



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae Luimnigh

Limerick City  
& County Council

Seirbhísí Corparáideacha, Rialachais & Custaiméara  
Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Luimnigh  
Ceanncheathrú Chorporáideach  
Cé na gCeannaithe  
Luimneach. V94 EH90

Corporate, Governance & Customer Services  
Limerick City and County Council  
Corporate Headquarters  
Merchant's Quay  
Limerick. V94 EH90

**To: The Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council**

t: +353 (0) 61 557 150

**Observer Programme 2025 Ryder Cup. Bethpage Black, New York, USA 24<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>  
September 2025**

**Background**

An invitation was received by Mayor John Moran, Cllr. Catherine Slattery, Príomh Chomhairleoir, and Cllr. Gerard Ward, Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale, Chair from the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport to attend the Observer Programme with other government officials at the 2025 Ryder Cup in Bethpage Black, New York. This was the last Ryder Cup event before it comes to Adare Manor, Limerick, Ireland in 2027, the latter of which will be the largest international sporting event, Ireland will ever have hosted.

At the September 2025 Meeting, approval was given by the Council to this proposed visit, in accordance with Section 142(5) of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.

**Delegation & Trip**

Mayor John Moran, Cllr Catherine Slattery and Cllr Ger Ward attended various parts of the observer programme with other invited Council officials and other government agency officials, all of whom are involved in the planning of the 2027 event.

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September, the delegation travelled to the event course at Bethpage Black in Long Island for a tour of the course, it's controls and infrastructure in advance of the first day of competition. The opening ceremony and final day of the Junior Ryder Cup were due to happen that day but due to inclement weather, the opening ceremony had been brought forward to the Wednesday and the Junior Ryder Cup golfers stayed at their course in Nassau County. The delegation was briefed by Ryder Cup Europe/US PGA representatives on the logistics of these changes and the implications with a view to learning for such potential changes for Adare. The delegation attended a Ryder Cup Europe Opening Ceremony event with the Ryder Cup Europe leadership, their board, the Ryder Cup Committee, past and future host nations, Adare Manor and the other government agencies.

On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September, the delegation travelled to the event course at Bethpage Black in Long Island for 05:30am to experience the first day of the competition and the iconic First Tee experience. Observations of traffic management, crowd management and additional security due to the President of the USA First Tee visit to the course that day were key features. That

delegation attended a Ryder Cup Europe & Tourism Ireland event 'Ireland meets New York' that evening with Minister Patrick O'Donovan, the McManus Family, the Ryder Cup Europe leadership, their board, the Ryder Cup Committee, past and future host nations, Adare Manor and the other government agencies.

On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September, the delegation travelled to the event course at Bethpage Black in Long Island to experience the second day of the competition, for an official photo with the Samuel Ryder trophy on the grounds of Bethpage Black and for a debrief meeting with the officials of the Ryder Cup Europe/PGA of America representatives. That evening, the delegation was invited to a sponsor's event in Long Island to experience the scale and standard of venues that will be needed on multiple levels for 2027.

On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September, the delegation travelled to the event course at Bethpage Black in Long Island to experience the third day of the competition, to attend the Handing Over of the ceremonial putter on the 15<sup>th</sup> Tee from the PGA of America to Minister Patrick O'Donovan and JP McManus and Sue Ann McManus. An official photo of the Council delegation with the ceremonial putter was taken on the grounds of Bethpage Black.

Discussions took place with Ryder Europe, PGA of America, Department of Community, Culture and Sport, National Transport Authority, An Garda Síochána, Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland and Adare Manor and the collective delivery required to make the 2027 event the most successful Ryder Cup yet. The benefits of the observer programme were that those in attendance experienced the scale and standard of the event including observing those involved in the transport logistics, security, crowd management, media coverage and the experience of the First Tee, which is world renowned and unique to the Ryder Cup event.

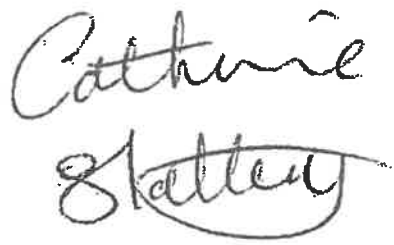
The lessons learned from the 2025 event are:

- the significant variation to travel times to and from the event from 1 hr 30mins to 3 hrs 15mins one way for a 34 mile trip
- the length of day for those attending with a 07:10hrs tee off Friday and Saturday with entry onto course from 04:30hrs and an undefined finish time each day as subject to the score
- the volume and standard of transfer vehicles required
- only one park & ride site catering for 10k cars; travel by train 40% and ride share 20%
- the importance of crowd management, crowd control and in particular the need for early intervention by the event organisers;
- The health and safety standards required including the challenges of an undulating forested state park
- the extensive preparation required for the visit of the President of the USA and its impact on the timings of the event;
- the need to be able to execute a significant change to the programme due to inclement weather e.g. opening ceremony brought forward by a day and Junior Ryder Cup did not travel to the main site
- the range and scale of the hospitality offerings on site
- the range and quality of the venues required for corporate hosting off site
- the roles and responsibilities of the volunteers
- very few sustainability measures apparent on the site

- the features of a fan zone in the city centre
- the lack of branding off site including in the city centre, en route to the course and in the local town.

The observer programme, designed by Ryder Cup Europe for the stakeholders involved in the detailed planning of the 2027 event, gave those in attendance great insight into the mechanics of the event and the determinants of success.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Catherine Slattery'.

Cllr. Catherine Slattery  
Príomh Chomhairleoir

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Gerard Ward'.

Cllr. Gerard Ward  
Cathaoirleach of Municipal  
District of Adare-Rathkeale

19<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## COUNCILLORS REPORT ON CONFERENCE WHICH THEY ATTENDED

REQUIRED TO BE COMPLETED UNDER SECTION 142(5) (f) and (fa) OF THE  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001

Organiser of Conference: Salmon Watch Ireland

Name of Conference: Saving the Irish Salmon – Salmon Watch Ireland Annual  
Conference 2025

Location of Conference: Sheraton Athlone Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

Date of Conference: 11 October 2025

Summary of Conference Content

### **Key Talks & Themes**

#### **Biosecurity & Invasive Species – Chantel Carr (National Parks & Wildlife Service)**

Emphasized frontline role of anglers in preventing invasive species spread  
through simple “Check, Clean, Dry” routines and steam-wash stations.

#### **Community Stewardship Model – Maura Brennan (Nore Vision)**

Spotlighted successful multi-stakeholder, community-driven water  
stewardship efforts, including agricultural improvements, Himalayan Balsam  
control, and citizen-driven water quality tracking.

#### **Long-Term Salmon Survival Trends – Dr Elvira de Eyto (Marine Institute)**

Presented 70-year data from Burrishoole showing marine survival declining to  
just ~7%, with rising sea temperatures and estuarine predation key factors.

#### **Munster Blackwater Fish Kill – Inter-Agency Case Review**

Highlighted systemic weaknesses in pollution response; SWI recommended  
real-time discharge monitoring, rapid testing teams, and public transparency.

## **Sea Lice Impact on Wild Salmon – Dr Paddy Gargan (ex-Inland Fisheries Ireland)**

Based on 18 years of data, sea lice from aquaculture were confirmed as a significant driver of wild salmon mortality—up to 19% increased losses in untreated smolts. Regulatory action mandated under EU habitats law.

### **Farm Licence Issues – Deenish Island**

Exposed regulatory failure: the farm operated beyond licence limits, impacting sea trout stocks and contributing to nutrient pollution.

## **Cross-Border Science in Salmon Conservation – Dr Sarah McLean (Loughs Agency)**

Advocated for ecosystem-scale, joint Ireland–UK research and management to align with salmon migratory life cycles.

## **Aquaculture & EU Directives Compliance – Emma Armshaw (Sustainable Water Network)**

Argued that open-net fish farming breaches Water Framework & Marine Strategy directives; pushed for transparent licensing and closed-containment systems.

## **Marine Phase Protection – Ken Whelan (Fisheries Scientist)**

Urged better recognition of marine phase pressures (bycatch, predation), calling for migration corridors, improved coastal monitoring, and full inclusion in marine biodiversity frameworks.

## **Key Findings & Outcomes**

### **1. Marine Survival Crisis**

Marine survival rates have plummeted to ~7%, significantly below optimal levels, largely due to warming seas and increased predation.

### **2. Salmon Farming Threats**

Aquaculture-derived sea lice pose a severe threat: untreated smolts face ~19% higher mortality.

Open-net farms consistently breach environmental and licensing standards; closed-system models are needed.

### **3. Pollution, Enforcement & Governance**

The Munster Blackwater incident revealed critical failures in pollution prevention and reactive capacity. SWI urged improvements including real-time monitoring and public accountability.

### **4. Community & Policy Actions**

Biosecurity, river stewardship, legal enforcement, and ecosystem-based policy emerged as shared actions—each complementing science-driven decision-making.

#### **Calls to Action**

**Environmental Enforcement:** Strengthen oversight, ensure rapid response to pollution and aquaculture breaches.

**Aquaculture Reform:** Transition to closed-containment systems; publicize licences; integrate with EU water directives.

**Marine-Focused Conservation:** Create safe migration corridors, monitor coastal threats, acknowledge ocean-phase pressures.

**Local Stewardship Mobilisation:** Equip anglers and communities to lead biosecurity, river monitoring, and invasive species control.

**Cross-border Coordination:** Facilitate science and management across the island to match trans-boundary salmon life cycles.

Salmon Watch Ireland's 2025 conference reinforced the urgency of an integrated conservation strategy—spanning science, policy, grassroots action, and enforcement—to prevent further collapse of Ireland's wild salmon.

Signature: *Seán Hartigan*

Print Name: Seán Hartigan

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SUBSISTENCE

