

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF CORK CITY COUNCIL

HELD ON FRIDAY, 16th JUNE 2017

- PRESENT** An tArd-Mhéara, Comhairleoir D. Cahill in the Chair
- NORTH EAST** Comhairleoirí S. Cunningham, T. Tynan, T. Brosnan, J. Kavanagh.
- NORTH CENTRAL** Comhairleoirí F. Ryan, K. O’Flynn, L. O’Donnell, J. Sheehan
- NORTH WEST** Comhairleoirí M. Nugent, T. Fitzgerald, K. Collins, M. O’Sullivan.
- SOUTH EAST** Comhairleoirí K. McCarthy, C. O’Leary, D. Cahill, L. McGonigle, T. Shannon, N. O’Keeffe, S. O’Shea.
- SOUTH CENTRAL** Comhairleoirí M. Finn, F. Kerins, T. O’Driscoll, S. Martin.
- SOUTH WEST** Comhairleoirí J. Buttimer, H. Cremin, M. Shields, F. Dennehy, P.J. Hourican, T. Moloney.
- ALSO PRESENT** Ms. A. Doherty, Chief Executive.
Mr. J. G. O’Riordan, Meetings Administrator.
Ms. U. Ramsell, Staff Officer, Corporate and External Affairs.
Mr. P. Moynihan, Director of Services, Corporate and External Affairs.
Ms. D. Hegarty, Law Agent
Mr. B. O’Hare, Management Accountant, Finance.
Mr. D. Joyce, A/Director of Services, Environment and Recreation.
Mr. A. O’Riordan, Systems Analyst, ICT and Business Services.

An tArdmhéara recited the opening prayer.

1. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

On the proposal of Comhairleoir K. O’Flynn seconded by Comhairleoir S. Martin, An Chomhairle agreed to Suspend Standing Orders to allow media cameras in the Chamber for the handover of the Lord Mayor’s Chain, and to allow streaming of the Annual Meeting.

An tArd-Mhéara D. Cahill addressed the meeting.

2. ELECTION OF AN tARD-MHÉARA

An tArd-Mhéara D. Cahill sought nominations for the office of Ard-Mhéara:

Comhairleoir J. Sheehan proposed, Comhairleoir J. Buttimer seconded the nomination of Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald

Comhairleoir F. Ryan proposed, Comhairleoir L. O’Donnell seconded the nomination of Comhairleoir T. Tynan

A vote was called for where there appeared as follows:-

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR T. FITZGERALD

Comhairleoirí S. Cunningham, T. Brosnan, J. Kavanagh, K. O’Flynn, J. Sheehan, M. Nugent, T. Fitzgerald, K. Collins, K. McCarthy, C. O’Leary, D. Cahill, L. McGonigle, T. Shannon, N. O’Keeffe, S. O’Shea, M. Finn, F. Kerins, T. O’Driscoll, S. Martin, J. Buttimer, H. Cremin, M. Shields, F. Dennehy, P. J. Hourican, T. Moloney (25)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR T. TYNAN

Comhairleoirí T. Tynan, F. Ryan, L O’Donnell, M. O’Sullivan. (4)

As the number voting in favour of Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald exceeded those voting in favour of Comhairleoir T Tynan, An tArd-Mhéara D. Cahill declared Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald elected to the office of Ard-Mhéara.

An tArd-Mhéara Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald then addressed An Chomhairle:

Fellow Councillors, Chief Executive, Members of Staff, Members of the Oireachtas, Family and Friends.

It is a deep privilege to be elected Cork’s first citizen. I want to thank my Fianna Fail colleagues for their nomination, and my fellow council members for electing me.

To follow in the footsteps of so many distinguished Lords Mayor is an honour; and to wear a chain of office worn by Terence MacSwiney and Tomas Mac Curtain is humbling.

Cllr. Des Cahill has shown great commitment and has been a wonderful ambassador for Cork at home and abroad. I particularly want to thank him for his generosity and cooperation over these recent weeks of transition.

Ankie, Isabel and David must feel a deep sense of satisfaction and fulfilment as they reflect back on Cllr. Cahill’s Mayoralty Year.

MY MAYORALTY THEME

I see my Mayoralty year as being about building ‘A New Bridge for Cork’- the City of Bridges.

Not the bridge of ‘bricks and mortar, or steel components’ connecting one bank of the river to the other, but a ‘citizen’s bridge’ connecting different ‘peoples’ in our city, one to the other, and to wider Cork.

MY VISION

My vision is to help build an even more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable City of the future

A city that continues to make connections locally nationally and internationally.

MY PERSONAL STORY

Vibrant communities, make up our City, north, south, east and west. They are part of my own ‘Connected City’ story.

In 1958 my mother Maura from Fair Hill crossed the North Gate Bridge to set up home with my father Tom from Cove Street & Turners Cross, and with an abundance of Murphy's sausages, bodice and ham, through my Dad's work we began our family journey.

School began in the South Mon and a short few years later my mother encouraged dad to cross back over the bridge to settle on the North side.

They are wonderful parents and grandparents, and soon to be great grandparents, both unique in their own way, a northside/southside combination that has given me, my brothers and sisters John, Christine, Ann and Tomas and extended family every encouragement to involve ourselves in our place, to connect with the people among whom we live, work, socialise and to make a difference.

They are my heroes; I love them dearly and thank them for their encouragement and support on my journey to this office.

Sadly, Georgina's parents Ned and Marguerite Healy have passed away in recent years. Over the coming year they will be with us in spirit, especially in the person and activity of the new Lady Mayoress Georgina.

Georgina, you mum and dad will be looking down with such pride tonight. We miss them dearly.

The Healy family have always being there for me. Thank you Jane, Carmel, Philomena, Martina, John, David, Edward and George, the wider Healy clan and of course the best Gluten Free confectioner Helen.

With unbounded thanks to Michelle and Deborah- our family-, Georgina and I will offer a mayoralty that becomes a family and community celebration.

I hope City Hall is ready for this!

Overlooking the village of Blackpool our family set up home in Cushing Place in Farranree. In the Fair Hill tradition school began at St. Vincent's Convent and the North Monastery.

Later moving to Knocknaheeny was one of the best things that ever happened to me.

As part of this community, as it developed step by step, I learnt and lived the crucial Prevention, Promotion and Proactive responses to life's challenges.

PREVENTION, PROMOTION AND PROACTIVE

As your Lord Mayor, I will point the spotlight of Prevention, Promotion and Proactive, on many aspects of life in our city and of its citizens, especially those requiring a 'Citizen's Bridge'. In order to do this we must start with local people, listen to what they have to say, and respond to their needs for 'Connection'.

This city has a history of collaboration, community development, and volunteerism. The resilience gets us through the difficult times and has allowed Cork to emerge as a major city.

I look forward to engaging with these incredible people over the coming year

PREVENTION:

The city values the important role of parents and families in shaping the future of Cork.

*During my term of office I want to give **priority** to Early Years & Nurturing Families. Research shows what happens in our early years has a lasting impact on children's learning, health and development.*

Our parents and families play a key role. As we grow, our community and our city can support all our citizens, however young or old, in reaching their full potential.

I affirm the role of parents and the wonderful preschool and crèche services and facilities available in the City for families. And I want to hear from families about how we can make the City even more family friendly.

Providing universal access to quality and affordable education in early years is one of the most powerful ways to ensure fair access to health, social and economic opportunities – even before a child reaches school age.

***This vision for the City** - positive early year experiences for all – needs a first step. I hope that my Mayoralty Year can be this first step.*

PROMOTION:

Cork is a vibrant and diverse city – as Corkonians we are proud of our heritage and we celebrate our diversity. The economic confidence of Cork has been influenced by our harbour, port, and our trading history as a city.

With our port we learnt global ideas and summonsed up the energy and drive to make Cork a location that valued change - in action and opinion.

Cork has always been an open, welcoming city. For most of its long history, it is where the river meets the sea.

*Cork has always been an 'Atlantic City', with a deep connection to the 'Atlantic' through its sailors and sea-traders – an 'Atlantic Way' **without the 'Wild'**!*

International Relations.

Since 1958 Cork City has been formally twinned with six cities – Coventry, Rennes, San Francisco, Cologne, Swansea and Shanghai. Our international relationships have fostered strong links in many diverse areas – cultural, educational, social, touristic, technical, scientific and economic.

The activities of the City Council in this regard have helped to promote Cork internationally and have added value and substance to the reputation of the whole region.

The need for Cork to have a strong international profile is now greater than ever, most especially in a competitive global context where information, investment and human capital are highly mobile. Our international relations activities are extremely important, and there is a continuing need to derive the maximum value from these activities.

TEAM in Council and the work of our International Relations committee is a key driver in terms of promoting our city and I welcome and look forward to implementing key initiatives approved by Council to promote our city and its people, internationally.

PROACTIVE

Urbanism

There is no other city in Ireland that has similar potential for new urbanism, - that is to refine how people engage with the city, especially the City Centre.

With new office accommodation in the city centre and with a healthy number of planning applications on hand, Cork being just one hour from London, Manchester and Birmingham will target UK companies seeking a European base.

We have now created an exciting new bridge for Cork – direct trans-Atlantic flights to America. My congratulations to the management and staff of Cork Airport, and my best wishes and support for their continued success.

Cork has a lot to offer, a healthy city, a city of learning for their workers and children, a place that values and supports a high quality of life.

I believe there will huge opportunities to attract European companies as well and I will make it a priority to strengthen our partnership with IDA Ireland to capitalise on this.

As a region, we have a lot of companies which trade with the UK and they will also need specific support in the advent of Brexit, even potentially seeking some presence in the UK - a win/win situation.

Cork City Council is well placed to create these opportunities in partnership with other agencies such as the chamber of commerce, Cork Airport etc.

CONNECTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Roads and Transportation:

The development of critical infrastructure is essential to the future growth and prosperity of the city and surrounding areas. The city must continue to provide easy access to an increasing number of visitors and workers across a variety of transport modes.

In recent times there has been a welcome focus on the Dunkettle interchange and the connectivity between the City and Ringaskiddy.

A Cork to Limerick Motorway and a new Northern Ring Road would provide much needed connectivity between the N8, the N20 and the N22.

For me the provision of a Northern Ring Road is of particular importance. It would transform the City. It would create new development opportunities and the means to more fully develop the economic and employment generating potential of the entire northern part of the city.

It would also significantly benefit the broader Cork region by improving access to the national road network and it would create a much needed opportunity to better balance traffic movement around the City.

Work on this project was suspended a number of years ago but it now needs to be reactivated and progressed.

Housing

Homelessness is a major concern for us all here in the City Council.

The Deputy Lord Mayor and I will continue to highlight the social and humanistic challenges that face our applicants and the wider community in need of housing.

This is not about numbers. It's about real people. Their fears and worries. Their needs for security, their need to be able to plan their lives.

While 'Rebuilding Ireland' gives us a long term plan, short term measures must give families a basic right to a good quality home, security of tenure, a healthy living environment, and lifestyle.

Support to voluntary housing bodies and sheltered housing projects must be a priority with increased funding.

Where a household's income exceed limits for social housing, but is not sufficient to secure a mortgage, assistance is needed.

*Let's review our investment in our Downsizing scheme supporting our aging population based on models of best practice developed here in the city such as:-
Ardfallen, Ringmahon House, Sonas Knocknaheeny and Ard na Ri Farranree a community based sheltered housing behind Farranree Church when former Lord Mayor Dan Wallace was Minister.*

Regeneration

Regeneration has been a huge success story in our city.

In my own parish of Knocknaheeny/Hollyhill and all around the North West Ward we can see the dramatic changes taking place through the Regeneration Project.

The area is strong in community spirit and I am so proud of all of the people in the community who have connected and journeyed together for a better quality of life for local people.

The Northside has a new library, a site of knowledge and information, which is no doubt making a vital contribution to the designation of the northwest as a Learning Neighbourhood.

We also see hundreds of new homes being built for the families of the area, often replacing the poorer quality dwellings which people lived in previously.

St. Anthony's Park is a model of best practice that should be used to address traveller accommodation needs.

A good and quality home is not a gift from government; it is a citizen entitlement.

Regeneration is more than investment in bricks and mortar. To be meaningful, effective and sustainable regeneration has to be about people, families and communities.

That is why all the investment in bricks and mortar must be matched by investment in the infrastructure of community supports and learning.

This will lead to personal fulfilment and community development through access opportunities, community based initiatives, formal and informal programmes. This is what offers people of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to realise their potential.

All the International evidence about Regeneration tells us that to be effective it must be multi- stranded. If one strand is neglected then its overall potential is unrealised.

Special Welcome

A special guest tonight is our Patrick's Street Echo Boy, Michael O' Regan who has attended almost 50 Annual Meeting of Cork City Council. Welcome Michael.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Evening Echo who are celebrating their 125th Anniversary delivery a highly professional connected Community newspaper to our citizens.

Boundary Extension

A lot has changed in that time. Over the past 50 years has experienced enormous changes as indeed has our great country. Society and the economy have changed radically. Our education system has changed beyond recognition.

Today, technology, globalization and urbanization represent challenges to every City, including Cork – these are challenges of a scale and complexity that we could not have contemplated 50 years ago.

The City boundaries were last revised over 50 years ago, when Ireland was a very different place to what it is today.

We have long since out-grown the boundaries set in the 1960's, and we all now accept that the current situation is not sustainable.

Last week saw the publication of the Report of the Expert Advisory Group on Local Government Arrangements in Cork.

I welcome the conclusion of the Review Process, which commenced nearly 2 and half years ago. And I welcome also that the members of the Expert Advisory Group were unanimous in their recommendations.

As Lord Mayor I will work to ensure that the City Council plays its full and active part in delivering what is best for Cork – all of Cork – both Cork City and Cork County.

The Councillor's elected to Cork County Council are our fellow Party members, our colleagues, indeed our friends.

And they are no different from City Councillor's in wanting to see Cork prosper and position

itself to face the challenges of our time.

We in Cork City Council have always acknowledged the need for a compensation model as part of any boundary change.

This adjustment is needed to maintain a strong County – from Castletownbere, to Charleville to Youghal.

Good democracy distributes wealth fairly.

I am a democrat, and in my role as Lord Mayor I hope to lead this Council through the necessary implementation steps for the McKinnon Report, including a fair compensation package for our neighbours.

With the professional skill base of our CEO's Ann Doherty and Tim Lucy and their teams, together we can plan for an exciting future for Cork and its citizens.

The region, and the country, cannot waste the unique opportunity that implementation of the McKinnon Report represents.

DESCRIBING CORK CITY

Cork has flown the flag as 'The City of Culture' in 2005 led by Cllr Sean Martin.

A number of major events during my mayoralty year will see Cork fly the flag as:

- A Sporting City*
- A Learning City*
- A Healthy City*
- An Arts City*
- A Business city*

A Sporting City

This year marks the centenary of the birth of former Taoiseach, and Freeman of the City Jack Lynch.

In the GAA world Jack Lynch was a superstar before superstars were ever thought of. One of the greatest dual players of all time, I hope to mark this significant anniversary in conjunction with the North Monastery Past pupils Union and other sporting and political organisations.

The opening of Pairc Uí Chaoimh brings sporting opportunities both on and off the field. The Cork County Board is to be congratulated for the development of Páirc Uí Chaoimh Stadium and Centre of Excellence which has set new standards in sporting excellence.

A Learning City

In September 2017, UNESCO's third International Learning Cities Conference will be hosted by Cork, bringing 700 people from all around the world to our city.

I look forward to welcoming delegates and Mayors from all over the world to our city and to City Hall.

Following conferences in Beijing in 2013 and in Mexico in 2015, the selection of Cork as the first European city is a great honour which builds on the UNESCO Learning City Award achieved in 2015, and reflects the value placed by UNESCO on our track record of learning in the city.

Cork can trace its identity as a Learning City back 1,500 years to the time of St. Finbarr, reflected in the motto of UCC - 'Where Finbarr taught let Munster learn'. Education and learning have been a priority for the City and for the Local Authority since its foundation.

Cork Corporation was one of the founding bodies in 1908 of what is now the largest College of Further Education in Ireland – Cork College of Commerce.

In fact, previous Lords Mayor have made a huge impact on our educational system. Tomas Mac Curtain was a teacher of Irish a passionate educator of our language, Terence MacSwiney was an educator, poet and patriot, whose political writings has inspired many people in their struggle for freedom around the world.

In more recent years, in 'Imagine our Future' the city has committed itself to become an internationally recognised Learning City.

The UNESCO Learning City Conference brings the ultimate validation of the City's educational and learning credentials.

I commend Cork City Council with other Learning City lead partners – Cork ETB, CIT, and UCC, and our strategic partners including HSE Cork and a wide range of support partners - to work together to advance Cork as a city that promotes: Learning for All; Inclusion, Prosperity and Sustainability, for the better quality of life for all our citizens.

I am particularly interested, myself, in the expansion of the learning concept to one of 'Life wideness'.

It adds value by recognising that learning and personal development occurs to a greater extent in authentic settings. We are consistently learning in our everyday lives: at work, at home, through our hobbies and interests and in our social lives.

Our youth should experience a life and education that is broader than a text book; we should embrace every opportunity to learn about life which is a lifewide experience. Perhaps we can set a long term vision of Lifewide experience.

Let us look at the apprentice and external training experience to ensure that our young people have equal opportunity in the market place.

Perhaps we have forgotten that the Leaving Certificate and a Third Level Qualification is not the path for some of our young people?

We are fortunate to have valuable professional teachers who are committed to the 'Lifewide Experience' of Learning. In partnership with all sectors of our education system I look forward to exploring this long-term vision for those who are interested.

A Healthy City

During challenging times, Cork demonstrated a resilient capacity by breaking down barriers across the city to become more efficient; and by building on areas of common interest.

Cork's designation by the World Health Organisation as a Healthy City confirmed our linkages with Shanghai, Rennes, and San Francisco, and have served to validate our position in Europe but also globally.

Our key unique selling point is 'Community Connections'. Our communities have connected and collaborated to grow, develop and sustain themselves during times of affluence and during times of austerity.

Our capacity as a city to collaborate at inter-agency level is continually enhanced by the new and developing partnerships that emerge each year and continue to thrive today.

*My experience of working at European level representing Cork with the World Health Organisation has helped me to see that we live in an increasingly globalised world. Worldwide connectedness has exploded in all aspects of life but the emphasis always returns to **action at local level.***

I hope to coordinate the next European political vision group to Cork and I look forward to advancing the work undertaken by the HSE and Shanghai in developing a health agenda with a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mayor of Shanghai.

I want to explore a new Twinning/Healthy Cities International partnership with Cork, Shanghai and San Francisco with a view to developing projects of common interest. The actions and developments undertaken by our local Healthy Cities Committee are to be commended and health actions at local level in our communities are the key to a 'healthy city'.

APPRECIATION

Family

Georgina and I, Michelle and Deborah, already know how thankful we are for one another in family, and for the shared story that has brought us to tonight.

We are who we are, and what we are, because of our Parents, and our siblings, to whom we owe an immense debt of thanks.

This is your moment too. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. I am also so grateful to my extended family, sisters and brother in law, nieces and nephews from both families for their support.

Thank you to:

Friends, Colleagues and Co-Workers

-the great friends from my days in the Ascension Youth Club in the Hut in Gurrabraher Fr. Michael, Pat, Bryan

- To the many voluntary organisations I am involved in on the northside to this day.

- The many projects and groups supported by local clergy and religious groups.

- projects undertaken within the remit of An Garda Siochana, HSE, City Council ETB and other statutory agencies.

You have supported and encouraged me in so many ways and I thank you for taking that extra step in supporting to this office on this historic evening for me and my family.

I want to thank

-the Fianna Fail North Central City Comhairle and Comhairle Dail Ceantair organisation for their ongoing affirmation of my work within the ward and within the party.

To Deputy Billy Kelleher a warm welcome and especially Uachtarain Fianna Fail Michael Martin for his confidence in me to represent the people of the North West Ward.

I am delighted to welcome Cathaoirleach of the Seanad Senator Denis O' Donovan and his colleague Senator Mark Daly. They are joined by former Lords Mayor and TD's Dan Wallace, John Dennehy and Donal Counihan.

HSE

I want to thank my colleagues in the HSE and in particular Principal community worker Ronnie Dorney and my colleagues on the board of management of the Knocknaheeny Youth Project. You have facilitated a smooth transition for the year from the Project to City Hall.

We will continue that team effort in a limited way over the next 12 months. I am proud to lead a great dedicated staff at the youth project who support and deliver crucial services on a daily basis.

City Hall

Which brings me to an exciting year here in City Hall working closely with our Chief Executive Officer Ann Doherty and her dynamic staff at all levels of the organisation.

Since I was elected to council in 2004, I have worked with two City Managers.

Forty years ago the Regional Hospital opened its doors for the first patients. I was fortunate to bring in the first patient. Tempus fugit – Time flies - and it is ironic that the CEO and I both started our careers in the Regional Hospital at Wilton.

I don't think that we ever envisaged that we would share this same podium.

Given her excellent track record so far I think Cork has a great future ahead under her leadership.

Ironically Finbarr Archer (Driver) worked in the Regional Hospital as well in those early days, and from what I can see Paul, John Ger, Nicola, Catherine and Finbarr brings great style to the Lord Mayor's pivotal role.

Listeners

To conclude:

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals coordinates efforts around ending poverty and hunger, combating inequality and disease, and building a just and stable world.

Here in Cork we play a huge role in supporting the implementation of this agenda.

Every one of the 17(Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are underpinned with the work that is happening in our city every day. Goal 11 specifically aims to promote cities that are “inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”

This is the vision I see for Cork – an inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable city ready to embrace all that the future holds.

I am really delighted to be elected as First Citizen of this wonderful city. It is indeed a very proud moment for me and my family. I will give it my all, ensuring the proud traditions of the office of Lord Mayor are maintained.

I thank you for listening to me and I look forward to the year ahead. Cross those bridges with me and let’s make those connections work together.

Míle Buíochas

3. **ELECTION OF LEAS ARDMHÉARA**

An tÁrd-Mhéara, Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald sought nominations for the office of Leas Ard-Mhéara.

Comhairleoir M. Shields proposed, and Comhairleoir T. O’Driscoll seconded the nomination of Comhairleoir F. Dennehy

Comhairleoir T. Tynan proposed, and Comhairleoir M. O’Sullivan seconded the nomination of Comhairleoir F. Ryan

A vote was called for where there appeared as follows:-

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR F. DENNEHY

FOR: Comhairleoirí S. Cunningham, T. Brosnan, J. Kavanagh, K. O’Flynn, J. Sheehan, M. Nugent, T. Fitzgerald, K. Collins, K. McCarthy, C. O’Leary, D. Cahill, L. McGonigle, T. Shannon, N. O’Keeffe, S. O’Shea, M. Finn, F. Kerins, T. O’Driscoll, S. Martin, J. Buttimer, H. Cremin, M. Shields, F. Dennehy, P. J. Hourican, T. Moloney (25)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR T. TYNAN

Comhairleoirí T. Tynan, F. Ryan, L O’Donnell, M. O’Sullivan. (4)

As the number voting in favour of Comhairleoir F. Dennehy exceeded those voting in favour of Comhairleoir F. Ryan, An tÁrd-Mhéara Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald declared Comhairleoir F. Dennehy elected to the office of Leas Ard-Mhéara.

The Leas Ard-Mhéara then addressed the meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**ARD-MHÉARA
CATHAOIRLEACH**