

## Municipal District of Monaghan.

**Inaugural meeting of Monaghan Municipal District held in the Council Chamber, Mtek 1 Building, Knockaconny on Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014.**

**Present:** Cllrs. David Maxwell, Seamus Treanor, Paudge Connolly, Robbie Gallagher, Sean Conlon and Brian McKenna.

**In Attendance:** Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive, Adge King, Director of Corporate, Paul Treanor, Acting Director of Services, Donal McElwain, Municipal District Co-Ordinator, Frances Matthews, Co-Ordinator of Municipal District meetings, Bernie McElvaney, Senior Staff Officer, Dermot Deeney, Executive Engineer, Damien Thornton, Assistant Engineer, Bernie McMahan, Staff Officer, Carmel Murphy, Assistant Staff Officer, Marcia McMeel, Clerical Officer, Janice Eardley, Clerical Officer.

### **1. (a) Election of Cathaoirleach:**

At the outset Donal McElwain opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first Annual General Meeting of the Municipal District of Monaghan. Mr. McElwain sought nominations for the position of Cathaoirleach. Cllr. Conlon was proposed by Cllr. McKenna and seconded by Cllr. Conlon

Discussions took place with regard to the annual appointment of 'Cathaoirleach'. Cllr. Treanor proposed that the independents should get the fifth seat; this was seconded by Cllr. Connolly. A vote on this proposal was taken which resulted as follows:-

*For:-*

Cllrs. Treanor and Connolly.

*Against:-*

Cllrs. Conlon, McKenna, Maxwell & Gallagher.

It was then proposed by Cllr. Conlon, seconded by Cllr. Maxwell that each party would be allocated a year as Cathaoirleach for the first four years and the final year would be determined by lots between the two largest parties i.e. Sinn Fein and Independents. A vote on this proposal was taken which resulted as follows:-

*For:-*

Cllrs. Conlon, McKenna, Maxwell and Gallagher

*Abstentions:-*

Treanor and Connolly.

Therefore the second proposal which was proposed by Cllr. Conlon seconded by Cllr. Maxwell was carried.

As there were no further nominations received for the position of Cathaoirleach Mr. McElwain declared Cllr. Conlon to be elected as Cathaoirleach for the coming term.

Cllr. Conlon on taking his seat welcomed all to the meeting and said it was a great honour for him to be appointed as the first Cathaoirleach for the Municipal District of Monaghan.

### **(b) Election of Leas-Chathaoirleach:**

On the proposal of Cllr. McKenna, seconded by Cllr. Maxwell, Cllr. Treanor was proposed for the position of Leas-Chathaoirleach. As there were no other nominations for this position Cllr. Treanor was declared Leas-Chathaoirleach for the coming term.

The Chief Executive, Eugene Cummins congratulated Cllr. Conlon on his appointment as Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Treanor as Leas-Chathaoirleach. He stated that this was an important day and a day to be marked in history. He said it was a new era in Local Government and was a proud day for him to be part of it. It had given effect to a lot of changes and acknowledged how staff and elected members have embraced the

changes. The Chief Executive said that a special focus will be placed on younger people and community and those socially excluded in order to make Monaghan a better place. Further focus will be placed on the district facilitated by the Public Participation Network while the Community Development Plan will address the needs of the community in the future.

He continued to say that emphasis was on outcome rather than debate and that the elected members have a hard task with only six members representing over 20,500 people. He said the nature of their role has significantly changed with increased powers assigned to them.

The Chief Executive welcomed members of the press, Padraig Clerkin from Northern Sound and Michael Mc Donnell from The Northern Standard and said they are very important stakeholders in moving the Municipal District forward.

He concluded by wishing the Cathaoirleach and all the members the very best in working in the Municipal District.

It was agreed to circulate a list of new staffing to all members.

## **2. Adoption of Standing Orders:**

It was agreed by all members present that the meetings would be held on the third Monday of each month excluding August at the time of 3.30pm.

In relation to the notices of motions and questions, Cllr. Maxwell requested clarity on the issue. The Chief Executive stated that representations from members on day to day issues should be dealt with via email or telephone but that it was up to the members if they wished to do this.

Cllr. McKenna raised the standing order in relation to disorderly conduct. Cllr. Connolly also queried the severity of the penalties associated with this. Mr. Cummins replied that it was vital that District business be conducted in a business-like manner and requested that the members leave the standing orders as they were for the time being.

On the proposal of Cllr. Maxwell and seconded by Cllr. Gallagher, the Standing Orders, including amendments, were adopted.

## **3. Function and role Of the Municipal District and (4) outline of Reserved Functions.**

Mr. Adge King, Director of Services addressed the meeting and congratulated Cllr. Conlon on his appointment as Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Treanor on his appointment as Leas-Chathaoirleach and also all the members of the Municipal District on the recent election.

He proceeded to give a presentation on the functions of the Municipal District which was circulated to all those present.

Cllr. Treanor raised the issue of car parking charges and queried as to how the funds would be allocated in the district in the future. A detailed discussion took place in relation to the revenue from car-parking . Questions were raised in relation to the level of debt inherited from the Town Councils.

Cllr. McKenna suggested that a presentation should be given clarifying the impact of the abolition of the Town Councils and the change- over with regard to issues such as Debt and Assets. The Chief Executive stated that there would be clarity during the budget process and all their concerns will be addressed then.

Cllr. Maxwell asked if a member makes a proposal to increase/reduce parking fees and other members agree to it, can it be passed at Municipal District level. The Chief Executive advised that if any issue/decisions have significant implications for the County at large, it will be a County Council decision.

#### **5. Report by Municipal District Co-Coordinator:**

Donal McElwain gave a brief report on the set up of the Municipal District including the breakdown of staff, offices, office contact number and the actions for the next few months.

#### **Any Other Business**

Cllr. McKenna stated that in light of yesterday's news in relation to Monaghan's poor record of Road Safety, the Road Safety Committee should be made aware of this and further funding requested from the NRA. The Chief Executive responded that the record was high, but that the report was a statistical anomaly rather than a true reflection of road deaths in the County. Currently, he said Monaghan County Council does not have a Road Safety Officer and this must be addressed in the near future.

Cllr. Maxwell expressed concern at the closure of the Town Council offices and requested that the ground floor should be open to give 'life' to the building. Cllr. Gallagher acknowledged his comments and said if it's only for tradition, there should be someone in the building. The Chief Executive stated that he will be discussing this matter with John Murray and Donal McElwain.

Cllr. McKenna raised the issue that today is 'Canada Day' and that the Canadian Ambassador would not only be attending the Country and Western Music Festival, but would also be staying in Monaghan for a period of 2 days. He requested that the Ambassador and his colleagues' attendance would be acknowledged during their stay. Cllr. Conlon replied that as the next Municipal District meeting would not be held until 21<sup>st</sup> July, it would be impossible to arrange something for them, however he assured members that something would be organised to acknowledge their presence in the County. Cllr. McKenna also stated that the festival committee acknowledge our assistance at this event.

#### **Votes of Sympathy:**

It was unanimously agreed that the sympathy of the Council be extended to Michael McDonnell, The Northern Standard journalist, on the death of his father, Sean,

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

The meeting concluded at 12.30p.m.

Signed

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**Cathaoirleach**

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**Meetings Administrator**

**21<sup>st</sup> Day of July, 2014.**

Date