

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT ANNUAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK, AND ONLINE, ON MONDAY,
30TH JUNE, 2025, AT 3.00 P.M.**

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor D. McSweeney, Príomh Chomhairleoir

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor John 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'Hanlon, O'Sullivan (O), O'Sullivan (T), Pond, Reale, Ruddle, Ryan (M), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan, Slattery, Stokes, Talukder, Teefy, Teskey, Ward.

Apologies: Councillors O'Donovan, Ryan (E).

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

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

The Príomh Chomhairleoir opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Council Chamber for the Annual Meeting. At the outset, he congratulated Mr. Kieran Lehane, Director, Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services on his 50 years of service in Local Government and commended him for his longstanding commitment and dedication to public service.

He also congratulated Councillor Kieran O'Hanlon who had served as President of AILG over the past year and acknowledged his recent appointment to the new Local Democracy Taskforce, which was recently established to focus on reforming and strengthening local government.

The Príomh Chomhairleoir then gave the following address:

“Mayor John Moran, Fellow Councillors, Director General Dr. Pat Daly, Council Officials, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Being elected the first Príomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council on the 21st of June 2024, at the age of 26, was a huge honour — for me, my family, my friends, and all those who supported me.

When this Council first met on that day, it marked a new chapter for Limerick — a chapter full of potential and opportunity. I was also acutely aware that the road ahead would not be easy. Change, especially meaningful change, is rarely without challenge.

Over the last twelve months, all in this chamber have worked together in the best interests of Limerick City and County. Because of this collaboration, I firmly believe we’ve delivered meaningful progress — but we can and must do more. I return to the chamber floor today ready for that continued work.

Reflecting on the year, there were many difficult moments — none more so than our eight-and-a-half-hour budget meeting. Yet, despite the challenge, we succeeded in passing a budget of over €267 million (excluding HAP) — an €18 million increase on the previous year — while protecting all local businesses from a proposed rates increase.

However, one of the darkest days I have witnessed in my six years in this Council Chamber occurred only last Thursday.

We heard from a man whose Family’s generosity has touched not just every corner of Limerick City and County, but the entire country. To hear such a damning account of how JP McManus and the McManus Family’s proposed gift — the International Rugby Experience to the people of Limerick — was handled was deeply upsetting and concerning to me and every member in this chamber.

The protracted and disrespectful treatment of the McManus Family was nothing short of incredulous. It exposed serious dysfunction within our Local Authority and underlines the urgent need review.

Some of the public commentary on this matter — made by a very small minority in this chamber — showed poor judgement, to say the least.

That said, I want to acknowledge and thank Dr. Pat Daly, who showed real leadership and courage in standing up and offering a sincere apology to the McManus Family and this chamber. That action must be respected. But we must also recognise that some chose not to show that leadership.

As I conclude my term as Príomh Chomhairleoir, I want to sincerely thank every member of this chamber for their support throughout the year. Yes, we’ve had robust and heated debates — but that is the cornerstone of democracy. Debate, disagreement, and discussion are not flaws.

In fact, those debates took on added importance this year, as for the first time in the history

of the State, executive functions rest with a single political office holder: the Directly Elected Mayor.

That makes it even more critical that decisions are not only made fairly — but are seen to be made fairly by the Directly Elected Mayor. That accountability of the Directly Elected Mayor must happen here, in this Council Chamber.

I would also like to thank my family — who unfortunately cannot be here today — and my friends who have stood by me throughout my political journey. They have made many sacrifices, and for that, I offer my sincere thanks.

A special word of thanks goes to the Council staff, whose support, advice, and professionalism have been invaluable. Under the experienced leadership of Dr. Pat Daly and his team, we've navigated many challenges. I particularly want to thank the Corporate Services team — Ciara, Aedín, Collette, Siobhán, Jacinta, and Liz — for their dedication and commitment to ensuring the smooth running of meetings.

A thanks must also go to Councillor Noreen Stokes, the Leas-Príomh Chomhairleoir, who was always available to stand in for me.

In conclusion, we must remember that local government should be grounded in pragmatism — in simply getting the job done. It should not be about mischievously slowing down or obstructing progress for political gain or personal agendas.

As we begin the second year of this term, I appeal to the leadership of this Council: to lead with integrity and respect. Leadership is not about choosing sides — it's about working together, finding common ground, and serving the people of Limerick first."

1. Election of Príomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council:

The outgoing Príomh Chomhairleoir invited nominations for the Office of Príomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council for the coming year.

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

"That, Councillor Catherine Slattery be appointed Príomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor is appointed."

As there were no other nominations, the outgoing Príomh Chomhairleoir declared Councillor Slattery elected as Príomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council and congratulated her on her election.

Having taken the Chair, the incoming Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Slattery, gave the following address:

Mayor, fellow Councillors, friends, family, and members of the community, It is a tremendous honour to stand before you today as the first woman elected as Príomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council. I am deeply grateful to my fellow Councillors for placing your trust in me. This is not only a personal milestone, but a significant one for Limerick, and I will carry this responsibility with pride, determination, and humility.

To the people of Limerick City East, who elected me in June 2024 – thank you for your trust and belief in me. Without your support, I would not be here today. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to my family and my team – your unwavering support throughout my political journey has lifted me up, especially during the moments when I needed it most. I will not stand here today and make promises without action. That's not who I am.

When I was first elected in 2019, I set out clear priorities for our city – and those priorities have not changed. If anything, they've grown stronger with experience.

I have a deep and lasting commitment to youth and community development. I've worked alongside many local sporting organisations and community groups, and I know first-hand how essential these networks are to keeping our communities connected and thriving. Unfortunately, Limerick still lacks adequate indoor and outdoor community and sporting facilities. This needs to change. We must invest in the spaces that bring people together – where children can play safely, young people can develop, and all residents can feel a sense of belonging.

Housing is another pressing issue. We need a significant increase in the delivery of affordable homes for purchase and rental. Young people deserve the chance to stay and settle in Limerick. Families experiencing homelessness – particularly those with children living in hotel rooms for extended periods – deserve so much better. We must accelerate the delivery of social and affordable housing with urgency and purpose.

Our city centre must also be revitalised. We want a Limerick that is bustling, vibrant, and attractive – not only to visitors, but to businesses, investors, and residents. Initiatives like Twilight Thursdays have shown promise, but we must go further. We need to create meaningful, long-term incentives to encourage businesses to open, stay, and grow in our city centre.

And with that vibrancy must come safety. We need visible, consistent Garda presence on our main streets—O'Connell Street, William Street, and beyond. The people of Limerick deserve to feel secure, to shop, dine, and enjoy their city without fear. Tackling anti-social behaviour must remain a top priority.

Our elderly citizens also hold a special place in my heart. I've had the privilege of spending time with residents in St. Camillus Hospital and community groups across the city. These individuals were once the voice of our communities, and now it is our duty to be theirs—to protect, support, and celebrate them in their later years.

The priorities I have outlined are not pipe dreams. They are realistic and achievable—but only if we work together. Regardless of political affiliation, we are all here to serve the same purpose: to build a stronger, fairer, and more inclusive Limerick.

Being elected Príomh Chomhairleoir is the greatest honour of my political career so far. I will never take it for granted. I have worked hard to earn the trust of the people, and I will continue to work just as hard—every single day—for our communities.

I want to leave you with the words of a woman who continues to inspire me:
 “Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”
 — Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Let us lead together, and let us bring Limerick forward—united in purpose, proud in identity, and ambitious for our future.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh.

2. Election of Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council:

The Príomh Chomhairleoir invited nominations for the Office of Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council for the coming year.

Proposed by Councillor Foley;
 Seconded by Councillor Collins (B);

“That, Councillor Michael Collins be appointed Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting or until a successor has been appointed.”

As there were no other nominations, the Príomh Chomhairleoir declared Councillor Michael Collins elected as Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir and congratulated him on his election.

The incoming Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir thanked Members for their support. He stated that he looked forward to supporting and working with the Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Slattery, and with the Elected Members, Management and Staff to deliver for the people of Limerick.

The Members welcomed Deputy O’Dea, former Councillor John Egan and all guests who were present in the Chamber. They congratulated the Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Catherine Slattery, and Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Michael Collins, on their election and wished them both the best for the year ahead. Members acknowledged the work involved in the positions and assured them of their full support. Members welcomed the election of a female Príomh Chomhairleoir, and noted that it was a great occasion for her and her family.

Members congratulated the outgoing Príomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Dan McSweeney, and commended him for his dedication and commitment to the role, acknowledging his leadership over the past twelve months. Members also thanked the Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor Noreen Stokes, and commended her on her work throughout the year.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Catherine Slattery on her election and noted that it was good to have more diversity at the top table. He welcomed her family and friends to the Council Chamber and said he looked forward to working with her over the next twelve months. The Mayor congratulated Councillors O'Hanlon and Sheahan on their appointment to the new Local Democracy Taskforce.

The Director General, on behalf of Management and Staff, congratulated Councillor Catherine Slattery and Councillor Michael Collins on their election to the Office of Príomh Chomhairleoir and Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir of Limerick City and County Council respectively.

The Director General stated that it was an honour for Councillor Slattery to be elected to the position of Príomh Chomhairleoir and wished her well for the year ahead. He assured the new Príomh Chomhairleoir that she had the full support of Management and Staff in working together for the betterment of Limerick. He paid tribute to the outgoing Príomh Chomhairleoir and Leas-Phríomh Chomhairleoir, acknowledging that they were the first ever elected to those roles in the country, and complimented them for their commitment and work over the past year.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed:

Príomh Chomhairleoir

Date: _____