

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT ANNUAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 27TH JUNE, 2016, AT 3.00 P.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor L. Galvin, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Browne, Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Costelloe, Crowley, Daly, Donegan, Foley, Gilligan, Gleeson, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Keller, Leddin, Loftus, Lynch, McCreesh, Mitchell, O'Brien, Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, O'Dea, O'Donnell, O'Donoghue, O'Hanlon, Pond, Prendiville, Ryan, Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Sheehy, Teefy, Teskey.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive (Mr. C. Murray), Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Social Development (Mr. P. Dowling), Director, Economic Development (Mr. P. Daly), Director, Physical Development (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Service Operations and Change Management (Mr. G. Daly), A/Head of Finance/Human Resources/Corporate/ICT (Mr. S. Coughlan), Director, Limerick 2020 Bid Team (Mr. M. Fitzpatrick), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. T. Knox).

The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Galvin, opened the Meeting by giving the following address:

“Colleagues, Chief Executive, Senator, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to begin by acknowledging the support you have given me over the past 12 months during my term as Mayor of the City and County of Limerick. The role of Mayor is an historic one that goes back centuries and throughout the year, I have been honoured to serve you and the people of Limerick in this prestigious office.

I depart the role with some wonderful memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life. Admittedly, the past 12 months have been a real eye opener for me as Mayor. I have visited every corner of the County and City in my capacity as Mayor and I have learned a lot about how individual communities are working hard to enhance their home villages and towns. The community spirit and pride of place on display throughout Limerick is a credit to these communities. Limerick is a vibrant place with countless individuals and local groups with bright ideas and positive attitudes to making things happen. This has especially been evident during the past year in the way that communities have supported the 1916 Commemoration Programme, and participated in initiatives such as Team Limerick Cleanup, Pride of Place and Tidy Towns. It

was great to see that Limerick City and County Council continued to support and recognise those who contribute so valuably and selflessly to community life in Limerick. I had the pleasure of officiating at the presentation of awards in community schemes such as Limerick Going for Gold, the Burial Ground Awards and The Golden Mile Awards.

It gave me great pleasure during the year to award Civic Receptions to a number of organisations and individuals around Limerick including the victorious All Ireland winning Na Piarsaigh hurlers, as well as the County's Under 21 team. A highlight for me during the year was witnessing at first-hand the work of our three large educational institutions - the University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College and Limerick Institute of Technology. I have been on the Governing Authority of the University of Limerick and the work that is carried out in Plassey is phenomenal. All three institutions are a credit to Limerick. The huge amount of highly qualified graduates in Limerick is an important feature in the Region's growing attractiveness as a destination for inward investment from global, technical, and other companies.

Businesses from inside and outside of Ireland are now viewing Limerick with a fresh eye as ongoing investment has transformed the city centre with the arrival of more than 30 new retailers in the past 12 months. Not only is Limerick becoming a key European hub for inward investment; its start-up business scene also is buoyant and many companies are 'spinning' into Limerick as they expand. Central to this is the energetic and positive business environment being developed in Limerick. I want to commend the Council and its Elected Members for the lead role they are taking in fostering partnership approaches to promoting entrepreneurship and start-ups in the Region. We want Limerick to be the best place to start a business in Ireland. I can clearly see from the work of the likes of the Local Enterprise Office that there is a great energy level there for start-ups. Most importantly, the Limerick 2030 Vision has caught the imagination of the business community and it has energised the public and private sector in Limerick. Long may this continue.

I want to pay a special tribute to the Council staff who have shown a great level of commitment to their role in administering services for the people of Limerick. The recent severe weather event demonstrated the scale and importance of the role played by Council staff. Council staff, both indoor and outdoor, worked around the clock during December and January, including during the Christmas holiday period, to strengthen flood defences and support property owners affected by flooding along the Lower River Shannon. Their contribution to the response efforts was admirable.

The efficient delivery of Local Government services is key to this country's economic recovery. So, too, is the ability of workers within this sector to provide such services. Working closely with the various Sections of the Council, I can see that Limerick is well served and that the wider public is very appreciative of your valuable contribution.

Once again, I wish to thank each and every one of my fellow Elected Representatives for the courtesy and support they have shown me in the last year.

I also want to thank the Chief Executive, Conn Murray, and his Management Team who have been of tremendous assistance during my term as Mayor.

Finally, I want to thank Marianne O'Reilly and the Corporate Services team who have kept me on my toes throughout the year. Also, I want to acknowledge the support of my wife, Catriona, during the past 12 months.

I will look back on my term as Mayor of Limerick with great affection but all good things must come to an end. On that note, I wish the incoming Mayor the very best for the year ahead.

Go raibh mile maith agaibh go léir. Thank You."

1. Election of Mayor of the City and County of Limerick

The outgoing Mayor invited nominations for the Office of Mayor of the City and County of Limerick for the coming year.

Proposed by Councillor Collins (M);
Seconded by Councillor Collins (J);

"That, Councillor Kieran O'Hanlon be appointed Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to hold office to the next Annual Meeting or until his successor is appointed."

Proposed by Councillor McCreesh;
Seconded by Cmhrl. Ó Ceallaigh;

"That, Councillor Lisa Marie Sheehy be appointed Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to hold office to the next Annual Meeting or until his successor is appointed."

Proposed by Councillor Keller;
Seconded by Councillor Prendiville;

"That, Councillor Cian Prendiville be appointed Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to hold office to the next Annual Meeting or until his successor is appointed."

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Councillor O'Hanlon

Councillors Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Crowley, Daly, Donegan, Foley, Galvin, Gleeson, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Leddin, Lynch, Mitchell, O'Brien, O'Dea, O'Donnell, O'Donoghue, O'Hanlon, Pond, Ryan, Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Teeffy, Teskey.
(29)

For Councillor Sheehy

Councillors Browne, Costelloe, Loftus, McCreesh, Cmhr. Ó Ceallaigh, Sheehy, (6)

For Councillor Prendiville

Councillors Gilligan, Keller, Prendiville. (3)

The outgoing Mayor declared Councillor O'Hanlon elected as Mayor of the City and County of Limerick and congratulated him on his election.

The incoming Mayor, Councillor O'Hanlon, gave the following address to the Meeting:

“Outgoing Mayor Liam Galvin, Deputy Mayor Gerald Mitchell, fellow Councillors, Senator, Chief Executive Conn Murray, members of the Executive, this is one of the proudest days of my political career.

I've had the privilege of being 'Mayor of Limerick' before, albeit Mayor of Limerick City. It was too a very proud moment for me, because I was the 800th Mayor of Limerick City. It is difficult to believe that was all of 20 years ago but the only rule for ageing I apply is that birthdays are good for you and the people who have the most of them live the longest!

Today, the privilege is even greater than it was in 1996 because, of course, our City and County have come together. Today we are all under the one flag, moving together in strength and purpose in what is truly a remarkable time for our City and County.

Events of the last week have dramatically changed the political mood of the moment. I now take on this role at a very sensitive time for politics, for the economy generally as a result of the Brexit result. At this stage it is impossible to quantify exactly what the impact of this vote will be on us here in Limerick but we do need a period of calm to carefully analyse the implications. There will be challenges, for sure, for all of us but also opportunities. What we need to do now is carefully analyse where both these are and take whatever steps we can to make sure Limerick is best positioned to make the most of this new European context and, indeed, our relationship with the UK.

We differ quite often in this Chamber and that is the health of politics and democracy. But what we all agree on is that Limerick has embarked on a great new era. If you think back only a few years to the start of the decade, this was, indeed, a different place, a different climate. Limerick was a city under the grip of a national and global recession but with unique problems of its own. But to quote the American writer Dale Carnegie, *'Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.'*

We needed leadership and we were lucky to have it in abundance. We have had it politically, we have had it in Local Government through our Members and, indeed, our Executive. We have had it regionally in key stakeholders with so many, from our Third Level Institutions, to Shannon Foynes Port Company – an entity I am proud to say I am a former Board Member and Acting Chairman of – and, of course, Shannon Airport, which I call on all Limerick people to support; all moving forward with vision and feeding into a greater and positive story that Limerick is today.

Whether it is in politics, local government, business, whatever, you will only truly succeed when you have a vision. Our vision is *Limerick 2030 - An Economic and Spatial Plan for the City and County*. It is a plan, a framework, a roadmap that is helping to transform Limerick, its economy, and the way it is marketed as an ideal location over the coming 14 years and beyond.

I congratulate Conn Murray and his team on this and I look forward to working with them to continue the momentum and ensure we go further down the road of this visionary plan, to ensure that we continue to prosper as a City and County and that this growth in prosperity presents opportunity for ALL our citizens, without exception, to improve their lot. The economic development of Limerick is a central pillar of Limerick 2030 and it has already reaped very significant dividends, with over 7,000 jobs announced for Limerick since the beginning of 2013. That is worth repeating - 7,000 jobs announced for our City and County. Six years ago that rate of job creation would have been almost unthinkable.

And we are building for the future – literally. We have some very ambitious programmes planned that will re-energise Limerick, not least here in the city centre with the Hanging Gardens, Arthurs Quay and Opera Centre projects which will create huge employment in the construction stage and thereafter.

You will, indeed, hear some voices in Limerick's Regeneration Areas claiming that they have not felt this warm wind of change. But it is undeniable that we have a transformative €300m Limerick Regeneration Plan underway. It has reaped very significant social dividends already in these areas and now there is tangible and visible evidence of physical change, with modern new, fit-for-purpose housing developments and social facilities already completed, under construction or in advance stage of planning.

We have come a long way with regard to the regeneration programme but have a good distance yet to travel. However, one thing we cannot allow to happen is to take our foot off the policing pedal. Our Gardaí in Limerick have done remarkable work in smashing the grip that gangland activity had here and we need to ensure they continue to win this fight. It is imperative that Limerick gets the resources necessary so that people in the regeneration areas can continue to enjoy this rebirth of their localities and live in peace and harmony.

As referenced earlier, thanks to the amalgamation, our focus is on County as well as City. We have witnessed much investment in facilities and services throughout the County, which will continue to be a key focus for me as Mayor. My two predecessors as Mayors have both been from the County and I am equally determined to ensure the spread of this remarkable recovery in Limerick is felt in every corner of our proud County. In addition to being on the

Board of Shannon Foynes Port Company, I worked in West Limerick for 30 years, in Wyeth in Askeaton, so I know just how essential it is for us to ensure the growth is spread across the County.

Looking ahead to the next twelve months, my ultimate goal is to ensure that the incredible momentum built up by Limerick over the past number of years is maintained and even grown. That momentum has been collectively generated across so many areas, from economic development to cultural expression.

Indeed, with regard to the latter, there has been an extraordinary amplification of our cultural heritage over recent years. It was given stunning voice in 2014 when Limerick became Ireland's first National City of Culture, resulting in a greater national and international appreciation of just how diverse and rich our culture is.

We are now, of course, in the final and exciting furlong of the European Capital of Culture 2020 selection process, having already made the shortlist. Thankfully, our 2014 National City of Culture programme was by no means a year in isolation as it has led to a great flowering of our culture ever since, right through the 2020 European Capital of Culture bid process. Collectively, the 2014 designation and 2020 bid have given the new and emerging Limerick a platform for celebrating, through cultural expression, who and what we are as a City and County. Critically also, that platform has encouraged so many who heretofore may have felt they had no voice, or that no one would listen to it, onto a grand stage to parade their cultural talents and be fully appreciated for them. That has been one of its greatest and most abiding legacies of this period. There is a renewed pride in who we are and we are not just encouraged but willing to sing from the rooftops about it.

Over the coming week or so, and not least on Monday and Tuesday next when the adjudicators on the European Capital of Culture competition are in town, we want to let the judges know just how proud we are of our City and County, what Limerick will do for this designation and, indeed, what this designation will do for Limerick. So, I would urge every business, indeed every person, to ensure Limerick's best foot is forward and that we continue to dance over the coming eight days and beyond as a City and County and bring home what would be a much deserved and appreciated European Capital of Culture 2020 designation.

Within the cultural space, I believe that we have an opportunity and obligation to develop Limerick's offering in traditional Irish music and song. We have a proud tradition in this aspect of our culture. The late Ciarán Mac Mathúna, Limerick, was one of Ireland's foremost influencers in the renaissance of Irish music in the '60s and '70s. I think it is long overdue that we honour Ciarán for his contribution to Irish music in Limerick, nationally and internationally, and over the next twelve months also I would like to see us move towards developing a traditional music weekend in Limerick like there is in Milltown Malbay for Willie Clancy. Furthermore, it would be a fitting tribute to Ciarán and all in Limerick who champion traditional music, song and dance if we were to host the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann here in 2020 when hopefully we will be the European Capital of Culture.

Another major goal of mine for the coming year is that we progress our twinning arrangement with Boston in the US. I intend to lead a delegation with fellow Councillors on behalf of the local authority that will also include

representatives of Limerick Chamber, Third Level stakeholders and An Garda Síochaná in Limerick, which has links with the Massachusetts State Police. As Chairman of COMHALTAS GARRAÍ EOIN, I am delighted that it, too, will be joining us on this delegation. They already have strong ties with the Boston Comhaltas Group and can help us further our wider links with the City of Boston. They are busy fund-raising for this and are appealing to the business community, in particular, for support – support they fully deserve and I have no doubt they will get. While I am on this, I wish to extend a warm invitation to all to attend their special 1916 celebration on Thursday night next at Richmond Rugby Club at 8p.m.

Generally with regard to the 100th anniversary commemorations of 1916, this has been a proud year for Limerick as we have celebrated our deep links with that historic uprising. As part of our own events here in Limerick City and County Council to mark 1916, I intend to have a reception here for all Members, Mayors and Chairs as well as Managers, of the Local Authority.

I would like to take this opportunity also to congratulate Patrick O'Donovan, T.D., on his recent appointment as Minister for Sport. It is only right that Limerick, with its sporting heritage, would hold this Ministry and I intend to find a fitting way to congratulate Patrick and pay tribute to this achievement.

From an administration level, the amalgamation of Limerick City and County Councils has been an unqualified success and huge credit to all involved for making that happen – the Executive, Staff, Members and, indeed, the Public. But it hasn't come about without challenges and in many ways we are still adapting. Certainly, as Councillors, there is room for improvement and by this I am thinking particularly about the way we do our business, the amount of meetings we have, the duration of those meetings and what we discuss at them. There are issues that unmistakably fall under our remit but, from time to time, we end up discussing matters we have no control over. I intend to meet with each Party and Councillor over the next two months to come up with a plan that will benefit Councillors and the general public and ultimately ensure we do our business more efficiently.

Finally, I think over the coming 12 months as the completion of the motorway from Limerick to Galway advances, there is a need for a greater conversation than heretofore with regard to how Limerick and Galway can work closer together in the national and regional interest. Likewise, there should be an opportunity to complete a motorway corridor that will run from Galway to Limerick and onto Cork but we need to get that final leg to Cork back on the capital spending programme with a review of the Government's Capital Investment Plan. It is a statement of Limerick's success that we are no longer looking within and trying to fix problems but we are now looking outwardly and how we can grow even further. The Limerick of the future is all about growth, about leaving further in the rear-view mirror the stereotype of the past decade. We have a dynamic, successful and rapidly growing economy and I look forward to doing my part to ensure that in 12 months' time we will have gone even further down the road to becoming a major driver of regional and national economic prosperity.”

2. Election of Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick

The Mayor invited nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick for the coming year.

Proposed by Councillor Collins (M);
Seconded by Councillor Donegan;

“That, Councillor Noel Gleeson be appointed Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to hold office to the next Annual Meeting or until his successor is appointed.”

Proposed by Councillor Costelloe;
Seconded by Councillor Sheehy;

“That, Cmhlr. Séighín Ó Ceallaigh be appointed Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to hold office to the next Annual Meeting or until her successor is appointed.”

Proposed by Councillor Prendiville;
Seconded by Councillor Keller;

“That, Councillor Keller be appointed Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick to hold office to the next Annual Meeting or until his successor is appointed.”

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Councillor Gleeson

Councillors Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Crowley, Daly, Donegan, Foley, Galvin, Gleeson, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Leddin, Lynch, Mitchell, O’Brien, O’Dea, O’Donnell, O’Donoghue, O’Hanlon, Pond, Ryan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Teefy, Teskey. **(28)**

For Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh

Councillors Browne, Costelloe, McCreesh, Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, Sheehy. **(5)**

For Councillor Keller

Councillors Keller, Loftus, Prendiville. **(3)**

The Mayor declared Councillor Gleeson elected as Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick and congratulated him on his election.

The incoming Deputy Mayor congratulated Councillor O' Hanlon on being elected Mayor of the City and County of Limerick. He thanked his Proposer and Secunder and his fellow Councillors for their support. He said it was a great honour for him to be elected Deputy Mayor and it was a very proud day.

He went on to state that he had first been elected to Limerick County Council in 1985 and since that time he had seen many changes in politics and in life. He made reference to two recessions and the recovery and how this affected people. He added that he was very much a community person and acknowledged the vast work that was being undertaken by volunteers in their communities. He referred to the success of his own community in competitions such as the Tidy Towns Awards and Going for Gold. He said that he was honoured and proud to be a Member of the Council and to stand with the Members, his colleagues, as representatives of communities the length and breadth of Limerick. During his term of office he said he would like to progress work on projects as part the Limerick Age-Friendly Strategy.

In conclusion, he thanked his wife, family, friends, neighbours and supporters for their support and encouragement down through the years.

The Members welcomed the guests who were present in the Council Chamber. They congratulated the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their election and assured them of their full support. They wished them well in the year ahead and expressed confidence in their ability to carry out the duties of Mayor and Deputy Mayor with great honour and distinction. Tributes were also paid to the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Galvin, and outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mitchell. Members praised them for the manner in which they had performed their role and stated that they had been excellent ambassadors for Limerick.

The Chief Executive firstly congratulated Councillor O'Hanlon and Councillor Gleeson on their elevation to the Office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the City and County of Limerick respectively. He stated that it was an onerous and responsible position as it carried with it the challenge of delivering political leadership for and on behalf of the people of Limerick. He wished to compliment the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Galvin, on what had been a very successful year. He also extended his appreciation to the outgoing Deputy Mayor of the City and County, Councillor Mitchell.

In conclusion, he thanked the outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Cathaoirligh and Leas-Chathaoirligh for the work in their respective Metropolitan and Municipal Districts.

3. Appointment of Members to the Limerick Market Trustees

Circulated, list of current representatives on the Limerick Market Trustees, including note advising that there was a vacancy on the Committee following the election of Councillor Maria Byrne to Seanad Éireann and the resultant casual vacancy on the Council.

The Meetings Administrator stated that under the Limerick Markets Act, 1852 (as amended), Limerick City and County Council was entitled to nominate the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, and the Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, together with a further 16 Members of the Council, as Trustees. Under the Act, the Council was required to make these nominations annually. The Grouping system applied if so desired.

Councillor Sheahan (J) proposed that, in addition to the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick (Councillor O’Hanlon) and the Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick (Councillor Hourigan), the following Members be appointed to the Limerick Market Trustees:

Councillors Leddin, McCreesh, Costelloe, Loftus, Teskey, Lynch, Collins (J), Collins (M), Crowley, Pond, O’Donnell, Mitchell, Butler, Hurley, Sheahan (M), Sheahan (J).

This was seconded by Councillor Collins (M) and agreed.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Mayor

Date:
