

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT ANNUAL MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON FRIDAY, 19TH JUNE, 2015, AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Michael Sheahan, Mayor

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Butler, Byrne, Clifford, Collins, Crowley, Gilligan, Hourigan, Hurley, Keller, Leddin, Loftus, Lynch, McCreesh, Ó Ceallaigh, O'Dea, O'Hanlon, Prendiville, Quinlivan and Secas.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Deputy Chief Executive (Mr. P. Dowling), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Mr. T. O'Callaghan).

At the opening of the meeting a minutes silence was observed in memory of those who had died in Berkley, California.

Party Leaders reviewed the challenges that had been faced during the previous year and highlighted the range of projects that had come before them during the period which involved significant investment in the city and the enhancement of same. Congratulations and thanks were extended to the outgoing Mayor for his impartiality, fairness, hard work and commitment during a challenging transition period and for working tirelessly and unselfishly on behalf of all citizens.

The Deputy Chief Executive welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended apologies on behalf of the Chief Executive who could not attend for medical reasons. He thanked the Members for embracing change during the first year of the new Metropolitan District and thanked the outgoing Mayor for his assistance during the year and acknowledged his boundless energy and commitment to re-enforcing all that was positive about Limerick.

The outgoing Mayor gave the following address to the meeting:

"Looking back at the past year and reflecting on my term as the first Mayor of the new Metropolitan District of Limerick, and looking out at the same time at the majestic River Shannon from this most lovely chamber, I can safely say that pardon the pun, my term has been one of ebbs and flows-more positive flows than negative ebbs !

The highlights of the year were many, some of which I will refer to as I address you. In my opening address in this same venue here on the 16th of June just one year ago, I referred to the fact that we had forgotten to remember past Great Limerick Women of Distinction when it came to honouring achievement. To rectify this imbalance I put forward the names of three Limerick Women of Achievement - namely Kate O'Brien, Charlotte Grace O'Brien and Sophie Mary Pierce for special recognition and felt so proud when Limerick Council and University of Limerick collaborated to honour the

three women in a wonderful event in the University of Limerick on International Women's Day, an event which was further added to by the presence of Sabina Higgins, wife of our President Michael D. In this regard I would like to say a big 'thank you' to our own Liz Creamer here in City Hall and U.L's Marie Connolly for the most professional and effective manner in which they jointly organised the wonderful event.

The other major highlights for me were meeting with so many community individuals, groups and organisations, the vast majority of whom are volunteer dominated. To you volunteers and you organisations I say many thanks for your unselfishness, humanity and dedication to the many people and organisations that you have given and continue to give long hours of unselfish service to.

In this regard I would also like to pay tribute to all the emergency services and in particular the Garda Síochána for their devotion to duty in pursuit of making Limerick a better and safer place for all.

We dealt with many positive programmes of work to enhance the future development of our city here in the Chamber, the results of which will bear fruit over the next couple of years, and thus make our city and region a better place in which to live, work and to visit. But in looking towards and developing the new, we must not do so in unseemly haste in a way that sets aside or removes the best traditions of our historic city past. I would urge officials at the top level of our organisation to engage in an open manner with public representatives so that valued traditions of our old city past are continued and enhanced and become complimentary to the wonderful plans for our newly developing city and region.

I would like to thank all the officials whom I came in contact with and who were all most helpful to me and most respectful of the office which I held.

Personally, I owe a genuine and great debt of gratitude to my secretary of the past twelve months, Siobhan Carroll. Her advice, work ethic, professionalism and knowledge of the workings of my office were invaluable to me.

To you my fellow councillors I say 'thank you' for the respect you have shown to me at all times especially while conducting business here in the Chamber but also when acting as Deputy Mayors on my behalf. In this regard I wish to pay special tribute to Cllr. Maria Byrne who was superb in her role as Deputy Mayor.

Lastly but most importantly, to my family I say I really appreciate all the sacrifices you have made on my behalf, not just during the past year but since I was first elected as a public representative over six years ago. Without your help I could not have made it this far.

In conclusion I leave this most historic office proud of the fact that I was the first public representative to be elected Mayor of the new Metropolitan District of Limerick representing a tradition going back over 900 years. I sincerely hope that I have represented my office, you and the good people of Limerick, not just with pride, but most importantly, with honour and with dignity".

1. To elect a Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been elected

The Mayor invited nominations for the Office of Mayor for the coming year.

Proposed by Councillor Collins;
Seconded by Councillor Hourigan.

“That Councillor Jerry O’Dea be appointed Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been appointed”.

Proposed by Councillor Prendiville;
Seconded by Councillor Loftus.

“That Councillor Paul Keller be appointed Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been appointed”.

Proposed by Councillor Quinlivan;
Seconded by Councillor McCreesh.

“That Cmhr. Séighin Ó Ceallaigh be appointed Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been appointed”.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Councillor O’Dea

Councillors Butler, Byrne, Clifford, Collins, Crowley, Hourigan, Hurley, Lynch, O’Dea, O’Hanlon and Sheahan (11)

For Councillor Keller

Councillors Keller, Loftus and Prendiville (3)

For Cmhr. Ó Ceallaigh

Councillors Gilligan, McCreesh, Ó Ceallaigh and Quinlivan (4)

Abstain

Councillors Leddin and Secas.

The Mayor declared Councillor Jerry O’Dea elected as Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

The Mayor made the following address to the meeting:

“Mayor Sheahan, fellow councillors, distinguished guests, officials and family, thank you for being here tonight. I feel immensely proud and humbled to stand before you tonight as your newly elected Mayor of the Metropolitan area of our ancient and historic city.

I suppose I wouldn't be standing here without the help of my party colleagues and friends at last Summers local elections. I won't start mentioning names but you know who you are and I thank you.

Our first new Metro Council of last year saw many challenges and I'd like to thank Councillor Michael Sheahan for all his work. As Metropolitan Mayor I feel the position should rise above any party politics. I will strive to be fair and impartial and my sincere hope is that we will work diligently with the common goal of improving the quality of life of all our citizens. The second year of this council I intend to be businesslike, democratic and efficient with agenda items relevant to the improvement of our fine city.

Somebody asked me recently that if elected what would be my vision for the city. I'm afraid the vision I have will take much more than a year to achieve but that's no reason not to start! I would love to see Limerick continue to grow into a fine modern city but maintaining a palpable consciousness of its proud history. We have so much to offer. I want to see inward tourism grow and prosper.

As a member of the board of governors of our fine University, led by Professor Don Barry, I would like to progress further integration and cooperation between the city and U.L., LIT, LCAD, Mary Immaculate and all of our fine third level institutions. I would hope we can continue to create a 'living city' where families will want to live and students, tourists and citizens will be happy to walk the streets in safety and small businesses will feel it worthwhile to remain open after 5pm.

I see the role of the Metropolitan Mayor as the facilitator/coordinator for these ideas to flourish. Look around you..it's already happening. The city of culture, the milk market, smarter travel, the focus on the river Shannon, all examples of what we can achieve.

We have published many fine documents and plans for our city and last year the full Council took a brave step in sanctioning over €30 million to advance these plans. Our challenge now is to deliver on these plans for our citizens.

My last wish is for Limerick and the region to achieve more successes on the sporting field. Our famous Thomond Park needs no further mention and the reopening of the Marketsfield with the return of Limerick FC was a joy to behold and a great example of what can be achieved when people work together. With a nervous Tipperary team arriving on Sunday hopefully visitors and citizens will once again experience the atmosphere of our proud and strong "sporting capital of Ireland"

Go raibh mile maith agat go leir".

Members congratulated the Mayor on his election and wished him well for the year ahead. Members emphasised the importance of the Office of Mayor in ensuring that the city continues to progress by taking a leading role in seeing projects through to fruition, acting as an important contact for organisations and groups that interact with the Metropolitan District and ensuring that the work of the District is relevant and productive.

2. To elect a Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been elected

The Mayor invited nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Collins;

Seconded by Councillor Butler.

“That Councillor Shane Clifford be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor is appointed”.

Proposed by Councillor Quinlivan;
Seconded by Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh.

“That Councillor Malachy McCreesh be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor is appointed”.

Proposed by Councillor Prendiville;
Seconded by Councillor Keller.

“That Councillor John Loftus be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor is appointed”.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Councillor Clifford

Councillors Butler, Byrne, Clifford, Collins, Crowley, Hourigan, Hurley, Lynch, O’Dea, O’Hanlon and Sheahan (11)

For Councillor McCreesh

Councillors Gilligan, McCreesh, Ó Ceallaigh and Quinlivan (4)

For Councillor Loftus

Councillors Keller, Loftus and Prendiville (3)

The Mayor declared Councillor Shane Clifford elected as Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

Members congratulated Councillor Clifford on his election and wished him well for the year ahead.

Councillor Clifford thanked the Members for electing him and stated that he looked forward to working with the new Mayor and helping him in any way possible. He stressed that there was a lot of work to be carried out to reform a local government system that had its roots in the British Empire. He praised the staff for their dedicated efforts to introduce reform and called on everyone involved to lend their positive support to the change management project. In conclusion, he congratulated outgoing Mayor Sheahan on his year in office.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
MAYOR

Dated: _____