

Free Mayo Echo

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Swinford bids Farewell to Robert



Swinford town came to a standstill as one of its sons was buried on Monday. Thousands turned out to remember brave Garda Robert McCallion, and the atmosphere was one of utter sadness at the tragic loss of such a brave and loved young man.

His remains had reposed since Friday in the McCallion family home on Swinford's Park Road. Many thousands came over Friday and Saturday to pay their respect.

On Sunday, thousands more had turned out for the removal of the 29-year-old Garda, and the massive crowds, mostly from the locality, meant that there was a long delay in the procession making its way to the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians where Father Derek Gormley received the remains.

Garda McCallion, accompanied by two colleagues, was investigating a report of a stolen car in Letterkenny in the early hours of March 26th last when tragedy struck.

Above: The removal of the remains of Garda Robert Mc Callion are carried past Swinford GAA Club to the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Swinford on Sunday evening. Photo by Cyril Byrne; Courtesy of the Irish Times.

APOLOGY

On 30th April, 2008 the Mayo Echo published an article entitled 'The battle for Marks and Sparks'. The article dealt with planning matters in Ballina and Castlebar relating to the zoning of lands for commercial development in both towns. The article alleged that improper meetings and actions had taken place in both towns and the consequence of these actions was the loss of Marks & Spenser to Castlebar. The role and motives of Councillor Paddy McGuinness were highlighted in the article in a manner which suggested that he influenced decisions that would benefit him personally and prevent certain development in Castlebar.

We are happy to state that the article did not intend to suggest that Councillor McGuinness was involved in any corrupt practices nor that he acted at any time in a manner that was inconsistent with his duties as a councillor. The Mayo Echo accepts unequivocally that Councillor McGuinness acted in an honourable fashion in his role as a member of Mayo County Council and has always conducted himself as a public representative in an open and transparent manner.

The Mayo Echo apologises unreservedly to Councillor McGuinness for any hurt caused by the article. We have agreed to pay his costs in this matter and to make a contribution to the fund for the enhancement of Main Street, Castlebar.

As he stepped from the patrol car at the Tara Court housing estate, he was struck by a red Peugeot, which drove straight at him as he and his colleagues were attempting to block it from leaving the estate. It is understood that the Peugeot was being used to tow away a Toyota Corolla that two men had allegedly broken into.

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