

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MONTHLY MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK AND ONLINE ON MONDAY, 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2024 at 9.45 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Kieran O’Hanlon, Cathaoirleach

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Beasley, Benson, Butler, Daly, Donoghue, Doyle, Gavan, Hartigan, Hickey-O’Mara, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, O’Donovan, O’Sullivan, Pond, Secas, Sheehan, Slattery and Talukder.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Service, Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services (Mr. K. Lehane), Meetings Administrator (Mr. M. Leahy), Senior Executive Engineers, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing (Mr. M. Richardson and Mr. L. Browne), Administrative Officer, Property Management (Ms. T. Knox), A/Senior Executive Engineer, Travel and Transport Strategy (Mr. J. O’Leary), Executive Planner (Ms. K. McDonnell), Senior Planner (Ms. N. O’Connell), Senior Engineer, Environment and Climate Action (Mr. A. Finn), Senior Executive Officer, Housing Support Services (Ms. M. Hayes), Administrative Officer (Mr. J. McDonald), Senior Staff Officer (Ms. F. O’Keeffe), Administrative Officer, Community (Mr. P. Malone), A/Head of Human Resources (Ms. D. Minogue), Arts Officer (Ms. E. McCooey), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Services and Governance (Ms. S. Carroll).

At the outset of the Meeting, the Cathaoirleach and Members extended their congratulations to Limerick man, Michael Benn, now Rockaway Beach, Queens County, New York who was recently named as Grand Marshal for the 2025 New York St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

Members also congratulated all those who took part in the Parade for National Services Day over the weekend and conveyed their thanks and appreciation for their great work.

Members also extended their good wishes to Laura Flannery, Head of Corporate Services who was leaving Limerick City & County Council to take up a new role elsewhere and thanked her for her work with the local authority over the past three years.

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 15th July, 2024:

Proposed by Councillor Pond; Seconded by Councillor Hartigan;
And Resolved:

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

2. Declaration of Interest

The Meetings Administrator stated that, in line with Part 15 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, and the Code of Conduct, he was inviting those present to notify the Cathaoirleach of

any declaration of interest in any item due for discussion at the Meeting. No such interests were declared.

3. Disposal of Land

- (a) Circulated, Report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 26th July, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at Knockatanna, Caherconlish, Co. Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (b) Circulated, Report of the Senior Staff Officer, Housing Support Services dated 23rd August, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal of Freehold Interest of premises consisting of a dwelling house situate at 6 Sarsfield Avenue, Garryowen, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (c) Circulated, Report of the Administrative Officer, Rural, Community & Culture Development Directorate dated 6th September, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal by way of sub-lease, of 4th Floor Crescent House, Hartstonge Street, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (d) Circulated, Report of the Administrative Officer, Rural, Community & Culture Development Directorate dated 6th September, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal by way of sub-lease, of 3rd Floor Crescent House, Hartstonge Street, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (e) Circulated, Report of the Administrative Officer, Rural, Community & Culture Development Directorate dated 5th September, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal of Property at 'Shines' 4a Lower Gerald Griffin Street, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (f) Circulated, Report of the Administrative Officer, Rural, Community & Culture Development Directorate dated 4th September, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal of Property at Ballyclough Avenue, Castletroy, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

- (g) Circulated, Report of the Administrative Officer, Rural, Community & Culture Development

Directorate dated 4th September, 2024, setting out proposals for Disposal of Property at 19 Clare Street, Limerick and the intention to bring a Section 183 Notice to Full Council in this regard, for approval.

The report, as circulated, was noted by Members.

4. Transportation and Mobility Directorate

Draft Limerick City and County Council Metropolitan District of Limerick Control of Car Clubs Bye-Laws 2024

Circulated, Report of the Director of Services, Transportation and Mobility Directorate dated 23rd August, 2024 together with Draft Limerick City and County Council Metropolitan District of Limerick Control of Car Clubs Bye-Laws 2024.

Members welcomed the introduction of the Bye-Laws. They raised a number of queries in relation to possibly extending the Bye-Laws to the county and flexible parking zones. These were responded to by the A/Senior Executive Engineer who confirmed that it was the intention to introduce same in the Municipal District Areas as well.

Proposed by Councillor O'Donovan;
Seconded by Councillor Hartigan;
And Resolved:

"That, the Draft Limerick City and County Council Metropolitan District of Limerick Control of Car Clubs Bye-Laws 2024, be and are hereby adopted, in accordance with Part 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended).

QUESTIONS

5. Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if a survey has been done, or if not, has the Council plans for same to be carried out, on the right hand side of Childers Road between Castletroy View and The Parkway, as there is a footpath left unfinished that needs to be connected to the footpath out to The Parkway Retail Park.

REPLY: Limerick City & County Council Road Operations Department does not currently have an approved budget to install a footpath at this location. However, we identify the merit of this request and we will look to source funding from the NTA to advance any proposals here.

6. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many houses have been purchased in the Metropolitan District area to enable tenants remain in situ under the Government Scheme since it was launched, and how many are projected for purchase in 2024.

REPLY: The Housing Directorate have 542 cases relating to Notice to Quits in the Limerick Metropolitan District as of the 10th September 2024.

A total of 76 properties have been purchased to date.

A further 40 properties are at 'sale agreed' stage and projected to close by the end of 2024.

No	Status	Note
42	Proposals	Proposals are at various stages for example, engaging with landlords, valuations, surveys, with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for budget approval etc...
40	Sale Agreed	The sale has or is in progress of progressing to conveyancing in order to close
76	Purchase Completed	The acquisition has completed and the sale is closed
43	Referred to the Housing Agency for consideration under the Cost Rental Tenant in Situ Scheme	The Cost Rental Tenant in Situ (CRTiS) Scheme is managed by The Housing Agency and is available where a household faces the termination of their tenancy due to the landlord's intention to sell the property. This scheme is for households not on the Social Housing Waiting List. To be eligible for the CRTiS scheme, the net annual income of the household is to be below €59,000.00 net per annum, which is the income limit for the standard cost rental framework. Under the scheme, the Housing Agency can purchase the house a tenant resides in and rent it back to the tenant.
36	Owner Re-Occupying	Notifications of Notice to Quits (NTQs) where owner is re-occupying for personal or family use.
2	Tenant Notification	Notifications of NTQs where we are awaiting owner consent to progress under TiS and to move to proposal stage.
303	Withdrawn	Withdrawn can be due to a number of reasons. For example: landlords not engaging despite repeated attempts, no agreement with owner on independent valuation, tenant has alternative accommodation, household not eligible under terms of the scheme.

7. Question submitted by Councillor J. Leddin

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many grants have been issued to successful applicants under the Vacant Homes Scheme in the Metropolitan District area since the scheme was launched.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council administers the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, funded through the Croí Conaithe (Towns) Fund, on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Applications to the grant scheme are assessed on an ongoing basis. Grant approval is given once a full application is confirmed and verified, an initial technical site inspection is completed and a recommendation is made for approval. Drawdown of the funding cannot be processed for approved applications until refurbishment works are completed and confirmed by final technical site inspection, claim documents including vouched expenditure is verified, and the relevant legal charge is registered on the applicant's ownership document for the subject property.

The table below provides detail on the total applications for the grant submitted to renovate properties in the Metropolitan District, the number of applications approved in the District, and the number of successful applications drawn down at 12th September 2024.

Number of VPRG Applications Received	Number of VPRG Applications Approved / Approved in Principle	Number of VPRG Applications Drawn Down
148	103	17

8. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District for an update on the junction tightening at Quinlan Street/Barrington Street, if this still will include a pedestrian crossing at the Crescent and when will this work be complete.

REPLY: Progression of the city transport plan is currently underway and will consider among other things traffic management and bus priority measures in the city centre. As part of the process we will be considering junction tightening, traffic changes and road improvements within the study area which includes junction tightening at Quinlan Street/Barrington Street. We will revert when the transport plan is more advanced and can provide more clarity in this regard.

9. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for a breakdown, by each Electoral Area in the Metropolitan District, the number of housing accommodation delivered by the Capital Assistance Scheme in the last 5 years.

REPLY: The Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) assists Approved Housing Bodies, through both construction and acquisition delivery streams (including Notice to Quit Acquisitions), with the delivery of housing accommodation to cater for priority groups on the Housing Waiting List such as the Elderly, Homeless persons (including Care Leavers) and also Persons with a Disability.

A breakdown of the number of housing accommodation units delivered between 2019 up to 2024 under the Capital Assistance Scheme by Metropolitan District Local Electoral Area is outlined below in Table 1. The Table shows that the CAS delivery stream delivered 165 units in total in the Metropolitan District which represents 10.7% of the total build and acquisition completions in the same timeframe.

	LIMERICK CITY EAST	LIMERICK CITY WEST	LIMERICK CITY NORTH	CAS Completions Total	Total LCCC Housing Delivery per year (Build and Acquisition)	Metro CAS delivery as a % of overall LCCC Housing Delivery
2019	7	5	13	25	213	11.7
2020	4	1	6	11	135	8.1
2021	0	0	3	3	223	1.3
2022	0	4	20	24	421	5.7
2023	13	41	16	70	420	16.6
2024*	10	8	14	32	124	25.8
TOTAL	34	59	72	165	1536	10.7

Table 1: CAS Delivery Information from January 1st 2019 up to 11.09.2024

10. Question submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if Limerick City and County Council has any plans for double yellow lines to be installed along Huntsfield Drive in Huntsfield Estate, Dooradoyle to stop the excessive parking on footpaths along this main entrance to the estate.

REPLY: The Limerick City & County Council Traffic Team will review with the Traffic Authority An Garda Síochana Roads Policing Unit to determine if double yellow lines are practical along Huntsfield Drive in Huntsfield Estate, Dooradoyle for traffic enforcement purposes.

Poor parking practices such as parking on footpaths and at entrances can be enforced by a member of the Traffic Authority without the requirement of double yellow line marking.

11. Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick a) for an update on the proposed improvement works for the existing playground in Castleconnell and b) when the contractor will be appointed for the expansion of this playground.

REPLY: The Council has undertaken some works on the existing playground in Castleconnell, a junior swing and basket swing have been replaced. The playground was recently power washed; the woodwork will also be painted in the near future. The Council will also be installing an inclusive roundabout in lieu of the existing roundabout and also a communications board. These works will allow the existing playground to function to an acceptable level until a full upgrade and extension of the playground is in place.

Consultants are in the process of being appointed and a consultation will be held with the community to ensure the needs of the community are met as part of the design process for the project. A Part 8 planning application is required for the project and once planning is

received, the project can process to the tender stage where a contractor will be subsequently appointed for the construction stage.

12. Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick when the contractor will be appointed for the Columbarium Wall Garden for Kilmurry Graveyard.

REPLY: The Council advised at a previous meeting that Consultants costs for the project were excessive. As a result, the Council are currently considering alternative ways of delivering the project and once agreed, a timeline for the construction stage will be advised to the Members.

13. Question submitted by Councillor E. Secas

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what funding is already in place for a dog park in Castletroy Park and what additional funding is required to proceed and deliver this project.

REPLY: It is estimated that the cost for the dog park in Castletroy Park will be of the order of €25,000, the Council has €8,000 and will require approximately a further €17,000 to deliver the project.

14. Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what progress has been made on the taking in charge of the road at the back of Dochas building on Parnell Street.

REPLY: The road at the back of Dochas building on Parnell Street was declared a public road following a public consultation process, a District Engineer's Report and its adoption at the May 2024 Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick. A road number will be allocated following an update on the Roads Schedule.

Limerick City & County Council Roads Metro District is reviewing resources to rectify defects on this roadway and introduce a one-way traffic management system and designated street parking as outlined in the taking in charge report.

15. Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what stage is the planning enforcement investigation at Colbert Station and when is it due to conclude.

REPLY: The Planning Authority has served a Warning Letter in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to works being undertaken at Colbert Station and is engaging with the developer in relation to addressing outstanding matters.

16. Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, that, having regard to road safety concerns from the local school community, what inspections / investigative measures and actions have the Planning Enforcement Team and Roads Department carried out in relation to the Castletroy Greenway at the Cairn Homes site near Gaelscoil Chaladh an Treoigh, and Castletroy Shopping Centre.

REPLY: Planning permission was granted for this development by An Bord Pleanála under Plg. Ref. ABP-20-307631 (LCCC Ref. 20/307631). In this regard, the applicant is required to undertake the development in compliance with the permitted plans and particulars, and in line with the associated conditions. The conditions included matters relating to roads and traffic management arrangements to be agreed. All proposals submitted by the developer to date, in relation to discharge of post decision compliance matters, have been inspected and reviewed by both the Planning and Road Departments and are subject to road safety auditing. These documents are available for members of the public to view on the planning file.

17. Question submitted by Councillor S. Hickey-O'Mara

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on the proposed bus shelter at the intersection of the Old Cratloe Road and Walnut Drive, Caherdavin Heights.

REPLY: A bus shelter is proposed for this stop as part of the Old Cratloe Road Active Travel Scheme. In order to facilitate a bus shelter, it is proposed to move the bus stop closer to Caherdavin Meadows junction.

The Old Cratloe Rd, Active Travel Scheme is anticipated to go to non-statutory consultation phase in Q4 of 2024, followed by the appropriate planning process with construction anticipated in 2025 subject to funding.

18. Question submitted by Councillor S. Hickey-O'Mara

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for a full breakdown of:

- ***The number of dogs destroyed at Limerick Dog Shelter over the past five years.***
- ***How much income has been accrued as a result of surrendering fees at Limerick Dog Shelter.***
- ***How much income has been accrued as a result of rehoming fees at Limerick Dog Shelter.***

REPLY: 109 dogs in total have been euthanized since 2020. The breakdown is –

2024 (to end of August)	2023	2022	2021	2020
32	69	5	0	3

€12,885 in total has been accrued by the dog shelter since 2020. This figure includes surrendering, rehoming and reclaiming fees. It is not possible to break down the amount for each. The fee to surrender restricted breeds at Limerick Dog Shelter has been waived since July of this year in light of the announcement of the ban on XL Bully dogs by the Minister for Rural and Community Affairs, Heather Humphries.

19. Question submitted by Councillor S. Hickey-O'Mara

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if Active Travel intend to install a bike lane on the Condell Road between the Coonagh and Clonmacken Roundabouts to provide safe access for cyclists.

REPLY: Active Travel has no current proposals for a cycle infrastructure link between the Coonagh and Clonmacken Roundabout.

However, Active Travel will review with NTA as part of future funding.

20. Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what plans the Council have, to repair damaged paving in Bedford Row and if they could give a timeframe for works.

REPLY: Limerick City & County Council's City Centre Response Team is carrying out repairs to the pavement on Bedford Row intermittently and as they arise. This team in conjunction with other departments is investigating a longer term solution for this pavement and the resource needs including its timeline.

21. Question submitted by Councillor S. Benson

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, what emergency measures have Limerick City and County Council put in place to address the shortage of emergency accommodation beds, as we approach the winter months.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council Homeless Action Team schedule a meeting annually to review the Winter Protocols this meeting is due to take place on Thursday the 26th September 2024. At this meeting we will conduct a review of the protocol document in an effort to maximise the number of extra spaces available with our various providers. In 2023 we were able to agree 12 extra spaces and we would be confident of securing this number with the possibility to have more subject to renovation works at McGarry House being completed. Limerick City and County Council Homeless Action Team have an excellent working relationship with the service providers and the street outreach team and in the event of a cold or extreme weather warning coming into effect would be in a position to engage with any rough sleepers supporting them to access beds and also supports around addiction and mental health through the relevant provider.

22. Question submitted by Councillor U. Gavan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many vacant social housing units are there in the Metropolitan District. What is the average turnaround time to bring these back into use and the average cost per house.

REPLY:

<u>Vacant Social Housing Units Major Refurbishments</u>	
Metro Units	47 Units
<u>Average Turnround Time</u>	
Average turnaround time for all major refurbs – Metro only	98 Weeks
<u>Average Cost Per House</u>	
Total average costs for units – Metro only	€212,470

<u>Vacant Social Housing Units Minor Refurbishments</u>	
Metro Units	65 Units
<u>Average Turnround Time</u>	
Average turnaround time for all minor refurbs – Metro only	63 Weeks
<u>Average Cost Per House</u>	
Total average costs for units – Metro only	€46,597

23. Question submitted by Councillor U. Gavan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick how many businesses are in compliance and arrears with rates in the Metropolitan District. How many pay nothing and what additional steps are being taken to improve rate take up.

REPLY: The following gives details of all Ratepayers at 31st December, 2023:

- 4,094 or 85% of Customers are fully compliant
- 433 or 9% of Customers are on Payment Plans
- 281 or 6% of Customers did not pay in 2023 – *Note: this includes accounts in liquidation/receivership/in probate and also a number of accounts where the premises are vacant and the Rates Section are awaiting vacancy forms from the owners.*

As in prior years, the Council continued to initiate legal proceedings in cases where no progress was being made in recovering the arrears due. It should be noted that considerable progress has been made in reducing the long term arrears, due to the Council.

As can be seen from the above, many of our customers are now on payment plans or paying by Direct Debit which are designed to clear the arrears in a timely manner while at the same time easing the burden for the Ratepayer. The Council also offers an annual Small & Medium Business Support Scheme, where the ratepayer may be entitled to 13.5% rebate of their annual rates, up to a maximum grant of €1,500 if the applicant is paying their Rates by Direct Debit or pays their annual rates in full by 31st July.

The Council continues to encourage customers who are experiencing difficulties to engage with their Account Manager, as soon as possible.

24. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick if a strategic plan or city-wide mapped overview is in place for all SHIP, HAP, AHB and CAS social housing particularly with a focus on ensuring that the government's 'Mixed Tenure Communities' policy is upheld, thus ensuring good management by AHBs of their tenants and to support sustainable communities across Limerick City.

REPLY: The term "mixed-tenure" typically refers to residential projects where various types of housing tenure and therefore different economic groups are provided. This involves a blend of ownership, private rental, social-rental, and affordable housing (both affordable sale and affordable rental) integrated within the same development. Mixed tenure is often viewed as a way to address some of the social issues linked with mono-tenure schemes, such as large-scale social housing schemes.

Nationally, the mixed-tenure policy is promoted as a policy under 'Housing for All', but without specific guidelines on how it should be implemented.

Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) has developed a more structured approach for implementing a mixed-tenure policy. For large-scale housing developments (over 40 units) proposed to LCCC as turnkey projects for example, the following approach has been agreed with the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council:

- A minimum of 20% private housing
- A minimum of 50% private affordable housing
- A maximum of 30% social-rental housing, including private rightsizing and Part V properties

For acquisitions, leases, or turnkeys with fewer than 40 units, where social-rental tenure is proposed, a thorough pre-assessment process is followed:

- A review of housing needs in the area for the proposed property types, with consultation via the I-house system and confirmation from the Housing Support Services Allocations unit of the waiting list for the bed type proposed.
- An evaluation of the level of social-rental housing (including Housing Assistance Payment [HAP]) in the area to avoid an overconcentration of any one tenure type. The approach of the Housing Directorate is no more than 30% on a street-by-street basis.
- An analysis of the HP Pobal Deprivation Index for the area to ensure that areas classified as 'extremely disadvantaged' or 'very disadvantaged' are not recommended for progression.
- In relation to acquisitions, a check to ensure that no first-time buyers are bidding. The Housing Directorate seeks confirmation from the vendor/Estate Agent that first-time

buyers are not involved in bidding for the property. If they are, the Housing Directorate will not support the acquisition of the unit.

Overall, the implementation of Limerick City and County Council's mixed-tenure policy has been successful in fostering balanced and integrated communities. The structured approach to both large and small-scale developments has generally achieved the intended goals of avoiding mono-tenure areas and overconcentration of social-rental housing. However, as with any policy, there have been a small number of cases where challenges have arisen, but these are being actively addressed to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the policy.

25. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what the projected Per Cent for Art budget currently is that can be generated from all capital projects underway or planned across all departments and sections in the Council.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council -

The Arts Office commenced a process in August 2024 to gather data on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme programme within each Directorate of the Council. The data requested includes the following: Capital Project title/type; details of funding source or Department; Total capital construction cost; Whether the Per cent for Art Scheme budget line was included in the overall capital construction project budget estimate (at inception of the project and at time of submission to relevant Government Department); Details of the budget that has been ring-fenced for Per Cent for Arts Scheme project and details of the current status of the relevant project.

The data collection process is currently underway, and data submissions from Directorates will be compiled by the arts office. This process will inform in relation to projected budgets that can be generated from capital projects underway or planned. Alignment of projects and programmes with the new National Per Cent for Arts Policy framework and Limerick City and County Council Public Art Policy 2024-2030 will be reviewed.

26. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what steps have been taken by the new Night Time Economy Officer to engage with traders and businesses to develop new partnerships to encourage initiatives that will generate an economic impact for Limerick City from Samhain Festival, Lighting Up Limerick for Christmas, St Brigid's Day, St Patrick's Day, and what offerings are in place for these festivals.

REPLY: In response to Councillor M. Donoghue's query, it is useful to clarify the roles and responsibilities in relation to both the Night Time Economy, and Festivals and Events.

The coordination and delivery of the civic festivals including St. Brigid's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Riverfest, Samhain and Christmas in Limerick are delivered primarily by the Festival and Events team who are also responsible for the allocated budget for these events.

The Night Time Economy (NTE) Advisor holds an advisory role, providing input and support to the Festivals and Events team and other teams/stakeholders, as required. For example, in the current preparation for the Samhain festival, the NTE Advisor is collaborating closely with the Festivals and Events team to deliver a window dressing incentive for local businesses along the parade route. The Advisor is coordinating discussions with larger retailers, encouraging them to lead by example and participate in the festivities.

Additionally, the NTE Advisor will facilitate connection between large retailers and a local theatre group to explore creative opportunities for Halloween-themed decorations. This initiative aims to enhance the vibrancy of the city, generate enthusiasm, and increase footfall during the event. Similar collaborative discussions and exchanges of ideas from a night-time economy perspective will continue to take place in preparation for future festivals.

Separately, the NTE Advisor has engaged collaboratively with city centre stakeholders, traders and businesses on a number of collaborative and innovative initiatives aimed at generating economic impact and activity in the Night Time Economy. These include:

- A recently launched **NTE Innovation Grant Scheme** to encourage new, unique, and diverse night-time activities within the city. This initiative has been well received, with several events already scheduled to take place in and around Halloween. The scheme has fostered collaboration between creative individuals and existing businesses, encouraging the meanwhile use of underutilised spaces in the city and promoting a more vibrant and dynamic night-time economy.
- The Night Time Economy Advisor has initiated and supported several activities that have successfully brought economic benefits to Limerick City and will be evaluated for ongoing potential. For instance, during the Mayoral initiative in August, we launched a series of night markets on Nicholas Street in collaboration with Treaty Brewery and other local food and arts industries.
- A pop up cinema was established and held over 3 weeks, in partnership with a local provider and in collaboration with three city centre venues, namely St Marys Cathedral, the Wickham Way and the People's Museum. These were held over three weeks with an excellent response (some were sold out).
- An outdoor film screening was organised in collaboration with Film Limerick, and the Hunt Museum hosted a series of late openings on Thursday nights, which include events running until mid-September.
- A two-week series of summer night walks, free to the public, saw high levels of engagement from both locals and visitors, significantly increasing foot traffic and patronage to local businesses.

The primary objectives of the NTE Advisor's role are outlined in the Service Level Agreement between Limerick City and County Council and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (TCAGSM). The key component of these objectives is the development of an Action Plan that is stakeholder-led and addresses critical issues related to the night-time economy in Limerick. An extensive consultation plan is currently underway, aiming to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders. The outcome of this consultation process will shape the Action Plan, a draft of which is expected in the coming

months. The approved Action Plan will focus on key issues identified and will be delivered over the following 12 months, prior to evaluation upon completion of the pilot programme.

27. Question submitted by Councillor F. Kilcoyne

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick can an update be provided about large and small road edge suction vehicles that were supposed to be purchased by LCCC for use in Limerick City West area to clean housing estate, cycle lane and footpaths etc.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council Roads Operations Department currently does not have a budget to provide additional suction sweepers for the Limerick City West area. However, the Metro district will request additional resources for the 2025 budget.

28. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick what engagement the Council has had with Waterways Ireland around their commitment to lodge a planning application for a maintenance plan for the Park Canal despite having committed to lodging said application by Q4 of 2023.

REPLY: Waterways Ireland have responsibility for the maintenance of the Park Canal. They have advised that Environmental Reports are in final draft for the maintenance works along the entire Park Canal (including sections leased to Limerick City and County Council, subject to agreement with Limerick City and County Council) and the main river Navigation through the Abbey River, as far as the terminus of the Ardnacrusha tail race where it meets the main River Shannon Navigation.

On receipt of the final Environmental reports, Waterways Ireland intend to schedule a pre-planning meeting with Limerick City and County Council, with the intention of submitting a planning submission, for the Limerick based maintenance works, in the final Quarter of 2024.

29. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on the Limerick City Transport Plan with reference to the approaches to the city from Pa Healy Road and the Corbally Road and the timeline for implementation.

REPLY: Limerick City and County Council is progressing the development of the Draft Limerick City Transport Plan with the National Transport Authority.

Improvements to and impacts on strategic junctions such as the Pa Healy Road\Corbally Road will need to be considered once the Limerick City Transport Plan is finalised.

30. Question submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan

I will ask at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick for an update on the Council acquiring a stake in the Markets Field Stadium.

REPLY: The Council is continuing its engagements with the LEDP and relevant stakeholders including Treaty United in relation to the future of the Markets Field Stadium. The Council will continue to engage with a view to a sustainable outcome.

NOTICES OF MOTION

31. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor P. Doyle

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that traffic wardens would visit Milford Grange, Elm Park and Hazelwood on a weekly basis during the academic year and ticket any cars parked on double yellow lines with special focus on Avignon roads and the entrance to the adjacent Hazelwood Estate, Milford Road, Castletroy.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor Hartigan.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Doyle highlighted the difficulties for residents when driveways were blocked by cars parked illegally. Some Members were not in agreement with the Motion and highlighted the issue for students who had difficulty getting housing and parking. Members agreed that the University of Limerick had a role to play, as well as TUS on the North side of the City, in working with residents, students and the Council in trying to resolve this issue.

REPLY: A Traffic warden has been deployed to patrol suburban areas in the Metropolitan District including residential areas near third level colleges since November 2023. This Traffic Warden currently patrols the Castletroy area, which includes the Milford Grange, Elm Park, Hazelwood, Avignon areas.

These areas will continue to be patrolled and fixed penalty notices will be issued where vehicles are parked on double yellow lines, footpaths, grass medians or margins and where a vehicle causes an obstruction.

32. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor P. Doyle (to be referred to the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that free parking for one hour be allowed for cars on street parking currently designated as loading bays from 14.00 PM to 18.00 PM Monday to Friday on a trial basis for three months. The objective of this measure is to encourage shoppers into Limerick City and increase footfall in William Street and Cruises Street and surrounding areas. The only cost to this measure is amending signage on the poles with appropriate stickers.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Travel and Transportation Strategic Policy Committee.

33. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council engage with the Northstar Family Support Project and provide them with a permanent premises for their vital service.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Slattery, seconded by Councillor Pond and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Slattery highlighted the excellent work carried out by Northstar Family Support Project since it was established in 2010 and who provide a vital service for families in relation to drug and substance abuse and addiction issues. Members supported the Motion and highlighted the importance of the local authority in supporting this very important project.

REPLY: The Council will arrange to engage with the Northstar Family Support Project in order to evaluate the needs and ascertain how the Council may be in a position to help them in finding a permanent premises.

34. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Slattery

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that no large development of apartments or houses be allowed be bought up by Vulture Funds so as to allow first time buyers a chance to purchase.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Slattery, seconded by Councillor O'Donovan and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Slattery stated that the policy had been adopted into the Development Plans in other counties and would be of great assistance for first time buyers.

REPLY: In May, 2021, Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Authorities "Regulation of Commercial Institutional Investment in Housing" were issued to planning authorities, in order to prevent multiple housing and duplex units being sold to a single buyer. The Guidelines included requirements that a condition be inserted in applicable new planning permissions, to the effect that all houses would have to be made available for sale and for occupation by separate, individual households.

The Planning Authority applies conditions to planning decisions in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines.

Members agreed to write to the appropriate Government Department to request that the "Regulation of Commercial Institutional Investment in Housing" Guidelines for Planning Authorities be amended to also include apartments.

35. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that a Community Liaison committee be established with immediate effect for the Mungret/Raheen/Dooradoyle area as stipulated in the planning conditions in respect to Irish Cement.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Donovan, seconded by Councillor Leddin and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor O'Donovan referred to the recent incident with emissions from Irish Cement and highlighted the urgent need to set up the Community Liaison Committee which had been agreed as part of the planning permission process.

REPLY: The Council is commencing the establishment of the Community Liaison Committee and it is intended to have same in place in Q4 2024, in accordance with requirements of the planning conditions attached to this permission in respect of Irish Cement.

Members supported the Motion and highlighted the importance of Irish Cement providing regular communication and updates to Councillors, especially when an issue arises at the facility.

36. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor E. O'Donovan

I will move at the next meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that the choice based letting scheme be extended to the Metropolitan area.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor O'Donovan, seconded by Councillor Hickey-O'Mara and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor O'Donovan highlighted the benefits of the Choice Based Letting Scheme, particularly for those who were long term on the housing list. She referred to a number of Local Authorities in the country who had rolled out the Scheme.

REPLY: LCCC currently do not operate a Choice Based Letting (CBL) Scheme for the allocation of social housing. However, Housing Support Services have initiated preliminary research into the roll out of a CBL Scheme in Limerick and are currently in discussions with our ICT and Business Improvements Directorates in order to agree a plan for the rollout of CBL in 2025.

37. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council write to Jim Meade, CEO of Irish Rail, to formally request that the CIE Sports & Social Club Building & Site on Carey's Road, Limerick be considered for "meanwhile use" pending a final decision and action in relation to the redevelopment of this site.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Kiely, seconded by Councillor Butler and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Kiely acknowledged the recent clean-up of the site and highlighted the benefits of bringing the property back into use, on a temporary basis. She stated that community spaces in the area were needed as many were at capacity.

Members also requested that a quarterly Briefing update on projects relevant to the Limerick Metropolitan District Area, be given to the Members of the Metropolitan District by the Land Development Agency.

38. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Kiely

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this local authority take action to clean up the canopy, steel structure (former tourist office) and area around Arthurs Quay.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Kiely, seconded by Councillor McSweeney and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Kiely referred to the poor condition of the former Tourist Office, which was located in an important city centre location, and which urgently required upgrading.

REPLY: The Council will investigate the level of work involved in carrying out the remediation works required to the canopy and steel structure of the Tourist Office. The design and materials used in the construction of the building pose certain challenges and these need to be considered in providing any work programme.

Members expressed frustration at the ongoing delays in getting this building and area tidied up and they requested a timeline for proposed works. The Director of Service agreed to revert to Members in this regard.

39. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Benson (to be referred to the Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council establish a working group to further progress the work and recommendations of the Autism Friendly Limerick group, but specifically in the area of housing. It is envisaged that this group will work with stakeholders including the disability network providers, HSE, and advocacy groups to explore how LCCC can better address the housing needs of people with ASD and neurodivergence.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Home and Social Development Strategic Policy Committee.

40. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Benson (to be referred to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee)

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council undertake a cost benefit analysis of providing the bin waiver scheme by the local authority, rather than using a private contractor.

It was agreed to refer this Notice of Motion to the Climate Action, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee.

41. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor U. Gavan

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that this Council lead the way to Limerick becoming a Living Wage City by ensuring all staff in its employ earning a living wage, and factor that policy into all its contracts it undertakes.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Gavan, seconded by Councillor Benson and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Gavan referred to the rising cost of living over the past number of years and the difficulties experienced by those on a minimum wage.

REPLY: Pay rates for local authority employees, including Limerick City and County Council employees are set nationally by direction of the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage or other relevant Minister. These pay rates are notified to all local authorities by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage or other relevant government department and are implemented uniformly across the local government sector. Limerick City and County Council does not have discretion with regard to these pay scales.

42. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue

I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick that Limerick City and County Council writes to the National Transport Authority (NTA) and any other relevant state authority, to seek funding support to provide free buses for all passengers on key routes into Limerick City at weekends, so as to increase footfall and business activity in the City Centre.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Donoghue, seconded by Councillor Doyle and agreed.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Donoghue highlighted the benefits of such an initiative, which would reduce car parking in the City Centre, promote the use of alternative transport and benefit the environment.

43. Correspondence

Correspondence was noted and taken as read.

Other Business

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that a provisional date of Friday, 20th September had been arranged for a Workshop on the Mayoral Programme and that the details of same would be notified to the Members.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

CATHAOIRLEACH

Dated:
