

Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Monaghan on Monday 2nd December, 2013 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'Brien, O'Hanlon, P. Treanor and S. Treanor.

Mr. P. Clifford, A/County Manager, Mr. A. King, and Mr. D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance, Mr. A. Hughes, A/Director of Services, Ms. D. Kierans, Executive Planner, Mr. K. McNally, Senior Executive Engineer and Ms. C. Thornton, Meetings Administrator.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4th November, 2013 be approved.

2. Correspondence:

The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda –

- Letter from Co. Monaghan GAA advising the Council of an extension to the GAA facility at Cloghan and inviting the Council to hold a monthly meeting there.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Taoiseach in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the new CAP Programme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in relation to the Council's resolution regarding the new CAP Programme.
- Letter from Teagasc regarding the decline in staffing numbers.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Finance in relation to funding for the alignment of the N53 road at Ballinacarry bridge.
- Letter from the Special EU Programmes Body regarding the realignment of the N53 road at Ballinacarry bridge.
- Letter from the Office of the Minister for Housing and Planning declining the Council's request for a meeting with Minister Jan O'Sullivan, TD.
- Letter from Irish Water regarding a Programme for Engagement specifically for the elected members.
- Letter from the Department of Social Protection regarding the Farm Assist Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Health in relation to tobacco packaging.
- Letter of acknowledge from An Garda Siochana regarding the Council's resolution relating to illegal cock-fighting.
- Resolution from South Tipperary County Council regarding the trafficking, exploitation and abuse of women and girls.

The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting –

- Letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Tanaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade in relation to the North-South Interconnector.
- Letter from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine regarding national co-financing of CAP Pillar 2 payments.
- Letter from the Department of Finance and Personnel N.I. regarding funding for the realignment of the N53 Castleblayney-Donal Road at Ballinacarry bridge.
- Resolution from Macroom Town Council regarding the referral of the Local Government Reform Bill to the Constitutional Convention.
- Resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Transport to extend the derogation period to allow adequate time to resolve the height restriction of 4.65 metres for vehicles using the country's road network.
- Resolution from Offaly County Council calling on the Minister for Health to lift the ban on Nurse recruitment.

Proposals arising out of correspondence:

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council consider holding a meeting in the new GAA facility at Cloghan in the new year.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that Monaghan County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton, TD and the Government to reverse the 2013 Budget changes cutting Farm Assist payments to low income farmers and their families, which further impoverishes them and removes any incentive to develop their holding. We also call for an increase to previous levels of top up for participants on the Rural Social Scheme from the current €20, as this scheme has benefitted enormously communities across County Monaghan.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly seconded by Cllr S. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to Professor Gerry Boyle, CEO Teagasc, indicating that the Council wishes to accept his offer of a meeting to keep it apprised of the staffing situation in Teagasc.

On the proposal of Cllr Connolly seconded by Cllr S. Treanor it was agreed that Monaghan County Council support the resolution from Clare County Council calling on the Minister for Transport to extend the derogation period to allow adequate time to resolve the height restriction of 4.65 metres for vehicles using the country's road network.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council support the resolution from Offaly County Council calling on the Minister for Health to lift the ban on Nurse recruitment.

On the proposal of Cllr Crowe, seconded by Cllr Carville, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council take up the invite to submit a project proposal to the SEUPB in relation to the realignment of the N53 Ballinacarry Bridge and that it inform Newry and Mourne District Council; both Department responsible for roads, North and South, and forward a copy of the letter from the SEUPB to Newry and Mourne District Council.

On the proposal of Cllr McNally, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that this Council renews its request to Minister Jan O’Sullivan for an urgent meeting to discuss Social Housing Policy and that a copy of the letter be circulated to the TD’s in the constituency asking them to facilitate such a meeting.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that this Council write to the Minister for Agriculture, Simon Coveney TD supporting an exceptional recruitment application from Teagasc.

On the proposal of Cllr P. Treanor, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the proposal to re-open the Ulster Canal be submitted to SEUPB for consideration as a “shovel-ready” project for Interreg IV/Peace III funding.

Cllr O’Hanlon proposed, Cllr Gallagher seconded that Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan TD, to instruct Irish Water not to retain profits or raise prices for the next six years but to pass any profits they make in the form of cuts to consumers.

A vote by show of hands on this proposal resulted in 14 for, 5 against. The Mayor declared the motion carried.

On the proposal of Cllr O’Brien, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that Monaghan County Council call on Minister Jan O’Sullivan to increase the amount of rent payable by a tenant to allow them claim rent allowance.

3. To consider Material Contraventions of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013 – 2019:

(i) To grant planning permission for a development by the Electricity Supply Board at Corrybrennan, Ballybay (Ref 13/134)

The Members considered the report circulated in relation to planning application 13/134 - development of a new 38kv electrical transformer station at Corrybrennan, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan which contravenes the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013 - 2019. The Report recommended that permission for the development is granted, subject to the conditions outlined therein.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was unanimously agreed that the Council approve a material contravention of the County Monaghan Development Plan 2013-2019 to grant planning permission for a development at Corrybrennan, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan (Ref 13/134), subject to the conditions recommended.

(ii) To grant planning permission for a development by Ian & Claire Marron at Tullynaskeagh East, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. (Ref 13/235)

The Members considered the report circulated in relation to planning application 13/235 – erection of a two storey dwelling, detached garage and associated site works at Tullynaskeagh East, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan which contravenes the Monaghan

County Development Plan 2013 - 2019. The Report recommended that permission for the development is granted subject to the conditions outlined therein.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr P. Treanor it was unanimously agreed that the Council approve a material contravention of the County Monaghan Development Plan 2013-2019 to grant planning permission for development at Tullynaskeagh East, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan (Ref 13/235), subject to the conditions recommended.

4. To receive Report on Unfinished Housing Developments

Ms. Darina Kierans, Executive Engineer gave a presentation to the Council on the unfinished housing developments in the county. She stated that the Register of Unfinished Housing Developments consists of 37 such developments in County Monaghan. A further 19 developments are on a monitoring list – some of these have legacy developments which the local authority continues to address on an ongoing basis.

In her presentation she outlined the following

- Site categorisation criteria
- A breakdown of the developments by category
- Developments exempted from the Local Property Tax
- Sites identified for clearance/demolition

In conclusion she stated that the Council will continue to work with developers, banks, receivers/funders to resolve outstanding issues. Sites will be monitored regularly for health and safety issues. The Council will endeavour to claim insurance bonds before expiry and pursue bonds for problematic developments where progress to date has been slow.

Following her presentation she responded to a number of queries from the members.

The Mayor thanked Darina for a very informative presentation.

On the proposal of Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that the Council would make contact with the Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan TD, requesting that he applies pressure on the Banks to resolve, as a matter of urgency, the issue of unfinished housing developments.

5. To approve recommendations from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18 November, 2013.

On the proposal of Cllr Carville, seconded by Cllr Crowe it was agreed that the Council approve the Agreement between Monaghan County Council and the Muckno Community Partnership for the day to day operation of the Lough Muckno Park.

On the proposal of Cllr O'Brien, seconded by Cllr A. Murray it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18 November, 2013, be approved.

6. To receive report on the Clones Erne East Sports Project:

Mr. K. McNally, Senior Executive Engineer updated the members in relation to the current status of the Clones Erne East Sports Partnership project. He outlined the progress to date on the various technical elements of the project.

Mr. Aidge King, Director of Services outlined the action required to now bring the project through to operational stage. The capital cost of the facility will be circa €8,065,063. Given that it is nearing completion, the project, which will be known as 'The Peace Link' will be managed by the local community by means of a Licence Agreement with the Local Authority. This agreement will provide for the operation, management and upkeep of the facility into the future. It is anticipated that the facility will be open to the public in mid 2014. Provision is being made for the recruitment of a Manager and relevant staff in early 2014.

Following the presentation Mr. King responded to queries from the elected members.

7. To fix date for Speed Limits Committee meeting:

It was agreed that a meeting of the Speed Limits Committee would be held at 1.00 pm on the 6th January, 2014.

8. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Carthy, Connolly, Keelan, McKenna, McElvaney, McPhillips and O'Brien in relation to their attendance at the following conferences –

- Oideas Gael Irish Language course, Glencolmcille, Co. Donegal
- Positive Living in the 3rd Age, Monaghan.
- Mental Health and Coping Skills for Councillors, Kenmare, Co. Cork.
- Future Energy Needs, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
- Future of Energy in Ireland, Galway.
- Design Guidelines for the Planning and Development of Rural Housing, Rosscarberry, Co. Cork.
- LAMA Annual Autumn Conference, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

9. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector

During a debate on this item, the following proposals were agreed.

On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllrs McNally and Bannigan it was agreed that Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Communications Pat Rabbitte TD and the members of the Oireachtas Communications Committee to oppose the appointment of Mr. John O'Connor as Chairman of EirGrid due to the perceived conflict of interest resulting from his previous role with An Bord Pleanála. The

Council expresses its disappointment with the members of Seanad Eireann who voted against a proposal "to make provisions for the placing of such high voltage electricity transmission lines underground where physically possible".

On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Keelan it was agreed that Monaghan County Council calls for the repeal of the Strategic Infrastructure Act and that we write to all Cavan/Monaghan TD's seeking their support in ensuring that planning decisions affecting local communities are made in the counties where the impact will be felt.

10. Business submitted by County Manager

Budget Meeting – It was agreed that the date arranged for the Annual Budget meeting would be changed from the 16th to the 18th December, 2013 at 12.00 noon.

CPG Meeting – It was agreed that the Corporate Policy Group would meet on 9th December at 9.30 am to finalise the draft Budget, subject to the receipt of the Local Government Fund allocation for 2014, in advance of that meeting.

Cllr P. Treanor requested that an update on the Ulster Canal Project be a standing item on the monthly Council agenda. This was agreed.

11. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meetings held on 7th / 21st October and 4th November, 2013.

This item was not dealt with.

12. Questions:

Cllr P. Connolly asked:

1. In relation to the recent announcement by the Department of the Environment that there will be €32m in new funding for Social Housing,
(a) What allocation will Co Monaghan receive from this €32m?

Reply: *On the 15th of August 2013 Minister for Housing and Planning, Jan O'Sullivan, TD, announced that €32million in funding will be provided for the provision of more than 260 homes for those in need of housing. The Department has indicated that Monaghan County Council's potential allocation is €485,000.*

- (b) How many units/houses do they hope to achieve with this funding?

Reply: *The Department announcement stated that potentially six houses could be acquired.*

- (c) How many vacant social housing units does Monaghan County Council have?

**Reply: 15 houses are vacant at present:
2 are in the process of allocation
8 are ready for allocation
5 are having re-letting work carried out at present**

(d) Would it be the Council's intention to build new houses with this funding or purchase existing houses?

Reply: As the funding provided must be utilised before the end of 2013 the Council has targeted houses to be purchased.

2. What plans does Monaghan County Council have to improve road safety for cars entering onto the Monaghan/Glaslough road (L1220) from both the Griggy and Faulklands directions at Drumgarron crossroads?

Reply: This junction will be examined and placed on the Agenda of the next Roads Area Meeting for discussion.

3. In relation to the ongoing roadworks on the N2 Emyvale/ Monaghan road what are the new agreed target dates for the remainder of the contract?

Reply: The Contractor is proposing to have the road open to two way traffic for the Christmas holidays with the works substantially complete by mid January subject to suitable weather conditions prevailing.

4. In view of the Government announcement to introduce a €10m scheme to tackle some of the unfinished/ derelict housing developments in other parts of the country do Monaghan County Council have any plans to identify unfinished/ derelict houses that need to be demolished in County Monaghan and seek funding to resolve the issue?

Reply: The Special Unfinished Housing Development Resolution Fund, recently announced, has not yet been opened for applications. The Council will be seeking assistance through this fund, to resolve issues relating to unfinished housing developments, consequent upon its formal opening.

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

5. Will the Council give an updated report on the proposed Group Home for women for physical & sensory disabilities at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross including the proposed commencement and completion dates?

Reply: In response to adverts being placed in the government's e-tenders portal, 9 tenders were received by the offices of Respond! Housing Association in Waterford on 30th September 2013. As the most economical advantageous tender exceeded the available budget, value engineering workshops were held between Respond! Housing Association and the preferred tenderer.

On 14th November 2013, Monaghan County Council received a preliminary report on tenders from Respond! Housing Association. The final report from Respond! Housing Association is currently is expected shortly.

Once the final report has been received, Monaghan County Council will submit it to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government recommending approval of same. In this regard the Council has already held preliminary discussions with the relevant Departmental officials outlining the budgetary challenges associated with the project

In light of the fact that the most economical advantageous tender for the building of the group home at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross, for women with physical and sensory disabilities, has exceeded the available budget, Cllr Carty requested that the Council's secretariat would write to the Department seeking the additional funding required to allow the project to progress. This was agreed.

Cllr M. Carthy asked:

6. How many people have been hired by Monaghan County Council under the government's Job-bridge initiative? How many of these people were subsequently offered permanent employment?

Reply: *The Government announced a new National Internship Scheme as part of its Jobs Initiative programme, which was published on 10 May 2011. Participants on the National Internship Scheme receive, through the Department of Social Protection, a single allowance (Internship Allowance) consisting of €50 per week on top of their equivalent existing social welfare entitlements.*

Monaghan County Council has facilitated 25 internships to date with 14 participants currently in position. The programme provides the participants with an opportunity to put into practice skills they have learned during training and/or education, in a workplace setting, to enhance those skills, understand the workplace environment and context and to benefit from a mentor or supervisor's experience and advice. A further 3 internships have currently been offered. Of the 11 interns who completed their internship programme, 6 had secured employment before the end of their internship.

7. Can Monaghan County Council detail the quantities of salt/grit currently in stock? Is the council satisfied that there will be sufficient stocks of road salt for the winter period ahead?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council has been allocated a total of 6,500t of salt for the coming winter through the national Road Authority and Department of Transport Central purchasing system. The Council has approximately 1800t is currently in stock at present.*

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

8. In relation to the Woodlands Estate, Scotstown Road, Monaghan Town, what is the current position with the proposal to connect the estate directly to the main sewer and when can the residents expect the works to be completed?

Reply: *It is expected that the work will begin this month and should be completed by mid to late January 2014.*

Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

9. Would the Council liaise with the National Roads Authority with a view to installing additional traffic calming measures on the north and south approaches to Emyvale village with a view to slowing down traffic in the interests of residents and pedestrians?

Reply: *The Council will liaise with the National Roads Authority on this matter.*

10. In relation to the ongoing works on the N2 what is the updated position with regard to the Tydavnet road junction, when are the remaining works expected to be completed and can the public expect the road to be open to two way traffic in advance of the Christmas shopping period?

Reply: *The Tydavnet Road junction is due to close at its junction with the N2 for reconstruction works from the 28th November to the 20th December. The Contractor is proposing to have the road open to two-way traffic for the Christmas holidays with the works substantially complete by mid January subject to suitable weather conditions prevailing.*

11. Can the Council state how many grants were paid out under the Housing Aid for Older Persons Scheme over the last three years (i.e. from 2010 to 2013)?

Reply: *Monaghan County Council issued 331 HOPS grants from 2010 to 2013, to the value of €1,579,180.41.*

2010		2011		2012		2013	
€	No.	€	No.	€	No.	€	No.
344,477.20	67	426,820.30	79	452,060.96	104	355,821.95	81

Cllr S. Conlon asked:

12. In the interest of protecting biodiversity and groundwater sources, what are the conditions that typically exist that would necessitate a septic tank inspection by Council officials? What numbers of our Council staff have been formally up skilled regarding this relatively new government initiative?

Reply: *In the year July 2013 to July 2014 Monaghan County Council are required to carry out 33 inspections. The location of the septic tanks to be inspected will be decided on the basis of risk to human health and the environment, i.e. more inspections will be done where the risk is higher and fewer where the risk is lower. Five Council staff have been trained to carry out the inspections.*

13. What is the total number of applicants on our combined County Monaghan local authorities housing application list, giving the breakdown as per:

- Family
- Small Family
- Single Applicants Under 55
- Old Persons Dwellings

And in the past twelve months, how many of these applicants have been allocated a Council owned dwelling?

Reply: Combined total on our Waiting List is 968

1 Bed – 421

2 Bed – 347

3 Bed – 167

4 Bed – 32

5 Bed – 1

There has been a total of 71 allocations made to date (this figure is inclusive of the Town Councils)

Cllr C. Bennett asked:

14. I would like to address the issue of hard water in the Scotstown and Ballinode areas. Could Monaghan County Council please explore the possibility of connecting with the local group water schemes in these areas? The water from the local group water schemes in these areas is not hard and would therefore provide an alternative solution to the hard water problem in the Scotstown and Ballinode localities.

Reply: *The water supplied to these areas is to a high quality and complies in all regards with the Drinking Water Standards. The sourcing of alternative supply of water would need to be addressed by Irish Water, who from 1 Jan 2014 will be responsible for the service.*

15. Regarding kerbs dislodged at the bridge at Knockatallon Cross. Can Monaghan County Council please address this issue as a matter of urgency?

Reply: *The dislodged kerbs will be put back in place.*

16. In the interest of road safety can Monaghan County Council organise to have a large dip in the road repaired, 100 meters before Knockatallon cross on the left hand side?

Reply: *The Council will investigate this section of road.*

17. In the interest of safety, has Monaghan County Council made any arrangements to resurface the common areas at the Terrace, in Scotstown? The common areas are in a very bad state of repair and need urgent maintenance.

Reply: *It is proposed to place this item on the agenda of the next Road Area Committee Meeting for discussion*

18. In relation to a question I previously submitted. Has Eircom been contacted regarding their responsibility to the maintenance, of the forecourt of the Telecom Installation on the Monaghan side of Scotstown village. The area needs to be resurfaced, as the surface is very loose and is still a hazard to passing cars.

Reply: *Eircom has been informed of the condition of this area.*

Cllr N. Keelan asked:

19. In light of the recent announcement by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Leo Varadkar, in relation to the proposed changes to Speed Limits on our county road network, could the Manager outline the implications that these proposed changes will have. Will there be any cost implications in terms of our ever reducing road budget; will the county Speed Limit Committee still have a role in relation to the setting of speed limits in the county?

Reply: *No official notification has been received from the Department of Transport. Upon receipt, Monaghan County Council will examine the implications and report to the Speed Limit Committee early in the New Year.*

20. In relation to the awarding of contracts and the tender process, is it in keeping with proper procedures and regulations that companies and services providers are named on tender documents as examples of what is required; is this not giving an unfair advantage to those tendering for work?

Reply: *Trade names or manufacturers' names can be used to highlight performance specifications so long as they are accompanied by the wording or "equivalent" or "similar approved"*

21. In relation to Monaghan County Council water pipe network, what percentage of the network has lead piping; will the Manager make a statement in relation to the World Health Organisation report on the danger of lead in the water piping networks?

Reply: *In the Council's distribution network of water mains there are no lead pipes. We are aware that there is a small amount, probably less than 2%, of private service connections that are lead. The danger of lead piping in water mains is well known. All public water supplies in Monaghan are fully compliant with the Drinking Water Regulation's maximum allowable concentration of 25 µg/litre.*

22. In relation to Inniskeen village and the communities call for a bus shelter to serve local residents, what plans, if any, have Monaghan County Council to provide one; in the wider context of the Kavanagh Country Literary Landscape Management Plan, what plans have Monaghan County Council to develop 'set down' areas and bus stops to serve the school in particular and also to further develop footpath links in the village, which will help enhance the village and help to further develop Inniskeen as a tourist attraction?

Reply: *The issue of a bus shelter, footpath links and set down areas in the Inniskeen area will be examined and placed on the agenda of the next Road Area Committee Meeting for discussion.*

23. Has any progress been made in relation to a Memorandum of Understanding between Monaghan County Council and Armagh District Council following on from our meeting on January last?

Reply: *Preparatory work on a draft Memorandum of Understanding is continuing. The International Centre for Local and Regional Development is analysing the*

proposals submitted by Monaghan County Council and Armagh District Council and has committed to meet with officials in the coming weeks.

14. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations.

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

- Hugh Pat McGinnity, a member of the Council's outdoor staff on the death of his mother Margaret McGinnity, RIP, late of Dernahesco, Knockatallon, Co. Monaghan
- The wife and family of the late Tommy Bates, Latton, a former member of the Council's outdoor staff.
- Paul Corr, a member of the Council's staff on the death of his father Jimmy Corr, RIP, late of Allagesh, Scotstown, Co. Monaghan.
- Pauline McClean, a member of the Council's staff on the death of her father, Patrick McClean, RIP, late of Coragh, Killeshandra.
- Owen McDermott, Corcummins, Clones a former member of the Council's outdoor staff on the death of his brother Dermot McDermott, RIP.
- Dympna Condra, a member of the Council's staff on the death of her sister Una McNicoll, RIP, late of Lucan, Co. Dublin.
- Bernie Bradley, a member of the Council's staff on the death of her aunt, Rose O'Rourke, RIP, late of Inniskeen.

It was agreed that a vote of congratulations be extended to the following:

- Gaeil Triucha GFC on winning the AIB Ulster GAA Intermediate Club Championship Final.
- Emyvale GFC on winning the Ulster Junior Club Championship Final.
- Geraldine Clarke, Clontibret Camogie Chairperson on winning the Ulster Chairperson of the Year Award.
- Currin GFC on winning the Intermediate Football League Final and gaining promotion to the senior ranks for 2014.
- Amy Hamill, Glaslough Harriers on winning a bronze medal in the U-16 race over 4,000 metres in the Junior Cross Country Championships.
- Donaghmoynne Ladies Football Team on the Ladies Ulster Senior Football title and on narrowly missing out in the All-Ireland Final in Carrick-on-Shannon.
- Scotstown GFC on winning the League Division I Owen Ward Cup.
- Gráinne McNally, Caoímhe Mohan, Cora Courtney and Sharon Courtney on being selected on the Ladies All-Star Football Team for 2013.
- Conor McManus and Colin Walshe on being selected on the Mens All-Star Football Team for 2013.
- Liam Connolly, Carrickmacross Festival Committee on his work with the Committee during his term of office.
- Donaghmoynne Community Development on winning the 200-500 population category in the Pride of Place Competition 2013.
- Inniskeen Community Development on being runners-up in the Community Arts Initiative in the Pride of Place Competition 2013.

15. Conferences

There were no conferences approved at this meeting.

Urgent Business:

The Mayor advised the Council that he had received two notices of urgent business, as follows:

- (i) Notice in the names of Cllrs Coyle, McNally, O'Brien, Gallagher, and O'Hanlon calling for an immediate allocation of funding to Cavan-Monaghan Leader.
- (ii) Notice in the names of Cllrs O'Hanlon, McNally, Coyle, Gallagher and O'Brien calling on the Minister for Social Protection to change the rule in relation to the discontinuation of the Transitional Pension with effect from January 2014.

In accordance with Standing Order 14.2 it was unanimously agreed to discuss both notices of Urgent Business.

(i) Cllr Coyle proposed, Cllr McNally seconded

That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan, TD to make an immediate further allocation to Cavan Monaghan Leader, having cut their original allocation by €2.1m (17.5%) and with Cavan-Monaghan Leader having €1.4m of assessed projects ready to commence work if funding is available.

The Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

Cllr Coyle requested that the resolution be circulated to the Minister and the Oireachtas Members for the constituency as soon as possible.

(ii) Cllr O'Hanlon proposed, Cllr S. Treanor seconded

That Monaghan County Council calls on the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton TD to change the rule that anyone who reaches 65 after January 1st, 2014 will have no transitional pension to claim. They can either stay at work or if forced to retire claim Jobseekers Benefit.

The Mayor put the motion to the meeting and it was agreed unanimously.

The Mayor wished the members, officials and the media a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

The meeting then concluded.