

Report to the Protocol Committee for noting and referral to the City Council

Councillor Name	Mary Freehill
Conference/Seminar Name	MacGill Summer School
Conference/Seminar Topic	A Global Crisis - Can the Centre Hold?
Venue/Location	Glenties Co Donegal
Date (s) of Conference	21st to 26th July - I attended from 22nd to 25th July

Brief Summary

Monday and Tuesday focussed on Brexit and our relationship with Northern Ireland. This was a reminder that we need to constantly review our thinking in relation to the north and especially our institutional relationships. The point was made that there has been a considerable decrease in sectarianism since 1994 but that the press and media tend to focus on what conflict is left rather than communities that are working well together.

Wednesday focussed on climate change - yet another wake up call, which is especially relevant for us at Local Authority level. It made me think more about how we treat our natural habitat and our environment. In the afternoon we had speakers on budget overruns on contracts. I didn't really learn much from this other than how projects like Sligo airport came in on budget and that the airport closed down. Colm McCarthy's logic escapes me, I don't see the connection between an unnecessary project and keeping within budget.

On Thursday we had speakers on the Digital Web. They spoke about Artificial Intelligence (AI), how this will get rid of boring jobs but this will present ethical issues about displaced workers as we embark on 4th Industrial Revolution. They highlighted the importance of governance of AI and our vulnerability to cyber attacks. They also talked about needing to know basics like having facility to change password on devices when purchased and the need to keep software updated.

One overall observation was the number of young academic speakers, especially young women who are well qualified and very confident in their fields.

Recommendations

Conference Report Sheet

I was reminded of the need for DCC and Belfast City Council to come together as two cities, there is an opportunity for us to share our problem solving in relation to challenges in both our cities.

As above

Declaration

I certify that I attended the above-mentioned Conference/Training Seminar.

Signed by

Date

--

--