

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE THOMAS FITZGERALD CENTRE, BRUFF, CO. LIMERICK, ON MONDAY, 29TH MAY, 2017, AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor K. O'Hanlon, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Browne, Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Costelloe, Crowley, Donegan, Foley, Galvin, Gilligan, Hogan, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Leddin, Lynch, McCreesh, McMahon, Mitchell, Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, O'Donnell, O'Donoghue, Pond, Ryan, Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (M), Sheehy, Teefy, Teskey.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Economic Development (Mr. P. Daly), A/Director, Social Development (Ms. C. Kirby), Director, Service Operations and Business Improvement (Mr. G. Daly), A/Director, Customer Services, Culture and Arts (Mr. D. Brady), Meetings Administrator (Mr. C. O'Connor), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. T. Knox).

Mr. Paul Dennehy, Chairman of the Bruff Heritage Group, welcomed all in attendance to the Thomas Fitzgerald Centre in Bruff.

At the outset, a video outlining the history of the Courthouse and the link to the Fitzgerald/Kennedy families was shown.

Mr. Dennehy addressed the Meeting on behalf of the Bruff Heritage Group. He thanked Limerick City and County Council for its official recognition of the Centre, which was clearly demonstrated by its agreement to hold a Special Meeting at the Centre to mark the occasion of the centenary of the birth of the 35th President of the United States, John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

He then explained the link with Thomas Fitzgerald, who had left Bruff in 1852 and settled in Boston. He married Rosanna Cox and they had twelve children. One of them, John Francis (Honey Fitz) Fitzgerald, went on to become Mayor of Boston and was a member of the US House of Representatives. His eldest daughter, Rose, married Joseph P. Kennedy. They had several children, including John F. Kennedy, the future President of the United States. On

21st June, 2013, John F. Kennedy's daughter, Caroline, returned to her ancestral home in Bruff and officially dedicated the building to the memory of Thomas Fitzgerald.

Mr. Dennehy stated that the Heritage Group was anxious to promote Bruff and the Thomas Fitzgerald Centre as a tourism destination. He thanked all in attendance at this very special event.

Councillor Kieran O' Hanlon, Mayor of the City and County of Limerick, formally opened the Meeting wishing everyone a very warm welcome. He said that the Council was delighted to be in a position to host a Meeting of the Full Council in the Thomas Fitzgerald Centre in Bruff. He referred to John F. Kennedy's visit to Limerick in 1963 when he had been presented with the Freedom of the City. President Kennedy had planned on returning to Ireland the following Spring, but sadly this was not to be. The Mayor said that he was making every effort to foster relationships with Boston. He referred to upcoming visit to Boston and said that, as part of this visit, a new link would be added to the Mayoral Chain commemorating the centenary of the birth of John F. Kennedy. The cost of the link was being sponsored by the Shannon Group.

The Cathaoirleach and Members of the Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock, and each of the Party Leaders, addressed the Meeting saying that they were honoured to attend the Special Meeting on such an auspicious occasion. They thanked the Bruff Heritage Group and acknowledged the Group's dedication and commitment to the Centre and the promotion of Tourism in the area.

The Mayor said he was delighted to be in a position to announce the winner of the Fitzgerald Family Bible Bruff Award for 2017. The Award, he explained, was given to a person who made a significant contribution to the Country of Ireland through a particular act or particular service. He added that the Award was established in 2015 and promoted the link between Bruff and the Fitzgerald Family Bible. Previous recipients of the Award were Philomena Lee and Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh. He then proceeded to announce the winner of the Award for 2017, Social Justice Campaigner, Sister Stanislaus Kennedy.

The Deputy Chief Executive, on behalf of the Council, thanked the Bruff Heritage Group and community of Bruff for the very warm welcome. He stressed the importance of keeping the linkage alive with the Kennedy Family as the Thomas Fitzgerald Centre was a unique visitor attraction and one that would be looked at in terms of the overall tourism strategy. He commended the spirit of volunteerism which was evident in the establishment and development of the Centre. He concluded by wishing the Bruff Heritage Group the very best for the future and said the Council was fully supportive and committed to the Centre.

The Mayor then presented a framed copy of the original Scroll awarded to John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, on being granted the Freedom of the City of Limerick on 29th June, 1963, to Bruff Heritage Group, to mark the occasion.

The Meeting concluded with a viewing of a special video message received from the JFK Library, Boston, focusing on John F. Kennedy's life and which included interviews with Caroline Kennedy and her children to mark his 100th Birthday.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____