

Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday 7th April, 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

Chair: Cllr S. Conlon, Mayor.

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

Mr. E. Cummins, County Manager, Mr. A. King, Mr. P. Clifford and Mr. D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Mr. A. Hughes Senior Planner, and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

Apology: Cllr O'Brien.

Public Area: Ms Anna Murray, Ms. Dympna Finnegan and Ms. Fiona McCaffrey-Jones from the Monaghan Womens Group.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

- (i) *On the proposal of Cllr S. Coyle seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4th March, 2014, be confirmed.*
- (ii) *On the proposal of Cllr B. McKenna, seconded by Cllr S. Treanor it was agreed that the minutes of adjourned March Council meeting held on 28th March, 2014, be confirmed.*

2. Correspondence:

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:

- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Health in relation to the labeling of minerals and sweets.
- Letter from the Minister for Health regarding waiting lists for audiology assessment waiting lists.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Taoiseach in relation to the North-South Interconnector.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government regarding the North-South Interconnector.
- Letter from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government regarding Leader Funding for 2014-2020.
- Letter from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government regarding appointments to the board of Uisce Eireann.
- Letter from the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform regarding Leader funding.
- Letter from the National Roads Authority regarding the removal of rumble strips on the road network so as to improve safety for cyclists.
- Letter from the Minister for Public & Commuter Transport in relation to the Rural Transport Programme.

- Emails from Deputy Brendan Smith and Deputy Joe O'Reilly, enclosing replies from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government regarding the allocation of funding for the Rural Development Programme.
- Invitation from the Monaghan Association Beds and Herts to the 22nd Annual Function at St. Joseph's Parish Centre, Luton.
- Press release from Minister Phil Hogan, T.D., relating to Local Elections Polling Day and Spending Limit Orders and Voter Registration.
- Notification from the Irish Planning Institute regarding an Award for the Kavanagh County Literary Landscape Character Assessment Plan.
- Resolution from Limerick City Council calling on the Government to legislate against all types of top-ups and bonuses where tax-payers money is involved.
- Resolution from Clones Town Council calling for the abolishment of the extra charge people are forced to pay as a result of taxing their car for a three-month period as opposed to a twelve month period.

The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting:

- Letter from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport regarding Community Involvement Schemes.
- Letter from the National Roads Authority regarding Vehicle Restraint Systems on the National Single Carriageway Network.
- Letter from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to the Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme 2014.
- Resolution from Monaghan Town Council calling on the Government to introduce a temporary moratorium on State owned bodies re-employing those already in receipt of public sector pensions.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to maximize to 46% the national contribution to Pillar II of the Rural Development Programme and expedite the announcement of same.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Keelan, it was agreed that the Council support the motion from Clones Town Council calling for the abolishment of the extra charge people are forced to pay as a result of taxing their car for a three-month period as opposed to a twelve month period.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Keelan, it was agreed that the Council writes to Mr. Jimmy Deenihan, T.D., Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism asking him to seek an allocation for the re-opening of the Ulster Canal, from the €2.1 billion E.U. Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that the Council accept the invitation from the Monaghan Association Beds and Herts (Luton) to attend its annual function on 3rd May. The Council to be represented by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr D. Maxwell and the County Manager, Mr. E. Cummins.

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Bennett it was agreed that the Council calls on the Minister for Health to restore full Audiology assessment services to the Cavan/Monaghan area and to employ the necessary levels of staff to ensure feasible waiting time periods for those in need of assessment.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr O'Brien it was agreed that this Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government that all Semi-State bodies have a representation of successful business people on their Boards (min 33%) with a proven track record and that this proposal is implemented as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that this Council writes to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government asking him to outline the current profession and expertise of each member of the Board of Irish Water.

3. To receive presentation on the Local Enterprise Office (LEO):

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services gave a presentation to the Council on the Local Enterprise Office (LEO). He explained that the County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) will be dissolved on 15th April and all functions of CEBs will be transferred to Enterprise Ireland. Enterprise Ireland will enter into a Service Level Agreement with County Councils to operate the Local Enterprise Offices. He stated that the LEO will provide support and services to start, grow and develop micro-businesses in each local area. The Monaghan LEO will be based in the M:Tek Building and will be staffed by the existing CEB staff plus two Council staff. The Head of the LEO will report to the County Manager. A new Economic SPC will be established following the local elections in 2014. The objective of the LEO is to sustain and increase employment of client companies and support startup businesses and employment opportunities.

The LEO will provide Business Information and Advisory Services; Enterprise Support Services; Entrepreneurship Support Services and Local Enterprise Development Services. An Evaluation and Approvals Committee will be established which will be chaired by the County Manager, will include a representative from Enterprise Ireland and will also include five individuals with business expertise. Appointments will be for three years (one replaced each year) and there will be a public call for expressions of interest.

Following his presentation, Mr. Clifford responded to queries from the members.

The Members complimented the County Enterprise Board for the excellent service it had provided to the county over the past number of years.

4. To receive presentation on the Local Community Development Programme

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services gave a presentation to the Council in relation to Local Community Development Planning (LCDP), which is a process that brings together public sector bodies; local communities; publicly funded bodies and the voluntary sector. He referred to the role of LEADER and the Monaghan Integrated Development Ltd. The Alignment of Local Government and Local Development Report (March 2012) provided for an integrated approach at county level – the LCDP.

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 gives City and County Councils responsibility for local economic and community development. Local Community Development Committees (LCDC's) will be established. Each LCDC will have a maximum of 15 members with eight members being selected from the private sector; three elected members; three from State Agencies and the Chief Executive of the Local Authority.

Each local authority will make a Local Economic and Community Plan (LCEP) which will comprise two elements – a local economic element prepared by the County Council and a community development element prepared by the LCDC.

Following his presentation, Mr. Clifford responded to queries from the members.

Cllr Conlon proposed, Cllrs Carville and Coyle seconded

That Monaghan County Council do not set up a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) until final agreement is reached nationally between the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) through the Alignment Working Group process on the delivery of the two core programmes of local development – LCDP and Leader.

Mr. E. Cummins, County Manager stated that at his first Council meeting he expressed his intention to bring economic development to the fore in Co. Monaghan. He stated that SME's are the life and soul of the county and they are the future of the county. He had met some of the county's industrialists and small industry representatives. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 is a powerful piece of legislation in terms of the local delivery of service. The situation will become much clearer with the advent of the LEO's, the LCDP and the LCDC. No other organisation is more suited than the local authority in bringing all this together. The Members will have a stronger role in delivering the LCDP and how the budget will be spent.

A recorded vote was taken on Cllr Conlon's proposal, which resulted as follows:

For: Cllrs Bennett, Carthy, Carville, Conlon, Connolly, Coyle, Crowe, Gallagher, Keelan, McKenna, McNally, O'Brien, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor. **Total 15**

Against: Cllrs Bannigan, Maxwell, McElvaney, McPhillips, Murray **Total 5**

The Mayor declared the motion carried. It was agreed that it would be forwarded to the Minister and all local authorities in the country.

5. Local Elections 2014 – (Update by Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Service/Returning Officer)

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Service/Returning Officer briefed the members in relation to plans for the forthcoming local elections. He stated that the period for nominations will commence on 26th April and end on 3rd May, 2014. The Local Election Count will take place in Sean McDermotts GFC Centre in Threemilehouse and will commence immediately following the completion of the segregation and verification of the European Election ballot papers.

On the proposal of Cllr Crowe, seconded by Cllr Keelan, it was agreed that the Council ensures that applicants included in the Supplement to the Register of Electors receive polling cards letting them know they are entitled to vote.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to Mr. Joseph Smith, Returning Officer for the European Elections calling on him to give consideration to employing up to 20% of staff at polling stations and Count Centre from the Unemployment Register.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council through the office of the Returning Officer for the Local Elections give consideration to employing up to 20% of staff at polling stations and Count Centre from the Unemployment Register.

Cllr Bannigan requested that consideration would be given to permitting those electors from Raferagh, included on the Corracharra register, to vote in Corduff rather than in Derrygooney, as Corduff is closer to these residents.

6. To consider recommendations from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18th March, and 28th March, 2014.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that Polling Information Cards be issued to local government electors (L voters) at the forthcoming election in May 2014.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the Council approve the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on the 18th March, 2014 and the recommendations contained therein.

7. To receive Report on the activities of the Audit Committee for 2013.

It was agreed that the Report of the Audit Committee for the year ended 31st December, 2013 be noted.

8. To adopt the draft Annual Report for 2013.

On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr Maxwell, it was agreed that the Draft Annual Report for the year be adopted.

Consideration of Items (9) and (10) was deferred to the next meeting.

11. To fix date for meeting of Castleblayney Area Councillors in relation to the Market House.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Castleblayney Area Councillors would be held on Thursday 17th April, 2014 at 9.30 am in the Town Council meeting room.

12. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences:

The members noted the reports from Cllrs. Bennett, Coyle, Keelan, McElvaney, McNally, Murray, O'Brien and O'Hanlon in relation to their attendance at the following conferences:

- AMAI Conference, Bundoran, Co. Donegal
- Seanad Reform and the Councillor, Bunclody, Co. Wexford
- Budgets and Financing of Local Authorities, Wexford
- Alternative Energy and Local Government, Ennistymon, Co. Clare
- LAMA Spring Seminar, Monaghan.
- Colmcille Winter School, Gartan, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.
- Ace Training, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork.
- Tourism Conference, Ennistymon, Co. Clare.

13. Update on the North South 440kv Interconnector project.

Cllr Bannigan updated the meeting in relation to the current status of this project.

On the proposal of Cllr Keelan, seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was agreed that EirGrid be called before the Public Accounts Committee for the vast amount of tax-payers money that has been spent on the North South Interconnector project thus far.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that the Council writes to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Minister for Communications requesting that the North South Interconnector powerlines be undergrounded thus avoiding the associated health risks.

On the proposal of Cllr Bannigan, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that EirGrid and Minister Rabbitte make a statement as to why a firm of Consultants are now contacting local groups on public consultation, given that EirGrid wrote to landowners in Co. Monaghan in January 2014 stating that consultation was now closed.

14. Update on the Ulster Canal project.

Mr. P. Clifford, Director updated the meeting in relation to this project.

15. Business submitted by County Manager

There was no business submitted under this item.

16. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meeting held on 4th March and 28th March, 2014

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 4th and 28th March, 2014 were responded to by the appropriate officials.

In response to queries from members regarding the arrangements for the staffing of and the location of the Municipal Districts offices, the County Manager stated that he would bring a full report to the May Council meeting.

17. Questions:

Cllr P. McNally asked:

- 1 How many applicants have been housed from our waiting list during 2013 on an area by area basis?

Reply:

Carrickmacross Electoral Area	6 allocations and 3 Transfers
Castleblayney Electoral Area	14 allocations and 2 Transfers
Clones Electoral Area	9 allocations
Monaghan Electoral Area	6 allocations and 2 Transfers

- 2 Has this Council changed its criteria regarding how we deal with disable or essential repair grants as it seems we are not grant aiding certain types of work like we did previously.

Reply: In January 2014, the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government, issued revised guidelines for the assessment of all housing grant applications. A further revision was received in February 2014. These guidelines were issued at both the February and March County Council meetings. An attached sheet details the changes effective from 1st January 2014.

- 3 Has this Council access to adequate funding to meet the needs of those applying to Monaghan County Council for new house mortgages.

Reply: At the County Council Meeting of 3rd May 2011, a borrowing resolution was passed enabling Monaghan County Council access funds for housing purposes. The resolution approved borrowing from the Housing Finance Agency of €2,000,000. To date Monaghan County Council has drawn down €636,000 of this for new approved mortgages. There is a further €330,000 pending on approved applications which leaves the current funding availability at €1,034,000.

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

- 4 (a) When is it expected that speed restriction measures, including the agreed reduced speed limits, will be put in place at Drumgossatt, Magheraclone?
(b) What are the proposed other safety measures to be put in place?
(c) Will the Council consider extending the barrier in the vicinity of the local primary school at Drumgossatt?

Reply: Statutory procedures in relation to public consultation regarding the setting of special speed limits at this location are currently in progress. It is expected to bring the proposed revision to Speed Limit Bye-Laws before the May Meeting of Monaghan County Council for adoption. Once adopted, arrangements will be made to put the speed limits in place. There is no funding or plans to carry out any further works at this location in 2014.

Cllr M. Carthy asked (contd):

- 5 Will the Council give an up-to-date report on progress, if any, over the past month regarding the proposed group home for women with physical and sensory disabilities at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross?

Reply: As advised previously the Council met with the Departments technical advisors and Respond! on 20th February 2014. During this meeting Department officials confirmed their support for the project but due to the tendered costs exceeding the available budget, they would be unable to approve the scheme in its current form, Respond! have now undertaken a preliminary review of the design of the project and have examined the possibility of increasing the number of bedrooms, (from 6 to 8 bed) in the facility which would in turn allow additional Departmental funding to be applied for. The Council met with representatives of the HSE on 19th March 2014. During this meeting the HSE have reconfirmed that subject to available funding, the HSE in principle supports the project in its revised form of an 8 bed unit.

Respond! are in the process of finalising revised proposals for the scheme. It is hoped that these proposals will be available by mid April 2014, with a view to making formal submission to the Department by early May 2014. Subject to the revised proposals complying with the requirements of the HSE, the scheme's budgetary restrictions and the requirement to seek planning permission/retender the project, construction will now not commence until Q1 2015.

- 6 How many childcare facilities in Co. Monaghan are currently being levied for commercial rates? How many childcare facilities in Co. Monaghan have been determined by the valuations office as being exempt from commercial rates?

Reply: There are 15 childcare facilities in the county currently rated. There are 3 facilities exempt from rates. On the 24th February 2014, a list of 29 childcare facilities was sent to the Valuation Office for valuation.

Cllr B. McKenna asked:

- 7 Will this Council consult and engage with the residents of the housing development at Killyneill, Tyholland, Monaghan as to the feasibility and practicality of providing a play area for children in the estate, on vacant land which is part of the development and on the western side?

Reply: On foot of representations an engineer has carried out an inspection of the area in question. There are difficulties in relation to the siting of play equipment in this area for the following reasons -

- (a) There is a main sewer crossing through the centre of the plot.
- (b) The plot is adjacent to Older Persons Dwellings, and
- (c) Access to the area could create a noise and nuisance problem for adjoining dwelling.

The Council has no objection to discussing alternative uses for the area with the residents.

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

- 8 What progress has been made with regard to traffic management and the installation of traffic calming measures in the village of Emyvale?

Reply: The National Roads Authority has renewed the road markings on the southern approach to the village. Monaghan County Council proposes to examine the northern approach to the village in conjunction with the National Roads Authority's Regional Road Safety Engineer.

- 9 What progress has been made with regard to the installation of a pedestrian crossing in Glaslough village?

Reply: An assessment to determine the appropriate type and location of a pedestrian crossing will commence this month.

- 10 Can Monaghan County Council explore, in the interests of road safety, the installation of traffic calming measures between the chapel in Clontibret and the Keady junction?

Reply: While it is noted that a 50 kph speed limit currently exists at this location the Council will examine the feasibility of additional safety measures at this location.

- 11 Can the Council report on any progress with regard to the use of the Monaghan bypass by walkers, runners and pedestrians?

Reply: A request for funding for the provision of pedestrian and cycling facilities was submitted to the NRA by Monaghan County Council in January of this year. The NRA responded noting that the collision data available indicated that "there is no indication of a problem for pedestrians or cyclists" and therefore did not warrant funding in the current year.

The NRA said that if further collision information was available the Council could request a further review by Regional Road Safety Engineer. The Council are seeking to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

- 12 In relation to the new road layout at Enagh what plans do Monaghan County Council have to improve road safety particularly in relation to road signage?

Reply: The Council will examine the installation of additional signage on the approaches to the junction.

- 13 To ask Monaghan County Council:

(a) In relation to the "Gateway Initiative" which was introduced in Budget 2013 how many positions have been identified to date e.g. in village enhancement, landscaping, tourism ambassadors, control of animals, libraries etc, and to date how many positions have been filled?

Reply: The Council has been set a target of 55 placements under the Gateway Scheme in 2014, by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The Council has received Garda Vetting reports on 12 persons who the Council expect to start work in the coming month.

(b) Have the Department of Social Protection made any recommendations in relation to suitable applicants?

Reply: Yes. The Council has now received nominations for participants in the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Clones to date.

- 14 To ask Monaghan County Council for an update in relation to the "Jobbridge Programme"
(a) How many positions are available under this scheme?

Reply: The Council currently has 14 Internship placements

- 4 No. Engineers
- 1 No. Cross Border Support Worker
- 1 No. Sports Development Intern
- 2 No. Library Computerisation Project
- 2 No. Local History Research Assistant
- 1 No. Hydrogeologist
- 1 No Planning Intern
- 2 No. Energy Map Interns

- (b) How many applicants are there for these positions?

Reply: The following internships will be filled following interviews due to be held in April/May

- 1 No. Museum Digital Archivist –18 applications received
- 1 No. Support Worker to Age Friendly project – 2 Applications received
- 4 No. Engineers – Closing date 27/04/14

- (c) How many of these positions been filled on an ongoing basis in a temporary or whole time following their period on the programme?

Reply: Due to the moratorium on recruitment, the Council is precluded from offering an employment opportunity after the internship ceases. However over 60% of the interns to date have obtained employment prior to finishing their internships with the Council.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

- 15 In relation to the establishment of Irish Water/Uisce Éireánn what will be the implications, if any, for the private Group Water Schemes in the county; what schemes in the county and by extension, citizens will be liable for the introduction of full domestic water charges in 2014?

Reply: Monaghan County Council is not aware of any implications for private Group Water schemes in relation to the establishment of Irish Water. Anyone connected to a public Water Scheme will be liable for domestic water charges when they are introduced.

- 16 What is the up-to-date position in relation to my ongoing request to have the sewage collection network in Inniskeen village extended out to Ednamo in order to service the public housing development, and private dwellings in the area?

Reply: An application has been submitted to Irish Water seeking the necessary funding to carry out these works.

- 17 How many staff in total are currently employed by Monaghan County Council; how does this figure compare with the years 2009-2010?

Reply: There are 394 staff currently employed by Monaghan County Council compared to 491 at the end of March 2009.

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

- 18 What is the up-to-date position in relation to the Cavan to Dundalk Road Improvement Scheme?

Reply: The Consultants appointed for the design of the scheme intend to have the preliminary design of the scheme completed by the end of this year.

- 19 How many local authority homes in the county have yet to be fully insulated in terms of cavity wall and attic insulation?

Reply: During the period 2009 to 2013 energy efficiency upgrades, including cavity wall and attic insulation, were carried out to a total of 565 local authority owned dwellings in County Monaghan 213 of which were upgraded in 2013. In 2014 to date 88 houses have been upgraded and a further 124 houses were assigned to contractors during the first week of April 2014. Approximately 700 local authority dwellings remain to be upgraded in County Monaghan. The initial allocation from the Department for the Energy Efficiency Programme in 2014 is €206,763. Monaghan County Council has accelerated its Energy Efficiency Programme in 2014 and aims to spend the initial allocation in the first six months of the year and seek an additional allocation to allow the upgrade of at least 275 dwellings before the end of 2014.

Cllr C. Bennett asked:

- 20 Can Monaghan County Council look into the possibility of doing repairs on Cornacrive Road, Knockatallon. As the road is in a very bad state, is there any immediate works that could take place to facilitate the drivers on this road, as presently it is very dangerous.

Reply: Routine maintenance repairs will be carried out on this lane.

- 21 Can Monaghan County Council please address the large hole at Knockatallon cross. There is no boundary present on the road and it is an accident waiting to happen. The addition of a fence or the immediate filling of the hole would be accepted alternatives.

Reply: Monaghan County Council propose to pipe and backfill a section of the existing open drain at this location.

- 22 Can Monaghan County Council advise me on who is responsible to ensure broadband is in all areas by the year 2014. Scotstown and Knockatallon both have broadband that is not sufficient, and I would like to pursue this.

Reply: Monaghan County Council does not have a statutory role in the provision of telecommunications infrastructure in County Monaghan. The Council though does work closely with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in assisting the Department in delivering its schemes to improve telecommunications accessible in County Monaghan. These schemes have included the Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN Project), National Broadband Scheme and Rural Broadband Programme. It is a target of the Departments National Broadband Plan that a minimum of 30Mbps for every remaining home

and business in the country – no matter how rural or remote will be provided during the lifetime of the Government. Details relating to current broadband providers in County Monaghan are available on the internet which can be accessed free of charge from any of Monaghan County Councils libraries.

- 23 In relation to Irish Water dealing with complaints, I have sent numerous letters to Irish Water in regards to the hard water in the Scotstown and Ballinode areas. I have requested that they meet the people of these areas and see the problems that the residents are subjected to each day. Can Monaghan County Council please arrange a date for Irish Water to meet the residents as this problem is not going to go away and Irish water will have huge issues when they try to charge people for this hard water.

Reply: The matter was previously referred to Irish Water. The reply given directly to Cllr. Bennett was as follows:

“The water supplied in the Ballinode and Scotstown localities in Co. Monaghan is compliant. Irish Water will be evaluating and assessing all schemes in due course. The policy is to prioritise all the non compliant schemes for investment to bring them up to standard. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.”

The matter will be again referred to Irish Water.

17. Votes of sympathy/congratulations:

It was agreed that the Council extend a vote of congratulations to the following:

- Tanagh Outdoor Education Centre which was selected as the National Winner of the 2014 Xcessible Outdoor Inclusion Award.
- Gavin Coyle and Bawn Handball Club on winning the All-Ireland U-17 Singles Championship.
- Shannon Mulligan, Rooskey, Threemilehouse on winning the U-16 World Line Dancing Championship in Frankfurt, Germany.
- The County Monaghan Senior Football Team on gaining promotion to Division 1 of the Allianz N.F.L. and wishing the team and its management success in the Division II final against Donegal on 27th April.
- Sonya Casey, Scotshouse on being nominated as the County Monaghan Rose of Tralee.

It was agreed the Council extend a vote of sympathy to the following:

- Cllr J. Crowe on the death of his brother-in-law Paul Conlon, R.I.P.
- Cllr Donal Sherry, Monaghan Town Council on the death of his brother Frank, RIP
- Mr. Damien Treanor, Director of Services on the death of his cousin, Brendan McKenna, RIP.

It was agreed that a vote of good wishes be extended to former member and current Dail Deputy, Heather Humphreys and her family, for a speedy return to good health of her daughter Tara who was involved in a car accident recently.

18. Conferences:

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

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
Training Seminar for Councillors	Tourism in Local Communities	Talbot Hotel, Wexford	11 th & 12 th April 2014	Cllr J. O'Brien
Ace Training	MABS and the Insolvency Services of Ireland	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co.Cork.	11 th – 13 th April 2014	Cllr G. Carville
BG Seminarz	Crime and its Impact on Quality of Life	Quality Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry,	18 th – 20 th April 2014	Cllr D. Maxwell
Ace Training	Chambers of Commerce Building Business	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork	18 th – 20 th April 2014	Cllr P. Connolly
Ace Training	Know Your Rights: 2014 Social Welfare, Health and Taxation	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co. Cork	25 th , 26 th & 27 th April 2014	Cllr G. Carville
Ace Training	Retirement Entitlements and Taxation Benefits for Councillors	The Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Louth	2 nd , 3 rd & 4 th May 2014	Cllr G. Carville

URGENT BUSINESS:

The following motions of urgent business were carried over from the March Council meeting:

1. Notice in the names of Cllrs Murray, Bannigan, McPhillips, Maxwell and McElvaney

That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Agriculture Simon Coveney, T.D. to set up a task force to examine ways to improve the beef trade which is currently in a very serious state. And that the banks take a more pragmatic approach when dealing with farmers in difficulty due to this problem.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Murray and seconded by Cllr Bannigan. The Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously

2. Notice in the names of Cllrs Bannigan, McPhillips, Maxwell, McElvaney and Murray

That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Justice, Mr. Alan Shatter, T.D., to immediately consult with the National Game Council on issues relating to the licensing of firearms.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Bannigan and seconded by Cllr McPhillips. The Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Motions 3 and 4 were taken together.

3. Notice in the names of Cllrs Gallagher, McNally and O'Brien

That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D., to scrap the proposed Gateway Scheme in its present format as it is a form of exploitation of people who, through no fault of their own, find themselves unemployed.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Gallagher and seconded by Cllr McNally.

4. Notice in the names of Cllrs Bennett, Carthy, Conlon, Crowe, Keelan, B. McKenna and P. Treanor

That we the Members of Monaghan County Council, hereby call on the Council Executive to not participate in or implement the exploitative gateway scheme.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Carthy and seconded by Cllr B. McKenna.

A number of members spoke in favour of both motions and requested the County Manager not to participate in or implement the scheme.

Mr. Eugene Cummins, County Manager stated that the 'Gateway' Scheme was a very good scheme and that the Council's involvement with the programme was an executive matter and he would not be taking on board the resolutions proposed by the members. He said that the Council had interview a number of people and they were delighted to come on board to get some experience and opportunities they otherwise would not have had.

Cllr McPhillips spoke against both motions and outlined her experience of the 'Jobbridge Scheme', without which she would have been unable to complete her training as a Solicitor.

The Mayor put both motions to the meeting. Votes by show of hands resulted in 14 for 6 against on both motion. The Mayor declared the motions carried.

The Mayor advised the Council that he had received the following motions of Urgent Business at this meeting.

5. Notice in the names of Cllrs Coyle, Gallagher, McNally, O'Brien, and O'Hanlon:

That in view of the hugely important role for care and education for 0-6 year olds, all childcare/educational facilities are exempt from commercial rates and that Monaghan County Council and the Government implement this exemption with immediate effect.

The Mayor advised that there were two similar motions on the agenda and it was agreed that all three motions would be taken as urgent business and discussed together.

Motion 18.6 - That Monaghan County Council calls on the government to exempt all educational and childcare facilities from commercial rates (Sinn Fein members)

Motion 18.7 – To call on Monaghan County Council not to commence with the implementation of full commercial rates on childcare services that provide pre-school services and education for children up to 6 years, particularly up to 6 years, particularly in view of the fact that several County Council's do not implement any charges. (Cllr Connolly)

The motions were proposed and seconded. A lengthy debate followed to which a number of members contributed. The main argument being put forward centred around the fact that the activities that take place at childcare facilities in Co. Monaghan were very much educational as they were concerned with putting in place the proper foundations to the life-long development children and therefore should not be subjected to commercial rates. Members stated that imposing rates on these facilities would lead to a closure of some childcare facilities in the county. It was felt that rates costs would be added to the cost of childcare and this would place a serious burden on many cash-strapped families.

Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance advised the members that the Council had forwarded details of all the crèches in the county (29 facilities) to the Valuation Office and it was that office that would determine whether or not the various crèches were liable for rates. He stated that 15 premises of this nature in Co. Monaghan are already rated and it was to ensure that some people did not have an unfair competitive that the Council had forwarded details of the remainder to the Valuation Office. Once a property is valued, the Council is obliged to collect rates from it. He stated that some facilities in the county had been paying rates since 2001.

The Mayor put the three motions to the meeting and they were agreed. It was further agreed to circulate them to all local authorities.

6. Notice in the names of Cllrs Coyle, Gallagher, McNally, O'Brien, and O'Hanlon:

In light of the large number of county roads that are virtually impassable throughout County Monaghan and will see no repairs carried out this year, that this Council calls on the Government and, in particular, the Minister for the Environment, Phil Hogan, T.D., to immediately allocate funding to allow us carry out proper resurfacing. Failure to do so, will result in many roads becoming totally impassable thus affecting the farming community, public school bus transport and many small businesses throughout the county.

The motion was proposed by Cllr McNally and seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon. The Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

7. Notice in the names of Cllrs Maxwell, Carville, McPhillips, Murray and McElvaney:

That this Council values the importance of County Monaghan and the wider region. We urgently call on all political parties in Northern Ireland to vote against the HGV road levy when this decision comes before the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Maxwell and seconded by Cllr Murray. The Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

It was agreed that consideration of the remaining items on the agenda be deferred to an adjourned meeting on 22nd April, 2014 at 10.00 a.m.