

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2018**

**PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor Seán Lynch, Mayor.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors Butler, Collins, Costelloe, Crowley, Gilligan, Hogan, Hourigan, Hurley, Keller, Leddin, Loftus, McCreesh, Ó Ceallaigh, O'Dea, O'Hanlon, Pond, Prendiville, Secas and Sheahan.

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Director, Physical Development (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Senior Executive Officer, Design and Delivery Services (Mr. J. Delaney), and Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Mr. J. Clune).

At the outset, tributes were paid on the passing of a friend and colleague Michael Collopy, RIP. The Members expressed their sympathy, on behalf of the Council, to Michael's wife Helen and sons Michael and Bryan on Michael's sudden and untimely passing. The Members noted Michael's quiet unassuming manner and his loyal service and dedication to the Council and in particular to the Office of Mayor over the years.

Members also recalled Mary Lane RIP as a dedicated school warden who was remembered by all who encountered her in her workplace as a gentle and kind person who had given 18 years of dedicated service since 1999.

Kieran Lehane thanked the Members for their kind words and also extended the sympathy of the Chief Executive and Staff to Michael's wife and family. He remembered Michael as a loyal family man and a pillar of City Hall. He also extended sympathy to the family of Mary Lane, a school warden with the Council, who had died recently.

A vote of sympathy was also extended to the family of the late Shane Stokes on his untimely death in a traffic accident in England before Christmas.

A silence was observed in their memory.

**Matters Arising**

It was agreed to hold a briefing session to discuss the 2018 GMA allocations at 1pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> January in the Training Room, Dooradoyle .

**1. Adoption of Minutes**

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2017.

Proposed by Councillor Hourigan;  
Seconded by Councillor Hurley;  
And Resolved:

“That the draft Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read and adopted and signed”.

**2. Support Services Directorate**

**Schedule of Dates for JPC Sub Committee Meetings 2018 (4 no.)**

The Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services outlined proposals for the holding of Joint Policing Sub Committee Meetings in line with the Joint Policing Committee Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021. Following discussion and a vote by a show of hands, it was agreed that the sub committee will operate as single committee covering both North and South Limerick Districts in Metropolitan Areas. The meetings will take place in February, May, September and November at 12.30pm following the Monthly Metropolitan Meeting.

**3. Services Operations Directorate**

**Part 8 Procedure – Sycamore Avenue, Rathbane, Limerick**

Circulated, Report of the Director of Services, Service Operations Directorate dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 and enclosed Chief Executive’s Report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 setting out details of proposed residential development (5 units) at Sycamore Avenue, Rathbane, Limerick. The report had been prepared in accordance with Section 179 3(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) and noted that it was proposed to proceed in accordance with Section 5 of the report.

The Members welcomed the proposed development.

**QUESTIONS**

**4. Question submitted by Councillor E. Hogan**

*I will ask at the next Meeting for an update regarding what conversation has taken place with the Papal Nuncio regarding the possibility of Pope Francis including Limerick in the itinerary for his visit to Ireland in 2018.*

**REPLY:** The Council has been in contact with the Apostolic Nuncio in relation to an invitation to Pope Francis to include Limerick in his itinerary during his visit to Ireland. The Apostolic Nuncio has confirmed that the invitation has been forwarded to the Holy Father. He has also confirmed that the letter inviting him to visit Limerick has been received by the Holy Father who has expressed his appreciation for this gracious gesture.

**5. Question submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville**

*I will ask at the next Meeting has the Council any contracts with Aramark for food, property services, or other goods or services.*

**REPLY:** I am not aware of any contracts between Limerick City and County Council and Aramark for food, property, or other goods or services.

6. **Question submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville**

*I will ask at the next Meeting if the minutes of meetings of the board and other bodies of Limerick 2030 DAC can be made available to Councillors.*

**REPLY:** All non-commercial elements of Limerick Twenty Thirty DAC board minutes can be made available to the Councillors.

7. **Question submitted by Councillor P. Keller**

*I will ask at the next Meeting if the Council receives money for the use of the Peoples Park and other parks by private, for-profit festivals and events.*

**REPLY:** Limerick City and County Council gets many requests from organisations to host events on their infrastructure throughout the city and county including in parks and road. The Council does not charge a fee for this service.

8. **Question submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe**

*I will ask at the next Meeting for a list of when the Chain of the Metropolitan Mayor was used for official events last year.*

**REPLY:** The following is list of official events attended by the Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick from January, 2017 to date :

DATE	EVENT
21 <sup>st</sup> January	Conferring Ceremony at University of Limerick.
26 <sup>th</sup> January	Mayoral Reception for Castletroy Ladies Golf Club
2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Visit to Queens County, New York.
10 <sup>th</sup> March	Tree Planting Ceremony for National Tree Week in Scoil Mhathair De.
24 <sup>th</sup> March	Launch of Smarter Cities Challenge at Savoy Hotel
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Rotary Club of Limerick-Shannon President's Night
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Visit of Spanish Students to Mayor's Office.
5 <sup>th</sup> April	Visit of French Students on exchange with Laurel Hill Colaiste.
10 <sup>th</sup> April	Launch of the Seven Bridges Walk.
18 <sup>th</sup> April	Mayoral Reception for Paul Roche
26 <sup>th</sup> April	Conferring Ceremony in University of Limerick.
29 <sup>th</sup> May	Commemoration Service to mark UN Peacekeepers Day in St. Marys Cathedral.
16 <sup>th</sup> June	Opening of Gaelscoil, Shelbourne Road.
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Opening of new shop in Roches Street.
31 <sup>st</sup> July	Limerick Branch RBL "Night of Remembrance" Band Concert in St. Mary's Cathedral.
25 <sup>th</sup> August	Conferring Ceremony in University of Limerick.
30 <sup>th</sup> August	Mayoral Reception for Pike Rovers FC in Council Chamber, Merchants Quay.
7 <sup>th</sup> September	Launch of Science Foundation Ireland's new SFI Research Centres in Dublin Castle.

11 <sup>th</sup> September	Launch of Cork Womens Mini Marathon in Strand Hotel.
11 <sup>th</sup> September	Launch of Jazz Festival in Dolans.
12 <sup>th</sup> September	Coffee Morning for Post Polio Support Group in King Johns Castle.
13 <sup>th</sup> September	Launch of Beat on the Street.
22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Limerick LIKE event in King Johns Castle.
22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Launch of Exhibition for Organisation of National Ex Servicemen and Women in Merchant's Quay.
26 <sup>th</sup> September	Mayoral Reception for Winners of National Go for Life Games.
4 <sup>th</sup> October	Mayoral Reception for Geraldines AFC.
11 <sup>th</sup> October	Mayoral Reception for Paul Kiely.
12 <sup>th</sup> October	Lunch – World Barbeque Championships.
26 <sup>th</sup> October	Opening of new premises for Headway at Upper William Street.
28 <sup>th</sup> October	Geraldines AFC Anniversary Dinner at Castletroy Park Hotel.
30 <sup>th</sup> October	Mayoral Reception for Cassandra Wilson
6 <sup>th</sup> November	Mayoral Reception – Limerick United FC / Winners of FAI Cup Final 1982
22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Launch of 'The Curious Story of the Limerick' in the City Library.
27 <sup>th</sup> November	Coffee Morning for Irish Cancer Society
30 <sup>th</sup> November	Presentation for Fairtrade in the Library, The Granary.
1 <sup>st</sup> December	Coffee Morning for Novas
4 <sup>th</sup> December	Launch of Remembrance Tree at Bedford Row
13 <sup>th</sup> December	Mayoral Reception for Limerick Theatre Makers
15 <sup>th</sup> December	Mayoral Reception for St. Patricks GAA Club

The chain is also worn at Meetings of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

9. **Question submitted by Councillor J. Costelloe**

*I will ask at the next Meeting for a list of events where the Chain of the Metropolitan Mayor had been used in events which were not official Council duties or events and the reason why the Chain of the Metropolitan Mayor was used at same.*

**REPLY:** The Chain is worn by the Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick on many occasions. However, a formal record would not be kept of any informal events and a decision on attendance, etc. is a matter for the Mayor during the normal course of his business as Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

10. **Question submitted by Councillor M. Hurley**

*I will ask at the next meeting for an update on the current status of any plans to address the road maintenance issues raised by residents of Ahane.*

**REPLY:** This query refers to an issue raised by a resident of the LP1122 who lives on the Left Hand Side of road between the railway bridge and Ahane Church. There is an old masonry wall along this stretch of road that is maintained by the

residents and the wall is kept in good condition. The boundary ditch opposite this wall is overgrown but also includes an old dry stone wall that is in poor condition. The length of this wall is 600 m approximately and a scheme is requested to remove the ditch and the remains of the existing wall and build a new masonry wall and foundation.

The budget required for such a scheme would be large and it would not be possible to draw from the funding sources available to the Roads Operations Section. Heritage or Conservation grants could be sought but the costs associated with this proposal is likely to be excessive. The views of the Conservation Officer would have to be sought as part of the consideration of any works.

**11. Question submitted by Councillor M. Hurley**

***I will ask at the next meeting if the Council has given recent consideration to a pedestrian crossing being installed opposite entrance to Merchant's Quay. Many tour buses park in the area to the front of the Civic Offices and visitors frequently need to get safe access to local facilities for food/refreshments.***

**REPLY:** The Council has applied for funding under the Low Cost Safety Scheme to install a pedestrian crossing at this location.  
It is likely that grants for such works in 2018 will be notified to local authorities towards the end of January/early February.  
The Council will carry out safety improvement works at this location should its application for funding be successful.

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

**12. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. Hogan (to be referred to the Local Electoral Area Briefings)**

***I will move at the next meeting that, at the start of the new financial year, the Council restore and upgrade the Baggott Estate off Ballinacurra. It became overgrown in recent times and while some remedial work has been done it now needs to be regularly included in the maintenance calendar of the Council.***

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

Councillor Hogan expressed disappointment with the decision to refer this item to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

**13. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville**

***I will move at the next Meeting that this District write to the Minister for Health urging him to re-open the 1,500 hospital beds cut from hospitals over the last decade and reverse the other austerity cuts imposed on our health services to pay for the bank bailouts.***

The motion was proposed by Councillor Prendiville and seconded by Councillor McCreesh.

In proposing the motion Councillor Prendiville highlighted the ongoing issues with overcrowding in UL Hospital's A&E Department and the impact of bed closures over the last number of years as well as the need to reopen these beds and to provide the staff and support as necessary.

The Members supported the motion and highlighted the ongoing issue regarding waiting time for patients on trolleys in UL Hospital's Accident and Emergency Department. Issues noted included pressures following the downsizing of the hospitals in Ennis and Nenagh and St. Johns Hospital, as well as the ongoing problems with treating private patients in public hospitals.

The investment in the new facilities at the Accident and Emergency Unit was noted by some Members as well as the increased expenditure on public health.

Following further discussion it was agreed to invite the CEO of UL Hospitals to the February Metropolitan Meeting in order to outline the measures that UL Hospital Management have identified to deal with the overcrowding issues in accident and emergency and to outline progress to date in implementing these measures.

#### **14. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Prendiville**

***I will move at the next Meeting that, in light of the consistent breaches by landlords of minimum standards for rental accommodation and other basic rights of tenants, the Council makes sure to include information about tenants rights in the packs sent to HAP and RAS tenants as part of any housing needs assessment.***

The motion was proposed by Councillor Prendiville and seconded by Councillor Loftus.

In proposing the motion Councillor Prendiville outlined the lack of protection afforded to tenants and the absence of strict regulatory control over landlords providing unsuitable standards of accommodation. Members supported the motion and stressed the importance of tenants being informed of their statutory rights.

#### **REPLY:**

RAS: The responsibilities of landlords regarding their rights, obligations and duties concerning compliance with minimum standards are contained in documentation which is forwarded to landlords considering RAS as part of an expression of interest being submitted. All RAS properties are inspected prior to their entering in to the scheme to ensure compliance with relevant standards. In addition, the rights, obligations and duties of landlords are contained in the RAS agreement and are explained to landlords during the sign up phase. Each new RAS tenant and each existing RAS tenant whose contract is being renewed receive a copy of the Residential Tenancies Board "Good Tenant Guide" which advises tenants of the duties and responsibilities of both parties as regards the condition and maintenance of private rented properties. A copy of this document can be found at the following link: <https://www.rtb.ie/tenants/rights-responsibilities-obligations/good-tenant-guide>.

HAP: Each HAP pack contains an information booklet for landlords and prospective tenants which contain a section regarding minimum standards. In addition, a copy of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government "Guide to Minimum Standards in Rented Accommodation (Sept 2017)" is

included in the pack. A copy of this document can be found at the following link: [http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/guide to minimum standards in rented accommodation sept 2017.pdf](http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/guide%20to%20minimum%20standards%20in%20rented%20accommodation%20sept%202017.pdf).

It should be noted that housing applicants in receipt of social housing assistance under the RAS and HAP schemes are not included in the housing needs assessment. This has previously been advised to the elected members by email on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018.

Following queries in relation to the annual housing needs assessment, the Senior Executive Officer outlined that Limerick City and County Council, in preparing an assessment of applicants on the housing waiting list, follows criteria set out by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. In accordance with this criteria all HAP tenants and RAS tenants are excluded from this process.

**15. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor P. Keller**

***I will move at the next Meeting that this District write to the Minister for Housing urging him to introduce real rent controls in Limerick City, to reverse the rampant profiteering that has taken place over recent years and bring rents down to affordable levels.***

The motion was proposed by Councillor Keller and seconded by Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh.

In proposing the motion Councillor Keller highlighted the issues with rent increases in Limerick which are ahead of the national average while Limerick remains the only city without rent pressure zones.

Members supported the motion and highlighted the need for longer leases to provide security of tenure and also the need to increase the housing supply as well as bringing vacant units back into use particularly in the Georgian Quarter.

Following further discussion it was agreed to write to the Minister for Housing requesting him to introduce real rent controls in Limerick City, to reverse the rampant profiteering that has taken place over recent years and bring rents down to affordable levels.

**16. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Hurley (to be referred to the Local Electoral Area Briefings)**

***I will move at the next Meeting that immediate consideration be given to extending the footpath from the traffic lights at the entrance to the Cappamore junction on the R445 to Annacotty Business Park.***

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

Councillor Hurley expressed disappointment with the decision to refer this item to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

**17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Hurley (to be referred to the Local Electoral Area Briefings)**

*I will move at the next Meeting that immediate consideration be given to the widening of the Golf Links Road in Castletroy from the traffic lights to entrance to Castletroy Heights. This is now a public bus route and has become a dangerous stretch of road for passing traffic.*

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Local Electoral Area Briefings.

**18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor J. Leddin**

*I will move at the next Meeting that the Council publishes a list of all derelict and undeveloped sites in the District together with the names of the owners and what actions are planned to develop these sites or buildings.*

The motion was proposed by Councillor Leddin and seconded by Councillor Loftus.

In proposing the motion Councillor Leddin requested that an update be given to Members on specific sites in the city, many of these were now vacant for a number of years. In the discussion that followed Members also asked that the Members be informed of major acquisitions and expressed disappointment at not being made aware of the purchase of the Salesians School at an earlier stage.

**REPLY:** Limerick City and County Council maintains and makes available a Derelict Sites Register for its functional area, which contains the names and addresses of derelict sites owners.

Limerick City and County Council is in the process of populating the Vacant Site Register it established in January 2017. Under the requirements of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, the Council can provide notice of intention to site owners of proposed entry onto the register from 1 January 2018. This process is currently underway.

There is an appeal process open to potential vacant site owners, which has a statutory timeframe. Until such a time as this statutory process is completed a list of 'undeveloped sites' is considered premature.

The Senior Executive Officer informed the Members that a new Urban and Village Renewal Department was recently established. This Department will enable the Council to provide an enhanced response to dealing with vacant sites/property and to derelict sites. This department will deal with obligations on vacant sites arising from the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015.

It was agreed that Rosie Webb, Senior Architect in the Urban and Village Renewal Department would be invited to update Members on the role of this Department and on progress regarding vacant sites in the Metropolitan District.

**19. Correspondence**

Correspondence was noted.

This concluded the Meeting.

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

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