

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, AND ONLINE, ON MONDAY, 11TH JULY, 2022, AT 2PM.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor F. Foley, Mayor.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors Benson, Carey, Collins (B), Collins (J), Collins (M), Collopy, Daly, Donegan, Egan, Galvin, Hartigan, Keary, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, Murphy, Novak Uí Chonchúir, O'Brien, O'Donoghue, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheahan (K), Sheahan (M), Sheehan (C), Slattery, Talukder, Teefy, Teskey.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive (Mr. P. Daly), Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Support Services (Mr. S. Coughlan), Director, Housing (Ms. C. Curley), Director, Planning, Environment and Place-Making (Ms. N. Gallagher), Director, Transportation and Mobility (Mr. B. Kennedy), Director, National and Regional Shared Services (Mr. K. Lehane), A/Director, Economic Development and Enterprise (Mr. V. Murray), Senior Executive Officer, Regeneration (Mr. B. Troy), Meetings Administrator (Ms. L. Flannery), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Mr. M. Leahy), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. A. Foley).

Votes of Sympathy

At the outset and with the permission of the Mayor, the Council extended its sympathy to Cllr Bridie Collins on the recent passing of her father in law.

A minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect.

The Mayor explained that he had called the Special Meeting following a request from some Members in order to discuss the following:

That, due to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the global grain shortage, the Government should, as a matter of urgency, establish an Expert National Review Group on Horticulture to include the main stakeholders and to report back in six months. The purpose of the Group would be to review the industry under the headings:

Food Security; Import Substitution; Employment Opportunities.

Areas to include – Protected Crops,
Fruit Production – Top Fruits (apples)
Soft Fruits and the Seed Potato Sector.

The Members referred to the ongoing crisis in the Ukraine, condemned the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, and called for an end to this war. They noted that one of the many impacts of this invasion was the effect it was having on the supply of grain and the impact that this was having on the farming sector with the cost of production such as fertilizer and feedstuffs being also affected as a result.

This was creating a big issue for farmers and, combined with the increase in fuel costs also in recent months, was affecting this sector in a major way. The cost of feeding livestock, especially during the coming winter, was also of huge concern for farmers.

Members agreed that it was therefore very important that an Expert National Review Group on Horticulture be established which would include the main stakeholders in this area and which would report back in six months. The purpose of the Group would be to review the industry under various headings including Food Security; Import Substitution and Employment Opportunities with areas also to include Protected Crops, Fruit Production and Soft Fruits and the Seed Potato Sector.

Members agreed that increased costs in the farming sector would lead to an impact on the price of foodstuffs in the daily shopping basket of all consumers and stressed the importance in reducing food waste as much as possible and the need for food companies to be more innovative where possible to address these challenges.

Members also agreed that Ireland needs to be more self-sufficient in growing as many crops as possible, rather than importing many food items from outside Ireland. This would help address any potential shortfalls and they agreed the importance of incentivising farmers to produce more agricultural products and for supermarkets to pay decent rates to farmers to allow this to happen.

Proposed by Councillor Galvin,
Seconded by Councillor Sheahan (J);
And Resolved:

“That, due to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the global grain shortage, that the Minister for Agriculture should, as a matter of urgency, establish an Expert National Review Group on Horticulture to include the main stakeholders and to report back in six months. The purpose of the Group would be to review all food industries under the headings: Food Security; Import Substitution; Employment Opportunities. Areas to include – Protected Crops, Fruit Production – Top Fruits (apples), Soft Fruits and the Seed Potato Sector. This Motion to be circulated to all local authorities”

Signed: _____
Mayor

Date: _____