

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Mtek Building,
Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 4th April, 2011 at 2.00 p.m.**

Chair: Cllr J. Crowe, Mayor.

Present: Cllrs Bannigan, Carthy, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Gallagher, Keelan, Maxwell, McElvaney, B. McKenna, S. McKenna, McPhillips, McNally, Murray, O'Brien, O'Hanlon and P. Treanor.

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager, Mr. P. Clifford, A. King, D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Ms. N. Woods, SEO Housing, Ms. L. Murphy, ASO Housing and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

Apology: Cllrs Carville and S. Treanor.

1. Address by His Excellency Loyola Hearn, Canadian Ambassador to Ireland:

In welcoming His Excellency Loyola Hearn, Canadian Ambassador to Ireland, the Mayor stated that it was a great honour and privilege for him, as Mayor of County Monaghan, to welcome the Ambassador to the county. He looked forward to the same working relationship with the new Ambassador as they had with his predecessor Ambassador Binns. Cllrs McElvaney, McNally, Conlon and Connolly, on behalf of their political groupings, joined in the welcome to the Ambassador as did the Acting County Manager on behalf of the staff.

The Mayor then invited Ambassador Hearn to address the Council.

Ambassador Hearn thanked the Mayor and Members of the Council for the opportunity to address them. He paid tribute to Willie McKenna (who was present at the meeting) for his efforts in forging and perpetuating the strong links existing between Monaghan and Canada. He also acknowledged the role undertaken by his predecessor, whose roots were from the Monaghan area. The Ambassador outlined his progress in the political field and detailed some of the turbulent recent history of the Canadian Conservative Party of which he had been a member.

He expressed his delight at receiving the Ambassadorship to Ireland and stated that he grew up in a community that was completely Irish and had been good friends with Tommy Makem over the years. He was in Ireland to promote Canada and he also wanted to help promote Ireland in Canada and to help Irish people avail of the opportunities that existed there. Canada had increased the number of visas available to young Irish people between 18 and 35 years to 5,000 and have also agreed to renew these visas for a second year. He stated that in the near future Canada hopes to sign a major free trade agreement with Europe and Ireland could grasp a fair share of the opportunities available because of its geographical position. He looked forward to visiting a number of local businesses during his time in the county.

He referred to the lack of year round direct flights between Ireland and Canada and stated that he was aware the Irish-Canadian Business Association are having meetings with politicians and airlines on the subject and he encouraged the Council to put pressure on the relevant bodies to ensure this happens.

Following his address, Mayor Crowe made a presentation of crystal to the Ambassador.

The Ambassador then withdrew from the meeting.

Vote of sympathy

Cllr McNally referred to the terrible atrocity in Omagh, that weekend which had resulted in the death of Ronan Kerr, a member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in a car bomb explosion and called on the Council to condemn outright the actions of those who had planted a bomb under the car of a defenceless young policeman who had only recently qualified. He stated that the message had to go out to the people involved in this terrible act that they had no role, act or part to play in this society – people want peace and are enjoying peace. A number of members joined in the sentiments expressed by Cllr McNally.

Cllr McNally proposed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the family of the late Ronan Kerr, a member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland who was killed in a car bomb blast in Omagh that weekend. It was further proposed that the Council be represented at the funeral by the Mayor. Cllr McElvaney seconded the proposal which was agreed unanimously.

Cllr McElvaney proposed, Cllr McNally seconded and it was agreed that the Council write to the Chief Constable of the PSNI and the Chief Superintendent of An Garda Siochana stating that it is the firm resolve of Monaghan County Council that the culprits who carried out the terrible car bomb atrocity in Omagh, are brought to justice.

2. Confirmation of Minutes:

(i) Minutes of Council Meeting held on 7th March, 2011

The Meetings Administrator requested that the minutes be amended to include the name of Cllr Owen Bannigan as being authorised to attend the Rattoo Heritage Society seminar. (Cllr Bannigan's name had been omitted from the minutes circulated)

Cllr Connolly requested that page two of the minutes (Urgent business notice No. 2) be amended to provide for a recorded vote and not a show of hands vote and that the names of those voting for and against the proposed be included.

Both amendments were agreed by the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7th March, 2011, as amended above, be confirmed.

(ii) Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 16th March, 2011

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr S. McKenna, it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16th March, 2011, be confirmed.

3. Correspondence

The following correspondence was circulated:

- Letter from the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to grants for the insulation of water systems.
- Letter from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to unfinished housing developments and public safety.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the office of the Minister for Health in relation to the Council's request for a meeting with the Minister.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the office of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the Council's resolution regarding funding for disability services.
- Letter from the Health Service Executive in relation to the North East Doctor on Call service.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the office of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in relation to the Council's request for a meeting with the Minister.
- Email from Deputy Heather Humphreys regarding the proposed closure of the Ballybay Agricultural Office.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council regarding the preservation of the Irish language.
- Letter from the Minister for Transport in relation to the Council's resolution regarding additional funding for non-national roads.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Finance regarding the proposed closure of the Ballybay Agricultural Office.
- Letter from the Minister for Health in relation to the North East Doctor on Call service.
- Email from Deputy Heather Humphreys regarding the Council's request for a meeting with the Minister for Health.
- Letter of acknowledgement from Deputy Joe O'Reilly regarding the proposed closure of the Ballybay Agricultural Office.
- Letter from Monaghan Integrated Development seeking approval from the Council to the continuation of Cllr Gary Carville on the board of the company.
- Letter from Fort Augustus Irish Descendants, Prince Edward Island, inviting the Council to be represented at the Annual Irish Settlers Day celebrations in May 2011.
- Letter from the Monaghan Association Beds and Herts. inviting the Council to be represented at the 19th Annual Dinner Dance in Luton on 7th May, 2011.

- Letter to the Mayor thanking him for his presentation at the ‘Break Down the Barriers’ event in Monaghan recently.
- Letter from Youth Work Ireland to the Mayor, seeking an opportunity for the Clones Erne East Shadow Youth Partnership to make a presentation to the Council at a future meeting.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that the Council write to Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government seeking an increase in the allocation of €5 million that will remediate dangerous health and safety issues in unfinished housing developments.

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to Health and Safety Authority seeking practical support in assessing dangerous conditions in unfinished housing developments

On the proposal of Cllr Conlon, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for Enterprise Jobs and Innovation seeking the establishment of a job creation agency dedicated to resolving issues of unfinished housing estates and creating employment for the beleaguered construction industry.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O’Hanlon it was agreed that the Council write to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requesting him to re-examine the entire matter of unfinished housing estates.

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council accept the invitation from the Monaghan Association of Bed. & Herts to attend the Annual Dinner Dance on May 7th, 2011 and that the Council be represented by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the Clones Erne East Shadow Youth Partnership be invited to make a presentation to the Council at the May meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council adopt the resolution from Monaghan Town Council as follows –

“Iarrann an Chomhairle seo ar an Rialtas nua-tofa agus go h-áirithe ar a Taoiseach cinntiú go gcaomhnófar céad teanga oifigiúil na tíre seo agus go gcinnteoidh siad starraiceacht s’aici sa chóras oideachais”.

“That this Council calls on the newly elected Government and particularly it’s Taoiseach to ensure the preservation of our first official language and promote its prominence in the education system”.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council call on the Minister for Health to instigate an urgent review of the Doctor on Call service in Co. Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Council call on the Minister for Health to examine the provision of health care in Co. Monaghan and address such issues as severe over-crowding at Cavan General Hospital and the services provided by the North East Doctor on Call.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that the Council renew its request to the Minister for Health and the Health Service Executive for a meeting to discuss the Doctor on Call Service.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the Planning department do all in its power to ensure that all unfinished estates are finished as soon as possible. And it is further agreed that special attention is given to Drummond Ross on the old Ardee Road in Carrickmacross for health and safety reasons and that the possibility of drawing down some of the €5m grant funding for this purpose be examined.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council write to Eirgrid in relation to the Draft Grid 25 Implementation Programme requesting that they extend the consultation period to the maximum three month period.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council make a submission to the Draft Grid 25 Implementation Programme.

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that Cllr Carville is confirmed as the Council's representative to the board of Monaghan Integrated Development.

On the proposal of Cllr S. McKenna, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the Council accept the invitation from the Fort Augustus Irish Descendants, Prince Edward Island to attend the Annual Settlers Day celebrations in May 2011. It was further agreed that the Council be represented by the Mayor and an official.

Notices of Urgent Business:

The Mayor advised the members that he had received four notices of urgent business as follows:

- (i) Notice in the names of Cllrs Murray, Bannigan, Maxwell, McPhillips and McElvaney regarding reallocation of funding for non national roads.
- (ii) Notice in the names of Cllrs Connolly and Crowe in relation to the relaxation of the staffing embargo in hospitals.
- (iii) Notice in the names of Cllrs O'Hanlon, McNally, Coyle, O'Brien and Gallagher in relation to safety issues at McEneaney's site at the Ardee Road, Carrickmacross.

- (iv) Notice in the names of Cllrs Maxwell, Murray, McPhillips, Bannigan and McElvaney in relation to reduction of ESB charges to customers whose accounts in arrears.

It was unanimously agreed to take all four notices of urgent business. The Mayor stated that he would take these at the end of the meeting.

4. Part VIII Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001 -

- (i) To consider granting permission for alterations to an existing Part VIII development for the construction of 1285m² sports buildings at Liseggerton, Clones, Co. Monaghan: Reference 11/8001

The Members considered the report relating to this permission which was circulated with the agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that the Council approve the alterations to the existing Part VIII development for the construction of 1285m² sports buildings at Liseggerton, Clones, Co. Monaghan: Reference 11/8001 to comply with the Director's Report dated 28th March, 2011 and in accordance with Part VIII of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations 2001.

5. To fill vacancies on the following committees arising from the election to Dail Eireann of Heather Humphreys, former member.

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that Cllr Ciara McPhillips be nominated to the following committees, to replace former Councillor Heather Humphreys.

- (a) County Development Board (Monaghan) Peace III Partnership Board.*
- (b) County Monaghan Heritage Forum*
- (c) Audit Committee*
- (d) Housing Strategic Policy Committee.*

6. To consider recommendation from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 21st March, 2011

(a) To consider allocation of Arts Project Grants

It was agreed that the Council approve the allocation of Arts Project Grants, as recommended by the Corporate Policy Group, as follows:

1.	<i>Carrickmacross Craft Exchange</i>	<i>€2,960</i>
2.	<i>Ballybay Art Group</i>	<i>€2,700</i>
3.	<i>Solas Drop in centre Rooskey</i>	<i>€1,300</i>
4.	<i>Clones Community Forum</i>	<i>€2,800</i>
5.	<i>The Monaghan Traveller Support Group</i>	<i>€3,200</i>

(b) To consider recommendations in relation to funding requests:

The members considered the recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group in relation to three requests for funding.

It was agreed that the recommendations from the Corporate Policy Group meeting be approved.

(c) To consider revised criteria for Community Development Fund 2011:

Mr. A. King, Director of Services outlined the amendments proposed to the criteria for the Community Development Fund Scheme 2011.

It was agreed that the Community Development Fund Scheme 2011 be adopted and that applications be invited from interested groups.

(d) To consider review of category 5(n) of the Development Contributions Scheme 2008-2013

The Members considered the recommendation from the CPG in relation to this item. Mr. T. Gourley advised the members that if the Members decided to revise category 5(n) of the Development Contributions Scheme 2008-2013 it will be necessary to put the matter out for public consultation.

Cllr B. McKenna proposed, Cllr Carthy seconded that the Council approve the recommendation from the Corporate Policy Group that category 5(n) of the Development Contributions Scheme 2008-2013 be amended to provide for a revised charge per pylon carrying less than 400Kv power of €2,037 (reduced from €20,370).

Cllr Maxwell proposed, Cllr Coyle seconded that category 5(n) of the Development Contributions Scheme 2008-2013 be amended to provide for a zero charge per pylon carrying less than 400Kv power.

Cllr McElvaney proposed that the charge remain as it is currently i.e. €20,370. There was no seconder for this proposal.

The Mayor put Cllr B. McKenna's proposal to the meeting.

A recorded vote resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs Bannigan, Conlon, Connolly, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, B. McKenna, S. McKenna, McNally, Murray, O'Brien, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor. **Total 13**

Against: Cllrs Coyle, Maxwell and McElvaney. **Total 3**

The Mayor declared Cllr B. McKenna's proposal carried. Cllr Maxwell's proposal not put.

It was agreed to put the revised Development Contribution Scheme out for public consultation.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed to adopt the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 21st March, 2011.

7. To adopt the 2011 Tenant Purchase Scheme for long-standing tenants

Cllr Carthy, as Chair of the Housing SPC outlined the terms of the 2011 Tenant Purchase Scheme. He proposed that the Scheme be adopted by the Council.

Cllr Carthy proposed that the Council write to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requesting that all funding received by local authorities under the Tenant Purchase Scheme be ring-fenced for future expenditure on housing capital projects. Cllr Crowe seconded the proposal which was agreed by the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr Crowe, seconded by Cllr Maxwell it was agreed that the Council adopt the 2011 Tenant Purchase Scheme, as circulated.

8. To fix date for Local Improvements Scheme Committee meeting.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Local Improvements Scheme Committee would be held on Wednesday 13th April at 10.00 a.m. in the Mtek 2 Building.

9. To adopt the draft Annual Report for the year 2010

On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that details of all payments to members in 2010 be included in the Annual Report for 2010 and published on the Council website.

On the proposal of Cllr R. Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the draft Annual Report for the year 2010 be adopted.

10. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Coyle, McElvaney, McNally and P. Treanor in relation to their attendance at the following conferences –

- Colmcille Winter School, Churchhill, Letterkenny.
- Carlow Tourism Conference, Carlow Town.
- Managing Public Relations, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

11. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector

This matter had already been dealt with under correspondence.

12. Business submitted by County Manager

Mr. D. Fallon, A/County Manager advised the members that he has a meeting with the General Manager of IPBMI on the 5th April in relation to Hope Castle.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Roads/Environment SPC be held on 13th April, 2011 at 11.30 a.m. in Mtek 2.

13. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meetings held on 7th and 16th March, 2011.

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 7th and 16th March, 2011 were responded to by the appropriate officials.

14. Questions:

Cllr P. Treanor asked:

1. Will Monaghan County Council make an allowance for businesses who have received a much larger bill for water charges than usual, due to burst pipes during the extreme cold weather? These excessive bills, which were not the fault of the owner, have the potential to close down some businesses.

Reply: *Consumers are responsible for ensuring that service lines, fittings etc are maintained in good order and consequently they are liable to pay for any water that passes through their meter.*

Water Services currently take into account situations where a leak has occurred resulting in additional water consumption. This assessment is on an individual basis and is directly related to the cooperation of the individual in repairing the leak promptly.

2. What sections of the Newbliss to Threemilehouse road will be upgraded with the €250,000 allocation received for 2011?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council is proposing to upgrade the section of the R189 from Cornasoo to Golanmurphy. A portion of the earthworks has already been completed and it is intended to recommence works in June/July.*

Can some of this allocation be used to begin removing the dangerous bends on the Clones to Newbliss road?

Reply: *The allocation of €250,000 was received from the Department of Transport specifically for the R189 Threemilehouse Road for the Clones Area. The full allocation will be required for the proposed widening and realignment of this section of the R189 and consequently there will be no funding available for use on the R183.*

3. Does Monaghan County Council have plans to assist the local community in Scotshouse to develop a safe play-ground for their children?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council has not been approached to date by the local community in Scotshouse in relation to the provision of a safe playground for children. Clones Area staff are available to meet the local community to discuss this issue.*

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

4. How many tenants have purchased houses under the Tenant Purchase Scheme for 2010?

Reply: *There were no houses sold under the Tenant Purchase Scheme in 2010.*

5. What is the proposed completion date for the works already commenced on the N2 between Monaghan and Emyvale?

Reply: *The Council intend to complete the works commenced in 2010 on the N2 between Derrynagrew and Coolkill East (Tirnaneill) this year.*

6. When does the Council hope to complete restoration of the portion of footpath that has subsided between the N2 and Ballyalbany in the interests of pedestrian safety?

Reply: *It is intended to be complete these works in May 2011.*

7. What measures has the Council planned for National Spring Clean 2011?

Reply: *A successful Spring Clean is one of the primary objectives of Monaghan Local Authorities Litter Management Plan 2010 – 2012. Maximum participation is ensured by providing resources to interested groups who organise local clean ups. Resources provided by Monaghan County Council include an advertising campaign and awareness, free skips to resident groups and funding to Area staff to carry out litter picking on the national routes during spring clean. Additional support for National Spring Clean is provided by An Taisce*

Cllr S. Coyle asked:

8. (a) Have Monaghan County Council completed detailed plans for the realignment of the Ballybay-Cootehill Road (R190)?
(b) Has an application been made to the National Roads Authority for the funding of the necessary works on this route?

Reply: *There is no funding within the current allocations to carry out works on Ballybay-Cootehill Road (R190). Applications for funding are normally invited late in the last quarter of the year.*

9. When does Monaghan County Council propose to complete the Public Lighting Scheme at Magherarney, Smithboro? The completion of this scheme is essential for safety reasons.

Reply: *The provision of public lighting from Smithboro to Magherarney is currently third on a list of 18 such schemes awaiting funding in the Clones Area. Clones Area have requested revised quotations from Public Lighting suppliers to determine how many schemes can be completed within the available allocation for public lighting in 2011.*

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

10. What response has Monaghan County Council received to its application under the "Low Cost Safety Improvement Scheme Grant" to improve road safety at Knockconan Ballyoisin, on a short stretch of roadway which is used by a number of organisations and groups including a Childcare Centre, Blackwater Learning Centre, Knockconan National School, mass goers at Ballyoisin Chapel and residents of an adjacent housing development?

Reply: *The Council made an application for funding under the Low Cost Safety Improvement Scheme Grant for this location. However the funding was not granted.*

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

11. In relation to the request by residents of Highfield in Carrickmacross to have their estate taken in charge by Monaghan County Council, at what stage is this process now at?

Reply: *The relevant Sections of the Councils have recently completed a technical assessment of the development. It is now proposed to initiate a public consultation process in respect of the taking in charge of the development, in accordance with the provisions of the Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, and Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993. It is anticipated that the consultation period will be completed and a report presented to the members of the Council in June 2011.*

12. How many staff in total are employed by Monaghan County Council, including staff on contract; how many staff members have been let go from the Council as a result of cut backs in the last number of years; what measures, if any, can the executive take such as redeploying staff to those sections most under pressure, (Housing Section and Loans & Grants Section are examples) to deliver a service to the public?

Reply: *At 31 March 2008, Monaghan County Council employed 480 staff (excluding part-time fire fighters). By 31 March 2011, this number had reduced*

to 421. Monaghan County Council deploys staff resources to areas of greatest need.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

13. In relation to the ongoing upgrading of the sewerage collection network in Carrickmacross, will the Council publish a list to advise people of the town and surrounding area as to what roads will be resurfaced and when, including the Main Street of the town which is in a poor state?

Reply: *It is expected that permanent reinstatement of all roads affected by the Carrickmacross Sewerage Scheme will be completed within the twelve month maintenance period, as provided for under the contract. However, it must be noted that it is Monaghan County Council's intention to undertake permanent reinstatement as soon as is reasonably practicable. The majority of affected roads are permanently reinstated at this juncture.*

The attached schedule details indicative dates for the completion of the remaining permanent reinstatement of roads affected by the P & S Pipelines Contract.

Mullinary Road: *(Town Council to complete kerbing and footpaths in advance of permanent reinstatement)*

Quarter 3 2011

Lurgans: *(trench only reinstatement)* *Quarter 3 2011*

Mullinary Street: *Quarter 2 2011*

Culloville Road *Quarter 3 2011*

Castle Street *(half width)* *Quarter 3 2011*

Main Street *(trench only)* *Quarter 2 2011*

Tullynaskeagh East *(trench only)* *Quarter 3 2011*

14. Will the (400 approx) households not currently serviced by the Carrickmacross Sewerage Collection Network be written to this year offering a connection to the network a 50% reduction?

Reply: *A 50% discounted connection charge will be available to existing houses on septic tanks, for a limited period of 6 months, following the completion of the civil and mechanical / electrical contract. Monaghan County Council will contact all homeowners before the year-end, with information on the discounted connection charges applicable, and the closing date for receipt of applications. The current cost of a connection to the public sewerage scheme is €3,090 per residential unit.*

15. In relation to Bawn Village, when is it hoped to carry out the works approved under the Low Cost Improvement Scheme for regional and local roads?

Reply: *This is currently at the design stage and it is anticipated construction will commence during the summer.*

15. Notice of Motion:

Cllr Paudge Connolly proposed, Cllr McNally seconded,

- (i) *That Monaghan County Council calls on the National Roads Authority to place signage for Monaghan and other Monaghan towns at Junction 14 on the M1 motorway.*

In proposing the motion, Cllr Connolly referred to a response that he had received from the NRA to the effect that .. “Monaghan is an intermediate destination on the N2 to Derry. It is not possible to list all destinations on a route on every sign along the route. The terminal and next significant town are signed in accordance with the traffic signs manual...” Cllr Connolly stated that this was not acceptable and that Monaghan and its business community deserve to be recognised by the erection of signage on the M1.

The Mayor put Cllr Connolly’s motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

16. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations

It was agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to the following.

- Cllr Robbie Gallagher on the death of his uncle John Lynagh, RIP.
- Vincent McKenna and Norah Ryan (Council staff) on the death of their uncle, Patrick McKenna R.I.P.
- Nuala Woods (Council staff) on the death of her uncle Frank McAnenly R.I.P.

It was agreed that the Council congratulate the following

- Ryan and Aaron Mohan and the Saint Mellans Handball Club, on winning the Ulster College Under 12’s Handball Double title.
- Cailean Myles and the Monaghan Harps Handball Club on winning the Ulster under 12 Handball Singles Final title
- Sean McDermotts GFC Novelty Act group on reaching the All Ireland finals of Scór 2011 and wishing them good luck in the competition.
- Emyvale Set Dancing Group on reaching the All Ireland finals of Scór 2011 and wishing them good luck in the competition.

17. Conferences

On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr Coyle, it was agreed that the Council be represented at the following conferences by the members listed.

17. Conferences (contd):

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members
Celtic Conference	The Future of Local Politics	Celtic Ross Hotel Rosscarberry West Cork	15 th – 17 th April	Cllr R. Gallagher Cllr P.J. O’Hanlon Cllr C. McPhillips Cllr D. Maxwell Cllr O. Bannigan Cllr P. Connolly Cllr M. Carthy
LAMA	Spring Seminar Economic Revival: A Role for Local Government	Fairways Hotel Dundalk, Co Louth	29 th – 30 th April	Cllr P. McNally Cllr J. O’Brien Cllr H. McElvaney Cllr C. McPhillips Cllr A. Murray Cllr S. Treanor Cllr B. McKenna
Drogheda Borough Council	Mayday Conference	Westcourt Hotel Drogheda	6 th -7 th May	Cllr S. Coyle Cllr R. Gallagher Cllr H. McElvaney Cllr O. Bannigan
RJK Energy	Developing Rural Energy	Ramada Hotel Drumshanbo Co. Leitrim	27 th - 29 th April,	Cllr A. Murray Cllr O. Bannigan Cllr N. Keelan Cllr S. Coyle

Urgent Business;

As advised earlier in the meeting there were four notices of urgent business to be dealt with.

- (i) Notice in the names of Cllrs Murray, Bannigan, Maxwell, McPhillips and McElvaney:

Cllr Murray proposed, Cllr O’Hanlon seconded -

“ To ask the Minister for Transport, Sport and Tourism to immediately review the NRA budget and to re-allocate funding of at least 10%, currently allocated to National Primary and National Secondary roads to Regional and Local roads.”

In proposing the motion, Cllr Murray referred to the serious condition of many roads in the south of the county which are badly affected by potholes. He stated that at the recent road area meeting it was clear that sufficient funding is not available to deal and that they will reach a situation later in the year when the Council would not be able to do the basic repairs. He called on the Minister to review the National Roads Authority allocations for national primary and secondary roads and re-allocate funding of at least 10% to local roads in Co. Monaghan. Cllr O’Hanlon seconded the proposal which was agreed unanimously.

- (ii) Notice in the names of Cllrs Connolly and Crowe:

Cllr Connolly proposed, Cllr Keelan seconded –

“ That Monaghan County Council calls on the Government and the Health Service Executive to relax the staffing embargo to ensure that frontline staff are available in our hospitals ”.

In moving the motion, Cllr Connolly stated that the public service staffing embargo is impacting severely on frontline services in our hospitals. Recently elective procedures in Cavan General Hospital had to be cancelled because there was no staff available. He stated that there were no savings to be gained from the embargo. Cllr Keelan seconded the motion stating that frontline staff were critical in the health service. Cavan and Drogheda hospitals are unable to cope with the increased patient numbers as a result of the downgrading of Monaghan and Louth hospitals.

The Mayor put Cllr Connolly’s motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

- (iii) Notice in the names of Cllrs O’Hanlon, McNally, Coyle, O’Brien and Gallagher:

Cllr O’Hanlon proposed, Cllr McNally seconded –

“ That this Council requests, as a matter of urgency, an audit by the Health and Safety Authority on McEneaney’s site, Ardee Road, Carrickmacross be carried out immediately to ensure safety for all who access the site.”

In proposing the motion, Cllr O’Hanlon called for immediate action to improve the safety situation at the abandoned development site on the Ardee Road in Carrickmacross. Cllr O’Hanlon complimented the Town Manager for his actions in securing the erection of a hoarding around the exterior of the site. He stated that the situation is extremely dangerous with two car parks basically submerged in water and problems in relation to the stagnation of this water. Cllr McNally seconded the motion and claimed that children were gaining access to the site through the back and sides of the location and that there was water within the site up to ten feet deep in places. Cllrs. Keelan and Carthy also spoke to the motion.

The Acting County Manager stated that he would bring the matter to the attention of the Health and Safety Authority.

Cllr O’Hanlon’s motion was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously.

- (iv) Notice in the names of Cllrs Maxwell, Murray, McPhillips, Bannigan and McElvaney:

Cllr Maxwell proposed, Cllr McPhillips seconded –

“ That Monaghan County Council write to the Minister for Energy, the Electricity Supply Board and the Energy Regulator calling on the ESB to reverse its decision not to reduce the price of electricity to customers whose accounts are in arrears.”

In moving the motion Cllr Maxwell referred to the recent announcement by ESB of price reductions in electricity charges which could result in savings of circa €120 per year for the average family. However, it was noted that customers in arrears could not avail of the price reductions. Cllr Maxwell stated that it was unfair that people doing their best to pay arrears are being penalised by not being able to avail of the cheaper rates. Cllr McPhillips seconded the motion and stated that while ESB were to be commended for passing on price reductions to its customers it was regrettable that persons who had already engaged in repayment schemes would not be eligible. Cllrs Gallagher, Connolly and McNally also spoke in favour of the motion.

The Mayor then put Cllr Maxwell’s motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

The meeting then concluded.