

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Monaghan County Council held in the Council Chamber, Mtek Building, Armagh Road, Monaghan on Monday, 15th June 2026 at 2.00pm

Chair: Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllrs Aughey, Campbell, Carthy, Clerkin, S. Conlon, P. Conlon, Coyle, Johnston, Flynn, Gibbons, Keelan, McAree, McCooey, S. Treanor and Truell.

Mr. R. Burns, Chief Executive, Mr. C. Flynn, Ms. C O'Hare, Ms. O. McConnon, Directors of Services, Mr. N. O'Connor, Ms. N. Payne, A/Director of Services, Ms. M. McGarvey, Meetings Administrator and Ms. M. McMahon, Staff Officer.

MS Teams: Cllrs Gilliland and P. Treanor

Outgoing Cathaoirleach's address:

Cllr PJ O'Hanlon, outgoing Cathaoirleach welcomed and addressed all present. He referred to his election as Cathaoirleach on 16th June 2025 and provided an overview of some of the key highlights from a busy tenure:

- The Project Children 50th Anniversary Programme, which celebrated the enduring legacy of Project Children and its significant contribution to peace-building and fostering community connections.
- The comprehensive programme of events delivered as part of Climate Action Week (14–18th October 2025), which raised awareness of practical actions at both personal and local levels, while showcasing a range of projects and initiatives underway across the County.
- The announcement of €7 million in funding for the transformative redevelopment of the St Louis Convent Grounds in Monaghan Town.
- The inaugural Monaghan Business and Tourism Awards, that had been organised by the Anglo Celt in partnership with Monaghan County Council, held on 17th April 2026 at the Nuremore Estate, Carrickmacross. The event was attended by approximately 270 guests and celebrated excellence, innovation, and enterprise across the county.
- The Schools Sing Competition held at the Iontas Theatre, Castleblayney, which provided a platform for local students to showcase their creativity and confidence while promoting key messages around sustainability, anti-littering, and environmental protection. The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the work of those involved in organising the event, in particular Mr N. O'Connor, A/Director of Services, and Ms B. McMahon, Staff Officer, Environment.
- The adoption of the Litter Management Plan 2026–2029.
- Monaghan County Council's success in securing the Local Authority Energy Decarbonisation Award at the 2026 LAMA All-Ireland Community and Council Awards on 28th February 2026. The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the contribution of all involved in the Reclaimed Asphalt project, particularly Mr K. West, Acting Senior Engineer, Roads.
- The official opening of the new €3.4 million Ballybay Fire Station on 24th April 2026.

The Cathaoirleach thanked his party colleagues in Fianna Fáil for affording him the opportunity to serve as Cathaoirleach, noting that the role was both a privilege and an honour. He expressed his appreciation to the Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr R. Truell, for deputising on his behalf on various occasions.

He paid tribute to the Executive, led by the Chief Executive, for their ongoing assistance and support throughout his term of office, and acknowledged the local media for their fair and impartial reporting of Council meetings. The Cathaoirleach extended his sincere gratitude to the Meetings Administrator, Ms. M. McGarvey, for her exceptional support and guidance during his term in office. He also commended Ms C. McKeown and Ms J. Arnold of the Communications Team for their professionalism and attention to detail in the performance of their roles. He further expressed his appreciation to the Municipal District Coordinators and to all staff of Monaghan County Council, acknowledging their dedication and the high standard to which they carry out their roles, as well as their commitment and passion in delivering services.

Cllr O'Hanlon thanked his fellow members who work to ensure that their constituents have the best life possible in Co Monaghan. Concluding, Cllr O'Hanlon paid tribute to the support, encouragement and co-operation of his family which had allowed him to give the best of his attention to carrying out the privileged role of Cathaoirleach.

The outgoing Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr R. Truell, reflected on the past year and expressed his appreciation to the Cathaoirleach, Cllr P.J. O'Hanlon, for his leadership, dedication, and commitment. He noted it was a privilege to serve alongside him and to deputise when required. He highlighted the positive and productive work of the Council over the year, achieved through constructive engagement and a shared commitment to serving the people of Monaghan. He thanked fellow Councillors for their cooperation and acknowledged the professionalism and dedication of the Chief Executive and Council staff. Cllr Truell also expressed his appreciation to the public for their continued support. He concluded by stating it had been an honour to serve as Leas-Chathaoirleach and wished the incoming Cathaoirleach every success.

The members commended Cllr PJ O'Hanlon for the way he had undertaken the role of Cathaoirleach, for the courtesy and respect shown to his fellow members and the efficient, fair and impartial way he had conducted Council meetings. Members also commended Cllr R. Truell for his service and contribution during his term as Leas-Chathaoirleach.

1. Election of Cathaoirleach of County Monaghan for 2026/2027

Cllr O'Hanlon sought nominations for the position of Cathaoirleach.

Cllr P. Conlon proposed, Cllr R. Truell seconded, that Cllr Aidan Campbell be nominated for the position of Cathaoirleach of County Monaghan for the year 2026/27.

As there were no other nominations, Cllr Aidan Campbell was declared elected as Cathaoirleach.

Following his election, Cllr A. Campbell assumed the position of Cathaoirleach and thanked his proposer, seconder and the members that had supported his election. He stated that it was a great honour to be afforded the opportunity to be elected as Cathaoirleach. He pledged to work with his Councillor colleagues and the officials of the Council to achieve the common goal of delivering for the people and working to ensure Monaghan is a great place to live, work and visit. He paid tribute to the outgoing Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ O'Hanlon and the Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr R. Truell for their dedication, commitment and the professional way in which they had undertaken their roles over the past 12 months. He further wished the outgoing Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ O'Hanlon well as he takes up the role of Chair of the East border Region organisation. He congratulated Cllr. S. Coyle on his election as Cathaoirleach of Ballybay-Clones Municipal District and Cllr A. Johnston on his election as Cathaoirleach of Monaghan Municipal District and stated that he looked forward to working closely with them

in the year ahead. The Cathaoirleach thanked his family for their ongoing support and acknowledged the local media for their fair and impartial coverage of Council proceedings. He also expressed appreciation to the Communications Team, Ms C. McKeown and Ms J. Arnold, for their work. He referred to the development of a new citizen app which is being led by Director of Services, Ms C. O'Hare, noting its anticipated benefits for the public, and wished Ms. O'Hare every success with the initiative. He concluded by acknowledging the work of the Executive, and all Council staff, and stated that he looked forward to working with them in the year ahead.

The Cathaoirleach outlined the following key priorities for the year ahead:

- Expanding housing provision through Affordable Housing and Cost Rental Schemes across the county.
- Advocating for increased funding for the roads network.
- Supporting delivery of key capital projects, including the Blackwater Valley Enterprise Hub, Rockcorry Community Centre, Rooskey Lands Access Road, BioConnect Innovation Centre, St Louis Convent Grounds redevelopment, Carrickmacross Workhouse and industrial zoned lands at Annahagh and across the county.
- Promoting job creation and attracting investment.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the commencement of the Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration Phase II project during the summer, which will see the transformation of the historic Market House into a community and cultural space. He also noted the upcoming Lough Muckno and Environs Masterplan public drop-in event scheduled for 18th June and he encouraged public engagement. He further welcomed the recent launch of Community Vision and Spatial Plans for Glaslough, Inniskeen and Smithborough, commending the collaboration between the Council and local communities.

The Cathaoirleach highlighted the strength of the local economy, noting the role of indigenous enterprise and the supports provided by the Local Enterprise Office in enabling business growth and job creation.

He acknowledged the significant contribution of the arts, citing the international success of Michael Gallen, a Castleblayney composer who had been supported through Council seed funding, as an example of the value of investing in local talent.

In conclusion, he emphasised that the people of Monaghan are central to the county's success and expressed his appreciation for the ongoing contribution of communities, businesses and volunteers.

The members congratulated Cllr Campbell on his election as Cathaoirleach and wished him success during his term of office.

2. Election of Leas-Chathaoirleach of Monaghan County Council for 2026/2027

Cllr Campbell sought nominations for the position of Leas-Chathaoirleach.

Cllr C. Carthy proposed, Cllr S. Flynn seconded, that Cllr Noel Keelan be nominated for the position of Leas-Chathaoirleach for the year 2026/27.

As there was no other nomination for this position the Cathaoirleach declared Cllr Noel Keelan elected as Leas-Chathaoirleach and congratulated him on his election.

The members joined in the congratulations to Cllr Keelan on his election as Leas-Chathaoirleach and wished him success during his term of office. Cllr Keelan thanked his party colleagues for the nomination and stated that he would be available to assist the Cathaoirleach in any way possible during the year ahead. He also commended the outgoing Cathaoirleach, Councillor PJ O'Hanlon, and the outgoing Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr R. Truell, for their commitment, dedication and professionalism in the discharge of their duties. Councillor Keelan extended his best wishes to Councillor O'Hanlon as he takes up the role of Chair of the East Border Region in the year ahead.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Meetings Administrator

Date: _____
