land, including a 270sq.m. building as constructed thereon at Island House, Killybegs to Donegal 2040 Strategic Development (DAC) subject to the submission by Killybegs Tourism being looked at again in relation to obtaining space on the ground floor.

C/184/25

TO APPROVE THE DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL TOURISM STRATEGY 2025-2030.

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

The Cathaoirleach noted that the strategy had already been presented to members at MD level. Donegal Tourism, she advised did a fantastic job and there was great appreciation for the job that they did. She said that there had been an issue with some of the figures presented but that these had been revisited and the numbers clarified.

Cllr A Doherty queried the visitor numbers outlined on page 7 and asked what counters were used as there were no figures for Banba's Crown or for the Wild Alpaca Way.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services, in relation to the visitor figures for 2023 said that the total for Slieve League was much higher than outlined and that the total for the Visitor Centre alone was in the region of 142,000. He said that it would be possible to look again at how the gross numbers were captured and also in relation to the projects identified by Cllr Doherty. He acknowledged the excellent work carried out by the Tourism team led by Anne Marie Conlon in conjunction with Joy Browne and Mary Daly.

Cllr Mc Dermott said it was very disappointing to look at the statistics for the visitor number attractions especially as there was no reference to Malin Head the most northerly point in Ireland.

Cllr Blaney drew attention to the fact that Fanad Lighthouse was also absent from the list.

The Director of Service said that these issues would be followed up with Failte Ireland.

Cllr Mc Gowan expressed concern that East Donegal had again been ignored even though Ballybofey and Stranorlar were located one hours drive from the majority of the main tourist attractions in the county.

Cllr A Farren said that considerable work had gone into trying to develop and market Malin Head, yet it lagged in terms of the promotion of the overall tourism product. It was concerning, he said, that there had been very little focus on the development of an overall plan for this area

in the last five to six years. With 12% of jobs in Donegal tourism based, this project, he said, had the potential to enhance the tourism product in Inishowen and Donegal going forward. He alluded to the fact that there had been new counters put into the pathways at Malin Head and that these should have generated detail on the visitor numbers.

Cllr Canning said that the figures for the Grianan of Aileach were low and this was reflective of the fact that there was an issue in relation to opening times.

Members were informed that the numbers were sourced from Failte Ireland and based on their methodology. It was confirmed that the issues raised would be followed up with Failte Ireland.

Mr Martin advised that there was specific reference to Fanad Lighthouse, Fort Dunree and the Malin Head Visitor Centre under Sections 1.1.1 and 1.10.5. He said that it would be possible to look at updating the table.

Essentially, he said, this was a strategy document and not a marketing exercise. Hotel owners, he said had worked with the marketing team and thus was driven by the business itself. Donegal Tourism, he added, were committed to assisting them and driving this agenda forward. This association was, he noted, reflected in the overall visitor numbers. Donegal Tourism, he said, focused on marketing with the product development driven by the private sector.

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Dermott, seconded by Cllr A Farren it was resolved to defer the matter to the next plenary meeting so that the issues raised could be reviewed.

C/185/25

TOURISM PRESENTATION ON TBEX – EUROPE (TRAVEL BLOG EXCHANGE).

Members received a presentation from Ms Mary Daly, Senior Tourism Officer in relation to the TBEX – Europe (Travel Blog Exchange) which is scheduled to take place in Donegal in September 2025. This event, she confirmed would bring approximately 500 content creators to Donegal where they would take part in four days of intense meetings, conferences, workshops and networking activities. This major gathering for travel bloggers, influencers and the content creator community would, she advised, be preceded by tours across the county and by post event tours across Ireland. Donegal Tourism, she said wanted to take full advantage of this exceptional opportunity to showcase Donegal's distinctive assets on an international stage.

A overview and history of the event was provided and an analysis of why the event was being brought to Donegal. She highlighted the impact this would have going forward and said that it was hoped to showcase the county's stunning scenery, friendly welcome, unique experiences, a taste of Donegal food and crafts and offer an insight into our

language, and cultural and music traditions. This it was acknowledged was a massive event and would ensure that Donegal would be promoted and receive worldwide coverage and exposure.

Members welcomed the update and raised the following issues:

- Suggested that the Irish Language be actively promoted as part of this initiative together with all aspects of life in the Gaeltacht.
- Need to promote this so that all stakeholders can be prepared and to encourage all aspects of the industry to get involved.
- Areas such as our maritime history and places like Inishstrahull should be promoted.
- Need for the promotion of activities that fit in with our variable climate in Donegal.
- Information sought in relation to the various tours that are to be promoted as part of the overall programme.
- Highlighted the need to ensure that all viewing points and scenic spots are in pristine condition for the event. Noted that there were issues at Doe Castle.
- Signage must also be attended to and in place prior to the event. Signage at Rathmullan Pier needs attention.
- Dedicated strategy must be put in place prior to the event with collaboration at MD level by the Roads and Environment teams.
- Identified the need to reach out to the Tidy Towns groups with a dedicated funding element so that the county looks it best for the event.
- National Primary roads should be cleaned and litter free prior to the arrival of the delegates.
- Suggested that Aer Lingus be contacted re providing additional flights into Carrickfin Airport.

C/186/25

TO APPROVE THE ACTUAL GROSS EXPENDITURE FIGURE OF €217,549,832 AS SET OUT ON TABLE 3, PAGE 3 WHEN COMPARED TO THE REVISED BUDGET OF €212,186,413.

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

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan , seconded by Cllr Scanlon it was resolved to approve the actual gross expenditure figure of €217,549,832 as set out on Table 3, Page 3 when compared to the Revised Budget of €212,186,413. (Adopted Budget as amended by net increases in funding received for 2024) for all Divisions in accordance with Subsection 7 of Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

C/187/25

TO NOTE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 3RD MARCH, 2025

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

On the proposal of Cllr McMonagle, seconded by Cllr Meehan, the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 3rd March, 2025 were noted.

C/188/25

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 Blaney attendance at the following was approved.

Training

- AILG Elected Member Induction Day Training to be held on Thursday 29th May 2025 in the Athlone Springs Hotel, Athlone (For newly co-opted Councillors since the June 2024 Local Elections)

Other

- Attendance of Leas-Cathaoirleach at the National Enterprise Awards in the Mansion House on Thursday 22nd May, 2025.

Conferences

- Attendance at the Irish Planning Institute Conference 2025 in the Salthill Hotel, Galway from the 9th to the 11th April, 2025.
- Buildings Action Coalition 2025 Summit from the 17th to the 19th June 2025 in the Riverside Park Hotel, Enniscorthy, County Wexford.

C/189/25

CONFERENCE/EVENT REPORTS

On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr Bradley the following conference reports were noted:

- Attendance of Cllr Martin Harley at the Lonely Planet Awards in London on the 6th November, 2023.
- Attendance of Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan at the Association of Irish Regions (AIR) Conference in the Radisson Blu, Athlone on the 5th and 6th February, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan at the Irish Building Control Institute Conference in the Radisson Hotel, Cork on the 12th and 13th March, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Kavanagh at St Patrick's Day events in Philadelphia and New York from the 13th to the 18th March, 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Jack Murray at the CPMR Political Bureau Meeting in Bari , Italy from the 27th to the 28th March 2025.

- Attendance of Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh at Diaspora Events in Glasgow on the 28th and 29th March 2025.

C/190/25

DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS

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

“Calling on the current Government to establish an Independent Judicial Statutory Public Inquiry into the Irish Defective Concrete Scandal, which has been labelled incorrectly as the Mica Freeze Thaw Scandal as being the cause of this disaster.”

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

Cllr Mc Brearty said that the truth needed to be told about the defective concrete scandal which had been labelled incorrectly by the State and the NSAI as being caused by mica freeze thaw. The victims of this scandal, he advised, were entitled to an independent statutory enquiry similar to the Postmaster enquiry in the UK and the Morris Tribunal established by the Irish Government in 2002. He said that as the only Donegal politician who had been involved in a public enquiry, he was in a unique position to understand the pros and cons and the need for such an enquiry. He said that this would deliver the answers and establish as to why this had been allowed to happen in the first place.

He called on the Donegal TD's and Senators to lobby for the delivery of this enquiry as the Governments failure had allowed this crisis to happen.

This enquiry, he advised needed to have open terms of reference and the investigations needed to begin with the quarries, the construction and concrete industries at the point where they became self-regulating.

Cllr Mc Brearty advised that his 2023 amended position paper was a good starting point and overview of what had happened and who was responsible. He questioned what forensic evidence was available to endorse the theory that freeze thaw was responsible.

The Mica Action Group in their presentation to members in April 2014 had, he noted, presented a crumbling concrete block as evidence. He said he believed this had cemented the mindset that mica was the cause and queried what forensic evidence had been given to the group to support this claim.

The formation of the Expert Panel in 2016 was, he contended, effectively the beginning of the cover up as they had pointed to mica freeze thaw as the root of the problem. This was further endorsed by the publication of IS465 by the NSAI in November 2018, he added.

Cllr Mc Brearty queried what forensic testing had been used in the development of this standard and whether cognisance had been taken of EU directives for concrete blocks and building control and market surveillance regulations. The EU directives at the time were the only standards, he said, that could or should have been used to test the samples from DCC Social Housing. He said that to date the NSAI and Donegal County Council have refused to hand over these test results. The Expert Panel and the NSAI he advised needed to be held to account for establishing a standard that did not identify the true cause of the DCB scandal.

Donegal County Council and the Elected Members, he contended, had let down the people of Donegal by endorsing the 90/10 and the Enhanced Block Scheme.

A Sinn Féin motion calling for an enquiry in 2018 had been passed, he stated, but there was no sign or commitment of same to date.

He alluded also to the 5 defective concrete block properties purchased in Buncrana at full market value on the basis of IS465.

Reference was also made to the fact that a sulphate attack analysis had come back from the Petrolab which had proved that mica freeze thaw was not the cause of the scandal even though mica was present at 16%.

At this juncture, Cllr Mc Brearty contended that it was his professional opinion that the 90/10 Grant Scheme was suspended because of what was coming back from Petrolab and that IS465 and the Grant Scheme had been based on circumstantial evidence which replaced proper forensic evidence. It was, he said, a cover up and someone had to be held accountable. He called for IS465 to be withdrawn, and compliance predicated on the manufacturing standards and on compliance with EU directives.

This Council, he said, had created policies based on IS465 as reflected in the Tenant Purchase Scheme and the purchase of concrete products.

He expressed concern that evidence of defective concrete foundations had been presented to the Government, Donegal County Council and to the NSAI since March 2023 and consistently ignored.

Thus, he said, it was clear that no 100% redress, clarity on foundations, building control, market surveillance or accountability had been delivered.

Cllr Devine supporting the motion said that there had been no public accountability and said that answers were needed in relation to who exactly was responsible, why the crisis had been consistently ignored

and had been allowed to happen. People were living, he added, in dangerous conditions and deserved a fully independent public enquiry which was 14-15 years overdue.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Cllr Mc Brearty requested that the motion be forwarded to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage and to all members of the Oireachtas.

He called for recording of both his own and Cllr Devine's contribution to be made available to the Oireachtas members.

All concerned needed to accept the fact that many of the stakeholders involved had stuck their head in the sand and mislead homeowners from day 1, he added. People needed to know; he advised how the mica theory came about. He said that his own chartered engineer had highlighted the fact that when blocks were being tested in Northern Ireland high levels of mica in the region of 9 – 11% were detected but because there were no other deleterious materials they were passed for sale under Irish and British standards. IS465, it was noted prevented the sale of concrete products with a mica content of over 5% on the Irish market. He again asked how the mica freeze thaw theory had come about given that mica was not a reactive mineral. He said that he wanted answers as to what involvement Donegal County Council aided by the technical group had in the circulation of this theory.

Cllr Mc Brearty was informed that a copy of the motion would be forwarded to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage. for consideration.

C/191/25

**CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ACTION AND
PROVIDE CAPITAL INVESTMENT FOR CHILDCARE FACILITITES**

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

“That this Council calls on the Government to take action and provide capital investment for childcare facilities to create additional capacity as waiting lists grow in Donegal, as well as providing for childcare facilities with defective blocks.”

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

Cllr Nic Mheanman said this motion was about access to childcare and also in relation to the fact that the Government had promised to reduce childcare costs to €200 per month. This, she added, had not materialised. Correspondence received from Minister Norma Foley, she said, had indicated that later this year there would be an evaluation of the

National Childcare Scheme. This, she advised, clearly showed that there was never any real intention of reducing the cost and had been a false promise.

She said that she had received numerous requests from parents who were unable to get their children into childcare. This was a matter of grave concern, she added, as affordable childcare allowed parents to go to work, earn an income and send their children to college. People were struggling, she said, all over Donegal and the Government needed to be made aware of the struggles that they faced in accessing these services.

Cllr Mc Monagle said the situation was now at crisis point. He alluded also to the fact that it had been left to developers when building housing estates to develop such facilities. Few had been delivered, he noted, and what was left tended to be 4 bed accommodation units which are totally inadequate for use as a childcare facilities.

Many of the existing facilities, he contended, were defective concrete affected buildings and this was adding to the problem. The motion, he noted, was timely and capital investment was needed sooner rather than later to alleviate the situation.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/192/25

INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME FUNDING

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

“That this Council writes to the Department of Rural & Community Development seeking an immediate increase in the amount of Local Improvement Scheme funding that this County receives.”

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

Cllr Bradley said that he believed there were in and around 1500 live applications in Donegal with €34m needed to complete all schemes. He noted that €2.8m had been allocated to Donegal in 2024. This, he said, had been very welcome and was one of the highest allocations that had ever come into the county. At this rate, he said, it would take 12 years to complete all such applications.

Donegal, it was noted, had no rail and retained the largest national primary road network covering 6270kms of road with 5000kms of these being local roads.

He alluded to the fact that there had been a change to the application process last year which had allowed applicants to apply with only one

herd number. This easing of the rules, had not, he contended, resulted in any additional funding. Current funding, it was acknowledged, allowed for the completion only of 6 lanes per Municipal District and this was not enough. Additional capital resources, he advised, were needed.

Cllr Blaney said it was very clear that LIS funding had not been adequate and that with 6 per MD completed each year amounting to 30 countywide it would be 50 years before all could be completed. Cllr Scanlon asked if he could add an amendment to the motion in relation to plainings.

Thus, on the proposal of Cllr Bradley, seconded by Cllr Blaney it was resolved to adopt the amended motion as outlined below:

“That this Council writes to the Department of Rural & Community Development seeking an immediate increase in the amount of Local Improvement Scheme funding that this County receives and that the stockpiles of plainings be considered for use on LIS schemes that do not need tar and chip.”

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/193/25

PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT – SECURING IRELANDS FUTURE

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

Donegal County Council notes the current Government's aim and ambition of driving balanced regional development and supporting rural communities in its “Programme for Government - Securing Ireland's Future”.

“Donegal County Council now calls on the Government to,

- *Remove the matching funding requirements for the Urban Regeneration Fund (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration Fund (RRDF) for Local Authorities located in the Northern and Western Region of Ireland,*
and
- *Ensure that more than half of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is ringfenced for the Northern and Western Region of Ireland for the next EU funding period (2028-2035)”.*

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

Cllr Doherty alluded to the NWRA Regional Priorities paper and the National Planning Framework which is due for circulation shortly.

He noted that almost one year on from the formation of the 2024-2029 Council that there were many issues that still needed to be addressed and that these needed imminent and continued liaison with the relevant Government departments so as to address the many deficits that existed in the various programmes being implemented across the county. He made reference to the following and highlighted the fact that additional assistance was needed in terms of the following

- Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme.
- Social Housing Remediation Programme.
- CLAR Programme and the failure to include additional areas.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, he noted had made reference to the improved National Planning Framework first revision which it was noted would trigger a review of the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES).

He noted that the NWRA had advocated for the Northwest City Region to be recognised and expressed concern that the Shared Island Fund had not really delivered for this area and that the projects in train had not progressed at a suitable pace.

The NWRA, he said, would like to see and drive regional development prioritise the Northwest City Region, and see the delivery of infrastructure projects with sufficient funding needed to build the region's main urban centres, develop targeted incentives. He stressed the necessity of removing the match funding requirements for the URDF and the RRDF and of ensuring that more than half of the European Regional Development Fund is ringfenced for the Northwest in the next EU funding period (2028-2035).

He advocated the need to look at the National Planning Framework in terms of what was available to this region and to drive this forward positively so as to address the issues and bring infrastructure to the Northwest. It was important also, he added, that cognisance be taken of the priorities identified in the NWRA Regional Priorities paper and to progress these for the benefit of the county..

Cllr Mc Monagle said that the issues had been well outlined and that it was very apparent that we needed all the help that we can get if the ERDF implementation is to be brought up to speed in this area and on par with the eastern seaboard. He expressed concern at the timelines involved in getting some of these projects off the ground.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that it would be possible to contact the relevant Government Departments. He said that he welcomed the thrust of the motion and noted that the issue of co-funding was one that was tabled with the

Oireachtas Members on a regular basis. The Council's own investment, he said, could be extended much further in the absence of a co-funding requirement. He said he was supportive of the demand for the ringfencing of ERDF funding but that this was a matter for the Government or indeed Europe and was something that could be followed up separately.

Cllr Doherty welcomed the response and asked that the motion be circulated to local Oireachtas members and MEPs.

C/194/25

ADOPTION OF A THREE PART STRATEGY IN RELATION TO KEEPING COMMUNITIES TIDY

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

"In support of the efforts of the county's 'Tidy Town' volunteers in helping keep our communities clean and litter free, this motion calls on Donegal County Council to adopt a three-part strategy comprising:

- i. A roll out of a targeted public awareness campaign on littering, utilising social media platforms to educate and engage the public on the importance of keeping our towns and villages clean, and promoting respect for public spaces.*
- ii. To put up clear and visible signage in town centres and other high-footfall areas encouraging people to keep these areas litter-free and reminding them of their responsibility to dispose of waste properly.*
- iii. A pilot of the installation of litter bins in selected locations specifically designed to accommodate pizza boxes, with the aim of addressing the recurring problem of pizza boxes jamming standard bins, thereby reducing overall street litter and improving the efficiency of waste collection."*

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

Cllr Beard advised that these were low cost measures which could be put in place and would make a huge difference to the appearance and cleanliness of our public spaces.

She said that there was no street cleaning in place in Buncrana and this was a matter of great concern now coming into high tourist season. Tourism, she added, put a spotlight on our public places and it was very important that the right impression was given.

Cllr A Farren supporting the motion acknowledged the great work carried out by the various community groups and tidy towns associations and those who took part in local clean-ups. This, he

advised, needed to be backed up with the provision of additional litter bins.

He cited the importance of having the bins in place applicable to the need and location in question and the need to create the right atmosphere to encourage the use of litter bins. It was essential also, he added, that consideration was given to tapping into the recycling refund scheme to encourage better litter management.

Mr Michael Mc Garvey, Director Water & Environment said it was important to promote the awareness and the need for cleanliness and took on board the points raised. He said that there were challenges in terms of maintaining the correct approach but that the Environment Section actively engaged and worked with the fast food sector on the issue. It would be possible also, he added, to work with other local authorities and bin providers to see what could be accommodated with regard to pizza boxes etc.

Updates could, he advised, be provided through the Climate Action & Environment SPC and at MD level.

There was no opposition to the motion.

C/195/25

ADOPTION OF AN ANTI-RACISM CHARTER

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

“That Donegal County Council formulate and adopt an Anti - Racism Charter similar to the recently developed North-West Anti - Racism Charter as a matter of urgency.”

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

Cllr Crossan said that he had recently attended the launch of the Northwest Anti-Racism Charter which had advocated the following:

- “Oppose all harm by words and actions on the basis of difference of race and colour.
- Live together, love together, struggle together, thrive together.
- Hold ourselves and others to account for racist words and actions.
- Commit to policies and practices that oppose division by race and colour.
- Promote these attitudes throughout our region in the northwest of Ireland.
- We say no to racism.”

This, he advised, was to be made widely available for display in workspaces, social spaces and urged community groups, businesses etc to put the charter on display.

He said that he firmly believed that this should go beyond the northwest and be part of an All-Ireland Charter against Racism. By adopting such a charter, the message would go out that hateful and diverse actions would not be tolerated in any social setting or workplace.

Cllr A Doherty supporting the motion said that he noted in the response that dignity involved respect, acceptance, empathy and fairness as this was something that all elements of society needed to respond to. He also welcomed ongoing co-operation with Derry City and Strabane District Council.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services said that he agreed with the sentiment and thrust of the motion and that all concerned were supportive of the message relayed by Cllr Crossan. He said that his reply set out detail the fact that Donegal County Council had in conjunction with the relevant community based and voluntary agencies developed and adopted in 2021 the Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Inclusion Strategy for Donegal in 2021-2026. Thus, he said, the bones of what Cllr Crossan was asking was in place and that he would feed back to the Implementation Team regarding the need to strengthen the strategy and to make same widely available. The current strategy, he said, was very much in the same vein and that he would be happy to work with Cllr Crossan on progressing the issues that he had raised.

Cllr Crossan welcomed the response.

C/196/25

LETTERKENNY FIRE SERVICE

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

“That this Council calls on the Management of Donegal Fire Service to enter into meaningful discussions with our Firefighters in Letterkenny and that no changes be made to the operational capacity of Letterkenny Fire Station Service including the removal of the Second Fire Engine, Incident Command Vehicle and Water Tanker until a comprehensive Business Case and Risk Assessments are carried out in relation to Letterkenny Fire Station and its capacity to deal with any eventuality that may arise in the Town of Letterkenny and surrounding district serviced by Letterkenny Fire Station and that the Firefighters and their representatives be included in all future decisions and discussions that impact on their working conditions and operational effectiveness.”

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

Cllr Mc Monagle welcomed the fact that the business case would be expedited and completed by mid-July and that nothing would happen until this had been finalised. This, he said, was a positive move and a move in the right direction. The firefighters, he said, had proposed on the 7th May to revert to the pre WRC model and this he contended was about a healthy work-life balance.

For the town of Letterkenny and its hinterland, there was now, he said, a feeling that the service was understaffed. The six on six off model, it was acknowledged needed to be looked at as there was a duty to ensure that staffing numbers were adequate to respond to all situations.

With regards availability of personnel, he said, that few were available to respond during the day in the six on six off roster. This, he advised, impacted significantly on the number available when the 2nd pump was called out and expressed concern as to the capabilities of the daytime shift should a major fire break out in Letterkenny. He said that it was crucial that the firefighters were listened to. It was incumbent on management, he added, to ensure that a robust recruitment campaign was initiated. Even with this, he noted, that it would take 16 months to recruit the additional personnel and at least 16 months before they were trained and on the job.

Letterkenny, he said, was growing substantially and the firefighters needed all the support they could get including ongoing engagement with all stakeholders. He called for increased communication and said that the knock on effect of calling in appliances from other areas when there was only one pump in Letterkenny needed to be addressed in a county-wide context. He cited the recent gorse fires and the need for multiple stations to be involved in the response. Letterkenny, he said, was too big and had a wide and varied range of industry, health care and educational establishments to be left without adequate cover.

Cllr Meehan noted the response and said it was regrettable that this piece of work had not been done sooner. The overall decision, he said, needed to be well evidenced and researched. Any decisions as the result of changes in rostering would, he contended, need to take into consideration the safety of the people impacted. It was important, he added that the Council was in a position to facilitate the provision of any additional resources needed. To reduce fire service provision in a town which has doubled in size would, he stated, be illogical. He concurred with the need for ongoing communication at all levels.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Director Economic Development, Information Systems & Emergency Services said that it was the responsibility of the Fire Service to keep the community safe. The Fire Service in Donegal, he said was fit for purpose and to meet the service demands placed on it. It was, he added, a well resourced and financed service with the budget increasing from €9m to €12m in the last two years and had never been subject to restriction. It was acknowledged that a recruitment process was ongoing for all stations. He said that members would be updated of the outcome when the business case was completed. He informed members that there was a Senior Fire Officer assigned to each station in the county and that he facilitated the ongoing conversation in relation to the resolution and moving forward of day to day operational issues. The issues arising currently were as a result of the WRC decision, he noted, and a national platform also existed for members to voice concerns. He said, as far as he was concerned the communication channels had not broken down and that on the 7th May the firefighters were offered the option of reverting to the pre-WRC crewing model.

Mr Martin said that he would not stand over a service if he did not think it was fit for purpose. He said that the outcome of the business case was awaited and that it was hoped then to move forward on that basis.

Cllr Mc Monagle said that he accepted that there was a Senior Fire Office in each station but that it was important that communication translated into tangible actions. He said that he waited the publication of the business case and if the recommendation was for more staff in Letterkenny and throughout the county then that process should be commence immediately. Concluding, he said, it was not good enough that if a second tender is needed in Letterkenny that only one or two staff are available to respond.

The Director of Services said that it had to be clarified that Senior Fire Officers do listen and respond and that it would not be possible to operate in any other way. Everybody, he stated, was looking for the same outcome and that needs were responded to in line with national policy, and that equipment and training was up to standard.

In response to a query from Cllr Mc Monagle, he confirmed that it would be possible to have a workshop in July pending the completion of the business case.

C/197/25

**STREAMING OF ALL DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS
HELD IN LIFFORD**

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

“Can this Council support me in my call that all DCC meetings being held in Lifford are streamed live to members of the public again, as in recent times we have been strongly criticised for not showing these

meetings and most recently for the discussion around the recent protests, streaming was turned off. We believe it's only fair and right that those who elected us can watch what we do in representing them."

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

Cllr Devine said that defective concrete block homeowners had serious genuine concerns and should be able to view DCB Committee meetings online to keep abreast of developments.

Cllr Mc Gee said that the streaming of meetings would help the Council in the long run, inspire confidence and ensure transparency. It would be helpful, he added, that people could see what was happening and be informed as to what was happening with the DCB process.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig asked that the motion be amended to include all Municipal District meetings.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the motion had alluded to the recent plenary meeting during which a discussion on the anti-immigration protest in Letterkenny had taken place. It was important to note, he said, that the Council at that meeting had taken a decision to discuss the matter in committee and thus that segment had not been open to the public or media. He said that the CPG had discussed the matter a number of months ago and the determination had been that given the range of technical and resourcing implications involved and the fact that the public can attend such meetings that the streaming of plenary meetings only should remain.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that this was an ongoing reply, and that streaming was necessary as people were not always in a position to attend meetings.

The Director of Service responding to Cllr Bradley confirmed that Plenary meetings, Municipal District Committee meetings, SPC and other committee meetings were public meeting which could be attended by the media and the general public.

Cllr Devine said he stood by his comments and that DCB meetings given the public interest in the subject should be streamed. Cllr Mc Clafferty noted that there were possibly GDPR issues here and said that careful consideration needed to be given to what was being asked.

Cllr Mc Monagle noted that there was an opportunity for people to attend MD meetings etc and that whilst plenary meetings were live,

workshops were not. He said that when a meeting was live there was no control of what people say and that this had consequences in terms of overall liability. Further discussion was needed, he said, and that consideration had also to be given to staffing and resource issue and the cost to the Council.

Cllr Canning said that he understood what Cllr Devine was saying but that streaming would result in additional workshops and that same would have implications going forward.

Concluding Cllr Devine outlined the need for further discussion on the matter.

It was agreed that the matter would be considered further by the Corporate Policy Group and an update provided to members.

C/198/25

CENTRAL BANK OF IRELAND AND THE REGULATION OF THE ISRAEL BONDS ISSUANCE PROGRAMME

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

That this Council is gravely concerned that the Central Bank of Ireland is regulating the Israel Bonds Issuance Programme and, thereby, facilitating the sale throughout Europe of bonds which are funding genocide in Gaza.

This Council notes that,

(i) the bonds, known as Israel Bonds, have, since 1951, raised funds for the Israeli Treasury for use across the Israeli economy including the financing of the apartheid system, the Israeli military and illegal settlements

(ii) the bonds are now being advertised as war bonds and are funding the genocide in Gaza.

Council further notes that,

(i) in January 2024 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed the plausibility of the charge of genocide against Israel

(ii) in June 2024 the UN's International Commission of Inquiry on Palestine found that Israel's actions in Gaza "constitute the war crimes of wilful killing and mistreatment, and the crime against humanity of extermination"

(iii) in July 2024 an ICJ ruling declared that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid and its entire regime of military occupation of Palestinian territories is illegal and must end immediately

(iv) all institutions are under obligation under international law to prevent genocide and abuse of human rights.

Council believes that the Central Bank of Ireland must end all complicity in genocide. Council, therefore, calls on the Central Bank of

Ireland to immediately end the regulation of the Israeli Bond Issuance Programme.”

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

Cllr Meehan asked that the motion be circulated to the Minister for Finance, the Central Bank and to all local authorities in Ireland for their consideration. He said that he bonds had originally been regulated by the Central Bank in the UK and that post Brexit the Israeli authorities had moved this to the Central Bank of Ireland in 2021. The overall net value of this regulation was in and around 3 billion dollars per year he said. This money he noted, was being used to finance war and genocide in Gaza and also to finance testing of military equipment.

It would, he said, be simple for the Central Bank of Ireland and the Government to address this issue and every step possible needed to be taken to cut ties with any complicity in genocide by the Israeli forces in Palestine. He welcomed the fact that a private members bill had been introduced recently in Dáil Eireann on the matter. He cited the need to keep the momentum going in relation to the situation.

It was important, he contended, that Irish financial institutions were not complicit in abetting genocide in Palestine.

Cllr J Brogan said that what was happening in Gaza and the West Bank was deplorable. It was, he advised, open genocide and the murder of thousands of innocent men, women and children. The destruction of land and property was ongoing, he said, and Irish people did not want to be associated with these activities. It was important that all necessary steps were taken, he added, to halt the financing of the war in Gaza and cited the urgency in ensuring that the Occupied Territories Bill was passed through both houses of the Oireachtas.

C/199/25

NEW ANNUAL BANK HOLIDAY IN JULY IN HONOUR OF ST. COLMCILLE

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

“That the Council write to Government requesting that they introduce a new annual Bank Holiday in the month of July in honour of St. Colmcille.”

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

Cllr Kavanagh said that the motion in effect should read as a public holiday and that he had submitted same as Ireland currently had a below average number of public holidays compared to other EU

countries. This was 10 such days per annum currently, he noted, compared to 12.8 in other EU states. Countries such as Australia and New Zealand had he confirmed had 12 and 11 days respectively. Ireland, he said, had three patron saints with only two having a dedicated public holiday in their honour. He noted that St Colmcille feast day was in June but as there was already a public holiday in early June, then the first Monday in July would be an ideal date for a new public holiday to honour St Colmcille. This, would, he advised, also be an excellent tourism boost for the County and an opportunity to promote attractions such as Gartan and Slí Colmcille and other locations associated with St Colmcille. There was acknowledgement also that there was a cross border and an international dimension to any such recognition.

Cllr Mc Clafferty seconded the motion and outlined his support for same.

There was no opposition to the motion.

It was thus agreed to circulate the motion to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment for consideration

C/200/25

THAT €5M BE ALLOCATED IN THE REVENUE BUDGET 2026 TO DEAL WITH DERELICT SITES AND BUILDINGS

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

“I am asking Donegal County Council to allocate €5 million in the revenue budget for 2026 to deal with derelict sites and buildings to support the revitalisation and regeneration of our towns and villages.”

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

Cllr Naughton said this was an issue very familiar to all Councillors and alluded to the two funding streams that were available namely the RRDF and the URDF. Only one town in the county, namely Letterkenny, he added received funding amount to tackle dereliction with no such monies available under the RRDF. He noted that the Croí Cónaithe had been an excellent grant scheme and that changes were being considered in terms of looking at town centre and over the shop units.

Welcoming the response, he thanked the Regeneration Team for their work and dedication and said that they had the capability to do so much more if the relevant funding was in place. He alluded to the many vacant and derelict properties in towns and villages across the county which would benefit if this was progressed. He cited the need for a revolving fund which could facilitate the buying and selling of such properties.

He referenced the Town Centre First Policy Article 7.2 and the URDF and the RRDF together with National Planning Framework Ireland 2040 under which, he noted, a commitment had been given to support the RRDF to deliver the necessary facilities and infrastructure to deliver and bring life back into rural towns and villages. The funding, he advised, was available and called on the Council to take the lead in securing funding noting that in the period 2020-2025 over €41m in funding had been received in Donegal for regeneration purposes.

Cllr C Brogan said that it was an excellent motion and that it highlighted the opportunities that were available. He acknowledged the great amount of work done in this area and said that the regeneration team could build on this work if the funding envelope was enhanced.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services thanked Cllrs Naughton and Brogan for their comments and their acknowledgement of the work carried out by the Regeneration team.

His response, he said, outlined the value of having a fund like this available and referenced the €4m available under the URDF in Letterkenny to deal with dereliction. The true value of this fund, he added, was to be seen in the success of the Croí Cónaithe. He noted that there had been engagement with landowners sitting on vacant or derelict properties and who now had the attraction of having funds available to them for refurbishment works. The value here, it was noted, was that where there was no engagement, the compulsory purchase option could be utilised and the property then ultimately made available with any income generated going into a revolving fund. He noted that a priority list of towns had been agreed outside of Letterkenny, comprising one in each MD and that this would be targeted in terms of accessing this fund. The only concern, he said, was the overall concept of having a €5m fund available to support work in these towns was subject to approval and would create huge pressure on the revenue budgetary process for 2026. This, he said, also put an onus on the Council to lobby the Government departments for such funding.

C/201/25

ADDITION OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES THAT ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL ROLLOUT OF FIBRE BROADBAND

Cllr Jordan submitted the following motion and said that he wished to amend his motion as submitted by making specific reference to the commercial sector:-

“I am asking that this Council call on the Department of Telecommunications to add a number of villages in the county that are not included in the national rollout of fibre broadband.”

Thus, on the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Carr it was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

"I am asking that this Council to ask the Department of Telecommunications to call on the commercial sector(Vodafone) to deliver on their commitment and to add a number of villages in the county that are not included in the national rollout of fibre broadband."

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

Cllr Jordan referenced the fact that the rollout of the fibre broadband was slow and that whilst there was excellent coverage in certain areas many towns and villages were struggling to obtain any kind of service. There had been a promise, he noted, to upgrade all towns and villages on the national rollout but this had not materialised. He said that a promise had been made and not delivered on. This, it was noted was impacting on the business sector and the tourist industry. He asked the Council to put pressure on the various providers to deliver on that promise.

Cllr Carr outlined his support for the motion and said that fibre broadband needed to be rolled out to all of rural Ireland.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Garry Martin, Director of Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services said that the response tried to capture the fact that the towns were now lesser well served than many of the rural areas, It was disappointing, he said, that the commercial sector had not closed out on this aspect. He said that if members wished to identify specific areas requiring attention, then these could be highlighted directly to the Department.

Cllr Jordan welcomed the response and noted that there was an onus on providers to upgrade all towns and villages.

C/202/25

INCREASE IN THE FEE FOR PLANNING OBJECTIONS

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

"I am asking this Council to support my motion for the introduction of a higher planning fee in the region of €500 per objection and that we also write to the Government seeking such a rise in fees for objections etc. as I feel that that currently the €20 charge is not fair on applicants as it is too low and really is open to abuse by objectors."

I would also like this motion passed around the country to all other Councils for consideration.

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

Cllr Mc Clafferty said that he had submitted the motion as there was currently considerable abuse of the legislation with people objecting for little or no reason. He said that the current charge of €20 for a planning objection was far too low and needed review. The reality was, he said, that such objectors were holding up the planning process and that the something needed to be done at national level. A higher planning fee of €500 would, he contended, cut out the abuse.

Cllr Molloy supporting the motion said it was very easy to put in an objection given the low fee involved. With objections often coming from outside the area in question, he contended, that an increase in the cost might decrease the number of objections from outside the designated planning area.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that he could not support the motion as working people needed to be able to make an objection on a planning application in their own area at a reasonable cost. €500 was too much, he added, and outlined the need for people to be able to have ownership of environmental issues etc in their own communities.

Cllr Meehan said that he could not support same as planning had to be accessible and the fee suggested onerous on ordinary people.

Cllr Blaney said that he could see the reasoning for the motion but that €500 was excessive and €20 too low. This was something, he noted, which could be conveyed to the Department and that might also possibly be addressed in the context of the new planning framework. He cited the need for some form of agreement which would see objections categorised with a regional focus or county focus only.

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services Said that the motion would be conveyed to the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage in the context of the review of the regulations in conjunction with the new 2024 Planning Act. There would be an opportunity for Local Authorities to input into the process using this mechanism. Work had been ongoing, he confirmed, by Planning Authorities in relation to the review of fees generally and this was due to feed into the overall review.

Cllr Scanlon suggested a fee of €250 with €200 reimbursed if the objection was upheld.

Cllr Canning proposed that the matter be referred to the Planning SPC for further consideration and subject to the publication of the new Planning Act. This was seconded by Cllr Mc Monagle.

Cllr Mc Clafferty welcomed the commentary and criticism and said that he was agreeable to the matter being referred to the SPC. His proposal for a €500 fee, he said, was not set in stone and alluded to the fact that

there had been discussion by Kerry County Council regarding a €2000 fee.

Members not part of the Planning SPC were invited to make submissions on the matter for the next scheduled committee meeting.

C/203/25

RISING USE OF SMARTPHONES AND SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG EARLY TEENAGERS

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

Noting recent studies and increased media coverage, including the impact of the Netflix documentary Adolescence, which highlight the growing concerns around early access to smartphones and social media among young people,

“That Donegal County Council write to the Minister for Education, Helen Mc Entee, and the Minister for Children, Norma Foley, to express our concern regarding the rising use of smartphones and social media among early teenagers, and to request information on what plans or policies the Government intends to implement to address these issues and protect the wellbeing of children and young people.”

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

Cllr Carr said that this was an issue that received considerable media attention and referenced the fact that in 2023 a group of concerned parents, teachers and sports groups in the Glenties, Ardara and Lettermacaward areas had come together and responded to the rising impact of social media platforms on young people. This campaign, he said, had worked with 16 local primary schools and St Columba's to promote the delaying of smart phone use until pupils had left primary school. This had a significant impact, he added, with over 90% of parents in favour of the initiative and many committed to signing a voluntary pledge to encourage their children to abstain from smartphone use.

St Columba's, he said, had introduced a ban on smartphones for junior cycle students and this had already seen an increased focus on classroom activity and renewed interaction at breaktimes. This initiative was also backed, he added, by local sports clubs and it was hoped that it would combat the rise in anxiousness, addiction, exploitation etc among young people.

National action, he contended, was urgently needed and he cited the need for local communities to show leadership.

Cllr O' Fearraigh seconded the motion and said that the dangers of smartphone use for young people were wide reaching and had

contributed greatly to the bullying culture. It was heartening, he said, to see that so many parents had been supportive of the ban.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the motion would be forwarded to the relevant Ministers as requested.

Cllr Carr thanked members for their support and said that the government now needed to step their support and show the same commitment as the parents involved in the initiative.

C/204/25

IRISH NEUTRALITY AND DEFENCE COMMITMENTS

On the proposal of Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr Meehan to was resolved to adopt the following motion:-

“Do Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall, mar mheabhrúchán gur ghlac Comhairle na hEorpa le Dearbhú Seville i mí an Mheithimh 2002, rud a dheimhnigh nach raibh aon bhagairt ar neodracht na hÉireann mar thoradh ar Chonradh Nice, tugtar le fios gur dheimhnigh an Taoiseach a bhí ann ag an am, an tUasal Ahern, do Theach Laighean :

“Athdhearbhaíonn an Dearbhú Náisiúnta ceangal na hÉireann le beartas neodrachta agus dearbhaíonn sé: nach bhfuil Éire páirteach in aon ghealltanais comhchosanta: go ndéanfaimid ár gcinneadh ceannasach féin maidir le ar cheart d’fhórsa cosanta na 26 Contae páirt a ghlacadh i dtascanna daonnúla nó bainistíochta géarchéime arna gcur ar bun ag an AE bunaithe ar an Ghlas Triarach ceadaithe ag na Náisiúin Aontaithe, cinneadh an Rialtais agus glactha leis ag Teach Laighean ”.

Tá Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall sásta gur bhain an Dearbhú Náisiúnta Sollúnta le hIonstraimí daingniúcháin de chuid na hÉireann a bhain le Conradh Nice agus gur cláraíodh é ina dhiaidh sin ag na Náisiúin Aontaithe, agus gur athdhearbhaigh rialtas Cowan na gealltanais ina dhiaidh sin tar éis diúltú do Chonradh Liospóin ar dtús in 2008.

Mar sin féin, is mian le Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall a ndíomá a chur in iúl maidir le rún agus polasaí an Rialtais deireadh a chur leis an Ghlas Triarach, ina ndearna an Taoiseach, an tUasal Martin, cur síos air roimhe seo mar “croílár neodrachta na 26 contae”.

I bhfianaise an rúin an riachtanas maidir le sainordú ó na Náisiúin Aontaithe a bhaint, aithníonn an Chomhairle seo freagracht na Náisiúin Aontaithe maidir le síocháin agus slándáil idirnáisiúnta a choinneáil agus tosaíocht Chairt na Náisiúin Aontaithe mar dhoiciméad bunúsach de chuid an dlí idirnáisiúnta. Léiríonn an Glas Triarach gealltanais dlíthiúil agus polaitiúil ó stát na hÉireann i leith phrionsabail na Náisiúin Aontaithe. Ag am ina bhfuil méadú ar éagobhsaíocht dhomhanda, iarrann an Chomhairle seo ar rialtas an tSaorstáit an Glas Triarach a

chosaint mar chuid lárnach de neodracht na hÉireann agus brú a chur ar iarrachtaí chun síocháin agus taidhleoireacht a chur chun cinn.

Mar sin de tá Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall go láidir i gcoinne polasaí den chineál seo agus geallann siad go ndéanfar teagmháil le gach Comhairle Contae láithreach ag iarraidh orthu seasamh linn agus leis na forais rialtais cuí chun iad a chur ar an eolas faoina bhfreasúra.”

Má cheadaítear an rún go ndéanfar é a scaipeadh ar chomhairlí eile taobh istigh den stát –

“Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall, recalling that in June 2002 the European Council adopted the Seville Declaration, which confirmed that the Nice Treaty posed no threat to Ireland’s neutrality, notes that the then Taoiseach Mr Ahern confirmed to Teach Laighean that: “ The National Declaration reaffirms Ireland’s attachment to a policy of neutrality and confirms that: Ireland is not party to any mutual defence commitment: that we will take our own sovereign decision on whether 26 Counties defence force should participate in humanitarian or crisis management tasks mounted by the EU based on the Triple Lock of UN endorsement, Government decision and Teach Laighean approval”.

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall is satisfied that the Solemn National Declaration was associated with Ireland’s Instruments of ratification of the Nice Treaty and subsequently registered at the UN, while the undertakings were subsequently reiterated by the Cowan government following initial rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in 2008.

However, Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall now wishes to express its dismay at the stated intention and policy of the Government to dismantle the Triple Lock, which the Taoiseach Mr Martin previously described as “the core of 26 counties neutrality”.

In light of the intention to remove the requirement for a UN mandate, this Council recognises the responsibility of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security and the primacy of the UN Charter as a foundational document of international law. The Triple Lock represents a legal and political commitment by the Irish state to the principles of the UN. At a time of heightened global instability, this Council calls on the Free State government to safeguard the Triple Lock as a core component of Irish neutrality and to redouble efforts to promote peace and diplomacy.

Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall therefore states its forceful opposition to such a policy and pledges to immediately contact all County Councils requesting them to join us in this course of action and to inform the appropriate government organs of their opposition.”

If motion is approved that it is circulated to other councils within the state.

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

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that the three tiered approval mechanism authorising the deployment of Irish troops on overseas missions was vital for preservice Ireland's neutrality and had to be protected at all costs. Millions, he said, had been spent on bombs when this money could have been invested in healthcare etc. Asking members for their support he cited the importance of ensuring that Irish troops were not randomly sent to other countries.

Cllr Meehan said it was imperative that everybody was aware of what the Government were in the process of doing. It was imperative, he added, that nothing comprised our neutrality. Every poll carried out, he noted, in relation to Irish neutrality had garnered widespread public support. The attempt to remove the UN security mandate, he said, would effectively allow the Government to deploy Irish troops, putting the Irish National Defence Forces at risk. He said that he had spoken to Defence Force members on the ground, and they were not keen to progress the removal of the triple lock. Any such move, he advised, would be detrimental to our standing internationally and the safety of our defence forces.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director of Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that a copy of the motion would be forwarded to the Tánaiste for his consideration

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig thanked Cllr Meehan for his support outlining again the importance of retaining the Triple Lock.

C/205/25

INSPECTION OF SEPTIC TANKS

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

"With regards to the inspection of septic tanks that these inspections are open to all areas within the County of Donegal."

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

Cllr O' Fearraigh noted that back in 2013 59% of septic tanks had failed the inspection process yet 82% of these had now been corrected. Changes to the Septic Tank Grant Scheme in 2024 had been particularly beneficial, he added. There was still a problem, he contended, in that not all areas were included in the scheme.

He asked that update be provided in relation to the requests for Septic Tank inspections and as to how many people are carrying out these inspections within Donegal County Council.

Cllr Crossan outlined his support for the motion and said that the extension of same would be beneficial county-wide.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Michael Mc Garvey, Director Water & Environment noted that a lot of work had been done in relation to this aspect. He welcomed the changes to the scheme that had come into force in January 2024, removing the requirement to have the septic tank registered before the 1st February 2013 and increasing the maximum grant payable up to 85% of the cost. The scheme, he advised, still required inspection by the Local Authority.

Members were informed that further correspondence had been received from the Department earlier in the morning asking this Council to prioritise areas of high concern and to put a real focus on these. He said that the Annual Service Delivery Plan had given a commitment to increase resources and move forward with the inspection process. Every effort would be made, he said, to extend this, cater for the demand and meet national targets. Updates would be provided, he confirmed, through the MD process.

Cllr O' Fearraigh thanked all for their support and welcomed the fact that the scheme was being extended.

C/206/25

CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Brian Boyle, former Head of Information Systems on the death of his mother, Frances Boyle.
- Marie Deeney, formerly Income Collection, Inishowen MD on the death of her mother Bernie Deeney.

Staff Retirements

Best wishes were extended to Teresa Conway, Staff Officer, Planning and Doreen Floyd, Administrative Officer on their impending retirements. It was noted that they had a combined total of 91 years of service. On behalf of Donegal County Council, the Cathaoirleach thanked both staff members for their incredible service and commitment over many years.

Visit to Leitrim County Council

Members were informed that arrangements were being made for 8 member to go and meet with Leitrim County Council.

Events Attended

- Meeting with and presentation to the Korean Ambassador, His Excellency Yong-Kil Kim in the County House on Friday 4th April 2025.

- Participation in the Northwest Diversity and Cultural Conference held on the 4th April 2025 in Letterkenny.
- Launch of the Big Donegal Clean Up at the Pier in Donegal Town on Thursday 10th April.
- One Million Stars Project Workshop held in the Letterkenny PSC on the 15th April 2025.
- Cathaoirleach's Concert in aid of Donegal Domestic Violence Services held on the 18th April, 2025 in An Grianan Theatre. It was noted that this had been a massive success with €7,500 raised to date. The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the assistance provided by Moya Brennan and Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh and all involved in making this event a resounding success.
- Visit to Worcester State University with the Mayor of Derry City & Strabane District Council, Lillian Barr Senoi to accept an honorary doctorate award from the 22nd to the 24th April 2025.
- Contract Signing of the Design and Build Projects at Barrack Hill and Malin in the County House, Lifford on the 28th April, 2025.
- Bealtaine Launch at Buncrana Library on the 29th April.
- Cornerstone Launch in Letterkenny on the 30th April, 2025.
- Launch of National Bike Week in Lifford National School on Thursday 1st May 2025.
- Participation in the delegation to meet with Sligo County Council on the 6th May 2025.
- Attendance at the Local Enterprise Business Summit on the 7th May, 2025.
- Launch of the Go Visit Donegal Golf Brochure in Murvagh on the 9th May 2025.
- Delivery of the welcome address at the Forsa Local Government and Local Services Conference in the Mt Errigal Hotel on the 14th May 2025.
- `Opening of the new Sensory Garden in Bundoran Community Library on the 14th May 2025.
- `Attendance with the Director of Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services and the Head of Economic Development at the Transatlantic Climate Alliance Conference in Plymouth, Massachusetts from the 21st to the 24th May 2025. It was noted that the Council had received a number of awards from Ambassador Clare Cronin (Ret).

Congratulations

Congratulations was extended to Lowry Construction on winning the "Residential Award" at the Irish Construction Excellence Awards for the Trusk Road Age Friendly Housing Development.

Freedom of the County

The Cathaoirleach said that she would like to give a special acknowledgement to one of our own and her family. She informed members of the following:

“We are all very proud of her and despite her immense success, this woman remains a figure of mystery. She is someone who prefers her Dublin residence to the spotlight and who’s privacy has added to her mystique whilst making her music a refuge for listeners all around the world. She has achieved multi-million album sales and received critical acclaim all reflecting her unique ability to create music that transcends borders and speaks to the soul. Her album “Watermark” introduced her music to the world and highlighted that signature sound for which she has become famous.

It was noted that the song “A Day without Rain” became a global sensation in the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy providing solace for many. It was fitting also that all proceeds from this song were donated to the families of those in the Fire Service Department of New York who had perished in the tragedy.

Her music she noted continued to be a source of peace and inspiration.

The wonderful Eithne Pádraigín Ní Bhraonáin from Gweedore known worldwide as Enya is this remarkable woman.

Orinoco Flow it was noted was a global hit together with “Only Time” and “Caribbean Blue” other notable hits. Another outstanding achievement was when her composition “May it Be” from the soundtrack of “Lord of the Rings” – The Fellowship of the Ring was nominated for an Academy Award for best original song in 2002.

“Amarantine” her sixth studio album in 2005 continued this remarkable journey.”

Cllr Kennedy said that she would like to offer her the Freedom of her home county, County Donegal to celebrate not just her music, but her craft, her world of tranquillity and the beauty which she has so magnificently conveyed through her art.

She acknowledged that Enya was a very private person and that there would be no expectation to attend the ceremony in person. The award of same was, she advised, a token of how proud the people of Donegal were of her success and to highlight the fact that she deserved the highest honour that her home county could bestow.

C/207/25

CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S MANAGEMENT REPORT

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

1. Delegation Meeting between Donegal County Council & Sligo County Council.
2. Community Development & Planning Services
Community Development

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2024/2025
Clar Programme 2025
Planning Services
 Development Applications Unit
 E-Planning
 Enforcement
 Planning Policy
 Casual Trading – Review of Policy and Byelaws
 Review of the Development Contribution Scheme
 Conservation Services
Capital Projects Delivery Unit and Taking in Charge of Housing
Estates Division
 Major Projects
 Taking in Charge
 Refugee Response Unit
 Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT)
 Urban & Rural Regeneration and Development

3. Water and Environment
Waste & Litter Management
 Big Donegal Clean-Up Campaign
 Climate Action Plan Implementation
 Decarbonising Zones
 Funding of €15,000 for Donegal Community Climate Engagement Projects
 Success of Bespoke Organic Compost in treatment of Japanese Knotweed
 Central Laboratory
 Septic Tanks – National Inspection Plan
 Licence to Discharge Trade Effluent
 Bathing Waters 2025 Season
 National Agricultural Inspection Plan
Defective Concrete Blocks - Update
4. Housing Corporate & Cultural Services
Social Housing
 Social Housing Delivery Programme
 Social Housing Second Hand Acquisitions Programme 2025
 Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme
 Current Housing Stock Level
 Estate Management of Existing Social Housing Units
Culture Division
 Creative Ireland
Library Service
 Right to Read Programme
Arts Service
 Cathaoirleach's Concert in support of Donegal Domestic Violence Services
Regional Cultural Centre
 Festival

Exhibitions
 RCC Literary Journal -The Pig's Back
County Donegal Heritage Office
 Working over By – Smartphone Competition
 The Laurels – Glenties Historic Towns Initiative
 Community Archaeology Scheme
 Community Monuments Fund
Biodiversity Office
 Donegal is Buzzin' for Biodiversity
 Biodiversity Duty Feedback Report 2025

5. Economic Development, I.S & Emergency Services

Fire Service
 Operations
 Fire Prevention
 Major Emergency Management
Economic Development
 Donegal Tech Advocates
 RegTech Supercluster – New Webinar Series
 Alpha Innovation
 Launch of new Golf in Donegal Brochure
Local Enterprise Office
 Update
 Local Enterprise Week
 Made in Donegal
 Student Enterprise Programme
 SCÁLA

6. Roads & Transportation

Roads Areas Update
 Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance
 Rural Speed Limit Implementation
 Local Improvement Schemes
 Decarbonisation
 Winter Maintenance
National Roads Office Update
 TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project Donegal
 A5 Western Transport Corridor
 National Roads and Greenways Allocation
Central Technical Services Update
 Urban Speed Limits
 Piers and Harbours

The Chief Executive alluded to the fact that the report had issued in a new flip book format and said that it was hoped over the coming months to streamline the content. He said that if there were any queries these could be forwarded directly to the Senior Management Team. Cllr Scanlon suggested that the Coillte presentation delivered recently to the Agriculture Committee on the damage caused by Storm Eoghan be presented to all members of the Council.

C/208/25 **INSTALLATION OF MORE PUBLIC WATER REFILL STATIONS IN OUTDOOR AREAS**

Cllr Nic Mheanman submitted the following question:-

What efforts have been made to engage with Uisce Éireann to install more public water refill stations in outdoor areas i.e. Greenways, Parks?

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

C/209/25 **HOW MANY LIFE BUOYS DOES THIS COUNCIL HAVE IN THE COUNTY**

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

How many life buoys does this Council have in the County? Do we know the condition and location of all them?

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

C/210/25 **HOW MANY LIFEGUARDS HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED FOR THE SUMMER SEASON**

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

How many lifeguards have been employed for the summer season? How many are employed in each MD?

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

C/211/25 **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR INVESTIGATING PROBLEMATIC SEPTIC TANK RUN OFF**

Cllr Crossan submitted the following question:-

Who is responsible for investigating problematic Septic Tank Run-Off that could present as a public health issue and what powers are there to enforce remedial action to resolve this?

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

C/212/25 **BLUE GREEN ALGAE MONITORING**

Cllr Crossan submitted the following question:-

Has there been monitoring of our waterways for the emergence of Blue Green Algae in light of the prolonged warm dry spell of weather?

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

C/213/25 **COUNTY DONEGAL MOTORHOME FACILITIES, UPGRADES AND MAINTENANCE**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

County Donegal Motorhome Facilities, Upgrades and Maintenance. How many Council based Motorhome facilities are in the county, where are they located and will the council ensure that facilities currently in situ are retained, serviced, maintained and upgraded with newer models where required?

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

C/214/25 **ENERGY EFFICIENTY RETROFIT PROGRAMME**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

What funding has been granted and/or sought from the Department to enable further social homes in Donegal access works under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme in 2025 and will the Council confirm areas and housing schemes that will have works carried out this year?

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

C/215/25 **3D CONSTRUCTION PRINTING (3DCP)**

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

Could you provide an update on any discussions with companies specialising in 3D construction printing (3DCP)?

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

C/216/25 **ELECTORAL REGISTER IN THE COUNTY**

Cllr Kavanagh submitted the following question:-

What plans are in place to improve the accuracy of the electoral registers in the County?

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

C/217/25 **UPDATE ON THE CURRENT REVIEW BEING UNDERTAKEN BY MANAGEMENT OF OUR DIRECTORATES OF SERVICES**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we have an update and timeframe of the current review being undertaken by management of our Directorates of Services and of the

current council model to meet the current demands on our services moving forward?

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

C/218/25 **BREAKDOWN OF THE AVERAGE COST TO BUILD A 2/3 BED HOUSING UNIT**

Cllr Devine submitted the following question:-

Can I get a breakdown of the average cost to build a 2/3 bed housing unit for the Council's own stock and a breakdown what they can pay for a house from a housing body?

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

C/219/25 **NUMBER OF LITTER WARDENS AND NUMBER OF LITTER FINES AND DOG FOULING FINES ISSUED IN THE COUNTY**

Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

Can we be provided with information relating to the number of Litter Wardens at work in the county per MD and can we be provided with the number of litter fines and dog fouling fines issued in the county per MD over the past five years?

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

C/220/25 **SOCIAL HOUSING REMEDIATION SCHEME FOR SOCIAL HOUSES AFFECTED BY DEFECTIVE BLOCKS**

Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

Can we be provided with a breakdown of all communication, including in-person meetings, between this Council and the Department and Minister for Housing in relation to the Social Housing Remediation Scheme for those social houses affected by Defective Blocks? A timeline with efforts or proposals made by this Council would be helpful to illustrate the work done by Council.

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

C/221/25 **TIMEFRAME FOR THE CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP TO EXPLORE AND REVIEW THE CURRENT COSTING MODEL BEING USED BY OUR MACHINERY YARD**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we a timeframe for the cross-party working group to explore and review the current costing model being used by our Machinery Yard while hiring plant to our Municipal Districts as agreed at our plenary workshop on 7th April?

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

C/222/25 **TIMEFRAME FOR THE BUSINESS CASE TO BE CARRIED OUT IN OUR FIRE SERVICE**

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we a timeframe for the business case to be carried out in our Fire Service and a commitment that no service will be downgraded while this study is being carried as agreed at our plenary meeting in Letterkenny on 7th April?

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

C/223/25 **HOW MANY HOUSES HAS DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL BUILT IN EACH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

Cllr Naughton submitted the following question:-

How many houses has Donegal County Council built in each Municipal District for the last 10 years?

Can I receive the final department stage approval for the Council's own direct scheme:

- *The 30 units in Letterkenny?*
- *The 43 units in Dungloe?*
- *The 54 units in Buncrana?*

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

C/224/25 **WHEN WILL THE NEW DOG WARDEN BE APPOINTED IN THE COUNTY**

Cllr Mc Clafferty submitted the following question:-

When will the new Dog Warden be appointed in the County and have, we any retirements in the current Dog Warden Section pending and if so are replacements imminent?

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

C/225/25

HOW MANY PERSONNEL HAVE THE COUNCIL IN PLACE TO CARRY OUT SEPTIC TANK INSPECTIONS

Cllr O' Fearraigh submitted the following question:-

Under the national inspection on septic tanks how many personnel have the Council in place to carry out these inspections' county wide?

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

C/226/25

WHAT MEASURES ARE IN PLACE TO MANGE CAMPERVAN PARKING ACROSS THE COUNTY

Cllr Carr submitted the following question:-

What measures, such as byelaws, designated parking areas, enforcement policies, or signage are currently in place or planned to manage campervan parking across the county, and are there any plans or incentives to support the development of appropriate campervan facilities either directly by the Council or through private or community-led initiatives; furthermore, is the Council developing an overall strategy to address related issues such as waste disposal and sewage management in a sustainable and coordinated manner?

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

C/227/25

HOW MANY PIERS, HARBOURS AND SLIPWAYS DOES THE COUNTY HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WITHIN THE COUNTY

Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig submitted the following question:-

Cé mhéad cé, cuan agus fána a bhfuil an Chomhairle freagrach astu laistigh den chontae? As na céanna, cuanta agus fánáin a bhfuil an Chomhairle freagrach astu, cé mhéad acu a bhfuil fodhlíthe acu? As na céanna agus na cuanta agus na fánáin nach bhfuil fodhlíthe acu ach a bhfuil freagracht orainn astu, cá huair a chuirfear fodhlíthe i bhfeidhm iontu ar fad?

How many piers, harbours and slipways does the Council have responsibility for within the county? Out of all the piers, harbours and slip ways that the Council have responsibility for, how many of them do have byelaws? Of the piers and harbours and slipways that do not have byelaws but that we have responsibility for, when will there be byelaws put in place in them all?

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

C/228/25

WHY HAS THE REQUEST FOR AN EMERGENCY MEETING WITH THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT IN RELATION TO THE RECENT ANTI-IMMIGRATION MARCH IN LETTERKENNY NOT BEEN SUBMITTED

Cllr MacGiolla Easbuig submitted the following question:-

Maidir leis an mórshiúl frith-inimirce a bhí ar siúl i Leitir Ceanainn ar an 3 Bealtaine 2025, iarradh go n-eagrófaí cruinniú éigeandála leis an Ard-Cheannfort mar gheall ar imní mhór shlándála an phobail, na nGardaí agus ar ár gComhairleoirí. D'aontaigh na Comhairleoirí go léir leis seo, agus tá mé ag fiafraí cén fáth nár cuireadh an t-iarratas seo faoi bhráid an Ard-Cheannfoirt?

In relation to the recent anti-immigration march in Leitir Ceanainn on the 3rd of May 2025, it was asked that an emergency meeting would be organised with the Chief Superintendent due to the massive security concerns of the public, Garda and also us Councillors. This was agreed by all Councillors, and I am asking why this request was not submitted to the Chief Superintendent.

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

C/229/25

MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES

Members noted the motions from other Councils.

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

That the Chief Executive introduce a ban on fox hunting on Council owned lands in Fingal."

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL

"Leitrim County Council calls on the Department of Transport to secure funding for the removal of those huge Ash trees along local and regional roads, that are decaying from Ash Die Back. We are all aware of how dangerous those trees are to road users."

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

"Noting that a home is a moral human right, this local authority calls on the Government to start a process to have the right to housing enshrined in the constitution. A copy of this motion to be sent to all local authorities within the state."

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach:_____

Dated:_____