

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF CORK CITY COUNCIL
HELD ON FRIDAY, 20th JUNE 2025

PRESENT	An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir D. Boyle in the chair and subsequently an tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir F. Dennehy in the chair.
NORTH EAST	Comhairleoirí, J. Maher, J. Kavanagh, M. McDonnell, T. Tynan, O. Moran, N. O' Flynn.
NORTH WEST	Comhairleoirí T. Fitzgerald, D. Boylan, J. Sheehan, M. Gould, K. Collins, B. McCarthy.
SOUTH EAST	Comhairleoirí T. Shannon, K. McCarthy, M.R. Desmond, D. Cahill, H. Kamegni, P. Horgan.
SOUTH CENTRAL	Comhairleoirí S. O'Callaghan, S. Martin, N. O' Connor.
SOUTH WEST	Comhairleoirí C. Kelleher, J. Lynch, A. Deasy, T. Coleman, G. O' Brien, C. O' Connor.
ALSO PRESENT	Ms. V. O' Sullivan, Chief Executive. Mr. B. Geaney, Assistant Chief Executive. Ms. R. Loughry, Director of Services, Corporate, Community & Cultural Affairs. Mr. D. Joyce, Director of Services, Emergency Management & Climate Action. Ms. N. Stewart, Meetings Administrator. Ms. V. Keating, Staff Officer, Corporate, Community & Cultural Affairs.

An tArdmhéara recited the opening prayer.

1. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

An Chomhairle unanimously agreed to suspend standing orders to allow media cameras into the Council Chamber for the handover of the Lord Mayor's chain, and to allow the meeting to be streamed and recorded.

2. **AN tARDMHÉARA'S ADDRESS**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir D. Boyle addressed the meeting as follows:-

Councillors, Chief Executive management team, people of Cork, it has been the greatest honour of my time in public life to have served as Ardmhéara Chorcaí. Ours is a great city that can stand tall with many of the great cities of this world. There may be some, not of Cork, who might be amused by the confidence we have in ourselves, but for those of us who are Cork or have come to be Cork, we know that that pride of place is more than justified.

A Chomhairleoirí, a Phríomhfheidhmeannach, a fhoireann bhainistíochta, muintir Chorcaí, ba é an onóir is mó i mo shaol poiblí a bheith mar Ardmhéara Chorcaí. Is Cathair iontach í Corcaigh atá i measc na mór-chathracha ar fud an domhain. Bhféidir bheadh daoine ann, nach Corcaíoch iad, a bheith ag gáire faoinár bhféinmhuinín ach dúinn agus do dhaoine a tháinig go Corcaigh, tuigimid go bhfuil cúis mhaith leis an mbród áite seo.

Having had the honour of representing the city, in meeting with those who have come to visit; those who have come to engage with us either through business, culturally or through sporting or community engagement, I have always been pleased to hear what our visitors have to tell me about the city.

When I have represented the city abroad, particularly in our Twin Cities, Shanghai and San Francisco, I have been pleased to hear similar opinions being said.

Our great strength, what is recognised as our great strength, is our ability to work with all groups in the city, to give such groups a voice, and have each contribute in helping our city become a better place. Cork City Council, through working with other public bodies, business groupings, civic and community organisations, has made this a model that works in identifying problems that may affect our city; finding resources and the wherewithal to deal with such problems, and to plan for a better future.

The greatest privilege I've had as Lord Mayor has been in meeting many of the wonderful people of our city, people engaged in activities that involves doing good for others, for their communities and ultimately for the city itself. Wonderful people doing excellent things that it has been my privilege as Ardmhéara to acknowledge.

With the Community and Civic Awards I had the particular honour of acknowledging such people. One of whom, Siobhán O'Dowd, we lost shortly after that event.

Voluntary commitment is at the heart of life in Cork. I have had the honour of celebrating that. We should never lose sight that our city would not be able to operate without such commitment.

Our various festivals, some of which had significant anniversaries such as the Life Long Learning Festival, were run to the usual high standards. In addition, the city had the privilege of hosting European Maritime Day, on behalf of and working with the European Commission. The city has never looked finer.

We also had the opportunity of marking the 30th anniversary of the passing of our cultural icon, Rory Gallagher. I am grateful to the people in the City Council whose work helped make that such a wonderful celebration of his life.

The prime focus of the office of Ardmhéara must rightly be on the life and on the people of the city. Part of the function of the role also includes Cork's place in the wider world. The limitations of local government being understood, this Council has stated its concerns about the lack of justice found in many places across the globe.

It is right that the Council does so. In doing that we are reflecting the international concern given to Cork and Ireland over a century ago, when as a nation we sought independence, during which our city was burned after the deaths of two honoured

wearers of this chain and holders of this office, Tomás MacCurtain and Terence McSwiney. The international support and solidarity offered then must be returned and given to those who are undergoing injustice undermining their right to be.

The Palestinian people are being slaughtered by an amoral government that denies that people the right to exist. Cork stands with Palestinian people, and calls for governments around the world to condemn and remove any traces of support from an evil government that continues to subject Palestinian people to what are nothing less than war crimes.

Similarly the malevolent aggression of Russia against Ukraine must be brought to an end. We have warmly taken in a significant number of Ukrainians into our city, and our city is immeasurably better for their being here. As our guests, for them we must constantly call out the unacceptable invasion of their country.

As a city of welcome, a city of inclusion, we must continue to build upon the positive movement of people, of new communities into our city, people whose decisions to work, learn and live among us have made this city a better and stronger place to be.

Our other international responsibility is to live up to our obligation of being a Climate Neutral and Smart City, with the added lustre of having an EU Mission label. The climate emergency remains the essential issue of our time. Our ability to deal with the threats imposed, is not only necessary, if successfully done it can be to our benefit.

We are planting close to five thousand trees a year. We are improving the public realm in the city in a people centred way. The Marina Promenade, which I had honour of opening, enhancing the jewel that is Marina Park.

The proposed development of Douglas Street, now at public consultation, has the potential to re-invent that neighbourhood. These are the ways in which we will make our city better.

The greenest buildings are those already built. The more vacant and derelict building brought back into use, the more people living in the city centre, the better our city will be. We are making progress, but that needs to be faster.

The same is true of our public transport infrastructure. Significant announcements have been made over the last twelve months. It is vital that these projects are financed and quickly brought quickly into being.

As my time as Ardmhéara draws to a close, there are people I must thank for helping me do this role to the best of my ability. There is our Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr. Honore Kamegni, whose historic election has been more than justified with the dignity in which he has performed his role. I have huge pride for the ways my daughter, Saoirse, has performed her role as Lady Mayoress.

The office of the Lord Mayor is excellently served by Nicola O'Sullivan and Finbarr Archer. I am so grateful in how they have helped me to define my time in office. Similarly key people in Corporate and Community Affairs steered me in all the right directions.

I thank you Comharleoiri for how we have collectively discussed and decided how our city can best reach its potential.

Local government in Ireland is not what it can be and less than what it should be. Within the confines that exist I have tried to represent this city as best as I could. It has been the greatest honour of my life to have done so.

To conclude I will repeat the words I said in finishing my acceptance speech on taking this office on June 21st, 2024.

Is í an uaillmhian atá agam ná an Chathair bhródúil seo a leiriú. Cathair atá ag dul chun tosaigh sna laethanta atá le teacht. Corcaigh bródúil. Corcaigh níos fearr. Corcaigh nua, agus lean ar aghaidh, Corcaigh abú

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.

3. **ELECTED MEMBERS ADDRESS**

Comhairleoirí O Moran, N. O' Flynn, S. Martin, J. Lynch, S. O' Callaghan, K. McCarthy, J. Maher, and T. Tynan addressed the meeting on behalf of their respective groups.

4. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ADDRESS**

The Chief Executive, Valerie O' Sullivan addressed the meeting.

5. **ELECTION OF AN tARDMHÉARA**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir D. Boyle requested nominations for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir C. Kelleher and seconded by Comhairleoir T. Coleman, Comhairleoir F. Dennehy was nominated for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir T. Tynan and seconded by Comhairleoir B. McCarthy, Comhairleoir B. McCarthy was nominated for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir F. Kerins and seconded by Comhairleoir K. Collins, Comhairleoir M. Gould was nominated for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

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

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR F. DENNEHY

Comhairleoirí J. Maher, J. Kavanagh, M. McDonnell, O. Moran, N. O' Flynn, T. Fitzgerald, D. Boylan, J. Sheehan, T. Shannon, K. McCarthy, M.R. Desmond, D.

Cahill, H. Kamegni, P. Horgan, S. O'Callaghan, S. Martin, D. Boyle, F. Dennehy, C. Kelleher, A. Deasy, T. Coleman, G. O' Brien, C. O' Connor (23)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR B. MCCARTHY

Comhairleoirí T. Tynan and B. McCarthy. (2)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR M. GOULD

Comhairleoirí M. Gould, K. Collins, F. Kerins, N. O' Connor, J. Lynch. 5)

ABSTAIN: (0)

As those voting for Comhairleoir F. Dennehy were greater than those voting for Comhairleoirí B. McCarthy and M. Gould, An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir D. Boyle declared Comhairleoir F. Dennehy elected to the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

6. **AN tARDMHÉARA'S ADDRESS**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir F. Dennehy addressed An Chomhairle as follows:-

A Phríomhfheidhmeannach, a Fheisirí de Pharlaimint na hEorpa, a Theachtaí Dála, a Sheanadóirí, a Chomhairleoirí, a Dhaoine Uaisle, a áionna oirirce, a chairde agus clann.

Chief Executive, MEP's, Deputies, Senators, Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, friends, and family,

Standing before you tonight as the incoming Lord Mayor of Cork fills me with both profound humility and immense pride.

To me, this role is not just a title; it is a sacred trust bestowed upon me by the people of this great city. I am deeply honoured to accept it and fully aware of the responsibility it carries.

As I assume this office, I am conscious of the legacy I step into. Cork has been graced by leaders of vision and courage, none more so than 2 of our city's greatest hero's Terence MacSwiney and Tomás Mac Curtain.

Their sacrifices remind us that this position is not merely about governance; it is about service, about embodying the values, aspirations, and resilience of the people of Cork.

I wish to pay tribute to our outgoing Lord Mayor, Councillor Dan Boyle. We are extremely fortunate in Cork to have had exceptional Lord Mayors over the years and Cllr Boyle has very much maintained this standard.

Throughout his term, he represented Cork with pride and distinction on both national and international stages. His commitment to initiatives including advocating of converting derelict buildings into housing, expansion of green spaces, sustainable transport and the circular economy has set a standard that I pledge to uphold and build upon. Thank you, Cllr Boyle for your dedication to our city.

I also want to recognize the outgoing Lady Mayoress Saoirse Hurley for her remarkable contributions, especially her wonderful fundraising efforts for local organizations.

To outgoing Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Honore Kamegni, your dedication and commitment to Cork have been inspiring. Achieving so much in such a short time is a testament to your resilience and vision. Thank you for your exemplary service.

Tonight, I am very proud and privileged to honour another former Lord Mayor John Dennehy. 42 years ago you helped lead Cork through one of its most extraordinary years: the Cork 800 celebrations. Your leadership and collaboration with businesses and communities laid the foundation for a year of pride and achievement that still resonates in Cork.

From twinning Cork with San Francisco to representing us nationally as a Dail member, your legacy is very evident both in the city and in your local community. Thank you for your continued service and dedication to our city and of course thank you for everything that you have done for me as my father in both my political and personal life.

Today, Cork stands at a crossroads, facing challenges that demand bold vision and decisive action. Housing is among our most pressing concerns. With a huge projected population growth in the coming years, we must ensure every citizen has access to quality social and affordable housing. This requires collaboration across all sectors, and I commit to accelerating development while preserving the unique character of our city.

Our transport and infrastructure are undergoing transformative change. Projects like the Luas light rail and BusConnects promise to make Cork more connected and sustainable. However, we must ensure these initiatives serve all residents equitably and protect our environment for generations to come.

Safety in our city centre is another priority. Cork's heart must be a place where everyone feels welcome and secure. By working closely with An Garda Síochána, businesses, and community groups, we will maintain confidence and vibrancy to our city centre. I very much welcome the recent appointment of a Director with specific responsibility for the city centre and also the collaboration with the CBA to provide city centre wardens. I will work closely with all of the stakeholders to achieve our goals here to make our city even safer.

Cork's opportunities are as significant as its challenges. We are taking bold steps to become a global leader in sustainability, with initiatives like Local Green Deals and investments in renewable energy and green spaces. These efforts are investments in our children's future, and we as a community, will continue to build on them.

Economically, Cork is poised for considerable growth with plans for thousands of new jobs in the coming years. We are already seeing huge investment in our public realm and there is much more to follow. The Cork Docklands redevelopment aims to transform the area into a vibrant, sustainable urban quarter with residential, commercial, and cultural spaces, prioritizing connectivity, green infrastructure, and economic growth

But growth must be inclusive, lifting all citizens and all communities. We will prioritize education, skills training, and support for local businesses to ensure that everyone benefits.

For me, Cork has always been about its people and communities. Everything we do as a city council must be guided by their needs and aspirations. I will continue to work closely with community groups, sporting organizations, our elected representatives and the voluntary sector to strengthen the bonds that have already made this city so special.

One of my priorities will be to make City Hall more accessible to all our citizens. It is not my City Hall; it is yours. I would love to invite every citizen to share in its beauty, history, and vision. Obviously it would be physically impossible for me to bring all 230,000 citizens in over the next year, but together with the city executive, I will work to make this a reality for the future.

In summary, I pledge to work to acknowledge and strengthen our beautiful communities, to work with our young people to ensure that they can be the best that they can be, to collaborate with each and every elected member here across the political spectrum, to work closely with our executive and officials and to work with all stakeholders to make this city a place that all Corkonians can be proud of.

Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the citizens of Cork for placing your trust in me. I accept this mantle with a profound sense of responsibility and a determination to honour the legacy of those who have come before me.

7. **ELECTED MEMBERS ADDRESS**

Comhairleoirí T. Fitzgerald, C. O' Connor, D. Cahill, N. O' Flynn, K. McCarthy, J. Lynch, T. Tynan, and A. Deasy addressed the meeting on behalf of their respective groups.

8. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ADDRESS**

The Chief Executive, Valerie O' Sullivan, addressed the meeting.

9. **ELECTION OF LEAS ARDMHÉARA**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir F. Dennehy requested nominations for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir J. Sheehan and seconded by Comhairleoir M. R. Desmond, Comhairleoir M. McDonnell was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir B. McCarthy and seconded by Comhairleoir T. Tynan, Comhairleoir T. Tynan was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir M. Gould proposed and seconded by Comhairleoir J. Lynch, Comhairleoir N. O' Connor was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

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

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR M. MCDONNELL

Comhairleoirí J. Maher, J. Kavanagh, M. McDonnell, O. Moran, T. Fitzgerald, D. Boylan, J. Sheehan, T. Shannon, K. McCarthy, M.R. Desmond, D. Cahill, H. Kamegni, P. Horgan, S. O'Callaghan, S. Martin, D. Boyle, F. Dennehy, C. Kelleher, A. Deasy, T. Coleman, G. O' Brien, C. O' Connor (22)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR T. TYNAN

Comhairleoirí T. Tynan and B. McCarthy. (2)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR N. O' CONNOR

Comhairleoirí N. O'Flynn, M. Gould, K. Collins, F. Kerins, N. O' Connor, J. Lynch. (6)

ABSTAIN: (0)

As those voting for Comhairleoir M. McDonnell were greater than those voting for Comhairleoirí T. Tynan and N. O' Connor , An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir F. Dennehy declared Comhairleoir M. McDonnell elected to the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

An Leas Ardmhéara, Comhairleoir M. McDonnell addressed the meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**ARDMHÉARA
CATHAOIRLEACH**