

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 3 June 2024 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

Chair	Councillor Molloy (Outgoing) Councillor McConnell (Incoming)
Members Present	Councillors Bell, Black, Brown, J Buchanan, W Buchanan, F Burton, J Burton, Cahoon, Clarke, Forde, Graham, Johnston, Kelly, Kerr, Mallaghan, McAleer, McElvogue, McFlynn, McGuigan, McLean, McLernon, McNamee, S McPeake, McQuade, Monteith, Quinn, Robinson, Varsani, Wilson
Officers in Attendance	Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) Ms Campbell, Strategic Director of Environment (SD: Env) Ms Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisational Development Strategy and Performance (SD: ODSP) Mr McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) Ms Keys, Marketing and Communications Manager Mrs Forde, Committee and Member Services Manager Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast.

AC1/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

AC2/24 Apologies

Councillors Carney, Corry, Cuthbertson, Gildernew, Groogan, Martin, D McPeake, Milne and Totten

Mr Tohill, Strategic Director of Corporate Service and Finance (SD: CS&F)

AC3/24 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest.

AC4/23 Chair's Business

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy expressed sympathy to the family and colleagues of employee Siobhan Farrell, Planning and to Councillor Gildernew on the tragic death of her nephew Fiachra Ó Faoláin who was also grandson of the former councillor Phelim Gildernew.

Speaking on his year in office, Councillor Molloy said, "Just 12 months ago I sat here anticipating an exciting, busy and challenging year ahead, 12 months on I can honestly say that all expectations have been surpassed. The past year has gone in a flash and as it ends, it has been an absolute honour and privilege to have had this opportunity to not only represent this District but to engage with the people who make Mid Ulster the truly special place it is to live, to visit, to work in and to do business with.

During the year, I attended 100's of events and engagements but no matter where I have been, I have been warmly and respectfully received, welcomed into communities, sporting organisations, schools and businesses. The highlights have been many including the various projects of Connecting Pomeroy and its culmination on Thursday past with the opening of new Forest Building and magical trails, the state of the art facilities at the Dungannon Thomas Clarkes, Hallowe'en and Christmas events, Civic Awards, our inaugural Sports awards, The Moy Food Fair, Continental Market, Coalisland Summer Bash to name just a few as well as celebrating our diversity and cultural celebrations such as our Lithuanian and Timor Leste communities, Mid Ulster Pride, Seachtaine na Gaelige & St Patricks Day but in all just meeting people, having the craic with everyone, young and old, enjoying the moments, soaking it up and seeing people smile and laugh.

Some were obviously a bit more formal and it was always an honour to represent the Council and welcome and engage with international representatives such as delegations from Rivas Vaciamadrid and Plurin sur Mer, the US Special Economic Envoy, The Ambassadors to London for Timor Leste, The Peoples Republic of China and the Consular representatives for Portugal, Spain, Italy, the US and China and have conversations not just about tourism and economic interests but most importantly the experiences of their people living, working and making a contribution to life in Mid Ulster. For some events it was particularly important that both myself and the Deputy Chair were present together, sending out that message of unity with respect for difference, so Meta I thank you for your help, support and friendship in what I know was a very personal journey for you and your family.

I obviously have a few thank you's to do before I vacate, firstly to my party colleagues for entrusting me with the position of Chair and their support throughout the year, it has been an honour and a privilege. My employer Linden Foods have been absolutely fantastic and have allowed me the space to fulfil the role. To each and every fellow councillor thank you for your input and respect, not just during meetings but also out and about at various events and engagements.

To the various teams within Council Communications, Economic & Community Development, Tourism, to member support team and particularly to the staff who work so tirelessly at our many events and are the public front for this Council the work you do is immeasurable. To the Chief Executive and officers who as we know do a great job and provided me with sound advice and guidance when needed.

For fear of leaving people out I haven't mentioned many names however two ladies who kept me in craic all year round as I'm sure they do with many of you Jeanette and Christine, always time for a chat and a cup of tea on the go and special thanks to Louise and Jennifer who has made sure that all diary requests and commitments were attended to, between different representatives not one event was missed. Indeed the entire staff of this council are amazing and it was great to get around all our services and facilities at various times to meet so many of the fantastic people we have.

The biggest thank you I owe is to my wife Frances and our family who have had busy years themselves and many evenings and weekends didn't see much of me. There is a growing list of jobs to be sorted! And lastly I wish all those taking up positions for the incoming year the very best of luck and to the incoming Chair and Deputy, embrace it, enjoy it, you will have a great year getting to discover so much more about the work of the Council, our industry but most important of all our people, comhghairdeas agus ádh mór! Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir."

Councillor Mallaghan thanked the outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy for his excellent year in office which had been both successful and busy. He highlighted that many of the images shared on social media portrayed him as the true character he was especially in how he reached out to all communities. Councillor Mallaghan highlighted in particular East Timor Independence Day celebrations on the Hill of The O'Neill an event of flair and colour which showed Mid Ulster's true light unlike the racism displayed in Cookstown which is most definitely not acceptable. Councillor Mallaghan reflected on Councillor Molloy's first comments as Chair when he shared the family history and spoke of his father, Francie who is now stepping down after 39 years' service. He said that Councillor Molloy had promised to be his own man and he was true to that and had obviously favoured the recent launch in Pomeroy as he had worn a tie! He concluded paying tribute to Councillor Molloy's family and employer who supported him throughout the year.

The outgoing Deputy Chair, Councillor Graham extended sympathy to the Gildernew and Ó Faoláin family on the exceptionally sad death of Fiáchra. She also extended sympathy to the family of Siobhan Farrell.

Commenting on her year in office the Deputy Chair said, "I would like to begin by thanking my nominating officer and party colleague Cllr Trevor Wilson for the faith he had in me to undertake the position of Deputy Chair. It really has been both an honour and a privilege for me to serve all the residents of Mid Ulster this last year.

The year has gone by so quickly, I have been humbled, impressed and inspired by the people of our district who go above and beyond in their efforts to make this a

much better place for all of us. Individuals and groups alike, who come together to forge friendships, support networks and to fill gaps when other services were lacking, welcomed me in and showed me what can be achieved when we work together. The opportunity I had to represent this whole district at various events is truly one which I did not take lightly. I have met people I never would have met and been to places I would never have been otherwise. I have seen more of Mid Ulster than I have ever seen before and I am so grateful to everyone who supported and encouraged me along the way, so that I have been able to carry out my duties in a fitting manner. I have always said that it's much easier for men than for women because men can turn up in the same suit 100 times and people say isn't he well turned out? But if a woman turns up in the same dress twice they say isn't it a wonder she doesn't have anything else?

I would like to thank Adrain for always being so gracious with his time, the council officers and staff who were always on hand to guide and support me and to Dominic who I would like to thank and congratulate. We have different views politically, but you were a credit to yourself, your party and to this council, in the way you carried out your duties. You were always very courteous and obliging to me personally and it was a pleasure working with you.

To the people of Clogher Valley who believed in me and elected me in the first place, I offer my sincere and grateful thanks, for without you none of these things would have happened.

Finally, I just want to say thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout my year in office, especially my family and to say how very much I have appreciated all the kindness, encouragement and prayers for both myself and my family. Thank you for such an amazing opportunity, I have laughed and cried in equal measure but I have had a wonderful year as Deputy Chair and I hope the incoming Deputy Chair enjoys their year as much as I have. Thank you."

Councillor McLean on behalf of the DUP extended sympathy to the family of Siobhan Farrell and to the Gildernew family and said their thoughts and prayers were with both families.

Councillor McLean congratulated both the Chair and Deputy Chair on carrying out their roles and responsibilities throughout the year. He said whilst there is political differences yet it would be remiss not to acknowledge how both carried out their duties. He said as a Council Mid Ulster sets the benchmark and the other 10 councils should emulate how matters are settled, he concluded by commending the outgoing Chair and Deputy. He said like Councillor Mallaghan he too had been in the role and knows the sacrifices made.

Councillor Quinn on behalf of the SDLP extended sympathies to the families of Fiachra Ó Faoláin and Siobhan Farrell stating that thoughts and prayers are with them.

Councillor Quinn added his congratulations to the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair in how they had carried out their duties and shown Mid Ulster in a fantastic

light. He said they had been First Citizen for everyone and were a credit to themselves, their families, parties and the Council.

Councillor Monteith extended condolences to families Siobhan Farrell and Fiachra Ó Faoláin. In speaking of Fiachra's tragic death he said that he hoped the young people he was friends with stayed strong and supported each other.

Councillor Monteith commended the outgoing Chair saying he had known him for many years and he had been a credit to himself and his family. He also commended the outgoing Deputy Chair and said he had not known her for long but she had carried out a great job in the role.

Councillor Kerr extended condolences to the families of Farrell and Fiachra Ó Faoláin and like Councillor Monteith encouraged Fiachra's friends to be there for each other. He thanked both the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair for treating him with respect and in how they had carried out their respective roles.

Councillor Wilson extended sympathies to the families of Farrell and Fiachra Ó Faoláin. He too thanked the outgoing Chair and Deputy for the excellent year in office. Councillor Wilson paid tribute to Councillor Molloy and said he had treated everyone with courtesy and been fair across the board. To Councillor Graham he said she had carried out many duties and they both now deserved a rest.

Councillor Mallaghan paid tribute to the outgoing Deputy Chair and said that she had done a great job especially given the difficult time she had had. He concluded that they had stood side by side and showed great leadership.

The Chief Executive on behalf of all the staff said it had been a pleasure to work with the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair and that both had served the Council well and been fantastic ambassadors for Mid Ulster. He concluded saying that they could now enjoy their return to being noisy back benchers.

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy said that the interest in the Chair and Deputy Chair roles was demonstrated in the huge number of invitations received which augurs well for Council.

AC5/24 Nomination of Councillors to hold Positions of Responsibility for 2024-25 as confirmed at the AGM May 2023

The outgoing Chair Councillor Molloy referred members to the meeting pack containing the agreed grid for Positions of Responsibility for the period 2023-2027, to be filled using the d'hondt method.

Nominations were made as noted.

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy called on Councillor Mallaghan nominating officer for Sinn Féin nominated Councillor to take the Chair.

Councillor Mallaghan nominated Councillor McConnell.

Councillor Molloy stood down from position.

Councillor McConnell took the Chair at 7.20pm

The Chair, Councillor McConnell accepting the position said, “Go raibh mile maith agaibh agus ta failte romhaibh ar fad anseo trathna inniu.

I firstly wish to sincerely thank my party colleagues for entrusting me with nomination to this position for the year ahead, it is a massive privilege and honour for me personally to step into the role.

I feel this is equally shared by the good people of the Clogher Valley area who put their faith in myself by electing me as their Councillor back in May of last year.

I wish to acknowledge the sterling work of our outgoing Chair my party colleague, Councillor Dominic Molloy and the Deputy Chair Councillor Graham.

It was clear for us all to see throughout the year that they both had a great working relationship and Councillor Molloy highlighted that in his comments. Dominic is a good friend and a tough act to follow, Meta is an endearing, engaging and warm person and I would commend you both on how you served the council this past year. This has been a great strength of this Council - people working together in the best interests of the people we all represent. I think you rightly deserve a round of applause. Buladh bós.

This time last year 13 new Councillors entered the Council Chamber for the first time, myself included and now I find myself with the great honour of becoming Chairperson of Mid Ulster District Council.

I entered the political arena following a long period of four decades working in the Civil Service. My retirement was short lived, but I must admit the challenges I now face as an elected representative have been both rewarding and fulfilling.

I now appreciate fully the important and tireless work which Councillors carry out for our communities on a daily basis.

I am very lucky to have a dedicated and committed group of Party Colleagues alongside me working in the best interests of all our constituents within Mid Ulster.

Change is sweeping across the entire island, and as First Citizen of Mid Ulster I look forward to playing my part in building shared and better society.

I am committed to working for all, and to being a Chair for All, with an absolute determination to deliver positive change in this area.

We must continue to strive to do the best we can for all our residents particularly our community and voluntary sector and those who have been greatly affected by Tory cuts and by continued funding constraints.

In the coming year it is my intention to speak with as many of our people and communities as possible.

Our local employers and employees, our businesses and entrepreneurs, our community & voluntary sector and in particular our sporting groups, clubs and individuals who do so much across such a wide range of levels, ability and age and in so many different codes.

As a Council we must use our voice and our strength to fight for those who seek our support. A collective voice is required if we are to force change.

And I look forward to working with you all to achieve better outcomes for everyone.

There will be hurdles and challenges along the way, but I know with co-operation and respect, obstacles can be overcome - "Where there is a will, there is a way".

In closing I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting me in this role and finally the biggest thanks of all must go to my very supportive and understanding wife Kate and my family for their continued love and support without whom none of this would be possible. Go raibh mfe maith agaibh go leir."

The Chair, Councillor McConnell sought a nomination from the DUP for Deputy Chair.

Councillor McLean nominated Councillor Brown

Councillor Graham stood down and Councillor Brown took the role of Deputy Chair.

The Chair, Councillor McConnell invited Deputy Chair, Councillor Brown to speak.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Brown said he was a man of few words and would keep his comments short. He thanked his fellow councillors for the nomination and his group leader for all the advice and wisdom he had shared with him since entering politics. He said Councillor McLean had encouraged him to run in an election 31 years ago but at that time he had been unsuccessful but had kept coming back until he had attained success in 2019. Councillor Brown said behind every good man is a better woman and his wife Lisa is always there to keep him right. He concluded by saying his faith was important to him and in giving thanks to Almighty God shared Proverbs 3 5-6 "Trust in the Lord your God with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths."

The Chair Councillor McConnell invited Party Nominating Officers from parties to nominate Members to hold the remaining positions of responsibility for 2024-2025.

Position of Responsibility	Party	Councillor
Council, Chair	SF	Cllr McConnell
Council, Deputy Chair	DUP	Cllr Brown
Audit Committee, Chair	SF	Cllr McGuigan
Audit Committee, Deputy Chair	DUP	Cllr W Buchanan

Development Committee, Chair	DUP	Cllr Black
Development Committee, Deputy Chair	SF	Cllr Gildernew
Environment Committee, Chair	SF	Cllr McAleer
Environment Committee, Deputy Chair	DUP	Cllr J Burton
Planning Committee, Chair	DUP	Cllr Robinson
Planning Committee, Deputy Chair	Ind - Kerr	Cllr Kerr
Policy & Resources Committee, Chair	SDLP	Cllr Quinn
Policy & Resources Committee, Deputy Chair	DUP	Cllr F Burton
Housing Council for NI	SF	Cllr Mallaghan
Partnership Panel for NI (term of Council)	SDLP	Cllr Martin
Reserve & Cadets Association for NI	DUP	Cllr Cahoon
Policing & Community Safety Partnership (term of Council)	SF	Councillor S McPeake
	SF	Councillor McNamee
	SF	Councillor Carney
	SF	Councillor Varsani
	SF	Councillor Mallaghan
	SF	Cllr McGuigan
	DUP	Cllr Cahoon
	DUP	Cllr Cuthbertson
	DUP	Cllr Forde
SDLP	Cllr McFlynn	

A7/24 Appointment of Councillors to Committees 2024-25

The Chair, Councillor McConnell invited Nominating Officers from parties to nominate Members to serve on committees. Nominations were made

Audit Committee		
Position	Party	Membership 2024-2025
1. Chair	SF	Cllr B McGuigan
2. Deputy-Chair	DUP	Cllr W Buchanan

3. Member	SF	Cllr McConnell
4. Member	SF	Cllr Groogan
5. Member	DUP	Cllr Brown
6. Member	SDLP	Cllr McQuade
7. Member	Ind	Cllr Kerr
8. Member	Ind	Cllr Montieth

Development Committee		
Position	Party	2024-2025 Membership
1. Chair	DUP	Cllr Black
2. Deputy-Chair	SF	Cllr Gildernew
3. Member	SF	Cllr Bell
4. Member	SF	Cllr Clarke
5. Member	SF	Cllr Corry
6. Member	SF	Cllr McLernon
7. Member	SF	Cllr McNamee
8. Member	SF	Cllr Milne
9. Member	SF	Cllr Molloy
10. Member	DUP	Cllr W Buchanan
11. Member	DUP	Cllr F Burton
12. Member	DUP	Cllr Forde
13. Member	SDLP	Cllr McQuade
14. Member	SDLP	Cllr Quinn
15. Member	UUP	Cllr Wilson
16. Member	Ind	Cllr Montieth

Environment Committee		
Position	Party	Membership 2024- 2025
1. Chair	SF	Cllr McAleer
2. Deputy-Chair	DUP	Cllr J Burton
3. Member	SF	Cllr Groogan
4. Member	SF	Cllr Kelly
5. Member	SF	Cllr Mallaghan
6. Member	SF	Cllr McGuigan
7. Member	SF	Cllr McNamee
8. Member	SF	Cllr Milne
9. Member	SF	Cllr Varsani
10. Member	DUP	Cllr J Buchanan
11. Member	DUP	Cllr Cahoon
12. Member	DUP	Cllr Cuthbertson
13. Member	DUP	Cllr Robinson
14. Member	SDLP	Cllr Johnston
15. Member	SDLP	Cllr Martin
16. Member	Ind	Cllr McElvogue

Planning Committee		
Position	Party	Membership 2024-2025
1. Chair	DUP	Cllr Robinson
2. Deputy-Chair	Ind	Cllr Kerr
3. Member	SF	Cllr Bell
4. Member	SF	Cllr Carney
5. Member	SF	Cllr Clarke
6. Member	SF	Cllr Mallaghan
7. Member	SF	Cllr D McPeake
8. Member	SF	Cllr S McPeake
9. Member	SF	Cllr Varsani
10. Member	DUP	Cllr Black
11. Member	DUP	Cllr Buchanan
12. Member	DUP	Cllr Cuthbertson
13. Member	SDLP	Cllr Martin
14. Member	SDLP	Cllr McFlynn
15. Member	UUP	Cllr Graham
16. Member	Ind	Cllr K McElvogue

Policy & Resources Committee		
Position	Party	Membership 2024-2025
1. Chair	SDLP	Cllr Quinn
2. Deputy-Chair	DUP	Cllr F Burton
3. Member	SF	Cllr Corry
4. Member	SF	Cllr Gildernew
5. Member	SF	Cllr McAleer
6. Member	SF	Cllr McConnell
7. Member	SF	Cllr McLernon
8. Member	SF	Cllr S McPeake
9. Member	SF	Cllr Molloy
10. Member	SF	Cllr Totten
11. Member	DUP	Cllr Brown
12. Member	DUP	Cllr J Burton
13. Member	DUP	Cllr Cahoon
14. Member	DUP	Cllr McLean
15. Member	SDLP	Cllr Johnston
16. Member	UUP	Cllr Wilson

A8/24 Appointment of Chair of Mid Ulster Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

The Chair, Councillor McConnell drew attention to previously circulated report and sought the SDLP nomination to Appointment of Chair of Mid Ulster Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

Resolved That Councillor McFlynn be appointed to the role of Chair of the Mid Ulster Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

AC9/24 Confirmation of Outside Bodies

Members noted nominations to Outside Bodies.

Name	Number of Council Reps	Current Membership
A5-N2 Cross Border Group	4	Cllrs Gildernew, Robinson, McElvogue, McConnell

Name	Number of Council Reps	Current Membership
Agewell Partnership	5	Cllrs Corry, McFlynn, Milne, Clarke, F Burton
Caledon Regeneration Partnership	4	Cllrs F Burton, McElvogue, Gildernew, Robinson
CDM Community Transport and Out and About	3	Cllrs F Burton, Milne, Monteith
COSTA – Community Organisations of South Tyrone	5	Cllrs Gildernew, Graham, McConnell, McQuade, Molloy
ICBAN	4	Cllrs McFlynn, McPeake, McConnell, Robinson
Labour Market Partnership	5	Cllrs Kerr, Molloy, J Burton, Quinn, Varsani
LGSC Diversity Ambassador	1	Cllrs Groogan
Lough Neagh Partnership	5	Cllrs Milne, McPeake, Johnston, Carney, McLean
Mid Ulster Housing Forum	10	Cllrs McPeake, McNamee, W Buchanan, Forde, Corry, J Burton, Monteith, Mallaghan, Varsani, McFlynn
National Association of Councillors (NI)	8	Cllrs Wilson, McFlynn, Black, McConnell, Molloy, Cuthbertson, W Buchanan, Clarke
NI Amenity Council	3	Cllrs Robinson, Quinn, Bell
NILGA (NI Local Government Association)	8	Cllrs F Burton, Robinson, McFlynn, McPeake, McConnell, McGuigan, Brown, Graham
NILGA Policy & Learning Networks: <i>Elected Member Development</i>	1	Cllr McConnell

Name	Number of Council Reps	Current Membership
NILGA Strategic Policy Network	1	Cllr F Burton
Northern Ireland Local Government Traveller Partnership	1	Cllr McPeake
Peace Partnership	10	Cllr McGuigan, Forde, J Burton, McFlynn, McNamee, W Buchanan, McLean, McAleer, McPeake, Cahoon
Shopmobility Mid Ulster	5	Cllrs McFlynn, Forde, McNamee, McLernon, Kerr
SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project	1	Cllr Milne
Sperrins Partnership	2	Cllrs Clarke, McGuigan
Sustainable NI	2	Cllr W Buchanan, Mallaghan
Tullyvar Joint Committee	5	Cllrs Gildernew, McConnell, Graham, Robinson, Varsani
William Carlton Summer School	2	Cllrs McConnell, SDLP
Workspace, Draperstown	1	Cllr McGuigan

Name	Number of Council Reps	Current Membership
Coalisland & Dungannon Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (Dungannon & Torrent DEA)	12	Cllrs Monteith, Cuthbertson, Burton, McQuade, Molloy, Varsani, Kerr, McAleer, Carney, McLernon, Quinn, Buchanan
Coalisland Town Centre Forum (Torrent DEA)	6	Cllrs Kerr, McAleer, Carney, McLernon, Quinn, Buchanan
Cookstown Town Centre Forum (Cookstown DEA)	7	Cllrs Wilson, Martin, Buchanan, Cahoon, Mallaghan, McNamee, Bell
Magherafelt Town Centre Forum	5	Cllrs McFlynn, Totten, Clarke, Brown, McLean

(Magherafelt DEA)		
Maghera Town Centre Forum (Carntogher DEA)	5	Cllrs Black, Corry, Kelly, McGuigan, McPeake
Pomeroy Forest Centre Advisory Committee (Cookstown DEA)	7	Cllrs Wilson, Martin, Buchanan, Cahoon, Mallaghan, McNamee, Bell

Resolved That the Outside bodies nominations be confirmed.

A9/24 Schedule of Meetings: 2024-25

Members noted the previously circulated 2024/25 Schedule of Meetings for Council and Committee meetings. It was noted that to facilitate Westminster Elections a report would be presented to June Policy and Resources committee to reschedule as appropriate.

Matters for Information

AC10/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 7.40 pm

Chair _____

Date _____