

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE DHUN NA nGALL

Oifig Riathóir na gCruinnith
Aras an Chontae
Leifear
15 Iúil, 2025

FÓGRA CRUINNITHE

DO GACH BHALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE

A Chara,

Beidh Cruinniú de Chomhairle Contae Dhún na nGall ar siúl **Dé Luain, 21 Iúil 2025 ag 11.00 r.n in Áras an Chontae, Leifear.** Tá 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

*******D**
ONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Office of Meetings Administrator
County House
Lifford
15th July 2025

NOTICE OF MEETING

TO EACH MEMBER OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Councillor,

A Meeting of Donegal County Council will be held on **Monday 21st July 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 May Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 26th of May, 2025.
- b) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 28th of May, 2025.
- c) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 30th of June, 2025.
- d) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 30th of June, 2025.

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

Notice under Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) – to dispose of a plot of land at St Mary's Terrace, Ramelton to Ramelton Community Garden Committee.

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

To approve the carrying out of works in relation to the upgrading of several existing pedestrian crossings located on the N15 within the Twin Towns of Ballybofey and Stranorlar (Improved Pedestrian Crossing Scheme - N15 Ballybofey & Stranorlar)

4. Corporate

- a) Selection of substitute representative to the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions.
- b) To reschedule the Special Plenary Meeting on Monday 28th July 2025 to Friday 25th July, 2025 at 11am.

5. Environment

To note the Donegal County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 Progress Report for 2024.

6. Roads & Transportation

To approve the Plant Purchase and Refurbishment Plan 2024-2028.

7. Finance

- a) To consider and note Donegal County Council's Audited Financial Statement 2024.
- b) To consider and note the Local Government Audit Report on the Annual Financial Statement for 2024.

- c) To note the report from the Donegal County Council Audit Committee on its consideration of the 2024 Audited Financial Statement and Audit Report for 2024 of Donegal County Council as required by Section 121(3) of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended).
- d) To consider and note the Donegal County Council Audit Committee Report 2024.

8. **Planning**

To consider motion from Lifford/Stranorlar Municipal District in relation to Variation No 1 of CDP 2024-2030 in connection with lands at Mullindrait, Stranorlar.

9. **Endorsement of Minutes**

- a) To note minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 19th May 2025.
- b) To endorse the minutes of the meeting of Cruinniú Choiste na Gaeilge held on the 8th May 2025.

10. **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 Autumn Training Seminar to be held on the 17th & 18th September, 2025 in the Westport Woods Hotel, Westport, Co Mayo.

Abroad

- Attendance of the CPMR representative at the CPMR General Assembly in Barcelona from the 19th to the 21st November, 2025.

11. **Conference Reports**

- Attendance of Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle at St Patrick's Day Festival in Rudolstadt, Germany from the 20th March 2025 to the 23rd March 2025.
- Attendance of Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty at the Annual Planning Conference 2025 on the 11th April in the Salthill Hotel, Galway.
- Attendance of Cllr Jack Murray at events in St Charles, Missouri from the 21st May 2025 to the 30th May 2025.

MOTIONS

INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

12. Cllr Fionán Bradley

"That this Council prioritise the provision of its basic and essential services through its own human and financial resources as opposed to via outsourcing and external procurement."

13. Cllr Albert Doherty

"Donegal County Council urge the Irish Government and the Northern Executive to take the necessary steps to enhance co-operation between the existing health services North and South and move towards the full integration of service planning and delivery on an island wide basis. DCC state that reform must be implemented in a planned, systemic, strategic way to build an all-island Irish National Health and Care service. DCC further contend that it is essential that all of this work is accountable to the Irish Government, the Northern Executive and transparent to the public."

14. Cllr Terry Crossan

"That Gardaí are adequately resourced to tackle the ever increasing incidents of anti-social driving in our villages and public spaces endangering life and causing criminal damage to both public and private property."

Defective Concrete Blocks

15. Cllr Ali Farren

"That this Council issue the letters of assurance that was promised as part of the 40 year guarantee for homeowners that completed work as part of the DCB scheme as soon as possible." Families who have completed the remedial works were promised a guarantee but to the best of my knowledge the DCC have yet to issue them.

16. Cllr Joy Beard

"As everyone involved in the administration of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme knows, the timely payment of claims is essential to ensure that contractors are able to keep projects on schedule.

However, despite the dedication of the Defective Blocks team - who are working under extremely challenging conditions providing vital support to many distressed homeowners - an increasing number of claimants are reporting delays in the time taken to process payments.

Members of the Defective Concrete Blocks Committee have previously been told that the aim is to process claims within three weeks from receipt.

However, we are aware of many claims taking longer, which is causing unnecessary stress to homeowners already under extreme pressure.

This motion calls on Donegal County Council to undertake an urgent and comprehensive assessment of the staffing and administrative resources allocated to the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme.

Necessary steps should then be taken to ensure that claims are processed and paid within three weeks, and that should further information be required, such requests must be issued by Council staff within one week of submission.

Minor or administrative issues, such as missing Eircodes or trivial miscalculations, must not stall progress where the bulk of the claim is otherwise in order. These can be dealt with prior to payment of the next claim.

Furthermore, this motion calls on Donegal County Council to include the following information in the monthly Activity Report, which is sent to Members and can be viewed on the Council's website:

- The number of claims submitted.
- The number of claims processed within three weeks.
- The average time for claims to be processed.
- The number of claims delayed beyond that timeframe; and
- The reasons for any such delays."

Tourism

17. Cllr Martin Mc Dermott

"That this Council issue a letter of support in relation to the hosting of the 2029 World Sheep Shearing Championships".

LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Community Development

18. Cllr Tomás Sean Devine

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

Housing

19. Cllr Declan Meehan

"That this Council write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to express concern over the exclusion through ineligibility of County Donegal from key national affordable housing schemes, including cost rental initiatives, and to request an urgent review of the eligibility criteria and geographic rollout of such schemes to ensure they are extended to rural and peripheral counties like Donegal, where housing need is significant but often underrepresented in national policy." If passed, I would ask that this motion is circulated to all other local authorities.

20. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

I propose that this Council host a number of workshops in our county to help inform our electorate of all the different opportunities available in all areas of housing supports, housing initiatives, local authority home loans, mortgage support etc including grants available for home energy

upgrades and defective block scheme.

Roads & Transportation

21. **Cllr Liam Blaney**

That this Council requests extra funding from the Department for the Local Improvement Schemes.”

DONEGAL MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Roads & Transportation

22. **Cllr Noel Jordan**

“I am calling on the Roads Directorate to conduct a report on purchasing a road lining machine against the hiring of this vehicle

GLENTIES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

23. **Cllr Micheál Choilm Mac Giolla Easbuig**

“Go dtacaíonn Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall le #cuiran10úleis (#addthe10th), comhghuaillíocht atá ag iarraidh go mbeidh stádas socheacnamaíoch aitheanta mar an 10ú bhforas de leithcheal a dhéantar, i reachtaíocht um chomhionannas na 26 Contae, a dtugtar An tAcht um Stádas Comhionann agus An tAcht um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta, Nollaig 2021, orthu. Iarrann muid ar an Rialtas i mBaile Átha Cliath reachtaíocht a leagan síos don athrú ríthábhachtach seo gan a thuilleadh moille”.

“Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall supports #addthe10th an alliance which seeks to have socio- economic status recognized as the tenth ground of discrimination in the 26-Counties equality legislation, namely the Equal Status Act and the Employment Equality Act, 1 Dec 2021. We call on the Government in Baile Átha Cliath to legislate for this important change without further delay”.

Housing

24. **Cllr Denis Mc Gee**

“This motion calls on Donegal County Council to declare a housing emergency situation in Donegal due to the lack of housing in the county coupled with the defective housing crisis. It is imperative that central government acknowledge the fact that, though defective concrete has been discovered in other Irish counties, Donegal remains the epicentre of the disaster with an estimated 30,000 homes affected (Rabach, 2024, Society Social Studies of Science) This motion is calling on Donegal County Council to do whatever is required for Donegal to be assigned special status regarding housing and responses to be given the urgency required.”

LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

25. **Cllr Dakota Nic Mheanman**

"That this Council calls on the Government not to increase the student fees to €3000 this coming year which will be €1000 higher than they were last year, and that,

This Council asks that the Government adheres to the "Programme for Government" in which they have outlined that they will reduce the student fees and not increase them."

Roads & Transportation

26. **Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan**

"That this Council write to Minister Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Energy and the Department of Transport seeking a meeting to discuss the need to ensure the N15 upgrade is completed as far as Lifford. This remaining part of N15 needs to be included in any review of the National Development Plan. This remaining section of the N15 road in the county, is in urgent need of upgrading by realignment of the corners and the addition of a hard shoulder on both sides similar to the Ballybofey to Bundoran section. The narrow width along with the continual bends from Stranorlar to Lifford is well below National Primary Road standards on the very busy cross border road which has resulted in a lot of accidents. This National Primary Road was included in the Government's original National Roads upgrade over ten years ago, but it is not included in the present Ten-T."

Can a copy of this motion be sent to the Department of Transport, T.I.I., the National Transport Authority and all our Donegal Oireachtas members asking for their help in organising a meeting with all the above?

Environment

27. **Cllr Martin Scanlon**

"That this Council establishes a facility for the collection and disposal of spent sheep dip to support farmers who currently do not have the proper facilities or conditions to dispose of these chemicals properly."

28. Cathaoirleach's Business.

29. Chief Executive's Management Report.

QUESTIONS

INISHOWEN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Corporate

30. **Cllr Fionán Bradley**

To ask the Director for Corporate Services for a detailed breakdown of the total cost of streaming meetings of this Council live over a 12 month period. I would like information including the financial cost, the number,

type and frequency of meetings which were streamed as well as information in relation to the number of staff it takes to live stream each of these meetings.

Corporate

31. **Cllr Albert Doherty**

How is Donegal County Council supporting and promoting "green apprenticeships", who are the relevant and principal stakeholders, what benefits accrue to the county and are current and future training provisions threatened by reported funding allocation shortfalls?

Housing

32. **Cllr Fionán Bradley**

To ask the Director for Housing what immediate steps the Council have taken to amend the processes, policies and procedures the Council has in relation to house building in an effort to accelerate delivery following the publication of the Department of Housing's league tables which placed this Council at the bottom of the pile.

33. **Cllr Joy Beard**

During 2025, what methods have been used to test the concrete and aggregates used in the building of social housing units? Could members be sent the results?

Defective Concrete Blocks

34. **Cllr Joy Beard**

To ask the Director of Service,
Are requests to draw down funds from central government to pay claims made under the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme being processed on a timely basis?

Water & Environment

35. **Cllr Albert Doherty**

The Housing Commission has highlighted the need for increased investment by Uisce Éireann in water and wastewater infrastructure to support housing development, the review of the NDP is expected in July 2025,

My motion on Mar 31st last, adopted by DCC members demanded a special and urgent meeting between DCC and Uisce Éireann including the provision by Uisce Éireann of an infrastructure works plan for the County.

What response from Uisce Éireann has DCC received to date, and will council outline the follow up, meetings and representations to Uisce Éireann that have occurred since March 31st last?

Planning

36. **Cllr Terry Crossan**

Will D.C.C fully engage, in a meaningful way, with the next public inquiry on the Dalriadan Application for a Goldmine in the Sperrins so as to fully represent the citizens of Donegal and the R.O.I ?

37. Cllr Terry Crossan
Dalriadian Application
Can a copy of the D.C.C submissions to the previous inquiry be made available to members?

LETTERKENNY/MILFORD MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Housing

38. Cllr Tomás Sean Devine
Can I get an update as to where we are at with defective social houses being rebuilt and is there any update from the Housing Minister?

Defective Concrete Blocks

39. Cllr Tomás Sean Devine
Can I get a breakdown of staff handling payments for DCB homeowners and can we request extra staff to speed up and handle more payments as they come in, as some people are waiting long on payments which is affecting builders on site?

Community & Planning

40. Cllr Declan Meehan
Can we be provided with the number and proportion of successful Derelict and Vacant Homes Grants awarded in 2024 and so far in 2025, which relate specifically to houses located within the boundaries of settlements (urban), and the number and proportion of same for the same period, which relate specifically to houses located outside settlements (in rural areas)?
41. Cllr Ciaran Brogan
Can we get an updated report on our capital projects funded under RRDF and URDF and a timeframe for delivery?

Roads & Transportation

42. Cllr Declan Meehan
In January 2025's plenary meeting, I submitted a motion calling on DCC to write to the Minister for Transport to seek a meeting regarding funding for a feasibility study into rail connection between Letterkenny & Derry, to match the ongoing feasibility study in the North around rail connection between Derry and Portadown. In the response I was informed that Directors would be meeting with Translink about this study. Have meetings taken place between Donegal County Council and Translink and, if so, what were the outcomes from those meetings? Please provide details. Has a letter been sent from Donegal County Council, in line with my January motion, to the Minister for Transport seeking a meeting to discuss funding for a feasibility study into rail connection for Letterkenny to Derry?

43. Cllr Ciaran Brogan

Can we have an updated report on the TEN-T project including the Bonagee Link, Letterkenny Relief Road, Manorcunningham to Lifford and the Ballybofey-Stranorlar By-Pass?

LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Housing

44. Cllr Dakota Nic Mheanman

Can I get a list of payments that are included as income that are used to calculate rent on local authority homes?

Regeneration

45. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

Can I get an update on the RRDG projects for the county especially the "Seed Project" and can a letter be sent to the Minister Dara Calleary asking for his support in moving the projects forward?

Water & Environment

46. Cllr Patrick Mc Gowan

Can I have an update on Group Water Schemes that are with the Department awaiting approval?

Corporate

47. Cllr Martin Scanlon

What step are the Council taking to retain the current staffing levels i.e. (job security, long term guarantees of tenure) and what are they currently doing to try to fill the 70+ vacancies that are currently within the Council?

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

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

"Clare County Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne T.D, to review and amend the terms of the Defective Concrete Block Scheme to allow for applications, where individuals are living long term in supported housing provided by charitable bodies. These are the homes of individuals & deserve equality of treatment with all other homeowner. If passed, that the motion be circulated to all LA's."

DERRY CITY & STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL

"That this Council writes to the Minister for Infrastructure to record our devastation in light of the recent High Court ruling on the A5, and repledges this Council's full support for the A5 upgrade.

Welcomes the commitment from the Minister to work constructively with the A5/N2 Cross Border working group at its meeting this week and supports the Minister assessing the judgement and urgently considering options for a way forward.

Commits to working with the other four Councils who have an interest in this project and will write to them directly asking them to also repledge their support to working with the Minister to see this project proceed as soon as possible. Also to seek an immediate and urgent meeting with the Minister and the four relevant Councils.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

“I propose that we write to the Minister for Housing to call for an immediate review of the Affordable Housing Policy, to facilitate wider development catchment. I also propose that motion is forwarded to all local authorities.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Limerick City and County Council call on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne, TD, to amend the Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme 2016/S.I. No. 619/2023, to allow tenants to purchase their Council house after a period of five years and not a ten-year period as is currently required.”

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

That the Council:

- Seeks a meeting with the Minister for Infrastructure to discuss the A5WTC;
- Writes to the Minister for Infrastructure to record our disappointment in light of the recent High Court ruling on the A5WTC and re-pledge support to the A5 upgrade,
And
- Commits to working with the other four Councils who have an interest in the A5 project, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council, Monaghan County Council and Donegal County Council, and ask them to also re-pledge their support to working with the Minister to see the project proceed as soon as possible.

WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“Waterford City & County Council calls upon the Central Bank to take all possible steps to discontinue facilitating the sale of Israeli bonds.”

MINUTES OF JULY MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 21st JULY, 2025 IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD
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C/248/25

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs P Canning, Cathaoirleach, J Beard, L Blaney, M Boyle, F Bradley C Brogan, D Coyle, T Crossan, TS Devine, A Doherty, A Farren, M Harley, N Jordan, D. M Kelly, M McBride, M Mc Clafferty, M McDermott, P McGarvey, D McGee, P McGowan, D Meehan, A Molloy, M Naughton, D Nic Mheanman, and M Scanlon.

Online: Cllrs J Brogan, B Carr, G Doherty, M Farren, J Kavanagh, M MacGiolla Easbuig, M McMahan, G McMonagle, J Murray.

C/249/25

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, Johnny McGettigan, A/Director of Water & Environment, Eunan Quinn, Senior Planner, Lorraine Arbuckle, Senior Ex. Engineer, Laboratory, Frances Friel, Communications Officer, William Colvin, ASO, Róise Ní Laifeartaigh, Rannóg na Gaeilge, Clóna Ní Ghallachóir, Tacaíocht do Sheirbhísí Aistriúcháin, Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/250/25

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr N Kennedy and Mr Garry Martin who were unable to attend the meeting.

C/251/25

VOTES OF SYMPATHY AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

Cllr Mc Dermott proposed, seconded by Cllr A Doherty a vote of sympathy to the Mc Laughlin family in Carndonagh who had lost their daughter Natalie and granddaughter, Ella in tragic circumstances at the beginning of July. He said that it had been a very difficult time for the Mc Laughlin family and the wider community in Carndonagh. He extended condolences on behalf of Donegal County Council and acknowledged the work of the various emergency services who had attended the scene of the accident. Tribute was also paid to the staff of Altnagelvin Hospital and the Royal Victoria Hospital who had looked after Natalie and Ella with such great care.

Cllr Brogan paid tribute to the late Gavin Burke, formerly of the Library Service, and extended sympathy to the Burke family.

Cllr Mc Clafferty offered condolences to the Scott family in Dunfanaghy on the death of Edgar Scott.

The meeting was adjourned for a short recess as a mark of respect to all of the bereaved families.

- C/252/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 26TH MAY, 2025**
On resumption of the meeting Cllr Coyle proposed, seconded by Cllr McBride, to adopt the Minutes of the May Meeting of Donegal County Council held on the 26th May, 2025.
- C/253/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 28TH MAY, 2025**
On the proposal of Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr Coyle, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 28th May, 2025 were adopted.
- C/254/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 30TH JUNE, 2025**
On the proposal of Cllr Meehan, seconded by Cllr McDermott, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 30th June, 2025 were adopted.
- C/255/25 **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 30TH JUNE, 2025**
On the proposal of Cllr McBride, seconded by Cllr Meehan, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Donegal County Council held on 30th June, 2025 were adopted.
- C/256/25 **FORMAT OF THE MEETING**
The Cathaoirleach informed members that he was seeking a proposer and seconder for each of the statutory items on the agenda and would then deal with motions. Where further discussion was needed in relation to a statutory matter, he said, that this could take place once the motions had been debated. This format, he advised, would allow for a more concentrated emphasis on members business and lead to greater efficiency in the operation of the meetings. This was unanimously agreed.
- C/257/25 **DISPOSAL OF PLOT OF LAND AT ST MARY'S TERRACE, 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 Blaney, 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/258/25 **UPGRADING OF SEVERAL EXISTING PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS LOCATED ON THE N15 WITHIN THE TWIN TOWNS OF BALLYBOFEY AND STRANORLAR**
Members considered the reports circulated with the agenda in relation

to the above.

Cllr Scanlon proposed, seconded by Cllr McGowan, that the carrying out of works in relation to the upgrading of several existing pedestrian crossings located on the N15 within the Twin Towns of Ballybofey and Stranorlar (Improved Pedestrian Crossing Scheme – N15 Ballybofey & Stranorlar) 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).

C/259/25 **SELECTION OF SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE
CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS**

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr A Doherty, it was resolved that Cllr O’Fearraigh be selected as substitute representative to the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions.

C/260/25 **RESCHEDULING OF SPECIAL PLENARY MEETING ON MONDAY
28TH JULY, 2025 TO FRIDAY 25TH JULY, 2025 AT 11A.M**

It was unanimously agreed to reschedule the Special Plenary Meeting on Monday 28th July, 2025 to Friday 25th July, 2025 at 11a.m.

C/261/25 **TO NOTE THE DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE ACTION
PLAN 2024-2029 PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr Coyle, members noted the Donegal County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 Progress Report for 2024.

C/262/25 **TO APPROVE THE PLANT PURCHASE AND REFURBISHMENT
PLAN 2024-2028.**

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

The Cathaoirleach noted that discussions had taken place in relation to the operation of the Machinery Yard. Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig outlined his support for the plan. Cllr C Brogan said that there had been concerns previously in relation to procedures being operated in the Machinery Yard. He alluded to the fact that Cross Party Working group had met on two occasions with the Executive and the Machinery Yard Team. A specific template, had, he confirmed been agreed but it had to be acknowledged that this was a work in progress and that a commitment had been given by the Director of Service that there would be continued liaison with all involved. He said that it had also been agreed that the presentations delivered to the Working Group would be circulated at MD level and members kept informed of developments and in relation to the ongoing role of the Machinery Yard model. It was important, he added, that all concerned were confident that a competent model was in place and that the value for money aspect was being adhered to. It was imperative, he said, that members were in advance of the next budgetary process confident that all relevant options had been explored.

On the proposal of Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig, seconded by Cllr C Brogan,

it was resolved to approve the Plant Purchase and Refurbishment Plan 2024-2028.

C/263/25

**TO CONSIDER AND NOTE DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL'S
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024.**

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

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance gave a summary of the overall financial position for 2024. He noted the fact that Donegal County Council was one of the first local authorities to present the 2024 audited accounts to Council and something that it had been in a position to do over the past number of years. It was noted that the adopted budget for 2024 had been €185.6 million with an actual outturn of €217.6 million thus providing for an additional spend of €32m that had not been budgeted for. He drew attention to the fact that this had not been an overspend but rather the result of extra grant funding which had added to Council activity over the year.

He confirmed that income had exceeded expenditure by €1.2m thus generating a surplus in 2024 and that the revenue deficit was continuing to decline. All in all, he confirmed that the financial strategy in place was working. Attention was also drawn to capital expenditure with a breakdown per service provided. Members were informed that capital expenditure had amounted to €183.5 million in 2024 as opposed to €161.6 million in 2023. It was noted that capital expenditure had increased from €25 million to in excess of €183 million over the past 13 to 14 years.

Cllr C Brogan acknowledged the work of the Finance team and the input of the elected members. He said that record levels of funding were being received and complimented the Director of Finance and his team on the manner in which they delivered and presented all aspects of financial data. He said the current financial strategy was working but that there was room for improvement in terms of the spend on housing and housing maintenance.

Cllr A Doherty asked for additional clarity on the concerns raised by the Local Government Auditor in relation to the collection performance on housing loans.

On the proposal of Cllr C Brogan, seconded by Cllr Meehan the Donegal County Council Audited Financial Statement for 2024 was noted.

C/264/25

**TO CONSIDER AND NOTE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDIT
REPORT ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2024.**

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

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance, advised that the audit opinion

was included on page 17 of the report and was a positive audit opinion. He noted that a number of issues had been raised by the Local Government Auditor and that the associated management response to same was included on pages 1 to 14 of the report. He highlighted the fact the percentage performance in terms of commercial rates collection had been the best ever. Member's attention was also drawn to the fact that €13m had been paid in the Business Support Grant supported by central Government and the fact that the new legal services team for enforcement was in place. The low housing loan collection rate referenced in the report was directly related to the fact that Donegal was not able to access the Mortgage to Rent Scheme in the same way as other councils given the issues with the Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme.

The Chief Executive said that the performance had been good overall. He alluded to the fact that that an internal audit report had been referenced which drew attention to some irregularities in terms of plant hire. This would be dealt with going forward, he added, and due process applied.

He said that Donegal was not a highly wealthy county but that it was running well and that challenges would be worked through collectively. He cited the need to be realistic and noted that cross party deputations in their meetings with the various government departments had been particularly successful in securing additional funding allocations.

Cllr Mc Dermott proposed, seconded by Cllr A Doherty that data on the difficulties being encountered in Donegal in terms of not being able to access the Mortgage to Rent Scheme be highlighted and tabulated for presentation to department officials visiting Donegal on the 24th July with specific reference to defective concrete block affected homeowners.

Cllr Mc Clafferty asked if the Council was able to engage with PEPPER and if there had been engagement with other mortgage companies.

Cllr C Brogan asked that an update be provided at the September meeting in relation to outstanding issues on the Uisce Éireann central management charge and the overall transition aspect.

On the proposal of Cllr C Brogan, seconded by Cllr Meehan the Local Government Audit Report on the Annual Financial Statement for 2024 was noted.

C/265/25

**TO NOTE THE REPORT FROM THE DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
AUDIT COMMITTEE ON ITS CONSIDERATION OF THE 2024
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND AUDIT REPORT FOR 2024
OF DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL.**

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

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance said the report was a summary of the meeting that had taken place between the Audit & Risk Committee and the Local Government Auditor and was part of the overall framework of governance in the organisation.

Members noted the contents of same.

C/266/25

**TO CONSIDER AND NOTE THE DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL
AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT 2024**

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

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance advised that the report reflected the activity of the Audit & Risk Committee over the previous financial year. He said that there was a statutory obligation to circulate the report.

Members noted the contents of same.

The Director of Service confirmed that detail would be provided on the Mortgage to Rent Scheme as requested by Cllr Mc Dermott.

He said that Mortgage to Rent Scheme referenced was one solely for Council borrowers and that he would send out information on same as requested by Cllr Mc Clafferty.

An update on the central management charge he said could be provided for the September meeting.

C/267/25

**TO CONSIDER MOTION FROM LIFFORD/STRANORLAR MD IN
RELATION TO VARIATION NO. 1 OF CDP 2024-2030 IN
CONNECTION WITH LANDS AT MULLINDRAIT, STRANORLAR**

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

Mr Liam Ward, Director Community Development & Planning Services noted that the Planning Department was in the process of moving forward with Variation No 1 to the County Development Plan 2024-2030 and that this was at an advanced stage of preparation.

This would he said involve pre-draft consultation and a series of workshops with members in relation to the proposed area plans. The scope of the current variation includes, he added, new area plans for An Clochan Liath, Ballyshannon, Bridgend, Carndonagh, Donegal Town, and Killybegs. It also included, he said, residential rezoning at Cockhill in Buncrana, Residential Zoned Land Tax related rezonings and the replacement of designations in relation to national heritage areas in Letterkenny with local environment zonings. He proceeded to outline the timeframes associated with the progression of the variation.

The motion as submitted by the Lifford/Stranorlar members he noted

referenced lands at Mullindrait, Stranorlar and the request was to include these lands in the environmental process and to include in the variation process.

Thus, Cllr Mc Gowan proposed, seconded by Cllr Scanlon that the lands at Mullindrait, Stranorlar as referenced in the attached report be included in Variation No 1 of the County Development Plan 2024-2030

It was clarified by the Director of Service that clarification in relation to the variation would be provided at the September MD meetings.

Cllr Mc Dermott said that there were issues in Carndonagh regarding Uisce Éireann that needed to be clarified and additional clarity on several zoning issues in the town.

The Director of Service said that there would be further engagement at MD level before September. He advised that a note would issue to the Inishowen members later in the week in relation to Uisce Éireann related issues.

C/268/25

TO NOTE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE POLICY GROUP HELD ON THE 19TH MAY, 2025

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

On the proposal of Cllr Blaney, seconded by Cllr Meehan, the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on the 19th May, 2025 were noted.

C/269/25

TO ENDORSE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CRUINNIU CHOISTE NA GAELIGE HELD ON THE 8TH MAY, 2025

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

On the proposal of Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was resolved to endorse the minutes of the meeting of Cruinniu Choiste Na Gaeilge held on the 8th May, 2025.

C/270/25

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 Blaney, seconded by Cllr McGowan attendance at the following was approved.

Training

- AILG Autumn Training Seminar to be held on the 17th & 18th September, 2025 in the Westport Woods Hotel, Westport, Co Mayo.

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Bride, seconded by Cllr Jordan attendance at the following was approved

Abroad

- Attendance of the CPMR representative at the CPMR General Assembly in Barcelona from the 19th to the 21st November, 2025.

C/271/25

CONFERENCE/EVENT REPORTS

On the proposal of Cllr Blaney, seconded by Cllr McBride the following conference report was noted:

- Attendance of Cllr Gerry Mc Monagle at St Patrick's Day Festival in Rudolstadt, Germany from the 20th March 2025 to the 23rd March 2025.

On the proposal of Cllr Molloy, seconded by Cllr McBride the following conference reports was noted:

- Attendance of Cllr Michael Mc Clafferty at the Annual Planning Conference 2025 on the 11th April in the Salthill Hotel, Galway.

On the proposal of Cllr Crossan, seconded by Cllr Jordan the following conference report was noted:

- Attendance of Cllr Jack Murray at events in St Charles, Missouri from the 21st May 2025 to the 30th May 2025.

C/272/25

THAT THIS COUNCIL PRIORITISE THE PROVISION OF ITS BASIC AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES THROUGH ITS OWN HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

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

"That this Council prioritise the provision of its basic and essential services through its own human and financial resources as opposed to via outsourcing and external procurement."

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

Cllr Bradley said that Donegal County Council was duty bound to provide a range of basic services but that many of these were being outsourced and thus control lost over the overall quality aspect. Many of the operators concerned, he said, had a monopoly on the services provided.

He alluded to various services such as road lining, house building, house maintenance etc which had been impacted. A road lining team, he advised

could be utilised full-time in any Municipal District in the county. There was room also, he noted, for the employment of an in-house quantity surveyor to speed up the house building process. Reference was also made to the fact that there was no street sweeping service in Buncrana and that this too had been impacted by outsourcing. This was something, he added, which could be done more efficiently in-house.

Cllr Mc Dermott supporting the motion said that the impact of outsourcing was being seen in all our towns and villages. He complimented the work of the various Tidy Towns Committees but cited the need for the Roads Directorate to get involved again with some of the smaller jobs such as drain cleaning, verge clearing etc.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the Council's financial resources in relation to normal day to day revenue expenditure for a range of services and associated maintenance were set out and considered as part of the Revenue Budgetary process. This process would commence shortly, he said, for 2026 with members consulted initially at MD level. He said that back on the early nineties staffing levels had been higher and that these had not yet been restored following the recessionary period in 2008-2009. He said that the Council had submitted a workforce plan to the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage outlining the staffing provision required over the next four years to ensure effective service delivery. Ultimately, he said, that the level of resources was directly linked to what the Council could afford financially either through own resources or provided directly by the various Government Departments.

C/273/25 **ENHANCED CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE EXISTING HEALTH SERVICES NORTH AND SOUTH**

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

"Donegal County Council urge the Irish Government and the Northern Executive to take the necessary steps to enhance co-operation between the existing health services North and South and move towards the full integration of service planning and delivery on an island wide basis. DCC state that reform must be implemented in a planned, systemic, strategic way to build an all-island Irish National Health and Care service. DCC further contend that it is essential that all of this work is accountable to the Irish Government, the Northern Executive and transparent to the public."

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

Cllr Doherty urged the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government to take collective responsibility for the delivery of a fully integrated health service.

He alluded to the draft strategy circulated at a recent meeting of the North-West City Region which referenced the need for a focus on a number of long term ambitions including the overall health aspect. This, he said emphasised the importance of cross-border delivery in terms of health and education and outlined a number of key interventions in terms of health and resilience and the need to focus on the shared challenges involved. This document, he noted, clearly acknowledged the partnership and collaboration that already existed between the Health Service Executive, the Department of Health and Western Health and Social Services. It also outlined the need to maintain a focus on the cross-border provision and health care collaboration.

Cllr Doherty referenced the fact that travelling time was a key issue in terms of access to services and specialist healthcare in the northwest.

He alluded also to the critical importance of having a surgical hub located in Letterkenny and expressed concern at the lack of information on the status of same. There were concerns also, he added, in terms of recruitment at Letterkenny University Hospital which needed to be addressed. A recent Sinn Fein document on the provision of a world class health service for a new Ireland, he said, highlighted many of the points outlined today.

He asked that the motion be brought to the attention of the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, the First and Deputy First Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive and to the Health Ministers in each jurisdiction.

It was acknowledged that there were a number of core areas in health provision that could be improved through the integration process.

Cllr Nic Mheanman said that it was essential that there was on-going co-operation and that there were no barriers for people who wanted to access the health system.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that it would be possible to write to the relevant political personnel as outlined above.

Concluding Cllr Doherty said that his motion called for additional resources in the North-West highlighting the need for collaboration in all aspects of health delivery through enhanced service delivery.

C/274/25 **THAT GARDAI ARE ADEQUATELY RESOURCED TO TACKLE THE EVER INCREASING INCIDENTS OF ANTI-SOCIAL DRIVING IN OUR VILLAGES AND PUBLIC SPACES**

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

"That Gardaí are adequately resourced to tackle the ever increasing incidents of anti-social driving in our villages and public spaces endangering life and causing criminal damage to both public and private property."

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

Cllr Crossan said that there had been a number of serious incidents in small urban areas and that it was only a matter of time until there was a serious accident. He called for a more proactive approach and a greater visual Garda presence and asked that the motion be forwarded for the attention of the Chief Superintendent.

Cllr A Doherty seconding the motion said that the motion was timely and highlighted the seriousness of the problem in the Inishowen area. He noted that the former Chief Superintendent had highlighted the fact that the Garda Station in Carndonagh was no longer fit for purpose. It was essential, he added, that Gardaí had access to modern facilities and resources and said that this was particularly relevant in Inishowen and in the Carndonagh area.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the Chief Superintendent would be contacted as requested.

The Cathaoirleach noted that the Local Community Safety Partnership was due to be up and running at the end of September and that this was something that could be brought to the attention of same.

Cllr Crossan welcomed the response and thanked members for their support.

C/275/25 **LETTERS OF ASSURANCE FOR HOMEOWNERS THAT COMPLETED WORK AS PART OF THE DCB SCHEME**

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

"That this Council issue the letters of assurance that was promised as part of the 40 year guarantee for homeowners that completed work as part of the DCB scheme as soon as possible." Families who have completed the remedial works were promised a guarantee but to the best of my knowledge the DCC have yet to issue them.

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

Cllr Farren said that the standard reply seemed to be that the letters were imminent and that the matter was being looked at. Many homeowners, he said, wanted to move on and sell their properties. He was he said

concerned about the delay and noted that letters of assurance had been issued by Mayo County Council.

Cllr Beard said that not one letter had issued in Donegal and that this was concerning as people needed to move on, relocate etc for various reasons and were now sitting in limbo. All she contended had navigated the scheme and put their trust in it. It was essential, she added, that the Council issue the letters and provide the homeowners concerned with security.

There was no opposition to the motion.

The Chief Executive informed members that the matter was in its final stages and noted that the letters applied to those who had retained blockwork and not those who had availed of the demolition option. He said that an update would be issued as soon as possible to all 37 members.

Cllr Farren acknowledged the response and called for the letters to be issued as soon as possible.

C/276/25 **DELAYS IN THE TIMELY PAYMENTS OF CLAIMS IN THE ENHANCED DEFECTIVE CONCRETE BLOCKS SCHEME**

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

“As everyone involved in the administration of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme knows, the timely payment of claims is essential to ensure that contractors are able to keep projects on schedule.

However, despite the dedication of the Defective Blocks team - who are working under extremely challenging conditions providing vital support to many distressed homeowners - an increasing number of claimants are reporting delays in the time taken to process payments.

Members of the Defective Concrete Blocks Committee have previously been told that the aim is to process claims within three weeks from receipt.

However, we are aware of many claims taking longer, which is causing unnecessary stress to homeowners already under extreme pressure.

This motion calls on Donegal County Council to undertake an urgent and comprehensive assessment of the staffing and administrative resources allocated to the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme.

Necessary steps should then be taken to ensure that claims are processed and paid within three weeks, and that should further information be required, such requests must be issued by Council staff within one week of submission.

Minor or administrative issues, such as missing Eircodes or trivial miscalculations, must not stall progress where the bulk of the claim is otherwise in order. These can be dealt with prior to payment of the next claim.

Furthermore, this motion calls on Donegal County Council to include the following information in the monthly Activity Report, which is sent to members and can be viewed on the Council's website:

- *The number of claims submitted.*
- *The number of claims processed within three weeks.*
- *The average time for claims to be processed.*
- *The number of claims delayed beyond that timeframe; and*
- *The reasons for any such delays."*

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

Cllr Beard said the motion was self-explanatory and asked members for their support and assistance so as to alleviate the stress and heartache faced by

Cllr Devine said that the situation had been well articulated by Cllr Beard and that delays in payments were causing undue stress for many families. He called for adequate resources and structure to be put in place to ensure the timely payment of DCB grants.

There was no opposition to the motion.

The Chief Executive said that the spirit of the motion was well acknowledged, and that the Council wanted to get people paid quickly. He said that there had been a bit of a backlog, but plans were in place to ramp up the team. He noted that there were currently 500-600 houses involved in the process and that considerable monies were moving through the system. Efforts would also be made, he added, to reduce the number of further information queries possibly through the webinar process.

The DCB team, he advised, were doing their best to streamline the process all of which was geared to looking at what the Department wanted. They were, he said, working hard to meet the challenges and that good co-operation was the key to moving the applications forward.

Cllr Beard welcomed the fact that steps were being taken to improve efficiencies and additional staff put in place. A webinar, she advised would help but the problem was that many homeowners who had done everything correctly were waiting 6-8 weeks or longer for payment. Builders, she said, had walked off site due to lack of payment. There were issues, she contended, with internal resourcing and whilst additional staff were welcome this resource needed to be continually monitored.

Payment details, she advised, needed to be included in the monthly DCB report so that improvements to the system could be tracked. She suggested that a simple validation checklist be published outlining the documentation needed at each stage of the process to allow applicants and the competent building professional to see exactly what was needed.

She urged the Council to set a clear and accountable target for all claims to be processed and paid within three weeks and for further information requests to be issued within one week of submitting a claim.

The Chief Executive said that he could not provide that commitment today but would look at the request in the spirit that it was asked.

C/277/25 **THAT THIS COUNCIL ISSUE A LETTER OF SUPPORT IN RELATION TO THE HOSTING OF THE 2029 WORLD SHEEP SHEARING CHAMPIONSHIPS**

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

“That this Council issue a letter of support in relation to the hosting of the 2029 World Sheep Shearing Championships”.

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

Cllr Mc Dermott said that the Clonmany Agricultural Show were going to make a bid to hold the 2029 World Sheep Shearing Championships as they were due to be held in either Ireland or Wales.

It would, he advised, take place in the month of August in conjunction with the Clonmany Festival and the Clonmany Agricultural Show. Attention was drawn to the fact that a template already existed in terms of the plans that had been put in place to assist with the holding of the Irish Open in Ballyliffen in 2018.

This event, he noted afforded a unique opportunity to showcase Donegal and would be televised worldwide attracting upwards of 10,000 visitors. The application deadline, he said, was the 15th October and asked that a letter of support be provided to facilitate the submission.

Cllr Bradley said that he would be delighted to support the motion and was a fantastic opportunity to showcase Inishowen and Donegal.

There was no position to the motion.

Mr Richard Gibson, Director of Finance said that Council representatives had already been in touch with the Clonmany Agricultural Show organisers and that this contact would remain in place as plans evolved and also to look at ways in which the Council could possibly assist with this event. Contact had also been made with Failte Ireland in relation to any assistance they could provide should the application be successful.

Cllr Mc Dermott welcomed the response and paid tribute to the organisers of the Clonmany Agricultural Show noting in particular the input of Gerard and Josephine Noone.

C/278/25 PURCHASE OF THE LAND SITE OF THE CREESLOUGH TRAGEDY

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

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

He received a response from the Chief Executive in relation to the above.

Cllr Devine said that he wanted to add to the motion.

He called on the executive to sit down with the families concerned and discuss what was needed and wanted at the site of the tragedy. It was, he said an emotive issue and the families concerned had to relive again and again trauma of that day. The planning issue, he advised, was now at a conclusion and the time was right for meaningful discussion. He asked members for their support and expressed concern that the Red Cross had issued a statement the previous week again without consulting the bereaved family.

Cllr Mc Gee supporting the motion said it was extremely important that the families concerned were put at the centre of any discussions or proposals.

The Chief Executive said that the Senior Management Team in the Council and Elected Members were fully aware of the ongoing trauma of the bereaved families in Creeslough and had been to the fore in terms of working with the entire community in the aftermath of the tragedy of October 2022. This was, he admitted, an emotive issue for all concerned and the Council had to be transparent in any response that issued and be clear as to what its position was.

He then read his response into the record. (See Appendix 1)

Cllr Devine said the matter was not about money but rather about people's lives . He welcomed the Regeneration Project for Creeslough but said his motion was about the site of the tragedy itself. He said he wanted this motion passed so that the executive could sit down with the families and discuss the matter and hopefully reach a different outcome. He said he was of the belief that no one from the Council had spoken with the families since the tragedy.

Cllr Mc Clafferty said that those who had lost loved ones, those who were injured, or lost their homes in Creeslough, the entire community and all affected by the tragedy were at all times in his thoughts and prayers. He said that he had worked very closely with his colleagues in the Glenties

MD and with the previous Council together with the community in Creeslough, the Council Executive and the various agencies involved to provide assistance to those impacted by the tragedy.

Working with the various community organisations, he said that every effort had been made to build resilience in the community and turn the situation around. He said that he had been working with Donegal County Council officials, community representatives, the Creeslough Working Group and the Regeneration Team and other voluntary and sporting organisations all of which were committed to the regeneration of Creeslough. He welcomed the strong and ongoing commitment shown to the community by all the relevant stakeholders.

Cllr Mc Clafferty said he believed that talking and consensus building was what the community needed. The use of the CPO process was, he contended, a very blunt response and should only be taken as a last resort. He queried whether any talks had taken place between the interested parties and the families concerned and all interested parties. Widespread consultation with all parties was needed, he added. All concerned, he said, had a responsibility to help the community recover.

He thanked the Chief Executive, the Director of Community Development & Planning Services and the staff of Donegal County Council for their assistance to date and paid particular tribute to Fr. John Joe Duffy who had helped carry the community through many dark days.

Cllr Mc Clafferty then proposed the following counter motion which was seconded by Cllr Molloy:

“That the motion as submitted by Cllr Devine be deferred to the September meeting of Council and that prior to same, a workshop to discuss the motion and the ongoing works in Creeslough be convened”.

Cllr Molloy noted that the Creeslough Working Group had been set up early in the process and that this had been instrumental in the development of the Creeslough Action Plan which was now well under way. He said that he was fully supportive of a workshop involving all 37 members.

Cllr Devine said that the crux of the matter was that nobody was actually speaking to the families concerned.

The Cathaoirleach said that there was now a motion from Cllr Devine and together with a counter motion from Cllr Mc Clafferty to be considered. He said that the workshop to discuss the matter was the best option going forward.

Cllr Devine said he was happy to accept this providing a meeting was arranged with the families concerned.

The Chief Executive drew attention to the fact that there were challenges with this recommendation as the matter under consideration was in effect privately owned land.

Cllr C Brogan asked the media to respect the sensitive nature of the subject. He said that he believed that Cllr Devine was not fully informed. He said that the process had started with a Part 8 proposal, and this had been delivered by the Council with full engagement with the Creeslough Community Group. He referenced the work of the Town Team and the fact that there was full cross-party support for such initiatives. Glenties MD members, had, he advised, been completely involved with the development of the Community Hub and the associated funding aspect. He said he had the highest respect for the work undertaken by Donegal County Council management and staff who had dealt with the tragedy as it unfolded and in the aftermath of the event. The Council, he said, had engaged with the community and all relevant stakeholders. He noted that this was also applicable to the HSE who had been fully supportive of the ongoing initiatives and who would be part of the new Hub. He said he was supportive of the recommendation from Cllr Mc Clafferty. There had been, he advised, much good will and support shown to date and that it was important that this was built upon.

Concluding, he noted, that there were issues such as the ongoing investigation which were outside of the remit of the Council. He said the issue was a sensitive one, but it needed to be acknowledged that a lot of good work was taking place within the community and that it would be wrong for the message to go out that the Council had turned their backs on the families in Creeslough.

Cllr Devine in response said that he was not attacking the Council or being disrespectful to anybody but rather pleading that the families concerned would have the opportunity to sit around the table and discuss the situation regarding the site in Creeslough.

At this juncture Cllr Devine agreed to withdraw the motion on the basis that a workshop be convened to discuss the issues involved. He called again for the Council to reach out to the bereaved families.

C/279/25 **EXCLUSION THROUGH INELIGIBILITY OF CO. DONEGAL FROM KEY NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEMES.**

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

“That this Council write to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to express concern over the exclusion through ineligibility of County Donegal from key national affordable housing schemes, including cost rental initiatives, and to request an urgent review of the eligibility criteria and geographic rollout of such schemes to ensure they are extended to rural and peripheral counties like Donegal, where housing need is significant but often underrepresented in national policy.” If passed, I would ask that this motion is circulated to all other local authorities.

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

Cllr Meehan said that there were two schemes namely the “Affordable Scheme” and the “Cost Rental Scheme” in which there was no action for the people of Donegal. They were, he said, designed to help people buy or rent homes at prices they could reasonably afford and targeted to low and middle income earners thus bridging the gap between those who qualify for social housing and those who are not able to avail of these supports.

There were, he advised, an ever growing cohort of people who fell between the stools in terms of accessing this support. This had been compounded by the fact, he said, that there had been no increase in the associated means tests or access thresholds.

All members, he noted, were contacted on a regular basis by people facing and dealing with housing insecurity.

There had been, he added, an 90% increase in rents in Donegal over the past five years with no such increase in housing supports or general household income. It was noted that the cost of buying a house had increased by 63% over the same period. Department housing policies, he contended, needed to be reviewed even though Donegal was below the national average in terms of overall rent and general house prices.

He welcomed the fact that changes were afoot in terms of the “Affordable Purchase Scheme” and said that every method at the Council’s disposal should be used to effect change in the schemes outlined above.

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig supporting the motion said that decisions had been made politically in favour of the developers and that this had not been helpful to the people of rural Ireland and along the western corridor. Government policy, he contended, had left counties like Donegal behind and the result was emigration and the decimation of rural communities as young people cannot afford to buy or rent houses.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that there were a range of initiatives in relation to affordability which worked quite well including the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Scheme. He alluded to the fact that Donegal had not been assigned a delivery target in respect of the broader Affordable Purchase Scheme but confirmed that the Council was actively engaging with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to address the issues. He said that a comprehensive expression of interest process had been undertaken looking at local affordability challenges and potential demand and same shared with the Department. Regarding Cost Rental Housing, he noted that no schemes had been developed in Donegal but that the Council was engaging with the Approved Housing Bodies to explore

opportunities for its delivery. It was anticipated, he said, that the new National Housing Plan would introduce Affordable Housing delivery targets for all local authorities including Donegal and that the work carried out to date could be utilised to enhance and deliver affordable housing options.

Cllr Meehan noted that this was not specifically a Donegal issue and recognised that some of the other schemes such as the Vacant and Derelict Homes Scheme etc worked well. Affordable Schemes were, he said particularly necessary for low income families together with a revision of the relevant income thresholds.

C/280/25 **THE COUNCIL HOST A NUMBER OF WORKSHOPS IN THE COUNTY TO HELP INFORM OUR ELECTORATE OF ALL THE DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE WITH REGARD TO HOUSING SUPPORTS AND GRANTS AVAILABLE.**

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

I propose that this Council host a number of workshops in our county to help inform our electorate of all the different opportunities available in all areas of housing supports, housing initiatives, local authority home loans, mortgage support etc including grants available for home energy upgrades and defective block scheme.

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

Cllr Brogan said that there were so many different elements to Housing and people were having difficulty navigating the income challenges, finding available properties, acquiring information on a range of initiatives and services. He cited the need to be proactive and to get out and about and meet the people who wanted to avail of these services.

He called for roadshows to be showcased in each Municipal District where people could have access to what was available in terms of housing supports. This type of initiative, he noted, had been used for the Croí Cónaithe Scheme and had proved to be most successful and gave members of the public an opportunity to ask questions and become familiar with the initiative. The fact that Donegal had the highest number of applications in the country for this scheme was reflective, he added, of how successful this type of initiative had been.

He called on the Housing Section to organise the workshops as referenced in the motion and outlined the need for the banking sector, Credit Unions, Mortgage Lender, the SEAI etc to be included as a partners in the initiative. It would be helpful also, he added, to have some of the contractors involved with the DCB Scheme included as well.

It was about face to face interaction, he contended, and asked members for their support in engaging with the electorate.

Cllr Mc Dermott said that he could see how beneficial and informative that these types of workshops would be and would allow the public to meet with the people who were dealing with their applications. Regarding the DCB Scheme, he noted that minor elements were holding up payments. There was also room, he added, for the provision of information on the buying out of S.I Houses as issues often arose when the house has not been bought out. It was important, he said, that any such workshops were advertised so as to ensure maximum impact.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said the Housing Section would be happy to facilitate the arrangements of these workshops/information sessions in each MD as requested and that they could provide an opportunity for other agencies to get involved also.

C/281/25 **THAT THE COUNCIL REQUEST EXTRA FUNDING FOR LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES**

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

“That this Council requests extra funding from the Department for the Local Improvement Schemes.”

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

Cllr Blaney said he had submitted a number of motions over the past number of years calling for increased funding. He said that over twenty years ago the Milford Electoral area received more funding in one year than that allocated at present for the entire county.

Many of the lanes fixed at the time were, he said, once again in bad shape due to the lack of funding. Roads staff, he acknowledged did an excellent job with the available monies, but additional funding was needed.

He welcomed the fact that Donegal County Council was always in a position to utilise additional funding if sanctioned and said that he hoped that the Minister would be in a position to grant extra monies. There were, he noted over 1500 applications in hand, but current allocations only allowed for a small fraction of these to proceed.

Cllr Naughton said this was an issue which all members encountered and despite the regulations changing in the past number of years little inroad was being made into the number of schemes that had been completed. He said that if extra funding was received then staff were available to do the work. He said that contact should be made with the Department requesting that the LIS Schemes be brought back under the auspices of the Roads Section as this partnership worked very well.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation said that significant investment was needed to address the full list of applications in Donegal. He said that the Department for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht had indicated in the past few weeks that additional monies could be made available and querying if Donegal was in a position to draw down additional funding and ready to draw down same by the 7th November. Confirmation, he advised, had issued to the Department indicating that Donegal County Council was in a position to avail of the funding and to meet the necessary requirements. He agreed to keep members informed of developments and to update each Municipal District on the extent of their allocation.

Cllr Blaney welcomed the positive response and thanked members for their support.

C/282/25 **PURCHASE OF A ROAD LINING MACHINE**

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

“I am calling on the Roads Directorate to conduct a report on purchasing a road lining machine against the hiring of this vehicle.”

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

Cllr Jordan said this was something that had been raised by both the Roads & Transportation SPC and the Machinery Yard Working Group. The issue, he advised, was the lack of road lining and the timeframe for getting this process completed.

There was he acknowledged a value for money aspect involved and the fact that a specialised team needed to be put in place and adequately trained. This issue of road lining was, he added, a topic that came up throughout the county and driving instructors had indicated that the lack of same was impacting those doing their driving test. Poor lining at junctions etc was causing applicants to fail their driving tests.

It was noted that there were only two contactors carrying out this type of work in the Northwest and that the waiting time for getting roads lined was particularly lengthy. It was, he contended, a matter of road safety and the provision of an adequate service to the public. He asked that options be explored in terms of the purchase of a road lining machine and the training of the relevant staff members.

He said that approval had been given for the purchase of a high velocity tar sprayer and that this too had been categorised as special equipment.

Cllr Jordan thus called for a study to be carried out in terms of the value for money aspect of buying or leasing a road lining machine.

Cllr A Doherty seconding the motion said that this matter was something that came up in all of the Municipal Districts and that concerns had been raised in relation to the safety aspect. He called on the Council to prioritise the response

There was no opposition to the motion.

The issue, he advised, was that the waiting time for works of this nature was much too slow and the associated delays impacted road safety.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation said that there had been discussion on this topic at the Roads & Transportation SPC and by the Machinery Yard Working Group. It would be beneficial, he added, for members to see the applicable detail in a report and said that same would be circulated to the Roads & Transportation SPC, the Machinery Yard Working Group and to all the elected members.

Cllr Jordan asked that the report be prepared as soon as possible.

C/283/25 **DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORT #ADDTHE 10TH - AN ALLIANCE SEEKING RECOGNITION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS**

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

“Go dtacaíonn Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall le #cuiran10úleis (#addthe10th), comhghuaillíocht atá ag iarraidh go mbeidh stádas socheacnamaíoch aitheanta mar an 10ú bhforas de leithcheal a dhéantar, i reachtaíocht um chomhionannas na 26 Contae, a dtugtar An tAcht um Stádas Comhionann agus An tAcht um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta, Nollaig 2021, orthu. Iarrann muid ar an Rialtas i mBaile Átha Cliath reachtaíocht a leagan síos don athrú ríthábhachtach seo gan a thuilleadh moille”.

“Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall supports #addthe10th an alliance which seeks to have socio- economic status recognized as the tenth ground of discrimination in the 26-Counties equality legislation, namely the Equal Status Act and the Employment Equality Act, 1 Dec 2021. We call on the Government in Baile Átha Cliath to legislate for this important change without further delay”.

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

Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig expressed disappointment that he had not been able to put forward a counter motion earlier in the meeting.

Alluding to his motion, Cllr Mac Giolla Easbuig said that it had to be acknowledged that Donegal and other counties had been left behind. He said that socio-economic discrimination impacted rural and working class areas with people being left behind in terms of job opportunities,

interviews, grant applications etc. He acknowledged the fact that this motion was one that was being driven by Senator Clare Daly.

Cllr Meehan said that people were often discriminated on the grounds of where they were from, their employment/income status etc. The CSO, he added, had built up an evidence base of the various sectors experiencing discrimination across all sectors including government departments and agencies. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, had also, he said called for socio-economic status to be included as the tenth ground for discrimination equality legislation. He highlighted the fact that socio-economic status also affected people's access to essential services such as healthcare and housing thus exacerbating poverty. He called for immediate government action.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services confirmed that the motion would be circulated to the Minister for Children, Disability & Equality.

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

C/284/25 **THAT DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL DECLARE A HOUSING EMERGENCY SITUATION IN DONEGAL**

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

“This motion calls on Donegal County Council to declare a housing emergency situation in Donegal due to the lack of housing in the county coupled with the defective housing crisis. It is imperative that central government acknowledge the fact that, though defective concrete has been discovered in other Irish counties, Donegal remains the epicentre of the disaster with an estimated 30,000 homes affected (Rabach, 2024, Society Social Studies of Science) This motion is calling on Donegal County Council to do whatever is required for Donegal to be assigned special status regarding housing and responses to be given the urgency required.”

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

Cllr Mc Gee said that the severe lack of housing in Donegal warranted a special designation status from the Department and an urgent response to the crisis. This coupled with high rents he said was exacerbating the situation. He called for adequate resources to be put in place and highlighted the fact that all the elected members needed to be singing from the one hymn sheet regarding the housing situation.

Cllr Farren supporting the motion said that the lack of housing had been further compounded by the defective concrete blocks crisis. He noted also the fact that difficulty in getting planning permission and access to Uisce Éireann services were contributing to the problem.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that the scale and severity of the problem in Donegal was not on a par with the rest of the country and was impacting on various aspects of life for many people and most acutely in the delivery of housing. In addition, he said, that there were other systematic issues affecting same in both the public and private sectors for example the requirement for updated national standards for blockwork, concrete and aggregate, various infrastructural constraints inhibiting development.

He was, he said, happy to write to the Minister as requested and to seek a formal delegation to further raise these issues.

Cllr Mc Gee said that Uisce Éireann were stalling in terms of service development and this was severely impacting development throughout the county. Additional funding, he contended, was needed as a matter of urgency to help alleviate the housing crisis.

C/285/25 **THAT THE COUNCIL CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT NOT TO INCREASE THE STUDENT FEES TO €3000**

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

“That this Council calls on the Government not to increase the student fees to €3000 this coming year which will be €1000 higher than they were last year, and that,

This Council asks that the Government adheres to the "Programme for Government" in which they have outlined that they will reduce the student fees and not increase them.”

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

Cllr Nic Mheanman said that it had been a slap in the face for students to find that their fees would be increasing by €1000 this year. Promises had been made in the Programme, she added, and these had not been adhered to. Students, she said, were being left in a precarious position and she thus called on the government to reverse the decision.

Cllr A Doherty said that students were the country's future and that this increase on top of the challenges being faced by defective concrete block families outlined the seriousness of the situation. The government, he advised had promised to reduce student fees, yet this no longer seemed to

be a part of the plan. He reiterated the call for the €1000 increase to be scrapped.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Patsy Lafferty, Director Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services said that a copy of the motion would be forwarded to the Minister for Further and Higher Education.

Cllr Nic Mheanman thanked members for their support.

C/286/25 **THAT THE COUNCIL WRITE TO MINISTER DARRAGH O'BRIEN, MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT SEEKING A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE NEED TO ENSURE THE N15 UPGRADE IS COMPLETED AS FAR AS LIFFORD.**

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

"That this Council write to Minister Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Energy and the Department of Transport seeking a meeting to discuss the need to ensure the N15 upgrade is completed as far as Lifford. This remaining part of N15 needs to be included in any review of the National Development Plan. This remaining section of the N15 road in the county, is in urgent need of upgrading by realignment of the corners and the addition of a hard shoulder on both sides similar to the Ballybofey to Bundoran section. The narrow width along with the continual bends from Stranorlar to Lifford is well below National Primary Road standards on the very busy cross border road which has resulted in a lot of accidents. This National Primary Road was included in the Governments original National Roads upgrade over ten years ago, but it is not included in the present Ten-T."

Can a copy of this motion be sent to the Department Of Transport, T.I.I, the National Transport Authority and all our Donegal Oireachtas members asking for their help in organising a meeting with all the above?

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

Cllr Mc Gowan outlined the importance of ensuring that the remainder of the N15 from Stranorlar to Lifford was completed. He noted that there were issues in terms of the narrowness of the road and several bends all of which impacted on road safety. He alluded to the Corcam Bends and the fact there had been several accidents at this location. This section, he said, had been designed and redesigned yet nothing had been put in place. It was not just a matter of replacing the surface, he noted, but rather the need to get rid of the bends and put a hard shoulder in place given the level of usage. It was important, he added, that the road was brought to a decent standard given the level of National Primary traffic and through traffic that used it. He welcomed the commitment that correspondence

would issue to the Minister for Transport, the Department of Transport and to the T.I.I.

Cllr Scanlon, supporting the motion said this road was a vital artery with over a dozen roads leading into same from the border. It was, he advised, heavily trafficked and a main link also into the rest of the county. Over the years, he said, that there had been several accidents and fatalities on this road, and it was now imperative that it was brought to a decent standard for road users.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Bryan Cannon, Director Roads & Transportation said that this was a very significant issue for the Lifford/Stranorlar members who had raised the issue time and time again. This section of the N15, he noted, which was the only National Primary Road within the county which was not included in the Trans European Network comprehensive network. The Council, he confirmed, had continued to seek improvements on this on the N15 from Stranorlar to Lifford and was an ongoing item on the agenda for all T.I.I delegations on an annual basis. He noted that a request had also been made to have this section included in the National Development Plan review. The motion would be circulated, he added, as detailed.

Cllr Mc Gowan asked that this be done as soon as possible.

C/287/25 **ESTABLISHMENT OF A FACILITY FOR THE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF SPENT SHEEP DIP**

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

“That this Council establishes a facility for the collection and disposal of spent sheep dip to support farmers who currently do not have the proper facilities or conditions to dispose of these chemicals properly.”

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

Cllr Scanlon said that the Agriculture Committee had received two presentations on the factors influencing water quality. The proper disposal of sheep dip was, he contended, very much a related issue. Sheep dipping, he said, was becoming more popular and that this was directly linked also to the success of the National Sheep Welfare Scheme. There were, he said, a significant number of farms, especially hill farms which had no safe way of disposing of sheep dip. These, he said, did not have slurry tanks or suitable ground conditions for the disposal of same. Proper facilities, he stated, were needed as a matter of urgency. Acknowledging the great work carried out by the Lough's Agency and Inland Fishery in terms of water quality, he contended, that the provision of a disposal facility for spent sheep dip would contribute greatly to improving water quality.

Cllr Kelly seconding the motion alluded to the fact that the briefings delivered to Agriculture Committee had been very informative and that if a way could be found to assist farmers, then this would be most beneficial.

There was no opposition to the motion.

Mr Johnny Mc Gettigan, Acting Director Water & Environment, outlined the fact that Donegal County Council had no role or remit in the provision of such facilities. The protection of the environment, he said, was a priority and the Council had worked with Teagasc, the Catchment Care Project and the various Fisheries bodies in producing guidance on the safe disposal of spent dip. Donegal County Council it was noted, was participating in a national working group with various stakeholders to assess the value of implementing a disposal scheme and to analyse the various methods of disposal that might be available so as to establish methods of good practice. He said that updates would be provided through the Climate Action & Environment Strategic Policy Committee and at Municipal District level.

Cllr Scanlon thanked members for their support.

C/288/25 **Cathaoirleach's Business**

Votes of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was proposed to the following:

- The family of the late Phelim Doherty, Waterworks Inspector, Carndonagh.
- Sadie Bradley, Roads on the death of her mother, May Bradley.
- Liam Edwards, on the death of his mother, Kathleen Edwards.
- Shane Smyth, Tourism Unit on the death his mother, Marie Smyth.
- Natasha Costello, Bundoran Library on the death of her father, Donal Kerins (Snr).
- Phil Loughlin, formerly Motor Tax on the death of her husband John Barron.
- The family of the late Gavin Burke, formerly Library Services.
- The family of the late Charlie Bonner, Ballybofey.
- The family of the late Charlie Mc Ginty, Barnesmore.

Schedule of Uisce Éireann Workshops

Members endorsed the holding of the workshops outlined below:

Date	Venue	Time	MD
10.09.25	Donegal PSC	9.15-10.45	Donegal
		11.00-12.30	Lifford/Stranorlar
		13.30-15.00	Glenties
11.09.25	Letterkenny PSC	9.15-10.45	Inishowen
		11.00-12.30	Letterkenny/Milford

Civic Reception

On the proposal of Cllr Canning, seconded by Cllr C Brogan it was resolved to afford a Civic Reception in recognition of the hurling teams that won sixteen championships titles in a row over the period 1991 to 2006.

Congratulations

Congratulations was extended to all involved in the organisation and running of the Foyle Cup and the Cathaoirleach wished all the participants taking part in the competition well.

The Cathaoirleach best wishes to Erin Friel from Newtowncunningham who had been selected to represent Ireland in the European U20 Athletics Championships in Macedonia.

Congratulations was extended to Termon GAA team in relation to their return to Division 1 and to Glenfin Ladies team on winning the league title.

Members wished Jim Mc Guinness and the Donegal Senior Football team every success in the 2025 All Ireland final.

C/289/25 **Chief Executive's Management Report.**

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

1.Community Development & Planning Services

Community Development

Clar Programme 2025.

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

Major Projects Update.

Developer Provided Wastewater Infrastructure Resolution Works.

Refugee Response Unit Update.

Africa Day 2025 Youth Events.

Skills Audit.

Training for Centre Managers.

IFEST.

2. Water and Environment.

Waste and Litter Management.

Clean-Air Project.

Letterkenny University Hospital Biodiversity Day.

Oakfield Park-Festival of Food 24th & 25th May.

Donegal County Council Compost Giveaway Events.

National Food Waste Campaign – Free Compost Days.

The Rubbish Film Festival 2025.

First Ever National Relove Fashion Awards

ADI- Anti Dumping Initiative 2025.

Best Plastic Pollution Campaign

Litter Free Campaign.

Donegal International Rally.

Climate Action.

Climate Action Plan 2024-2029-Progress Report 2024.

Light for Local Authorities-Workshop Promoting Energy Efficiency and Responsible Lighting Practices.

An Falcarragh/Gort an Choire DZ Town Centre First Policy-Town Team.

Community Drop- In Event.

Central Laboratory.

June Public Service Announcements.

Defective Concrete Blocks-Update.

3. Housing, Corporate & Cultural Services.

Social Housing Delivery

Specific Instance (SI) Housing

Housing Grants

Disable Person's Grant(DPG) Scheme

Cultural Division.

Creative Ireland.

Library Service.

Skills for Life.

Arts Service.

38th Earagail Arts Festival

16th Irish Aerial Dance Festival...

2nd Donegal Mela.

Regional Cultural Centre.

Festivals.

Exhibitions.

County Donegal Heritage Office.

Working Over by Exhibition.

County Heritage Plan Funding.

Heritage Week in County Donegal.

The Laurels, Glenties Historic Towns Initiative.

Rope Thatch Mentorship Scheme.

Biodiversity Office.

Wild Day Out at Inch.

NPWS Funding Awarded for Biodiversity Projects in Donegal.

Museum.

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

Fire Service.

Operations.

Fire Prevention.

Major Emergency Management.

Local Enterprise Office.

Progress Against Targets.

National Enterprise Awards 2025.

Harris Tweed Delegation in Donegal.

Donegal Profit Net Engineering Network Tour of Terex Corporation.

Ambition Female Accelerator Programme.

Your Council Day-27th June 2025.

Business Supports Clinics.

10XNorth West.

5. Roads & Transportation.

Roads Areas Update.

Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance.

TII Emergency Pavement Scheme.

National Roads Office Update.

TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project Donegal.

A5 Western Transport Corridor

Central Technical Services Update.

Fintra Bridge

EV Charging Infrastructure.

Rail Connectivity.

Airlink between Derry City & Dublin Airports.

The Chief Executive said that he was available to take questions in relation to the items listed in the report.

C/290/25 DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF THE TOTAL COST OF STREAMING MEETINGS OF THIS COUNCIL LIVE

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

To ask the Director for Corporate Services for a detailed breakdown of the total cost of streaming meetings of this Council live over a 12 month period. I would like information including the financial cost, the number, type and frequency of meetings which were streamed as well as information in relation to the number of staff it takes to live stream each of these meetings.

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

C/291/25 HOW IS DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING "GREEN APPRENTICESHIPS".

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

How is Donegal County Council supporting and promoting "green apprenticeships", who are the relevant and principal stakeholders, what benefits accrue to the county and are current and future training provisions threatened by reported funding allocation shortfalls?

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

C/292/25 WHAT IMMEDIATE STEPS HAVE THE COUNCIL TAKEN TO AMEND THE PROCESSES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN RELATION TO HOUSE BUILDING

Cllr Bradley submitted the following question:-

To ask the Director for Housing what immediate steps the Council have taken to amend the processes, policies and procedures the Council has in

relation to house building in an effort to accelerate delivery following the publication of the Department of Housing's league tables which placed this Council at the bottom of the pile.

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

C/293/25 **DURING 2025, WHAT METHODS HAVE BEEN USED TO TEST THE CONCRETE AND AGGREGATES USED IN THE BUILDING OF SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS**

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

During 2025, what methods have been used to test the concrete and aggregates used in the building of social housing units? Could members be sent the results?

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

C/294/25 **ARE REQUESTS TO DRAW DOWN FUNDS FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO PAY CLAIMS BEING PROCESSED ON A TIMELY BASIS**

Cllr Beard submitted the following question:-

*To ask the Director of Service,
Are requests to draw down funds from central government to pay claims made under the Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Scheme being processed on a timely basis?*

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

C/295/25 **SPECIAL AND URGENT MEETING BETWEEN DCC AND UISCE ÉIREANN**

Cllr A Doherty submitted the following question:-

The Housing Commission has highlighted the need for increased investment by Uisce Éireann in water and wastewater infrastructure to support housing development, the review of the NDP is expected in July 2025,

My motion on Mar 31st last, adopted by DCC members demanded a special and urgent meeting between DCC and Uisce Éireann including the provision by Uisce Éireann of an infrastructure works plan for the County. What response from Uisce Éireann has DCC received to date and will council outline the follow up ,meetings and representations to Uisce Éireann that have occurred since March 31st last?

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

C/296/25 **WILL D.C.C. FULLY ENGAGE WITH THE NEXT PUBLIC INQUIRY ON THE DALRIADIAN APPLICATION FOR A GOLDMINE IN THE SPERRINS**

Cllr Crossan submitted the following question:-

Will D.C.C fully engage, in a meaningful way, with the next public inquiry on the Dalriadian Application for a Goldmine in the Sperrins so as to fully represent the citizens of Donegal and the R.O.I ?

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

C/297/25 **DALRIADIAN APPLICATION**

Cllr Crossan submitted the following question:-

Dalriadian Application.

Can a copy of the D.C.C submissions to the previous inquiry be made available to members?

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

C/298/25 **UPDATE AS TO WHERE WE ARE AT WITH DEFECTIVE SOCIAL HOUSES BEING REBUILT**

Cllr Devine submitted the following question:-

Can I get an update as to where we are at with defective social houses being rebuilt and is there any update from the Housing Minister?

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

C/299/25 **BREAKDOWN OF STAFF HANDLING PAYMENTS FOR DCB HOMEOWNERS**

Cllr Devine submitted the following question:-

Can I get a breakdown of staff handling payments for DCB homeowners and can we request extra staff to speed up and handle more payments as they come in, as some people are waiting long on payments which is affecting builders on site?

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

C/300/25 **CAN WE BE PROVIDED WITH THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF SUCCESSFUL DERELICT AND VACAN HOMES GRANTS**

Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

Can we be provided with the number and proportion of successful Derelict and Vacant Homes Grants awarded in 2024 and so far in 2025, which relate specifically to houses located within the boundaries of settlements

(urban), and the number and proportion of same for the same period, which relate specifically to houses located outside settlements (in rural areas)?

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

C/301/25 CAN WE HAVE AN UPDATED REPORT ON OUR CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDED UNDER RRDF AND URDF

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we get an updated report on our capital projects funded under RRDF and URDF and a timeframe for delivery?

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

C/302/25 FUNDING FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO RAIL CONNECTION FOR LETTERKENNY TO DERRY

Cllr Meehan submitted the following question:-

In January 2025's plenary meeting, I submitted a motion calling on DCC to write to the Minister for Transport to seek a meeting regarding funding for a feasibility study into rail connection between Letterkenny & Derry, to match the ongoing feasibility study in the North around rail connection between Derry and Portadown. In the response I was informed that Directors would be meeting with Translink about this study. Have meetings taken place between Donegal County Council and Translink and, if so, what were the outcomes from those meetings? Please provide details. Has a letter been sent from Donegal County Council, in line with my January motion, to the Minister for Transport seeking a meeting to discuss funding for a feasibility study into rail connection for Letterkenny to Derry?

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

C/303/25 UPDATE REPORT ON THE TEN-T

Cllr Brogan submitted the following question:-

Can we have an updated report on the TEN-T project including the Bonagee Link, Letterkenny Relief Road, Manorcunningham to Lifford and the Ballybofey-Stranorlar By-Pass?

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

C/304/25 LIST OF PAYMENTS THAT ARE INCLUDED AS INCOME THAT ARE USED TO CALCULATE RENT ON LA HOMES

Cllr NicMheanman submitted the following question:-

Can I get a list of payments that are included as income that are used to calculate rent on local authority homes?

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

C/305/25 UPDATE ON THE RRDG PROJECTS FOR THE COUNTY

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:-

Can I get an update on the RRDG projects for the county especially the "Seed Project" and can a letter be sent to the Minister Dara Calleary asking for his support in moving the projects forward?

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

C/306/25 UPDATE ON GROUP WATER SCHEMES THAT ARE WITH THE DEPARTMENT AWAITING APPROVAL

Cllr McGowan submitted the following question:-

Can I have an update on Group Water Schemes that are with the Department awaiting approval?

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

C/307/25 WHAT STEPS ARE THE COUNCIL TAKING TO RETAIN THE CURRENT STAFFING LEVELS.

Cllr Scanlon submitted the following question:-

What step are the Council taking to retain the current staffing levels i.e. (job security, long term guarantees of tenure) and what are they currently doing to try to fill the 70+ vacancies that are currently within the Council?

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

C/308/25 MOTIONS FROM OTHER COUNCILS/BODIES

Members noted the motions from other Councils.

CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

"Clare County Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne T.D, to review and amend the terms of the Defective Concrete Block Scheme to allow for applications, where individuals are living long term in supported housing provided by charitable bodies. These are the homes of individuals & deserve equality of treatment with all other homeowner. If passed, that the motion be circulated to all LA's."

DERRY CITY & STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL

“That this Council writes to the Minister for Infrastructure to record our devastation in light of the recent High Court ruling on the A5, and repledges this Council’s full support for the A5 upgrade.

Welcomes the commitment from the Minister to work constructively with the A5/N2 Cross Border working group at its meeting this week and supports the Minister assessing the judgement and urgently considering options for a way forward.

Commits to working with the other four Councils who have an interest in this project and will write to them directly asking them to also repledge their support to working with the Minister to see this project proceed as soon as possible. Also to seek an immediate and urgent meeting with the Minister and the four relevant Councils.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

“I propose that we write to the Minister for Housing to call for an immediate review of the Affordable Housing Policy, to facilitate wider development catchment. I also propose that motion is forwarded to all local authorities.”

LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“That Limerick City and County Council call on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne, TD, to amend the Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme 2016/S.I. No. 619/2023, to allow tenants to purchase their Council house after a period of five years and not a ten-year period as is currently required.”

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

That the Council:

- Seeks a meeting with the Minister for Infrastructure to discuss the A5WTC;
- Writes to the Minister for Infrastructure to record our disappointment in light of the recent High Court ruling on the A5WTC and re-pledge support to the A5 upgrade,

And

- Commits to working with the other four Councils who have an interest in the A5 project, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council, Monaghan County Council and Donegal County Council, and ask them to also re-pledge their support to working with the Minister to see the project proceed as soon as possible.

WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

“Waterford City & County Council calls upon the Central Bank to take all possible steps to discontinue facilitating the sale of Israeli bonds.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Cathaoirleach:_____

Dated:_____

Appendix 1

Motion – Cllr. Tomás Seán Devine

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

Reply:

Before addressing the present Motion, the Council is very much aware of the background to same, being the unimaginable tragedy which happened in Creeslough on the 7th of October, 2022. The Council acknowledges that for the families who lost their loved ones that day, their grief is continuing and may be unending. The shock and pain of the event was felt throughout the entire community and indeed the whole Country.

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, the community came together and was helped considerably by the efforts of a great number of organisations, public bodies and individuals. For the Council's part it took the proactive step of quickly establishing the Creeslough Working Group, made up of Elected Members, Council Officials and most importantly representatives of the local community in Creeslough.

Through this process, and with tremendous support provided by ARUP, on a pro-bono basis, the group carried out extensive consultations with the community in Creeslough always being mindful of the need for space for the thoughts and views of the families to be taken on board in all the emerging proposals. This thought process and engagement has continued.

The output from this work was the development of a Creeslough Action Plan, launched in March 2024 and the identification of a Community Regeneration Project in the village. The Council has progressed the project at pace with Part 8 Planning consent secured in September 2023. A successful application was then made under Call 5 to the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund with €12.1M secured in May 2024, and a co-funding commitment of € 1.3 M from the Council to bring the total allocation to € 13.4 M.

This project was intended to be the Council's and indeed Government's acknowledgement and contribution towards a long-lasting legacy project to mark and respect the tragedy in Creeslough in October 2022. The project is now progressing through the detailed design phase and on to the procurement of a contractor to deliver the project.

The Council has also established and supports a Town Team in Creeslough who will lead the implementation of other projects and actions identified in the Action Plan.

Turning now directly to the above motion before Council today.

1. Since submission of the motion, I had a discussion with Cllr. Devine and have engaged with the Corporate Policy Group of the Council I have also given very careful and detailed consideration to the appropriate response of the Council Executive to the proposed Motion.
2. In responding to the Motion which directly affects the Creeslough families who

have endured such grief, I know that no-one within the Council (members and staff alike) would want to add to that grief. However, my belief is that the Motion should not be adopted, and I would strongly urge the members not to do so for the following reasons: -

- (a) The issue of the future treatment and use of a site where a great tragedy has taken place is one that can be very difficult, distressing and possibly contentious for those involved. Where it is public land, it is a matter within the control of the statutory body, agency or department concerned. Where as in Creeslough, it is private land same is under the direct control of the landowner(s). I believe that any decision to acquire the land and develop same as a memorial garden could only ever come about through negotiation and agreement between all interested parties - ideally involving the whole community. If there was such agreement, (i) potential sources of funding would clearly have to be explored whether public, private donation, other private fundraising etc. or a combination of all and (ii) the future ownership structure and management of such a memorial would have to be determined. It would not be something that the Council would take the lead role in.
- (b) The Council has many varied roles and responsibilities arising from the Creeslough tragedy across planning and community, environment and emergency services. However, the Council does not have a statutory role or responsibility in the development of a memorial site on the Creeslough lands or in the acquisition of lands for that purpose. Even if it did and there was no agreement with the landowner(s) concerned successful confirmation of a CPO would be highly unlikely applying normal Compulsory Purchase rules and principles. The fact that the Council is leading on the development of the legacy project nearby in the village on public lands would certainly be a string consideration.
- (c) It is not clear to me should the motion be adopted at the Council meeting today, that it can be acted upon. I say this in the context that to implement any motion adopted by the Council it must be consistent with the role and function of the Local Authority and there has to be a budget available to implement same. I do not believe that either of these criteria are met in this instance. In my opinion it would be unwise for the Council to adopt a motion where it will most likely not be capable of implementation and at the same time would give rise to undeliverable expectations for grieving families.

Summary

I would therefore urge and recommend that the members do not adopt the present Motion and in the alternative that in the event there is agreement between all interested parties and the local community to the development of a memorial garden at the Creeslough site or at another appropriate site in the local Creeslough area, they consider supporting such development through the Creeslough Town Team or similar structure.

It is fully understood that each time the Creeslough Tragedy is raised in a public forum, there is huge sympathy and empathy for the families effected and the wider community.

It is also fully understood that the Council's response will be seen by some as uncaring and unhelpful and yet the Council has no role or responsibility to purchase these private lands and create a memorial garden.

The Council understands how the response will be received and yet the Council must be clear to all concerned and not create unrealistic expectations, which would ultimately lead to prolonged uncertainty and possible further distress to those most affected. It is for this reason that the Council wishes to provide a clear and definite response.

John G. McLaughlin.
Chief Executive