

**Minutes of meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Monaghan on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January, 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. P. Clifford, Mr. A. King, and Mr. D. Treanor, Directors of Service, Mr. J. Murray, Head of Finance 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 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2013, be approved.*

**2. Correspondence:**

**The following correspondence was circulated with the agenda:**

- Letter from the Department of Social Protection in relation to the operation of the Farm Assist Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Social Protection in relation to the Farm Assist and the Rural Social Scheme.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for Agriculture in relation to the recruitment of additional staff in Teagasc.
- Letter of acknowledgement from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to funding for Cavan Monaghan Leader.
- Email from Deputy Heather Humphreys in relation the Strategic Infrastructure Act.
- Email from Deputy Heather Humphreys confirming that she had sought a meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning on the Council's behalf.
- Letter from the Chief Investment Officer Loritus GmbH, requesting an opportunity to make a presentation to the Council on the company's waste recycling service.
- Resolution from Waterford City Council calling for a review of legislation in the area of anti-social behaviour.
- Resolution from Donegal County Council supporting the Irish League of Credit Unions in their fight against the regulatory regime being imposed on them by the Government and the Central Bank.
- Resolution from Donegal County Council opposing the privatisation of the Motor Taxation service.
- Resolution from Leitrim County Council calling on the Government and Minister Hogan to withdraw the proposal to introduce a levy on all vacant commercial premises.

**The following correspondence was circulated at the meeting:**

- Letter from the National Roads Authority detailing the 2014 National Road Grant Allocations for the county.
- Letter from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine advising of the approval of the appointment of additional staff in the Teagasc advisory, research and education functions on an exceptional basis.
- Letter from EirGrid in relation to the Renewable Integration Development Project (RIDP)
- Letter from EirGrid in relation to the International Expert Commission Report on the North South Interconnector.
- Letter from the National Transport Authority in relation to the issuing of local area hackney licences, on a pilot basis, to address certain transport deficits in rural areas.

**Proposals arising out of correspondence:**

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Coyle it was agreed that Monaghan County Council writes to the Minister for Social Protection urging that recent (Budget 2013) changes to the Farm Assist Scheme be reversed. That we also write to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine asking him to use his influence to encourage the Department of Social Protection to reverse these cuts in support of low income farmers.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Bennett it was agreed that Monaghan County Council requests that Teagasc Management recruit additional staff in Co. Monaghan in line with the recent approval of additional staff sanctioned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform outlined in letter from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2013.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McNally it was agreed that Monaghan County Council renew its request to the CEO of Teagasc for an urgent meeting following confirmation of additional staff to Teagasc in order to seek additional staff/resources for County Monaghan to serve the farming community.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Connolly it was agreed that the Council adopts the motion from Donegal County Council supporting the Irish League of Credit Unions in their fight against the regulatory regime being imposed on them by the Government and the Central Bank.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Carthy, seconded by Cllr Gallagher it was agreed that the Council adopts the motion from Leitrim County Council calling on the Government and Minister Hogan to withdraw the proposal to introduce a levy on all vacant commercial premises.*

*On the proposal of Cllr O'Hanlon, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that a letter be sent to the Oireachtas Members for County Monaghan enquiring what their position is in relation to the introduction of a levy of 50% of the full rates payable on all properties that are vacant. That the Council calls on the Deputies to ensure that the current situation does not change.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Keelan seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Chief Investment Officer Loritus GmbH, be invited to make a presentation Environment SPC on the company's waste recycling service.*

**3. To approve recommendations from Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2013.**

**(i) Consideration of Draft Litter Management Plan 2014 - 2016**

Mr. Nial O'Connor, Environmental Education Officer outlined the main objectives contained within the Draft Litter Management Plan 2014 – 2016. He then responded to queries from the Members.

A number of members expressed concern at the continued littering in various areas of the county and along the road network. They called for increased monitoring through the use of CCTV and for other options to be explored in order to improve the detection of littering offences.

Mr. O'Connor stated that the Council has a number of mobile CCTV cameras which are placed at litter black spots in the county and on the bypasses.

*On the proposal of Cllr McElvaney, seconded by Cllr B. McKenna it was agreed that the Draft Litter Management Plan 2014 – 2016 be adopted.*

**(ii) Adoption of Minutes of CPG meeting**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Conlon it was agreed that the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013, be approved.*

**4. To fix dates for meetings of the following Committees:**

**(i) Standing Orders and Procedures Committee**

It was agreed that a meeting of this committee be deferred until after the local elections.

**(ii) Speed Limits Committee**

It was agreed that a meeting of the Speed Limits Committee would be held at 1.00 pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2014.

**5. To approve the nomination of Teague McGinley to the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.**

*On the proposal of Cllr Maxwell, seconded by Cllr Carthy it was agreed that the nomination of Teague McGinley to the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, be approved.*

**6. To receive reports from Members attending Conferences:**

The Members noted the reports from Cllrs Conlon and Gallagher in relation to their attendance at the following conferences –

- IRFU/IFA/Ulster GAA Sport & Reconciliation Conference
- LAMA Annual Autumn Conference, Ennistymon, Co. Clare

**7. Proposed Eirgrid 440kv Interconnector:**

The Members noted the correspondence which had been circulated with the agenda –

- Letter from EirGrid in response to issues raised by the Council
- Letter from Minister Pat Rabbitte TD Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources enclosing copy of a Consultation paper '*Proposed Incentive for the delivery of the North South Interconnector*'
- Letter from the Commission for Energy Regulation detailing various aspects of electricity generation and costing in Ireland.

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr O'Hanlon it was agreed that Monaghan County Council express its disappointment at the Oireachtas members for Cavan/Monaghan who voted against a motion in Dail Eireann calling for an independent international constitutional enquiry into the EirGrid proposals for electricity transmission.*

**8. Update on the Ulster Canal Project.**

Mr. P. Clifford, Director of Services reported that a meeting of the Ulster Canal Inter-Agency was held in Belfast on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2013. It was agreed to carry out a data gathering exercise to assist the DCAL Economist, to reinforce the business case and to identify activity levels along the Waterway.

**9. Business submitted by County Manager:**

There was no business submitted.

**10. Matters arising out of minutes of Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.**

Matters arising out of the minutes of Council meetings held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October, 4<sup>th</sup> November and 2<sup>nd</sup> December were responded to by the relevant officials.

Cllr Carthy requested the Director of Housing to ensure that the Group Home at Carrickmacross be treated as a priority so as to ensure this project is given approval to commence as soon as possible.

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr McElvaney it was agreed that Monaghan County Council expedites works to develop an appropriate design solution to address the very serious flooding problems on the Ballybay-Cootehill road (R190) at Cumry and make application to the Government for special funding as in recent weeks and years, enormous hardships have been suffered by residents in this area as their homes and farms, etc were inaccessible for lengthy periods causing great difficulties for those travelling the road to work, etc., due to flooding.*

*On the proposal of Cllr Coyle, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, it was agreed that Monaghan County Council/Irish Water extend the sewerage scheme network on the Castleblayney Road, Ballybay to the Cremartin/Keady Road (L3403) as committed to by Council staff in 2012. The residences along this road are in the townlands of Drumgrole, Dunmaurice and Corbyfin. It was agreed to write again to the Minister for Health regarding a motion passed by the Council relating to prescriptions for generic medicines.*

**11. Presentation on the EU-funded URBACT Programme Wood Foot Print Project by Pdraig Maguire, Regional Planner, Border Regional Authority:**

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Pdraig Maguire, Regional Planner, Border Regional Authority and Mr. Dermot Maguire representing Monaghan Furniture Producers and invited them to address the members in relation to the Wood Foot Print Project.

Mr. Maguire explained the background to the project which aims to preserve the viability of the furniture manufacturing sector in the county. He stated that initiatives to identify new product areas and to examine alternative uses for vacant factory space are key components of the strategy which aims to plot a productive future for a sector that was once a major source of employment in the county. He advised that Monaghan County Council is the managing authority for the local action plan. He asked the councillors to engage with businesses in the sector they were aware of that were facing difficulties and to encourage them to participate in the project which was designed to maintain existing jobs and also to identify future opportunities.

Mr. Maguire then outlined the following actions that the Council could take to assist the project:

- Complete the inventory of furniture businesses within the study area;
- Continue active participation within the Local Support Group (Councillors and Officials);
- Promote and market the project within your communities and media and encourage people and business owners to become involved;
- Participate and support the workshop on week of 10-14 February 2014;
- Provide resources, support and a welcome to the EU Project Partners when they come to Monaghan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Transnational meeting on 12-14 March 2014
- Ultimately, take ownership of the LAP after it is completed in April 2015 and take on implementation programme;
- Maintain the Local Support Group Network beyond the life of the LAP and use it as a platform to develop other projects using the existing networks and relationships built up during this process

Mr. Dermot McNally representing the furniture producers explained why there is a need for this project and what is different. He outlined the following -

1. Funding is available to investigate this issue/problem through the URBACT Programme,
2. The project is unique in that it brings together 8 countries facing similar issues within the industry.
3. The industry is in crisis in Ireland and faces a very uncertain future
4. If we save or create one job or save or create another business then it can be considered a success

5. Residents in small towns like Monaghan, and indeed the county itself, will need to think outside the box to create and attract appropriate jobs relevant to its natural assets

A number of members spoke following the presentation and congratulated the project team on their work to date and referred to the importance of the furniture industry in the county. They expressed the view that the participation of all businesses will be important. Cllr P. Treanor referred to the lessons and principles contained within the recently approved Regional Strategic Framework for the Central Border Area which the project team can avail of.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Maguire and Mr. McNally for their presentation and wished them well with the project which the Council will be supportive of.

## 12. Questions:

### Cllr G. Carville asked:

1. For an update on actions, plans, vision and proposals for Castleblayney Courthouse/ Market house and to seek a statement on the matter.

**Reply: A meeting consisting of members of the Castleblayney Electoral Area was held 18 December 2013. It was agreed by those present that costings be obtained for various options and presented to a further meeting to be held in early 2014 before determining how to proceed with this matter.**

2. In view of the recent survey showing increased footfall in the offices of Castleblayney Town Council and the recognition that these offices are a lifeline for many people in the town, will the Council re-consider the question of local government offices and people's presence in Castleblayney?

**Reply: A recent survey of calls to all Town Council offices was carried out to ascertain service levels. No increased footfall was recorded in Castleblayney. With an average of 19 callers per day the footfall was less than other Town Council offices, however a higher proportion of calls related to housing rent payments. Plans to service the proposed Castleblayney-Carrickmacross Municipal District were outlined to members of the County Council and Castleblayney Town Council in November 2013.**

3. Will the Council consider the provision of public lighting at Cremartin?

**Reply: Monaghan County Council will consider the provision of public lighting in Cremartin.**

### Cllr R. Gallagher asked:

4. Can the Council state what the estimated cost will be to Monaghan County Council of the property tax for 2013?

**Reply: The estimated cost of the Property Tax for Monaghan County Council (excluding the Town Councils) in 2013 is €22,950**

**Cllr R. Gallagher asked:**

5. Has the Council received any clarity on how the proposed municipal districts will work and how the payment of rates will be affected, particularly for businesses in each of our towns?

**Reply: *The Municipal Districts will come into effect in June 2014. Any outstanding Rates payable to the Town Councils will become payable to the County Council. Council staff will be in contact with businesses in early 2014 to ensure a smooth transition from Town to County Council in June 2014.***

6. What progress has been made with regard to the development of a pedestrian crossing at the Oakland Centre in Glaslough?

**Reply: *It is proposed to carry out an assessment of this location early in 2014 in order to determine the most appropriate option for pedestrian crossing facilities.***

7. In light of the ongoing works on the N2 between Monaghan and Emyvale, will the Council state when the road will be open to two way traffic?

**Reply: *The N2 opened to two way traffic on 20 December 2013. When the Contractor recommences work on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January following the Christmas holidays it is expected that while the road will remain open it will be subject to ongoing traffic management to allow the completion of surfacing works. It is expected these works will be substantially complete by the end of January.***

**Cllr P. McNally asked:**

8. (a) What is the cost of disposing of a cubic meter of Septic Tank sludge at any of our sewerage Plants?

**Reply: *Monaghan County Council presently accepts septic tank sludge at Monaghan WWTP at a charge €25/m<sup>3</sup>***

- (b) How does this compare with our neighbours in Counties Cavan, Louth & Meath?

**Reply: *We understand this is similar to what our neighbouring counties charge***

**Cllr S. Treanor asked:**

9. How does Monaghan County Council intend to deal with an unauthorised halting site at Bessmount Hollow (Knockaconny) adjacent to the I.D.A Industrial estate?

**Reply: *Monaghan County Council is seeking to resolve the issue of unauthorised parking in this area by consulting with the other users/occupiers/industries in the area on a workable solution to restrict access to the area by persons who park their caravans in this area.***

**Cllr C. Bennett asked:**

10. Can Monaghan County Council complete pipe laying works up to the bridge at Lannaght, Knockatallon? A pipe has been laid half way along the edge of the road towards the bridge, but the work has not been completed. This has therefore left a very dangerous hole at the side of the road, which creates hazardous driving conditions and safety issues for road users in the area.

**Reply: *The Council will examine this location and discuss the matter the next North Monaghan Road Area Meeting.***

11. Can Monaghan County Council investigate the bridge at Lannaght, Knockatallon? The bridge is only built a few years ago, but is in a bad state as it is starting to crack and fall apart. Can the bridge please be made more structurally sound before it collapses?

**Reply: *An investigation of the bridge at Lannaght will be carried out and a report prepared for the next North Monaghan Road Area Meeting.***

12. In the interest of road safety, could Monaghan County Council, examine the road at Dernahesco, Knockatallon? The road is in a very bad state of disrepair and needs resurfacing. Can I have a date please, when road upgrades are intended for this road?

**Reply: *The roads programme for the coming year will be determined at the next Road Area Committee Meeting to be held early in the New Year when roads budgets and allocations are known.***

13. Does Monaghan County Council have a policy in place for cleaning sign posts? A lot of sign posts are illegible due to dirt and grime accumulated on them. This can lead to accidents and I would strongly encourage this measure to be carried out as promptly as possible.

**Reply: *Washing of signs is carried out by the engineering areas and is assessed on the basis of condition and resources available.***

14. Can Monaghan County Council address the issue of re-occurring potholes at Rafeenan, Ballinode? (beside Connolly's bridge). Does Monaghan County Council have plans to resurface this road in the near future?

**Reply: *The roads programme for the coming year will be determined at the next Road Area Committee Meeting to be held early in the New Year when roads budgets and allocations are known.***

**Cllr P. Connolly asked:**

15. In relation to the "Fix My Street" scheme which was introduced recently by Monaghan County Council
- (a) How many complaints/observations have been received?
  - (b) What issues are generally addressed under this scheme?
  - (c) Are the Council in a position to respond positively to these issues?
  - (d) What areas of the County make most use of the scheme?



**Reply: Fifteen submissions were made using the "Fix Your Street" portal in 2013 reporting on a number of issues, in particular potholes on roads, litter and public lighting faults. Whilst submissions were received in all road areas, the majority of reports were from the Monaghan and Castleblayney road areas. Monaghan County Council responded to each submission using the portal.**

**Cllr S. Conlon asked:**

16. In light of the recent announcement by Minister Jimmy Deenihan that a national allocation of €5m is being made available for Conservation Grants, is there any indication when this scheme will be advertised?

**Reply: Details of the Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme will be advertised in the local press during the week commencing 6 January 2014.**

17. As discussed at a previous Road Area Meetings, when can long overdue road surface and drainage improvement works on the Ardaghey road, LP1500, from Tamlet to Greaghglass expect to be initiated?

**Reply: The LP 1500 is proposed for the 2014 Roads Programme. The Roads Programme for the coming year will be determined at the next Road Area Committee Meeting to be held early in the New Year when roads budgets and allocations are known.**

18. Also in the interest of enhancing road safety, will the Roads Section undertake remedial works on the LP1630 between Drumbenagh to Milltown where the road surface is considerably uneven mostly due to infill subsidence along the path of a previously dug trench?

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

19. For the year 2013, what is the total sum collected by Monaghan County Council, for direct payment to the Department of Environment, through the charging of the landfill tax at Scotch Corner?

**Reply: The landfill levy return for the month of December has yet to be submitted to the Department. However, for the period January 2013 to November 2013 a total of €1,208,352 in landfill levy has been paid to the DoECLG.**

What is the current fee per ton?

**Reply: On July 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 the landfill levy increased from €65/tonne to €75/tonne.**

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

20. Given the growing public concern around the fluoridation of our drinking water, what schemes in the County add fluoride to the water, & what schemes don't?

**Reply: Monaghan PWS, Clones PWS, Carrickmacross PWS, Lough Egish RWSS are fluoridated. All other PWS in the County are not fluoridated.**

**Cllr N. Keelan asked:**

21. Given the difficulties that many of our community centres are having at present in obtaining fire certificates from Monaghan County Council, including, Corduff, Lisdoonan, & Inniskeen, will the Council work with these communities, and give them some time and space to complete the necessary works at these centres, but still mindful of fire safety?

**Reply: Monaghan Fire Authority has always endeavoured to work constructively and progressively with building owners to ensure the fire safety of their respective buildings. The three community centres in question have completed material alterations and/or major works in recent times in contravention to the building control regulations and building regulations. Every effort will be afforded to assist community groups and all building owners to achieve fire safety standards and building control compliance.**

22. Is there any indication from the Department that the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) will be reinstated in 2014, given the 200 hundred lanes on the list in County Monaghan waiting for resurfacing, and also given that the families living on these laneways are paying the same level of taxes as everyone else, but are not receiving the same level of services?

**Reply: The Department has not issued any notification to date in relation to the restoration of funding for Local Improvement Schemes for 2014.**

23. Will the Council confirm that Lisanisk private roadway in Carrickmacross will be fully reinstated and resurfaced once the works have been completed on the laying of the new water main, and also when is it hoped to have this work carried out?

**Reply: Yes. Lisanisk road will be fully reinstated and resurfaced once the works have been completed on the laying of the new water main. This work should be completed by April/May 2014.**

**Cllr B. McKenna asked:**

24. Will this Council examine the possibility of providing traffic calming measures on Regional Road 186 adjacent to the entrance to Tydavnet Primary school to reduce the speed of vehicles which is causing concern to parents and children alike?

**Reply: The Council will examine the possibility of traffic calming measures at this location.**

25. Will the Council take steps to eradicate water exiting onto local road LT 11713 at the entrance to the HSE Care Home at Tirnaskea North, Tydavnet?

**Reply: This will be examined with a view to establishing the source of the problem and to take the necessary steps to deal with it.**

**Cllr B. McKenna asked:**

26. Will this Council carry out a survey of the condition of the footpaths in Emyvale village, with a view to putting in place a plan to address those sections that are cracked/broken or have holes in them over the coming period?

**Reply: Arrangements will be put in place to survey the footpaths in Emyvale village. It is proposed to carry out necessary repairs early in the New Year subject to funding**

**Cllr M. Carthy asked:**

27. Will the Council outline whether any outstanding development contribution levies are owed by companies that are now under the control of NAMA; if so can the Council detail how much is owed by companies in this category?

**Reply: The Council is unable to confirm which development companies within the County are under the control of NAMA, and as such cannot specify the amount of contributions outstanding to them.**

28. Will the Council give an up-to-date progress report on the proposed Group Home for women with physical and sensory disabilities to be built at Drummond Otra, Carrickmacross including the envisaged commencement date?

**Reply: The final report on tenders was received from Respond! Housing Association on 29th November 2013. This report was submitted by Monaghan County Council to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government on 2nd December 2013. On the 9th December 2013 the Department requested that a Value for Money study be completed on the project. This is due to the recommended tender being substantially in excess of the pre-tender estimate prepared by Respond! Housing Association. The Council is currently seeking clarification from the Department regarding the scope of the Value for Money study. It is hoped that the study will be completed in mid-January 2014. Once the Value for Money study has been received, Monaghan County Council will submit it to the Department of 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.**

### **13. Notices of Motion**

**Cllr S. Conlon proposed, Cllr P. Treanor seconded,**

1. Answers to recent Dáil Questions addressed to the Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr. Brian Hayes TD, have stated there are five Government owned buildings identified in County Monaghan as long term vacant. They are the following former Garda stations:

Clontibret; Corrinshigagh; Newbliss; Shantonagh and Smithborough

In light of these buildings currently surplus to government agency requirements, that Monaghan County Council engage directly with the Office of Public Works with the intent of acquiring these buildings for use by local community/voluntary groups or sites for potential job creation opportunities.

In moving the motion Cllr Conlon proposed that the vacant Revenue Building at Coolshannagh be included in the proposal. He referred to the "Putting People First" document and in accordance with that document local authorities are to become catalysts for economic development. These buildings might provide set-up opportunities for small local businesses. Cllr P. Treanor concurred with the sentiments

Cllr Maxwell stated that, as far as he was aware, the Revenue Building was not vacant. Cllr Conlon held the view that this building was vacant but agreed to defer the proposal to another meeting.

Cllr Bannigan stated that he couldn't agree to a proposal that refers to the Council taking ownership of any more derelict properties. He proposed that the motion be amended by replacing the word 'acquiring' with the word 'facilitating'. Cllr O'Hanlon seconded the amendment, which was accepted by Cllr Conlon.

Mr. E. Cummins, County Manager acknowledged the sentiments of the Mayor's motion. He stated that the Council will have a much different role after June 2014. Economic development will be delivered in the context of the Municipal Districts and through the new Local Enterprise Office (LEO). However, the Council needs to be aware of the risks associated with managing these assets if the Minister or the OPW were to transfer these properties to the Council. He suggested that the Council consider the proposal in the context of the LEO and the existing buildings in Council ownership.

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

Cllr Bannigan requested that an inventory be prepared of all vacant properties in the county in Council ownership.

**Cllr P. McNally proposed, Cllr McNally seconded and it was agreed,**

2. That this Council seek a meeting with the NRA to examine the possibility of having all rumble strips removed from the hard shoulders of National and Secondary roads with a view to improving safety for cyclists. In most cases presently there appears to be only yellow hatching in readiness for protected areas for turning off. However, in many cases these are accompanied by rumble strips which seem to force cyclists on to the main thoroughfare.

**Cllr P. Connolly proposed, Cllr McNally seconded and it was agreed,**

3. That Monaghan County Council calls on the HSE-NE to ensure that all ambulance and emergency vehicles are equipped with Sat Nav equipment.

**Cllr M. Carthy proposed, Cllr Crowe seconded, and it was agreed**

4. That Monaghan County Council write to the Minister for Health, James Reilly, requesting that he immediately intervene to resolve the disgraceful waiting time of over 2 ½ years for those in

need of an audiology assessment and evaluation for hearing aid fitting in the Cavan Monaghan Region.

**Cllrs P. Treanor proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded, and it was agreed**

5. That Monaghan County Council:
  - Recognises that the Rural Transport Service (RTP) provided 1.3m journeys to rural dwellers in the state in 2012
  - Recognises the need to review and reform the Rural Transport Programme (RTP) in order to provide a more integrated and efficient rural service
  - Further recognises the value of local involvement and knowledge in the successful running of the RTP service and asks that this contribution by local people be respected and retained as the programme develops and grows.
  - Calls on Minister of State, Alan Kelly to ensure that as a result of the review that there is no reduction in the annual investment of €16.3m in the Rural Transport Programme (RTP) and that any monies saved as a result of the review be reinvested in the Rural Transport Programme (RTP)
  
6. In the absence of Cllr S. Treanor, this motion was deferred to the next meeting.

**Cllr Carthy proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded, and it was agreed**

7. That Monaghan County Council notes with disappointment the failure of the Government to include a much needed and significant stimulus package to create jobs in Budget 2014. We further note the failure of the Government to poverty and equality proof the budget and the failure of Budget 2014 to lift the burden off struggling low and middle income families and the failure to ask those who have more to pay more.

That we call on the Government to realise the regressive and potentially devastating measures in Budget 2014 and call on Fine Gael and Labour to:

- Reverse the decision to cut Jobseekers Benefit for under 25s given the real fear that this will lead to an increase of in the number of young people emigrating.
- Reverse the decision to abolish the Telephone Allowance for elderly people given the importance of the telephone particularly for isolated elderly people who must have a phone for their personal security alarm.
- Reverse the changes to medical cards which are likely to result 100,000 people losing their medical cards
- Reverse the cut the Maternity Benefit, the scrapping of the bereavement grant and the hike in prescription charges to €2.50.

**Cllr S. Coyle proposed, Cllr Coyle seconded, and it was agreed,**

8. That Monaghan County Council totally condemns the betrayal of older people in the recent budget, and calls on An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny T.D., all government ministers and Oireachtas members of the Fine Gael-Labour parties for the immediate reversal of the cuts in the areas of medical cards, the abolition of the telephone allowance, bereavement grants, the increase in prescription charges and DIRT tax, as they are causing enormous suffering, worry and stress to older people

#### 14. Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations.

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

- Matt Donnelly, Cavan and Aisling Donnelly, Bailieboro, on the tragic death of Shane Donnelly, RIP, a former employee with Meath County Council/Navan Town Council.
- Paula Cunningham, Council employee on the death of her aunt Geraldine McCabe, RIP.
- Brian Treanor, a member of the Council's outdoor staff on the deaths of his father and mother, Francis and Nan Treanor, RIP, Dundian, Emyvale.
- Briega and Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin on the sudden death of Briega's brother Bernard McGinn, RIP, formerly of Henry Street, Castleblayney.
- Fiona McCarron, Council employee on the deaths of her aunts – Kathleen O'Connor, RIP, Castleblayney, and Mary McQuaid, RIP, Killeevan.
- Toirleach Gourley, Council employee, on the death of his father Desmond, RIP.

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

- Darren Doherty, Emyvale Handball Club on winning both the Ulster Colleges Senior title and the County Monaghan Senior Handball championship.
- Pdraig Sherry, Annyalla on being appointed as Chairperson of County Monaghan GAA.
- Dermot and Liz Brannigan, Council staff on the birth of a baby boy.
- Pdraig McKenna, Killybrone and the other players who made their debut with the Monaghan Senior Football Team in the McKenna Cup.
- Aaron McCarey on his debut as goal-keeper with Wolverhampton Wanderers

#### 15. 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.*

Promoting Authority	Subject/Theme	Venue	Dates	Members Selected
Councillors Conferences	Political Reform 2014	Bewleys Hotel, Newlands Cross, Naas Rd Dublin 22.	10 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr H. McElvaney Cllr O. Bannigan Cllr D. Maxwell
I.C.B.A.N.	Community Forums Data Made Easy	Monaghan	16 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr P. Connolly Cllr J. Crowe
Training Seminar for Councillors	Local Government Bill 2013 A Political Perspective	Carlton Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe, Galway.	17th- 18h January	Cllr A. Murray

### 15. Conferences (contd):

<b>Promoting Authority</b>	<b>Subject/Theme</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Members Selected</b>
<b>Celtic Conferences</b>	Branding in Political Elections a new quality of Political Communication	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.	17 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr P. Connolly Cllr R. Gallagher Cllr P.J. O'Hanlon Cllr H. McElvaney Cllr G. Carville Cllr D. Maxwell
<b>TJK Conferences Ltd</b>	Valuation Process for Rating Properties Seminar for Councillors	Scotts Limerick, Ashbourne Ave, South Circular Rd., Limerick	17 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr P. McNally Cllr S. Coyle
<b>Training Seminar for Councillors</b>	Media Skills for Councillors	Clifden Station House Hotel, Clifden, Co. Galway	23 <sup>rd</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr PJ O'Hanlon Cllr P. McNally
<b>TGR Seminars</b>	How Councillors can access Grant Aid for Communities	Bunratty Castle Hotel, Bunratty, Co Clare.	24 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr O. Bannigan Cllr H. McElvaney
<b>Celtic Conferences</b>	Doing More with Less- Managing Time & Productivity	Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, West Cork.	24 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> January	Cllr J. O'Brien Cllr S. Coyle
<b>LAMA</b>	Annual Spring Seminar	Four Seasons Hotel, Monaghan	31 <sup>st</sup> January - 1 <sup>st</sup> February	Cllr N. Keelan Cllr O. Bannigan Cllr H. McElvaney Cllr G. Carville Cllr A. Murray

The meeting then concluded.