

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT ANNUAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, ON FRIDAY, 29TH JUNE, 2018, AT 3.00P.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor S. Keary, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive (Mr. C. Murray), Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Economic Development (Mr. P. Daly), Director, Support Services – Finance, Corporate, Human Resources and ICT (Mr. S. Coughlan), Director, Physical Development (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Service Operations (Mr. G. Daly), Director of Services (Ms. A. Duke), Meetings Administrator (Mr. T. O’Callaghan), Staff Officer, Corporate Services (Ms. C. Sheehy).

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

“Councillors, Oireachtas Members, Chief Executive, Staff of Limerick City and County Council, friends and supporters.

Twelve months ago when I stood before you, I said that the greatest honour that could be bestowed on anyone was to be elected first Citizen of their City or County. Twelve months later, I can say that it has been just that, a huge honour.

In the course of my term as Mayor, I have championed issues that I laid out in the run-up to taking on the role. These included the promotion of Limerick as a place to invest; the inclusion of groups that may not always feel central to the decision-making process; celebrating the champions of volunteerism across Limerick and marking the very significant cultural, historical and community events in a manner that I always strove to be respectful to the people of Limerick.

In the past twelve months, Limerick has experienced an economic renewal with strong inward and indigenous investment. We have seen strong and continued job creation with a number of companies setting up or expanding in Limerick. We have seen the steady decline in the unemployment rate which has given people from across the City and County the opportunity to go back to meaningful employment. This increase in employment has not only seen the

rejuvenation of our labour market, but it has also seen a rejuvenation in our communities where confidence is returning.

Limerick City and County Council has been to the fore in this economic development. Innovate Limerick and Limerick Twenty Thirty have hit many significant milestones during the year which I was delighted to facilitate and participate in. These included meeting NBC in New York as part of the St. Patrick's Day festivities where I discussed opportunities in Troy Studios with senior leaders in NBC. Later in the year, I led an economic delegation from the Council to the New York City and State area. The Mid-West Region and, in particular, Limerick has strong economic and twinning links to their region and I was anxious to strengthen them through meeting representatives of the companies who employ hundreds of people in Limerick.

I have no doubt that, based on the ingredients available in Limerick in terms of sites, infrastructure, educational institutions, supports and, most importantly, its people, Limerick is best placed to attract further investment from North America through the Council and the IDA.

This view is supported by the recent publication of the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan which identifies Limerick as a key driver for the Mid-West and for the wider development of Ireland. To achieve this, the National Development Plan has included a number of key projects which I believe are critical for our future and, as Mayor, I was delighted to see them included by Government in its plan. These include the M20, the Adare By-Pass, the relocation of the Maternity Hospital to UHL, investments in house building, school improvements and other projects that will see our City and County lead the development of the Mid-West.

This was again proven during my tenure as Mayor when, on behalf of the Council, I signed two agreements with the European Investment Bank and the European Central Bank respectively that will see a combined facility of €170 million being made available to the Council to develop the Opera Site in the heart of Limerick City.

I will now continue, as I have already done in the past year, to push the Council to apply the same energy to our towns and villages as it has to our City. The Government has made €1 billion available for rural regeneration and the challenge for Limerick City and County Council is to apply sufficient leverage to get the greatest amount we can out of this fund.

The year was tinged with highs and lows. Our Limerick Under-21 hurlers brought us great joy and pride, while the loss of Dolores O'Riordan shrouded us in grey and sadness. As a Council, we supported and marked momentous events like the Under-21 hurlers' homecoming, the Christmas and St. Patrick's Day festivities, Civic and Mayoral Receptions and many more, culminating as we did last night with the awarding of the Honorary Freedom of Limerick to Detective Garda Jerry McCabe posthumously, and to retired Detective Garda Ben O'Sullivan. I proposed this, as was my right as Mayor, because I feel as strongly now as I did 22 years ago that we needed to honour these men, one of whom paid the ultimate sacrifice in having his life ended by those whose motive was to subvert the legitimacy of this State and cause the maximum level of destruction. Events like this give all of us the opportunity to reflect and to recall times in Limerick's history when the people united together in the face of people who can never be allowed to erase or rewrite history.

The past twelve months have cemented for me a belief that I have always had since I arrived off the bus as a young Galway man with a fixed-term contract to construct houses in Moyross. Limerick is a fantastically welcoming place where the opportunities that presented in the past for a person like me to set up a home, build a family and set down roots in the community of Croagh, still exist.

Our challenge as Members of the Council is to ensure we continue to provide the leadership to create that environment of opportunity and welcome. This Council gave me the greatest opportunity of my life and I want to thank you for that.

There are countless numbers of people I have worked with over the past year and want to thank and while it is not possible to thank everyone, there are some I might single out. I would firstly like to thank the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Marian Hurley, who was always available to assist me when called on; also, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District, Councillors Seán Lynch and Vivienne Crowley; Siobhan Carroll and Eleanor Buckley as my secretaries who have kept me moving in the right direction all year and managed the diary with the highest level of professionalism; Liz Creamer, James Clune, Christy O'Connor and many others; Laura Ryan and Denis Tierney and the team in Marketing and Communications – thanks for keeping me on message – not an easy task at the best of times; Timmy Roche, Ger Reidy and Brian Hannon, thanks for your help; Chief Executive, Conn Murray, Deputy Chief Executive, Dr. Pat Daly, and all of the Management Team, thanks for your advice, assistance and guidance throughout the year.

On a personal note, to my wife Bridie who is here today and is by my side at all times, I cannot thank you enough for all of your help, support and patience always and over the past year in particular; also, to my daughters, Maria and Eileen, sons-in-law, nephew Dave Callanan, and all of my extended family, thanks for all of your support during my Mayoralty.

So, finally, I will finish where I started twelve months ago. The positions of Mayor and Councillor are not jobs, they are not things to take for granted, they are privileges bestowed on us by our neighbours, who expect us to do our best for them. I hope in my time as Mayor that, in doing my best, which I have, I have carried out my role for all of the people of Limerick, all of the time.

The profession of Public Representative is an honour, one which I am proud to have been called, and my commitment today as I conclude my term as Mayor is to continue to work for the people who put me here with the same energy and enthusiasm as I always have.

I want to wish Councillor James Collins, his wife Eileen, and their children the very best for the year ahead. My advice is to enjoy the year and appreciate the very special privilege which you have been given.

In my Mayoral acceptance speech last June, I mentioned John Hume whose only political philosophy was the pursuit of peace in Ireland, and once said: “I was grateful for the opportunity to make a difference.” I hope my time as Mayor of the City and County of Limerick has allowed me to make a difference to the future of Limerick. Go raibh mile maith agaibh go léir.”

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 O’Hanlon;**

“That, Councillor James Collins 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 Leddin;
Seconded by Councillor McCreesh;**

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

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Councillor Collins (J)

Councillors Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Crowley, Daly, Donegan, Foley, Galvin, Gleeson, Hogan, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Loftus, Lynch, Mitchell, O’Dea, O’Donnell, O’Donoghue, O’Hanlon, Pond, Ryan, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Teefy, Teskey. **(27)**

For Councillor Secas

Councillors Browne, Costelloe, Gilligan, Leddin, McCreesh, Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, Secas, Sheehy. **(8)**

Abstention

Councillor Prendiville. **(1)**

The outgoing Mayor declared Councillor James Collins elected as Mayor of the City and County of Limerick and congratulated him on his election.

Having taken the Chair, the incoming Mayor, Councillor Collins (J), thanked his Proposer and Seconded and his fellow Councillors for their support. He said it was a great honour to be elected Mayor and he had never imagined that one day he would be elected to that office. He stated that he would do his best to represent both City and County. He referred to the many issues he would like to concentrate on, including Education, which was one of the key reasons for the success of Limerick in recent years. He stated the Environment was a key issue, as was Crime and Safety of local communities, along with Employment, Housing, Transport.

He welcomed his family, friends and supporters to the Chamber and acknowledged their support and encouragement down through the years. He stated that politics had always been part of his life with his father, Michael, a former Member and Chairman of Limerick County Council and a TD for Limerick West, and his uncle, Gerry, also a former Member of Limerick County Council and a TD for Limerick West, as well as being a former Minister and a Member of the European Parliament for the Munster constituency.

In conclusion, he thanked his family, especially his wife Eileen, and his children Eoghan, Thomas, Daniel and Beibhinn, for their continued support.

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 O'Hanlon;
Seconded by Councillor Foley;**

"That, Councillor Michael Collins 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 McCreesh;
Seconded by Councillor Leddin;**

"That, Cmhlr. Séighin Ó Ceallaigh 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 Collins (M)

Councillors Butler, Collins (J), Collins (M), Crowley, Daly, Donegan, Foley, Galvin, Gleeson, Hogan, Hourigan, Hurley, Keary, Lynch, Mitchell, O'Dea, O'Donnell, O'Donoghue, O'Hanlon, Pond, Ryan, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Teefy, Teskey. **(26)**

For Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh

Councillors Browne, Costelloe, Gilligan, Leddin, Loftus, McCreesh, Cmhlr. Ó Ceallaigh, Secas, Sheehy. **(9)**

Abstention

Councillor Prendiville. **(1)**

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

The incoming Deputy Mayor, Councillor Collins (M), addressed the Meeting as follows:

“Mayor, Councillors, Management and distinguished guests, heartiest of congratulations on your election today.

I want to welcome members of the public and, in particular, your wife Eileen and children, your parents Michael and Una, your uncle Gerard and extended members of your family and supporters. It is a very proud day for you and your family.

As I mentioned earlier when nominating you, I have no doubt that you will serve this Council and the people of Limerick well in your year ahead. I have served on the last Council and this present Council with you for the past nine years and have found you to be highly competent, trustworthy, diligent and professional in how you carry out your duties as an Elected Representative of this Council. This will stand to you in your role as First Citizen.

Within the Fianna Fáil group and within this Council as a whole, you are highly thought of and respected and I particularly want to mention your accounting and mathematical abilities at Budget time. Management love you for it! As I also mentioned earlier, you sit on many committees, both within this Authority and externally. You are a committed Public Representative, always working for your community on local and national issues.

Your political background is well known and it is nice to be recreating a piece of history today as your late grandfather, James, whom you are named after, served on Limerick County Council and was a former Cathaoirleach in the 50’s and early 60’s. Your dad, Michael, served on the Council and also held high office as Cathaoirleach in 1990. Of course, they both served in Dáil Éireann, along with your uncle Gerard who also served as a member of the European Parliament. So a good pedigree in political life there.

Mayor, I am truly humbled and honoured to be elected Deputy Mayor here today. I want to thank my proposer and seconder, Councillors O’Hanlon and Foley. I am delighted that my wife Fiona, my mam Peggy, and my mother-in-law Winnie, are present here today. I want to thank all my family, friends and supporters for their support in my political life for the past fourteen years. I had the pleasure of serving as Leas-Chathaoirleach of Limerick County Council in 2004, just after being elected, serving with the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Eddie Wade. It was a baptism of fire!

I look forward to my year ahead in working and supporting you Mayor and carrying out my duties to the best of my ability and professionally as Second Citizen of Limerick City and County. I look forward to working with all Elected Members, Management and staff of this Council in promoting Limerick City and County as a destination to work, live and play.

Finally, Mayor, I want to thank the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Keary, and his Deputy Mayor, Councillor Hurley, for representing us in the past year. They

both served above and beyond the call of duty and for that we are grateful. I wish them well after a very successful year.

So, Mayor Collins, enjoy the celebrations with your family and friends. This evening is truly deserved.”

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 Keary, and outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor Hurley. 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 James Collins and Councillor Michael Collins 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 position, a responsible position and that it carried with it the challenge of delivering leadership for and on behalf of the people of Limerick. He complimented the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Keary, and the outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor Hurley, on what had been a very successful year. He said both Councillors Keary and Hurley had been professional, had demonstrated great commitment to Limerick and had been a pleasure to work with.

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

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Mayor

Date:
