

**Comhairle Baile Mhuineacháin**  
**Monaghan Town Council**

Minutes of Annual Statutory Budget Meeting of Monaghan Town Council held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2010 at 4.00pm in the Council Chamber of Monaghan Town Council, Town Hall, 1 Dublin Street, Monaghan.

**Cathaoirleach:** Cllr. Robbie Gallagher

**Present:** Cllrs. Mary Carroll, Seán Conlon, Thomas Hagan, Paul McGeown, Donal Sherry and Seamus Treanor

**In Attendance:** David Fallon, Acting County Manager, Gareth Mc Mahon, Town Engineer, Marie Deighan, Town Clerk and Mary Hughes, Staff Officer.

An apology for inability to attend was received from Cllr. Padraígín Uí Mhurchadha.

At the outset David Fallon, Acting County Manager reported to the Members on the current situation regarding salt supplies for the Monaghan Local Authorities. It was noted that a shipload of salt is expected into the country on Thursday. David Fallon stated that the Council may be able to secure salt themselves but it may be difficult as all the companies are supplying directly to the National Roads Authority.

Cllr. David Maxwell entered the Council Chamber.

Gareth McMahan, Town Engineer stated that a supply of grit has been stockpiled at the Monaghan Harps GFC complex and is available to the public for use. The Town Engineer also added that the Town Council have procured a product which functions as a de-icing material and that he is in the process of putting a programme in place through which it is hoped to have footpaths clear in the town centre area over the next forty eight hours. The Members welcomed this news and paid tribute to the outdoor staff who deserve great credit for the work they do in hazardous conditions. The Members called on all traders to clear the footpaths in front of their businesses in order to ease the situation.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Robbie Gallagher welcomed the Members to the Annual Statutory Budget Meeting of the Town Council. The Members noted the Acting County Managers report dated 10<sup>th</sup> December 2010 and the Minutes of the Budget Sub-Committee meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 10<sup>th</sup> December and 14<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

David Fallon, Acting County Manager informed the Members that confirmation has now been received from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government stating that the Local Government fund for 2011 has been decreased to €76,889, a reduction of 11.67% on the 2010 allocation. David Fallon stated that the 2011 budget has been drafted in the context of a continuing recession which will have a negative impact on the income from goods and services and stressed that the Council must meet staff costs and the cost of mandatory functions which will limit the funding for discretionary spending. The Acting County Manager stated that the draft budget provides for an annual rate on valuation of €72 which remains at the same level as 2008, 2009 and 2010 and stressed that despite the difficult financial position a lot of good work is still being carried out in the town. The Members examined the draft budget 2011 in detail, programme by programme and noted the following main points in relation to same.

### **Division A – Housing and Building**

The Members noted that expenditure under this heading amounts to €11,932 and income to €26,621. A planned maintenance programme for the Councils existing housing stock in the sum of €35,000 will be carried out in 2011. It was noted that the Town Council purchased four dwellings at Beechgrove Lawns and Belgium Square and acquired two dwellings under a Part V Agreement at Knockroe Glen in 2010. On the proposal of Cllr. Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr. David Maxwell it was agreed to write to Michael Finneran, T.D., Minister for Housing and Local Services seeking clarification if the Town Council's SHIP Allocation will enable the Council to purchase leased properties outright which in turn will increase the Council's own housing stock.

### **Division B – Road Transport and Safety**

The Members noted that expenditure under this heading amounts to €1,069,208 and income to €17,269. Provision has been made in this division for the running/administrative costs of pay parking at €452,846 and income from pay parking has been estimated at €27,000 (meter income) and €80,000 (traffic fines). It was noted that the Town Council are liable for VAT at 21% from the income received on pay parking meters in the public car parks in the town which amounts to approximately €72,000 per annum. The Council will continue with its road and footpath improvements in 2011 with the assistance of the Road Grant from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

### **Division C – Water Services**

Expenditure under this heading amounts to €1,363,175 and income to €1,018. The expenditure includes costs associated with the water supply and waste water treatment plants/networks and the upkeep and maintenance of the automatic public convenience located at the rear of the Courthouse. Income from the automatic public convenience is estimated at €600.

### **Division D – Development Management**

The Members noted that expenditure under this division amounts to €48,066 and income to €23,490. Provision in the sum of €3,500 has been made towards the St. Patrick's Day Parade and €1,700 has been provided towards the Blackwater 10K walk/run event. This division includes €4000 for the project management and administration costs associated with the North East Broadband Project Phase 1 scheme. This will be paid off over a number of years to clear the capital account.

### **Division E – Environmental Services**

Expenditure under this heading amounts to €361,007 and income amounts to €3,862. The estimated cost of operating street cleaning services in 2011 is €37,837. €15,000 has been provided to the Tidy Towns Committee and €1,500 to the Water Safety Association.

It was noted that the allocation to the Monaghan Tidy Towns Group has been reduced by €10,000 on 2010. Cllr. Seán Conlon informed the Members of a new Community Work Placement Initiative "Tús" which is being co-ordinated by Monaghan Integrated Development Limited and it was agreed to send the details of the scheme to the Tidy Towns Committee.

The Members called for some enhancement works to be carried out to the Monaghan Bombing Memorial at Church Square.

### **Division F – Recreation and Amenity**

It was noted that expenditure under this heading amounts to €79,172 and income to €9,372. The expenditure includes Leisure Centre loan repayments of 107,200 and €10,000 towards the over-expenditure associated with the construction of the Leisure centre which will be transferred to the Capital account.

The Members noted that €15,000 has been provided for contributions to local voluntary/community groups, €6,000 has been provided to the Neighbourhood Youth Project for their Halloween Festivities, €500 to the Monaghan Immigrant Support Group and €1,500 to the Monaghan Sub Aqua Club.

The Members noted that provision has also been made for €13,000 to the Monaghan Harvest Times Blues Festival, €2,000 to the Taste of Monaghan Festival and €1,000 to the Monaghan Chamber of Commerce to support initiatives towards bringing people into Monaghan Town.

Under this heading €30,000 has also been provided to the running costs associated with the Garage Theatre. This amount is to be transferred to the Capital account.

The Members noted correspondence from the Rotary Club of Monaghan seeking a financial contribution or assistance in maintaining the new Rotary Garden at the roundabout. Following a discussion and on the proposal of Cllr Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr Robbie Gallagher it was agreed that the Town Engineer liaise with representatives from the Rotary Club of Monaghan with a view to putting a maintenance programme in place.

The Members noted correspondence from Somhairle MacConghaile, Arts Officer, Monaghan County Council seeking financial assistance between the sums of €10,000 and €15,000 in relation to the Forge In Festival which will be taking place in Monaghan Town from 24<sup>th</sup> June – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2011. It was agreed by the Members that a contribution of €10,000 be made to the Forge In Festival and that pay parking income be increased by €10,000.

The Members noted correspondence from Yvonne McManus, Project Officer, Fóroige seeking financial assistance on behalf of “Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ireland Programme”. It was agreed to advise Ms McManus to make an application under the Local Community Grants Scheme which will be advertised early in the New Year.

#### **Division H – Miscellaneous Services**

Expenditure under this heading amounts to €879,851 and income to €12,535. The Members noted that the cost of rate collection and Members expenses are included under this heading. Provision is also made to cover the cost of bank interest charges and irrecoverable/exempted rates and rents.

The Members also noted that provision is made under this heading in the sum of €43,000 in respect of the costs associated with the purchase of items of machinery in 2009. The cost of these items will be paid off over a number of years to clear the capital account.

Included under this heading is the sum of €67,000 which has been deducted from the other divisions and has been incorporated under this heading for the maintenance and repair of machinery/vehicles. €20,000 has also been provided to be transferred to the capital account in respect of the construction cost associated with the new Machinery Yard for the outdoor staff. The Members noted that €80,000 has been provided in the budget for income from the Non-Principal Private Residence (NPPR) charge.

#### **Central Management Charge**

The Members noted that the cost of salaries, wages, pensions, staff training, health and safety, insurances etc are included under this heading and are apportioned across the other divisions.

### **Adoption of Budget and Determination of Rate**

The following figures were noted in relation to the overall draft budget taking into account the amendments made by the Members:-

Gross Revenue Expenditure - €5,222,411

County Demand - €1,123,357

Total Gross Revenue Expenditure - €6,345,768

Total Revenue Income - €2,014,167

Nett Expenditure - €4,331,601

Local Government Fund Allocation - €909,619

Pension Related Deduction - €67,270

Amount to be levied - €3,354,712

Net effect evaluation - €46,590 General Rate in Valuation - €72

On the proposal of Cllr Thomas Hagan seconded by Cllr Seán Conlon it was agreed to adopt the Draft Budget as amended.

On the proposal of Cllr Seán Conlon seconded by Cllr David Maxwell it was agreed to approve the Rate on Valuation of 72.00 to be levied for 2011.

The Members noted that the Budget as adopted will be re-instated in accordance with the Costing system from the Department and will be forwarded to the Members.

The Members commended the work carried out by the Town Council's Budget Sub-Committee in the preparation of the 2011 Budget.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Dated this the 21<sup>st</sup> day of February 2011.

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**Cathaoirleach**