



Oifig an Runaí Aire
Office of the Minister of State

12 May 2022

Cllr. Martin Ryan
dara.obrien@limerick.ie

Ref: HPLG-MoSB-00310-2022

Dear Cllr. Ryan,

I refer to your correspondence regarding a notice of motion of Cappamore-Kilmallock Municipal District in respect of the establishment of the office of directly elected mayor in Limerick.

I wish to thank you for bringing the Municipal District's notice of motion to his attention. I am most grateful to the Municipal District members for their interest in this important reform of local government in Limerick.

I wish to inform you that in order to facilitate and oversee the provision of impartial and factual information to the electorates in Limerick, Waterford, and Cork City regarding the 2019 plebiscites on directly elected mayors, an independent Committee was established. It was chaired by a retired High Court judge, and included representatives from the three local authorities concerned, this Department and the Local Government Management Agency, and an independent legal advisor.

The Committee's public information campaign ran across a range of platforms: it included the holding of media briefings in each of the three local authorities where plebiscites were held; advertisements were placed in local and national newspapers, on local radio and on social media; posters were displayed in public offices in the three local authority areas, and a guide for voters was distributed to households as well as being made available in public offices. Furthermore, public information meetings, chaired by the Committee Chairman, took place in each of the three local authority areas. A dedicated webpage was also set up with information for voters.

Following the vote in Limerick in favour of establishing a directly elected mayor, an Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) was set up, and the Group's Chair engaged with a wide range of stakeholders. In addition, the University of Limerick performed a public consultation exercise on behalf of the IAG. Part of the purpose of the consultation was to raise public awareness and generate discussion; it involved the facilitation of over



21 community consultations, the receipt of submissions, and the issuing of a survey questionnaire that gained over 900 responses.

It is also intended that there will be a public information campaign to enhance awareness of the establishment of the office, as well as the role/functions of the directly elected mayor, and to promote understanding among the people of Limerick of the changes to their local authority. The campaign will take place in advance of the first mayoral election, following the passage of the Local Government (Directly Elected Mayor with Executive Functions in Limerick City and County) Bill 2021 through the Oireachtas. The timing of the mayoral election will of course be a decision for Government once the legislation is enacted.

Thank you for your interest in this important reform of local government. I look forward to further engagement with elected members in Limerick and with the people of Limerick in relation to the directly elected mayor project as the legislation progresses.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Burke T.D.

Minister for Planning and Local Government

Please note: I am a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015