

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, AND ONLINE, ON MONDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024, AT 3.00 P.M.**

**PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:**

Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor D. McSweeney.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Moran.

Councillors Beasley, Benson, Butler, Carey, Collins (B), Collins (M), Conway, Donoghue, Doyle, Foley, Galvin, Gavan, Hartigan (S), Hartigan (T), Hickey-O'Mara, Keary, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, O'Donoghue O'Donovan, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan (O), O'Sullivan (T), Pond, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Sheehan (C), Slattery, Talukder, Teefy, Teskey, Ward.

An apology for his inability to attend the Meeting was received from Councillor Ryan (M).

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Director General (Mr. P. Daly), Deputy Director General and Director, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development (Mr. G. Daly), Director, Finance, Economic Development, Digital and ICT Services (Mr. M. White), Director, Housing (Ms. C. Curley), Director, Regeneration, Sports and Recreation (Mr. J. Delaney), Director, Rural, Culture, Community and Tourism Development (Mr. S. Duclot), Director, Transportation and Mobility (Mr. B. Kennedy), Director, Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Planning and Place-Making (Mr. V. Murray), Meetings Administrator (Ms. C. Farrell), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate and Governance (Ms. A. Foley), Staff Officer, Corporate and Governance (Ms. C. Sheehy), A/Senior Executive Officer, Housing (Ms. P. Phillips).

At the outset and with the permission of the Príomh Chomhairleoir a vote of sympathy was extended to Councillor Kieran O'Hanlon and his family, on the recent death of his sister, Patsy Hoare.

The Mayor and Members also extended their condolences to the family of the late Jon Kenny and remembered him as a true gentleman and a wonderful musician who will be deeply missed.

**1. Adoption of Minutes**

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of the following Meetings:

- (a) Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2024.
- (b) Adjourned Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2024.

- (c) Special Meeting of the Council held on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2024.
- (d) Special Meeting of the Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2024.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);  
 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, she was inviting those present to notify the Meeting of any declaration of interest in any item due for discussion at the Meeting. No such interests were declared.

## **3. Disposal of Land**

### **Housing Directorate**

- (a) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 6, Sarsfield Avenue, Garryowen, Limerick (Registry of Deeds).

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 6, Sarsfield Avenue, Garryowen, Limerick (Registry of Deeds) to Denis and Marian Keehan, for the sum of €299.20, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2024.”

- (b) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2024, concerning disposal of property at Knockatanna, Caherconlish, Co. Limerick (LK4127L), together with map.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at Knockatanna, Caherconlish, Co. Limerick (LK4127L), to James Fanning, for the sum of €195.42, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and

County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2024.”

(c) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2024, concerning disposal of land at Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale Co. Limerick (LK5762L), together with map.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;

Seconded by Councillor Galvin;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land at Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick (LK5762L) to Michael O’Keeffe, for the sum of €195.42, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2024.”

(d) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024, concerning disposal of land at Knocklong West, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick (LK5817L), together with map.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;

Seconded by Councillor Galvin;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land at Knocklong West, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick (LK5817L), to William Houlihan, for the sum of €195.42, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024.”

(e) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024, concerning disposal of land at 5, Ash Hill, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick (LK5601L), together with map.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;

Seconded by Councillor Galvin;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land at 5, Ash Hill, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick (LK5601L), to John Joe Carey, for the sum of €195.42, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024.”

(f) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 21, Sean Heuston Place, Limerick (LK3834L).

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;

Seconded by Councillor Galvin;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 21, Sean Heuston Place, Limerick (LK3834L), to Patricia Bennis, Legal Personal Representative of Mary Power, deceased, for the sum of €239.45, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024.”

(g) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 9, Casement Avenue, Janesboro, Limerick (LK4397L).

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;

Seconded by Councillor Galvin;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 9, Casement Avenue, Janesboro, Limerick (LK4397L), to Michael Butler, Legal Personal Representative of Mary Butler, deceased, for the sum of €195.42, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024.”

(h) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024, concerning disposal of land at Toureen, Croom, Co. Limerick (LK9543L), together with map.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;

Seconded by Councillor Galvin;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land at Toureen, Croom, Co. Limerick (LK9543L), to Brendan and Mary Conmy, for the sum of €195.42, the disposal to be by way of Deed of Conveyance of the freehold interest of Limerick City and County Council in the property, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024.”

**Rural, Culture, Community and Tourism Development Directorate**

**General Disposals**

(i) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 3a Meat Market Lane, Limerick, V94324D (house exchange).

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 3a Meat Market Lane, Limerick, V94324D, to Evan Stokes, the disposal to be made in consideration of Evan Stokes transferring the ownership of his property at 140 St. Munchin’s Street, St. Mary’s Park, Limerick – (1) the disposal to be by way of exchange of the above property to Limerick City and County Council (subject to necessary conveyancing requirements; (2) Limerick City and County Council to acquire the property free of any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) and any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) on the property at 140 St. Munchin’s Street, St. Mary’s Park, Limerick, to be transferred to the property at 3a Meat Market Lane, Limerick, V94324D, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2024.”

(j) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 2a Meat Market Lane, Limerick (house exchange).

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 2a Meat Market Lane, Limerick, to John Gavin, the disposal to be made in consideration of John Gavin transferring ownership of his property at 50 St. Munchin’s Street, St. Mary’s Park, Limerick – (1) the disposal to be by way of exchange of the above property to Limerick City and County Council (subject to necessary conveyancing requirements); (2) Limerick City and County Council to acquire the property free of any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) and any existing mortgage(s) or burden(s) on the property at 50 St. Munchin’s Street, St. Mary’s Park, Limerick, to be transferred to the property at 2a Meat Market Lane, Limerick, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

(k) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of 0.03 acres (0.012 hectares) at Baunacloka, Mungret, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land comprising 0.03 acres (0.012 hectares) at Baunacloka, Mungret, Limerick, to Henry O’Grady in exchange for 0.035 acres (0.014 hectares) at Baunacloka, Mungret, Limerick, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

(l) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of land comprising 0.03 acres (0.013 hectares) at Baunacloka, Mungret, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land comprising 0.03 acres (0.013 hectares) at Baunacloka, Mungret, Limerick, to Mungret Property Ltd., for the sum of €10,000 – *‘by resolution passed at Council Meeting dated 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2024, the elected members resolve to revoke the previous S183 Notice dated 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2024, in relation to the disposal of property to Mungret Properties Limited. The disposal will be subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the contract. The purchaser agrees to discharge Limerick City and County Council’s legal costs,’* – particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

(m) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 4 Glenosheen, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 4, Glenosheen, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, to Michael O’Sullivan, for the sum of €60,000, subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the contract, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

(n) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of land comprising 16.50 acres (6.677 hectares) at Churchtown, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of land comprising 16.50 acres (6.677 hectares) at Churchtown, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick, to ORTEC NCW Limited, for the sum of €363,000 (€22,000 per acre), subject to the covenants, conditions, agreements contained within the contract, including but not limited to the following: (i) costs of drainage works on the land to be paid two-thirds by the Council (capped at €123,333). Drainage works to be carried out by or on behalf of ORTEC NCW Limited to the satisfaction of the Council; (ii) the Council to be responsible for ongoing maintenance and repair of the drainage works; (iii) a wayleave to be reserved in favour of Limerick City and County Council to enable the Council to carry out repairs/maintenance; (iv) ORTEC NCW Limited to be entitled to make deferred payments in relation to the purchase price by equal monthly instalments over a 36-month payment timeframe (interest free). Transfer not to complete until final payment; particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

- (o) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of property, by way of lease, at Main Street, Ardagh, Co. Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property, by way of lease, at Main Street, Ardagh, Co. Limerick, to Kevin Barry, the consideration being a 10-year lease with rent to be charged as follows: (i) Years 1-2: rent-free period (on the basis of agreed schedule of works to be undertaken by the tenant); (ii) Years 3-4: market rent to apply; (iii) Year 5: rent review; the disposal to be by way of 10-year lease (full repair and insure) and subject to the covenants and conditions contained therein, particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

### **Derelict Disposals**

- (p) Circulated, copy of Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, concerning disposal of property at 3 Kileely Villas, Thomondgate, Limerick.

Proposed by Councillor Teskey;  
 Seconded by Councillor Galvin;  
 And Resolved:

"That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended) and Section 211 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to the disposal of property at 3 Kileely Villas, Thomondgate, Limerick, to Penina Sulamita B Das Chagas, for the sum of €145,000 - *'by resolution passed at Council Meeting dated 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2023, the elected members resolve to revoke the previous S183 Notice dated 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 in relation to the disposal of property at 3 Kileely Villas, New Road, Thomondgate, Limerick. The disposal will be subject to the covenants and conditions contained within the contract,'* particulars of which were contained in Statutory Notice dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2024."

During the discussion on disposal of land, Members highlighted the need for more adequate zoning of lands in Newcastle West, to provide more opportunities for existing companies to expand, if the need arises. They emphasised the importance of having more local authority owned land in the area and stressed the value this would add to attract new possible businesses and more housing to the locality.

#### **4. Corporate Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development**

##### **(a) Executive Report**

Circulated, Executive Report for the months of September and October 2024.

The Reports were noted by the Council.

##### **(b) Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029**

Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, together with copy of the Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029.

The report stated that a Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme was considered at the September 2024 Meeting of the Council, following which it was placed on public display. The National Key Stakeholder Pillars were circulated with copies of the Draft Scheme and invited to make submissions in relation to same. The closing date for receipt of submissions was Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 and three submissions were received. These submissions were considered by the Corporate Policy Group and it was agreed to amend Section 5 of the draft scheme.

It was now recommended that (i) the Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029, as circulated, be adopted; and (ii) the Council Members be appointed to each Strategic Policy Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;  
Seconded by Councillor Teefy;  
And Resolved:

“That, (i) the Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029, as circulated, be and is hereby adopted.”

(ii) It was agreed that the appointment of Council Members to each Strategic Policy Committee would be made at the next meeting of Limerick City and County Council.

**(c) Corporate Plan 2024-2029**

Circulated, report of the Mayor of Limerick, John Moran, dated 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, outlining update on Limerick City and County Council Corporate Plan 2024-2029.

Members noted the up-to-date position.

**(d) Foreign Travel**

(i) Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, seeking the Council’s approval for attendance and participation by a delegation from the Council in the Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade 2025, New York City, USA.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;

Seconded by Councillor Teefy;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with Section 142 (5) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to foreign travel in respect of attendance and participation by a delegation from the Council in the Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade 2025, New York City, USA.”

(ii) Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, seeking the Council’s approval for attendance and participation by a delegation from the Council in the Annual Queens County St. Patrick’s Day Parade 2025 in Rockaway Beach, Queens, New York, USA.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;

Seconded by Councillor Teefy;

And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with Section 142 (5) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to foreign travel in respect of attendance and participation by a delegation from the Council in the Annual Queens County St. Patrick’s Day Parade 2025 in Rockaway Beach, Queens, New York, USA.”

(iii) Circulated, report of the Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, seeking the Council’s approval for attendance and participation by a delegation from the Council in the Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade 2025, in Savannah, Georgia, USA

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;  
 Seconded by Councillor Teefy;  
 And Resolved:

“That, in accordance with Section 142 (5) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to foreign travel in respect of attendance and participation by a delegation from the Council in the Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade 2025, in Savannah, Georgia, USA.”

**(e) Establishment of Sister Cities between Limerick and Austin, Texas**

Circulated, report of the Head of Trade and Investment, Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism Directorate, dated 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, recommending that the Council approve the formal Establishment of Sister Cities between Limerick and Austin, Texas, USA.

The report stated that a formal endorsement of the Sister City relationship will encourage further collaboration in business, education and culture. It will bring opportunities for exchanges between business and community. It noted the partnership is about building friendships, business networks, strengthening ties and fostering mutual understanding for the benefit of both cities.

Members welcomed the recommendation to establish a Sister Cities Agreement between Limerick and Austin and emphasised the benefits this relationship would have for both cities, highlighting the opportunities it would offer. They outlined the need to establish more connections with other Cities, especially those that hold a strong economic and educational link with Limerick. In particular, they outlined the successful connection and collaboration Limerick has with Savannah. They referred to previous meetings held between Shannon Port and Savannah Port, and the significant role the Council played in setting these up and looked for an update on those meetings to be shared with all Members.

Proposed by Councillor Butler;  
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);  
 And Resolved:

“That the formal establishment of Sister Cities between Limerick and Austin, Texas, USA, hereby be approved.”

**5. Housing**

**(a) Appointment of Chairperson to the Limerick Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee**

Circulated, report of the Mayor of Limerick, John Moran, dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, in relation to the appointment of a Chairperson to the Limerick Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

The making of the appointment was a Reserved Function.

Proposed by Councillor Sheahan;  
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);

“That, Ms. Anita Pannell of the Limerick Traveller Network be appointed as Chairperson of the Limerick Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.”

As there were no other nominations, the Príomh Chomhairleoir declared Ms. Anita Pannell appointed as Chairperson of the Limerick Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee.

**(b) Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029**

Circulated, Mayor’s Report dated 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, to Elected Members on the submissions received as part of the public consultation on the Draft Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029,” together with ‘Traveller Accommodation Programme Limerick City and County Council 2025-2029 – DRAFT – November 2024.”

It was recommended that the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029 (as amended), and as circulated, be adopted.

Proposed by Councillor Donoghue;  
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);  
And Resolved:

“That, the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029 (as amended), and as circulated, be and is hereby adopted, in accordance with Section 7 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation Act) 1998.”

**6. Rural, Culture, Community and Tourism Development**

**Strategic Fund for Culture and Arts**

Circulated, report of the Arts Officer/Creative Ireland Co-Ordinator dated 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2024, seeking the Council’s approval to recommended allocations under the Strategic Fund for Culture and Arts.

Proposed by Councillor O’Donovan;  
Seconded by Councillor Collins (M);  
And Resolved:

“That, the approval of the Council be and is hereby given to recommended allocations under the Strategic Fund for Culture and Arts, as set out in report of the Arts Officer/Creative Ireland Co-Ordinator dated 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.”

## **MAYOR'S QUESTIONS**

Members expressed their disappointment that answers to the Mayor's Questions were only uploaded at the start of the meeting, noting they did not get adequate time to consider the replies.

With the permission of the Príomh Chomhairleoir it was agreed to defer the Mayor's Questions until later in the agenda, to allow time to print and circulate the answers to the Mayor's questions for the Members consideration.

## **QUESTIONS**

Replies to the following Questions on the agenda were circulated to all Members prior to the Meeting and the Questions were therefore taken as having been dealt with:

**9. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan**

*I will ask at the next Meeting (a) what remains as the outstanding balance on the loan provided to the Dublin Bike-Hire Company, (b) are repayments on schedule and (c) when is full and final repayment due.*

**REPLY:** (a) €116,044.20;  
 (b) All repayments due to date have been made in full;  
 (c) June 2026.

**10. Question submitted by Councillor J. Scanlan**

*I will ask at the next Meeting what areas have been identified as priorities by our Authority and what progress has been made in terms of the introduction of Average Speed Cameras countywide.*

**REPLY:** The current tranche of Fixed Spot and Average Speed Camera Sites was chosen by An Garda Síochána. Each is at a high collision site with injury collisions.

A site on the N69 east of Askeaton in Ballyhomin was chosen for a Fixed Spot Camera and this will be in operation early in 2025.

Following monitoring of these pilot sites, the programme will go on to install further cameras. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) expects that at least one Average Speed Site will be in County Limerick. The location of this will be determined in consultation with the Local Authority and TII.

**11. Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely**

*I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the verbal commitment given to examine the possibility of a community hedge cutting scheme and its inclusion in the budget.*

**REPLY:** Subject to final endorsement of the draft Budget 2025, provision has been made for the promotion of a hedge cutting grant scheme. If approved, the procedure of how such a scheme will be administered has to be developed.

**12. Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery**

*I will ask at the next Meeting can the Council give a timeframe on how long it takes after reporting a bulb gone on a street light to have the bulb replaced.*

**REPLY:** As per previous correspondence, Limerick City and County Council entered into a new public lighting maintenance contract with Electric Skyline LTD (ESL) on 1st November, 2024. Interim cover was in place between 24th July 2024 and 1st November 2024 to deal with emergencies and major outages as they arose.

Limerick City and County Council is aware of a backlog of public lighting faults which have built up in that time and the Council is working with ESL to clear this backlog. We are aiming to have the backlog under control by mid-December 2024 and ESL have provided additional resources to assist in this target.

Once the backlog is under control, we will be implementing the performance criteria which is outlined within the contract where ESL have 10 working days to repair a reported fault. If the fault is not repaired in 10 working days, ESL shall incur a penalty where the repair is within their control (e.g. non-infrastructure related).

**13. Question submitted by Councillor C. Slattery**

*I will ask at the next Meeting why did Limerick City and County Council not provide an in-person ceremony to switch on the Christmas lights in Limerick City.*

**REPLY:** Limerick City and County Council has programmed a number of Christmas events, throughout December, organised for Limerick for Christmas 2024, including LUXE Christmas Procession on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2024, Cruises Street seasonal street shows, Christmas Couture in the Castle and many other events. It was decided that there would be no switch-on event for Christmas 2024.

**14. Question submitted by Councillor S. Hickey-O'Mara**

*I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the procurement and installation of specific dog waste bins across Limerick as I have been asked about this on numerous occasions by residents.*

**REPLY:** The Cleansing Section operates a system of 'any bag, any bin' for dog waste in Limerick City, meaning bagged dog waste can be placed in any general litter bin. Requests for litter bins at specific locations are considered following an assessment of the area in question.

Prior to bin installation, consideration is given to the following: (i) the proximity of existing litter bins; (ii) suitable locations where a bin can be serviced by Cleansing Section bin collection vehicles; (iii) the observed need for a litter bin based on the presence of litter; (iv) the likelihood of increased litter in the vicinity of a bin arising from misuse of bins, e.g. dumping of domestic waste in or adjacent to litter bins (this will also be reassessed after any new bins are installed); (v) the need to provide bins to cater for a significant demand to dispose of dog waste on routes where dog walking is prevalent.

**15. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue**

*I will ask at the next Meeting what the projected budget for Riverfest 2025 is and what percentage of the overall Festival and Events 2025 budget Riverfest will absorb.*

**REPLY:** The projected budget for Riverfest 2025 is subject to approval by the Members at their Budget Meeting and therefore no accurate budget figures are currently available.

**16. Question submitted by Councillor M. Donoghue**

*I will ask at the next Meeting what policies, personnel and resources are in place to deal with dereliction and vacancy across Limerick City and Limerick County.*

**REPLY:** Limerick City and County Council takes a proactive, place-based approach to identifying and activating derelict sites and vacant homes in local communities for more beneficial uses. The Council operates this activation programme under a number of Government policies, in particular: Housing For All, Town Centre First, Our Rural Future, and statutory legislation of the Derelict Sites Act 1990, the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, and the Housing Act, 1966.

Key local plans guiding the approach include the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Mayoral Programme: More for Limerick 2024-2029.

The multi-disciplinary Vacancy and Dereliction Unit is located in the Property Management Services Department of the Rural, Culture, Community and Tourism Development Directorate and comprises 11 staff in total – six administration and five technical.

The Unit deals with derelict sites, vacant homes and vacant sites across all the Municipal Districts. It advises and guides owners of unproductive properties

on the various supports available to bring their properties back to more beneficial uses.

The Council operates the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) – Call 3 Fund of €9 million in the Limerick City Centre and €1 million in Newcastle West town area which supports a programme of building acquisition by the Council to return them to use through the market with new private owners to accelerate the provision of residential accommodation.

Also administered by the Unit is the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant which enables owners of derelict and vacant properties to benefit from grants of up to €70,000 to refurbish them for occupation as a principal private residence or to make available to the private rental market.

### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **17. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Benson**

*I will move at the next Meeting that this Council write to the Minister for Education urging her to scrap plans to spend €9 million on mobile phone pouches and to allocate this funding instead to special education provision.*

With the permission of the Meeting and at the request of Councillor Benson, this Notice of Motion was withdrawn.

#### **18. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor C. Sheehan**

*I will move at the next Meeting that this Council write to the Minister for Health and Taoiseach to ask them to intervene to ensure that the specialist nursing vacancies are filled in the University Hospital Limerick Oncology Department as soon as possible.*

Councillor Leddin moved the Motion on Councillor Sheehan's behalf. The Motion was seconded by Councillor O'Hanlon and adopted.

#### **19. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors J. Scanlan and E. Ryan**

*We will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City and County Council call on the Minister for Transport to remove the condition that a secondary land holding of one hectare minimum should apply to enable qualification for the Local Improvement Scheme.*

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Scanlan, seconded by Councillor Sheahan and adopted.

In moving the Motion Councillor Scanlan outlined his disappointment that two landowners were still required to enable qualification for Scheme. He emphasised that it was a big issue for people living in areas with roadways badly in need of improvement, and stressed the importance of removing this condition to allow more people apply.

It was agreed to write to the Minister for Rural and Community Development.

**20. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor A. Teskey**

**I will move at the next Meeting for a variation to the Limerick Development Plan to add the following to Chapter 11 Development Management Standards, 11.7.2.1 Wind Energy: "In addition to the above, the following local considerations will be taken into account by the Council in relation to any planning application;**

- **Impact on human health in relation to noise disturbance (including consistency with the Word Health Organisations 2018 Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region), shadow flicker and air quality."**

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Teskey, seconded by Councillor O'Donoghue and adopted.

In moving the Motion Councillor Teskey outlined the impact wind turbines can have on human health, and emphasised the importance of applying consistency across all wind farms in Limerick. He referred to the current government guidelines, and stressed the importance of bringing these guidelines and regulations up to date and in line with the World Health Organisation's advice.

Members welcomed the Motion and agreed new guidelines were required to ensure assessment of wind farm planning applications is carried out in line with World Health Organisation's noise guidelines, and stressed this was important to avoid possible health issues for people living near Wind Farms.

**REPLY:** It is not considered necessary to vary the Limerick Development Plan as the Plan currently includes an extensive list of aspects to be considered during the planning assessment of any planning application for wind energy, including noise and shadow flicker. These assessments are also required as part of any Environmental Impact Assessment that would be submitted with any planning application. Limerick City and County Council requires a lower fixed noise limit for night that is below that set out in the 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities. It would be unreasonable to include a requirement that planning applications be consistent with the World Health Organisation's 2018 Environmental Noise Guidelines for wind turbine noise as compliance cannot be tested and therefore not enforceable.

Following discussions, Members queried if a variation to the Limerick Development Plan could be moved and what was required to carry the Motion.

In response to the Members' queries, the Director of Planning and Place-Making advised the Meeting the Planning Department operate under current 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines, and advised a review of the current guidelines was underway to

address key aspects, including noise. This review included a public consultation but he noted the guidelines were not finalised yet by the Department.

The Director advised that a variation of the Limerick Development Plan comes under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and that the Members of a Planning Authority may at any time, for stated reasons, submit a resolution to the Mayor of the Planning Authority, requesting him to prepare a report on a proposal by them to initiate a process to consider the variation of the Development Plan where three-quarters of the Members of the Authority have approved such resolution.

It was agreed that further discussions would take place on this matter with the Mayor, Members and the Executive.

**21. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Beasley**

*I will move at the next Meeting that communication take place with the Ministers responsible for animal welfare regarding the request from Limerick City and County Council for a six-month amnesty for XL Bully dogs that are being surrendered to local animal welfare charities. This amnesty would facilitate the rehoming of these dogs to other countries, such as Italy and Sweden.*

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Beasley and seconded by Councillor Hartigan (T).

Following some discussion, at the request of Councillor Beasley and with the permission of the Meeting, the Motion was withdrawn.

**22. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor S. Hickey-O'Mara**

*I will move at the next Meeting that we run a Limerick-wide campaign to highlight the importance of Men's Mental Health through engaging with sports organisations, men's sheds, schools, and other organisations to promote connection and a sense of belonging in our city and county.*

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Hickey-O'Mara, seconded by Councillor Donoghue, and adopted.

In moving the Motion Councillor Hickey-O'Mara emphasised the importance of Men's Mental Health and highlighted the need to encourage more men to talk about mental health issues. He stressed the importance of supporting community organisations currently helping men to engage, and asked the Council to consider running a campaign to promote more participation amongst men.

Members fully supported the Motion and thanked Councillor Hickey-O'Mara for bringing it forward. The Members outlined the need to encourage more men to engage in various community based organisations that provide a space where men feel included and

safe. They stressed the importance of this matter, outlining how supporting these organisations will assist men to reach out and seek help as early as possible.

The Mayor acknowledged the need for leadership on men's mental health within Limerick City and County; outlining that Mental Health was part of the Mayoral Programme and agreeing more needs to be done to support this area.

### **Emergency Motion**

With the permission of the Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Kiely requested to move the following Emergency Motion and this was agreed:

***"I move at this meeting that Limerick City and County Council consider temporarily opening the bus lane on O'Connell Street for the Christmas period, to relieve traffic congestion and potentially encourage more footfall into the city."***

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Kiely, seconded by Councillor Butler, and adopted.

In moving the Motion, Councillor Kiely referred to a presentation from a group of city centre traders received at the November Metropolitan District Meeting. Following a discussion on the reserved functions of Elected Members, the council was requested to consider opening the O'Connell Street bus lane to all traffic for the Christmas period, to allow more movement of traffic. In discussion some Members supported the Motion and suggested the traffic congestion was discouraging people from coming to the city, while other Members did not agree with the proposal, expressing concerns that the schedule of buses running through the city would be severely disrupted. It was suggested that more buses were also required to encourage more footfall into the City. Members queried if opening the bus lane during off peak hours was an option, along with exploring the possibility of adding taxi ranks to O'Connell Street at night-time to support the night-time economy in the City.

The Director of Transportation and Mobility advised the Members the bus lane on O'Connell Street was essential for reliability in delivering a service to the people of Limerick. He acknowledged the request of some Members to open the bus lane on O'Connell Street, but advised that it was embedded in the Limerick Development Plan to move away from the use of cars and move more towards public transport, highlighting this temporary change would go against the policy of the Council

It was the view of some Members that opening the bus lane temporarily would not interfere with the schedule of buses but would support the businesses in the city and it was asked if it was possible for the Executive to approve the request. Other Members opposed the request to open the lane indicating there were other ways of supporting traders.

The Members were informed that a consultation process was possibly required before opening the bus lane and the short time frame to deliver on this was outlined. The Mayor agreed to examine the issue with the Director of Transportation and Mobility, including the need for a consultation process.

## **MAYOR'S QUESTIONS**

### **7. Question submitted by Councillor S. Kiely**

*I will ask the Mayor if the 100k over three years offered to the International Rugby Experience can be offered to the LEDP to save the Markets Field given the fact that it has been offered as a gift to Limerick City and County Council.*

**REPLY:** I regret to say that what the Councillor proposes will no longer be possible even though I have the highest of regard for what Ciara McCormack and Treaty United contribute to Limerick.

The Councillor will be aware that my original gesture was made to cover the shortfall of €100,000 for three years in the operating costs of the International Rugby Experience. This was to supplement the already very generous offer of the McManus Family to cover most of the very significant operating shortfall for three years. With both offers covering the full operating shortfall, I had hoped we might see the decision to close reversed and keep the attraction open for the next three years and save the valuable jobs for the dedicated staff and their families. It would also have helped small businesses in our city centre by bringing visitors right to the junction of Cecil Street and O'Connell Street and combat the high levels of vacancy which blight the nearby city streets.

The Councillor will also be aware that funds from my Mayoral Fund are only to be used to progress items in the Mayoral Programme. A number of other actions in the Programme are designed to similarly help bring footfall to the city centre to help reverse those high levels of vacancy.

I believe Christmas offers us one such opportunity to show new leadership. As someone who used to run a small retail business, I may be one of the best positioned in this chamber to know that a key season for small retailers is the Christmas season. That is why the mayoral programme contains the following objective:

“ML121 – Enhance the offering of Limerick for Christmas by providing a nationally significant Christmas market and other Christmas animation across the city centre, encouraging occupants of Georgian buildings or other residents and businesses of the city centre to make a special collective effort throughout the city centre.”

To this end, the draft Budget booklet circulated this week allocates the IRE funds of €100,000 from the Mayoral Fund along with an additional €25,000 to begin to improve our Christmas offering. Many people have expressed their disappointment to me with the plans for Christmas in Limerick this year. Although I think we still have a very varied and rich programme, I share their views that we can do better.

But we all know that the best things need investment. The Christmas offering this year had to be limited to match the funds of €150,000 allocated in the budget this time last year – a budget which was approved by the prior council of which of course the Councillor was a key member. A lighting up ceremony would for example cost in the region of €100,000. So, with that limited budget we would have had a lighting up ceremony and no lights. Planning for a great Christmas also needs to begin early in the year so by the time the Mayoral Programme was agreed it was already way too late to change direction significantly.

I am sure that the Councillor loves Christmas as much as I do. With a new Council we now have a chance to change direction and start afresh. We can all agree that Limerick is not well served by restricting that spend to €150,000 while other cities like Waterford to which we look with envy spend up to €500,000.

It is for this reason, I want us to use Christmas to create a more fun and enjoyable Limerick and at the same time battle the crisis in retail in our city centre and county towns. I am calling on Councillors to help me do that and also increase their own allocation to Christmas by at least that amount.

That will almost treble the money we currently spend on Christmas activities for next year and bring us more in line with other Irish cities.

Before anyone asks, this extra quarter of a million euro per annum is not just for the city centre. I would like to see €50,000 of this additional funding spent each year to improve Christmas in one or more of our county towns. Just like, this year already, to deal with urgent repairs on the lights in NewcastleWest, €50,000 or more was allocated to light up that town.

Before I finish, I want to come back to Treaty United. Since June, I have held a number of meetings with Ciara (McCormack) and their investors, including a multi-party call only two weeks ago. I am very impressed with and want to support their work. It is regrettable that national government did not approve any funding for their plans in the recent Large Sports Infrastructure Fund decisions, despite the high priority Limerick through the executive including myself gave their project.

I agree with the Councillor that it is now important for us all to support the great work they are doing and support the transformation they are pushing forward. I would therefore welcome any proposal from the Councillor and her political group to identify another project they would offer to delay from 2025 so as to permit instead the reallocation of this €100,000 of capital funding to the redevelopment of the Markets Field. If one is identified over the next few days, I shall ask officials to immediately assess if that approach could instead be agreed in time for our Budget meeting on Friday.

**Suspension of Standing Order No. 4:** The Príomh Chomhairleoir drew attention to the time which was approaching 5.30 p.m. and on the proposal of Councillor Sheahan, seconded by Councillor Teefy, Standing Order No. 4 was suspended in order to complete the agenda.

**8. Question submitted by Councillor U. Gavan**

*I will ask at the next Meeting what are the Mayor's plans now for the Designated Activity Companies (DACs) following his recent legal advice.*

**REPLY:** As a shareholder and Mayor of Limerick, I am uniquely positioned to influence the future direction of the work of the DACs so that they best serve the interests of the people of Limerick in helping to drive the outcomes of the Development Plan and the Mayoral Programme and provide best value for taxpayer monies. My dual roles allow me to balance the interests of our community with the strategic goals of Limerick City and County Council and the company. It is welcome to now finally put beyond doubt that the role of "shareholder" in respect of shares owned by Limerick Council is indeed to be exercised by the individual elected as Mayor with a democratic mandate to deliver for Limerick.

**Strategic Vision**

My own vision for each of the DACs revolves around four core principles: delivering for Limerick, innovation, community engagement, and pursuing goals in line with the UN sustainable development goals. I now plan to develop new shareholder representation letters, one for each DAC, setting out the role they must play to align with Limerick's core plans, the need for them to have robust written strategic plans setting out what they will deliver and detailed implementation/operating plans with clear deadlines for delivery of their mission.

**Governance**

I propose next to carry out a short independent review of each of the DACs to confirm that they are fully in line with best governance practice and the applicable governance codes for state bodies. I have no reason to believe that they are not but I think it is only appropriate to confirm that as we start out on the next chapter for them. The review should also give clear guidance and recommendations about the role for the shareholder, the board, the management team of the DAC and the elected representatives, how to avoid unnecessary conflicts of interest or perceptions of same, and ensure that the oversight role of the elected representatives can be fulfilled.

The DAC boards have important responsibilities to carry out for each DAC and we have to make sure that they are fully enabled and supported to do that. I shall ask the reviewer to assess the range of skills on each board and the

functioning of the boards up to now to guide me in the selection of new directors to serve on the boards so as to ensure we have a diversity of viewpoints and all the skills necessary. It is a principle of mine that board directors should follow a system of rotation with five to six years being the optimum maximum period of service (unless perhaps moving to the role of Chair within that period). I shall shortly issue expressions of interest for persons willing to serve as Directors in the DACs and in conjunction with the Chair of the respective boards progress the necessary appointments to replace retiring members or fill other vacancies.

I am aware that we now also have to fill the role of CEO at Limerick Twenty Thirty DAC. I want again to thank David Conway for his service to Limerick. I have already written to the Chair to ensure that the selection process takes account of the approach set out here and had a meeting with the Chair of the Remuneration Committee to that end. I anticipate having an exit interview with David to learn what other improvements he believes we can make for the future.

### **Transparency and Accountability**

Everyone will know that I believe in maintaining transparency and accountability in any public role. I believe the DACs in so doing can lead in public disclosure in company documents and websites.

As a shareholder and Mayor, I will also ensure that open lines of communication are established between the company, the local government, and the community as represented by the elected representatives and myself. I intend to ask the Director General and the Director of Finance to consider the establishment for 2025 of a Shareholder Management Unit in Limerick City and County Council (similar in role to that which I set up in the Department of Finance or the role of New Era for other state bodies) to assist me in my duties as shareholder and protect the interests of the taxpayers.

Regular meetings will be held between the responsible member of that Unit and the management of each DAC to discuss progress, address concerns, and gather feedback from all stakeholders. The Unit will also assist Councillors to prepare for semi-annual (or more frequent if desirable) reviews by the Council of the operation and delivery of each DAC.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, my plans as a shareholder and Mayor for each DAC will require some transition. Great work has been done up to now but we are entering a period of higher demands for delivery and therefore continuation of the business as usual with which we have become accustomed may no longer be the right choice. Furthermore, many of the plans for the DACs require

considerable additional funding which has not yet been committed to by national government, for example the new city library at Opera Square.

The DACs have a critical role in their work for Limerick and I believe that if we do this next chapter well, we can achieve remarkable success for the company while also fostering a prosperous and vibrant community.

### **23. Correspondence**

The Correspondence circulated with the Agenda was taken as read.

#### **MAYOR / DIRECTOR GENERAL ORDERS:**

The Register of Orders made by the Mayor or the Director General up to the date of the Meeting was available on SharePoint for inspection by the Members.

#### **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:**

The Register of Decisions on Applications under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, was also available on SharePoint for inspection by the Members.

Signed:

**Príomh Chomhairleoir**

Date: