

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT ANNUAL MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON FRIDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE, 2017, AT 6.00 P.M.**

**PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor Michael Hourigan, Mayor

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors Butler, Collins, Costelloe, Crowley, Daly, Hogan, Hurley, Keller, Loftus, Lynch, McCreesh, Ó Ceallaigh, O'Dea, O'Hanlon, Pond, Prendiville and Sheahan.

Apologies for their inability to attend were received from Councillors Gilligan, Leddin and Secas.

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Director, Physical Development (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Staff Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. L. Creamer).

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

*"Coming into the year, having been Mayor in 2004, I wasn't sure how it was going to work out. I was surprised and pleased at how important it was and the need for the role.*

*Firstly, it is representing the city itself. It is an exciting time at the moment in the city and there are a lot of things happening. As I said at the beginning of the year, it is time to see cranes back in the city and this is happening in the Hanging Gardens and the new Courthouse in Mulgrave Street. There are plans afoot for the improvement of O'Connell Street and I believe also the Opera Centre is progressing. I believe myself Limerick in 2017 is a great place. Not alone do we see things happening in the city, it is also happening in the suburbs and the Industrial Estates. We also have two motorways, one to Dublin and one to Galway and with the airport on our doorstep, Limerick is certainly moving forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*There are one or two things of concern to me. I think we should look again at our symbolic image and I will give you an example of that. On St. Patrick's Day, I was on the reviewing stand with other Councillors and dignitaries. It was said afterwards to me was there any other Councillors on the reviewing stand but the problem was they were not easily identifiable by the people standing across the road.*

*Limerick is very vibrant at the moment in communities and for all the good news it is important that communities don't get left behind. As we read in the papers this week, the Central Statistics Office reminded us that there are some communities that have huge unemployment and as Metropolitan Mayor you can act as a link so that they are not forgotten and that they are recognised for what these communities can achieve in their own right.*

*As Metropolitan Mayor I was involved in communities on days such as the opening of the festival in St. Mary's Park. I was also particularly honoured to receive the Paul Harris Award from the Limerick Shannon Thomond Rotary Club, previous recipients were J.P. McManus and Brendan O'Regan.*

*Lastly, I want to thank my fellow Councillors for their support during the year. I also want to thank my Deputy Mayor, Daniel Butler.*

*I would like to thank Kieran Lehane, Christy O'Connor, Freda Ryan and Siobhan and all the staff who were so courteous to me.*

*I would also like to thank Mayor Kieran O'Hanlon. One of the challenges we faced was working together and it has worked out well.*

*Thank you".*

The Members congratulated Cllr. Hourigan on his year as Mayor noting that he represented Limerick very well at all times, carried out his duties with great energy, enthusiasm and positivity and worked in tandem with Mayor O'Hanlon for the betterment of the city and county.

The Director of Service (Physical Development), on his own behalf and on behalf of the Chief Executive and staff, congratulated Councillor Hourigan on his year as Mayor and stressed that he had been very attentive and hard working and he wished him well for the future.

Mayor Hourigan then thanked everybody once more for their support and encouragement in the course of the year and expressed his congratulations and best wishes to the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor. He thanked Deputy Mayor Butler for his help and assistance throughout the year also.

**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 outgoing Mayor invited nominations for the Office of Mayor for the coming year.

Proposed by Councillor Collins;  
Seconded by Councillor Crowley.

"That Councillor Sean Lynch 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 Costelloe;  
Seconded by Councillor Ó Ceallaigh.

"That Councillor Malachy McCreesh 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 Keller;  
Seconded by Councillor Prendiville.

"That Councillor Cian Prendiville be appointed Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been appointed".

The Meetings Administrator stated that Section 37 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, covered the method of election of Mayor and that the following provisions applied in respect of such elections:

- one or more than one Member could be proposed and seconded.
- where there was only one candidate that candidate would be elected.

- where there was more than two candidates that a poll would be taken.
- if at such poll a majority of the Members present voted for any particular candidate, such candidate would be elected.
- if at such poll no candidate received the votes of the majority of the Members present, then the candidate with the least number of votes would be excluded and one or more further polls would be taken.
- where there were only two candidates or where, as a result of one or more polls all the candidates except two had been excluded, the question as to which of such candidates would be elected would be put to the Members present and whichever of such candidates received the majority of votes cast would be elected.
- if from an equality of votes given to two or more candidates any question arose as to which of such candidates would be excluded or as to which of such candidates would be elected, such question would be decided by lot in accordance with the Act.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Councillor Lynch

Councillors Butler, Collins, Crowley, Daly, Hogan, Hourigan, Hurley, Lynch, O’Dea, O’Hanlon, Pond and Sheahan (12)

For Councillor McCreesh

Councillors Costelloe, Loftus, McCreesh and Ó Ceallaigh (4)

For Councillor Prendiville

Councillors Keller and Prendiville (2)

The outgoing Mayor declared Councillor Sean Lynch elected as Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick and congratulated him on his election.

On taking the Chair, the incoming Mayor, Councillor Lynch gave the following address :

*“Fellow Councillors, members of the executive, it is indeed a great honour to assume the role of Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.*

*There are those who would say we are living in a time of great division. We see divisions between Europe and the UK; across the political divide in the north. There’s no shortage of them in our own government either.*

*Yet we have a Tipperary man taking up position as Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.*

*Yes, fellow councillors, we have a new Limerick where everything is, indeed, possible!*

*I make apologies about my Tipperary heritage but I am proud to say that today, in this city that is exciting commentators up and down the country, that I happily count Limerick as my home. It’s not like I have much choice; the Lynch bloodlines are very much rooted in Limerick today.*

*Keeping it on the sporting field, in my years working here with An Garda Síochána, I have never seen Limerick in better shape. Better prepared.*

*This is now, for sure, a championship city. A top tier city. A city that now - thanks to four years of unprecedented growth with a total of 8,000 jobs created in that short period – has proven its ability to compete in the big leagues. An ability to compete with top cities across Europe for inward investment. A city that, as we learned only recently again with the 400 job Northern Trust announcement, is winning that investment on a regular basis.*

*For me, there was a seminal moment in the rise of Limerick just over a year ago, last April in fact when Limerick Twenty Thirty was launched.*

*It's not alone that this special purpose vehicle created by Limerick City and County Council launched the largest commercial property development programme outside the capital.*

*But what particularly caught my attention was the confident narrative of the day; a narrative led by Chairman of Limerick Twenty Thirty Denis Brosnan. His was a straight, no holds barred statement that Limerick will be the best placed and most competitive English speaking city in the EU for inward investment post Brexit.*

*It's a particularly bold statement for a city that was laid low to the extent Limerick was a decade ago and one that shows where it is today.*

*As someone who has been in public service in Limerick for a number of years, many of those as a proud member of Garda Síochána, I've seen the worst of days and now I am seeing the best of days.*

*The worst of days are, thankfully, in the rear view mirror as Limerick powers ahead. We have still much to do, many people to reach. But a solid foundation is there and we are not far off at the moment being a city where everyone who wants a job, will get a job.*

*Limerick triumphed because it worked together. The city and county coming together; our third level institutions pulling their weight. Shannon Airport weighing in. Shannon Foynes Port Company likewise. We won by playing like a team and the day we stop doing that is the day we risk losing it all.*

*We have had support but we need more of it. There's no doubt but with Michael Noonan's retirement from cabinet, our voice at Government has diminished. Indeed, one cannot help but fear that the effort to create balanced regional development across the island is going to be diminished. Yes, we have seen Patrick O'Donovan moved into the Department of Finance as a Minister of State but no direct cabinet representation at all now for the city.*

*Furthermore, the very minister charged now with overseeing the future planning of our nation, correcting the serious economic imbalance between Dublin, its commuter belt and the rest of the country is, guess what.....yes, Dublin based. Probably not what would imbue confidence that we will achieve the target of 70% of the projected 1 million population increase by 2040 outside the capital.*

*Therefore, with our political influence at the top table on the wane, it may be that we need to work harder than ever ourselves. We need to work closer together than ever. We need to maximise all our assets better than ever, not least our people and particularly those who have left our city and gone on to greater things. We need to tap them on the shoulder and look for their support.*

*Another fervent wish for the year ahead is that that we really put our shoulder to the wheel in Limerick in support of Ireland's bid for the 2023 Rugby World Cup. Limerick, as the spiritual home of Irish rugby, stands to gain immeasurably from a successful Irish bid and the Rugby World Cup would, indeed, benefit from coming to Limerick.*

*We would see sport tourism on a scale like never before in Limerick. And while on tourism, another desire I have for the year ahead is to grow awareness of Limerick's tourism offering. To that end, we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that Limerick becomes one of the Wild Atlantic Way loops being considered as part of its 2015 to 2019 strategy.*

*In terms of issues, I believe that one of the biggest single challenges facing us today, and something I certainly want to champion, is mental wellbeing. I think particularly of young people, not least with research telling us that one in five young Irish adults between the ages of 19 and 24 and one in six young people between 11 and 13 have mental health issues. Social media is having a significant impact and I certainly intend to give some focus to both of these areas in my term.*

*Ultimately, as Mayor, I hope, indeed, that in 12 months' time we will be looking back at another year of progress and a continuation of the economic surge that Limerick has been enjoying. That's a fundamental. I want to see the Limerick flag rise on all fronts; in sport – yes, including hurling – in business, socially, etc. and I'll certainly be doing all I can as Mayor to ensure it does”.*

Members congratulated Councillor Lynch on his election as Mayor and wished him and his family the very best for the coming year. They pointed out that he was very socially minded, busy and active in mental health issues and homelessness, had a huge interest in sport and would carry out his duties as Mayor with integrity and honesty and bring enthusiasm and vigour to the role.

Mayor Lynch thanked Members for their kind words and stated that there would be a code of dress for attendance at Council Meetings and punctuality by Members for meetings must be adhered to. Members would have to show respect for the Mayor, Officials and each other and must comply with Standing Orders.

**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 O’Hanlon.

“That Councillor Vivienne Crowley 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 Ó Ceallaigh;  
Seconded by Councillor McCreesh.

“That Councillor John Costelloe 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 Paul Keller 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 Crowley

Councillors Butler, Collins, Crowley, Daly, Hogan, Hourigan, Lynch, O’Dea, O’Hanlon, Pond and Sheahan (11)

For Councillor Costelloe

Councillors Costelloe, McCreesh and Ó Ceallaigh (3)

For Councillor Keller

Councillors Keller, Loftus and Prendiville (3)

The Mayor declared Councillor Vivienne Crowley elected as Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

Members paid tribute to the outgoing Deputy Mayor Councillor Butler and congratulated Councillor Crowley on her election as Deputy Mayor and pointed out that her late father, Councillor Joe Crowley, would have been proud of her. Members noted that Councillor Crowley had been a great addition to the Council and was hardworking, determined, had a deep interest in her community and it’s people and would make an excellent Deputy Mayor. All wished her the best of luck in the coming year.

The incoming Deputy Mayor, Councillor Crowley informed the meeting that she was honoured to be elected Deputy Mayor and thanked her Council colleagues for giving her this opportunity. She thanked Members for the sentiments they had expressed about her father and for the courtesy they have shown her since she was co-opted onto the Council. She referred to the growth and change in the city in recent times and said she was proud to work on behalf of the city and county and looked forward to supporting the Mayor in whatever way she could during the coming year.

The Director congratulated Councillor Lynch and Councillor Crowley on their election to the Office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively and assured them both of his full support and assistance in the year ahead.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_