

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF CORK CITY COUNCIL

HELD ON FRIDAY, 12th JUNE 2020

- PRESENT** An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Sheehan in the chair and subsequently an tArdmhéara, J. Kavanagh in the chair.
- NORTH EAST** Comhairleoirí K. O’Flynn, J. Maher, T. Tynan , O. Moran.
- NORTH WEST** Comhairleoirí T. Fitzgerald, M. Nugent, K. Collins, D. Boylan.
- SOUTH EAST** Comhairleoirí D. Cahill, M.R. Desmond, K. McCarthy, T. Shannon, D. Forde.
- SOUTH CENTRAL** Comhairleoirí M. Finn, D. Boyle, S. Martin, S. O’Callaghan, P. Dineen, F. Kerins.
- SOUTH WEST** Comhairleoirí F. Dennehy, D. Canty, C. Finn, C. Kelleher, G. Kelleher, T. Moloney, H. Cremin.
- APOLOGIES** Comhairleoirí G. Keohane, F. Ryan, L. Bogue.
- ALSO PRESENT** Ms. A. Doherty, Chief Executive.
Mr. B. Geaney, Assistant Chief Executive.
Ms. A. Murnane, Meetings Administrator.
Ms. C. Currid, Staff Officer, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.
Ms. N. O’Sullivan, Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.
Ms. A. Sheehan, outgoing Lady Mayoress.
Ms. S. Kavanagh, incoming Lady Mayoress.

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Sheehan recited the opening prayer.

1. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

On the proposal of An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Sheehan, An Chomhairle agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow media cameras into the concert hall for the handover of the Lord Mayor’s chain, and to allow the meeting to be streamed.

2. AN tARDMHÉARA’S ADDRESS

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Sheehan addressed the meeting as follows;

“Céad Míle Fáilte romhaibh go Halla na Cathrach.

I am delighted to welcome you all here to this historic occasion in Cork city concert hall.

I have come to the end of my year as Lord Mayor. What an amazing year it has been. It has been an incredible honour and privilege and I will always be grateful to Cork City Council for electing me.

This time last year I outlined that the theme of my Mayoralty would be connecting communities.

I did so bearing in mind that the year marked a number of significant changes. For my colleagues gathered here it was the beginning of a newly elected Council with some first time newly elected Council members taking office, facing a new set of challenges and opportunities. And for the city of Cork, following the first city boundary extension in fifty years when the land area of the city increased from 39 km² to 187 km it was an opportunity to welcome 95,000 new citizens into Cork city. It was also an opportunity to welcome people who have made Cork their home from the four corners of the world.

Many of the events/activities I attended took place in the heart of the community be it sports centres, youth clubs, hospitals, care centres, schools and clubs. Many involved meeting active volunteers who indeed are the backbone of what makes Cork city unique for its generosity, sharing and caring spirit. And it was a great pleasure to visit these groups and witness the pride they have for their communities.

New Boundary Areas

Incorporating the new areas into the city and most importantly making the new areas feel welcome was a challenge to which the Council rose. It has been a very successful integration I would like to pay tribute to the transition team led by David Joyce for all their hard work.

Fundraising

The Lord Mayor's office is unique for creating the opportunity to fundraise for many worthy charities across the city.

Among the fundraising events the Lord Mayor's office hosted were the Lady Mayoress' Coffee Morning, the Lord Mayor's Christmas Concert and the Lord Mayor's Tea Dance. Alas we were unable to proceed with the Lord Mayor's Charity Ball which was scheduled to take place in this very room last Friday. However, we were in the happy position of supporting a number of very worthy charities with the events that were held.

School Visits

Like previous Lord Mayors one of the highlights of my year was the school visits. One effect of the boundary extension was to add 30 schools to the city bringing a total of 130 which the Lady Mayoress and Finbarr and I visited in the city. The visits were all the more special as this year as we marked a centenary of school visits begun by Lord Mayors Tomas MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney. For some schools it was their 100th school visit but for others it was their very first visit.

I was especially honoured to be the first Lord Mayor to visit schools in the new areas in Blarney, Cloghroe, Glanmire, and Ballincollig. The pride that each school shows in their school was inspiring. Thanks to all the principals, teachers and management for their support. The warmth of the welcome we received will stay with us forever.

Defence Forces

Throughout the year I had many interactions and communications with the Defence Forces and the Gardaí. I want to acknowledge them for their dedication, professionalism and commitment to providing outstanding service to the country and indeed to Cork city. This was even more so over the past 3 months of the COVID19 pandemic.

Highlights of the year

I had so many highlights of the year, too many to mention here but I would like to highlight one;

I had the honour of attending the very moving opening ceremony of the Mary Elmes Bridge this year, the second bridge in Cork named after a woman. Hopefully, there will be many more. Everyone who attended was moved by the bravery of this native Cork woman who saved the lives of so many in WWII. She is an inspiration for modern times. As Mary Elmes son Patrice remarked at the opening ‘we need to build bridges, not walls.’

Commemorations Tomás MacCurtain

1920 was a pivotal year in the history of Cork. The election and subsequent murder of Tomás MacCurtain, the election and death of Terence MacSwiney along with the Burning of Cork are just some of the events that were planned to be commemorated this year. The establishment of a Commemorations Committee has allowed for a whole of Council approach to the commemorations.

One of the highlights of my Mayoralty was the special meeting of Council which took place on January 30th in the Council Chamber commemorating the election of the first Republican Council and the election of Tomás MacCurtain as Lord Mayor. History and community were celebrated that night with readings from the minutes and contemporary newspapers and talks on the significance of events such as the first election in which women had a vote and the first time we had proportional representation. We were joined by members of the new Irish communities and by a number of former Lord Mayors. I am about to join their ranks tonight. I will be in good company.

There were many other commemoration events planned by the community groups, the city and state that had to be deferred due to Covid19 and I would like to thank all the community groups and organisations for their enthusiasm and engagement during the year. Hopefully, most of these events can take place in the future.

COVID19

The Covid19 pandemic produced a unique challenge for our society and our city. It is hopefully a once in a life time event. The response to the pandemic by the citizens of Cork showed the strong community network and partnership that have been built up over many years.

The interagency planning between the City Council, the HSE, Gardaí and other emergency services really came of age during the initial phases of the Covid19 pandemic. Community

response teams showed the benefits of strong community engagement and structures building on years of strong community work.

Thanks

There are many to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for their help and support throughout the year.

I would like to thank Finbarr Archer for all his help and support during the year. His knowledge of the City and his ability to keep me on time are skills to behold. He worked long hours and was always extremely helpful. On behalf of the Lady Mayoress and myself, I would like to thank you Finbarr.

To Nicola and Sarah who manage the Lord Mayors' office with professionalism, patience and understanding, thank you for your great work.

To John Kenneally head Porter, his staff, Sean, Donal, Pat, Noel all great event organisers a huge thanks.

Thank you to my Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Sean Martin for his help and advice during the year and to my party colleagues for their unfailing support.

To my fellow Councillors for all their assistance during the year in deputising and in the conduct of meetings and for the dignity and respect afforded to the office of the Lord Mayor.

To the Chief Executive, Ann Doherty and the management team of Cork City Council for demonstrating their commitment to public service especially when faced with one of our biggest challenges during Covid19. Thank you Ann.

To Paul Moynihan and the team in Corporate Affairs, Alma Murnane, Nicky Carroll, Catherine Kelly, Carmel Currid and all the staff, thank you.

To the Lady Mayoress Aedamar who accompanied me and was a huge support and partner right throughout the year and who brought great energy and enthusiasm to the role. Thank you.

To my children Conor, Cillian, Eoghan and Eimear for their support and tolerance, thank you.

I would like to wish the incoming Lord Mayor every support and success. It's a huge honour to be Lord Mayor and enjoy every minute of it."

3. **ELECTION OF AN tARDMHÉARA**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Sheehan requested nominations for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir D. Cahill, seconded by Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald, Comhairleoir J. Kavanagh was nominated for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir P. Dineen, seconded by Comhairleoir H. Cremin, Comhairleoir T. Moloney was nominated for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

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

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR J. KAVANAGH

Comhairleoirí K. O’Flynn, J. Kavanagh, O. Moran, T. Fitzgerald, J. Sheehan, D. Boylan, D. Cahill, M.R. Desmond, K. McCarthy, T. Shannon, D. Forde, M. Finn, D. Boyle, S. Martin, S. O’Callaghan, F. Dennehy, D. Cauty, C. Finn, C. Kelleher, G. Kelleher. (20)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR T. MOLONEY

Comhairleoirí J. Maher, T. Tynan, M. Nugent, K. Collins, P. Dineen, F. Kerins, T. Moloney, H. Cremin. (8)

As those voting for Comhairleoir J. Kavanagh were greater than those voting for Comhairleoir T. Moloney, An tArdmhéara Comhairleoir J. Sheehan declared Comhairleoir J. Kavanagh elected to the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

4. **AN tARDMHÉARA’S ADDRESS**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Kavanagh addressed the meeting as follows:-

“Comhairleoirí, Oifigigh agus Príomhfheidhmeannach, is pribhléid dom seasamh os do chomhair tráthnóna inniu mar Ardmhéara Tofa Chathair Chorcaí agus gabhaim buíochas ó chroí leat as an onóir seo a thabhairt dom.

Councillors, Officials and Chief Executive, it is a privilege for me to stand before you this evening as the elected Lord Mayor of Cork and I sincerely thank you all for bestowing this honour on me and indeed my wife Stephanie as Lady Mayoress. This is very much a unique event and a privilege for us and indeed our family. I sincerely promise to embrace the role of Lord Mayor with diligence, enthusiasm and professionalism at all times.

I would like to acknowledge my family here this evening; my sons, Glenn and Philip and my wife Stephanie. I would also like to acknowledge my mother and father with whom I am delighted to share this wonderful experience.

The role of Lord Mayor is, of course, an apolitical role and I will always endeavour to execute my duties in an apolitical manner, to the very best of my ability. I assure every one of you, my fellow Councillors, fair and equal respect at all times. We are all elected primarily as representatives of our local communities but also as civic leaders and representatives of our wonderful city. When we do work together as a team we are very productive, positive, professional and capable of delivering what we consider best for our local communities and indeed our city. A case and point would be the recent transformation of Cork city into its newly extended format.

The significant contribution made by previous Lord Mayors, our Chief Executive, officials and, especially, the elected members in successfully delivering our new city certainly sowed the seeds for a thriving city that we can all live and work in and be very proud of.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by our outgoing Lord Mayor, Cllr John Sheehan and outgoing Lady Mayoress, Aedamar Sheehan. You were wonderful ambassadors for our city in a year that ended with the coronavirus pandemic locking down our city and indeed our country for the past number of months. We couldn't possibly have wished for a more competent Lord Mayor to navigate our city through this pandemic and the difficulties it presented, in particular we are thankful for your medical background and significant leadership skills. Your contribution to this city over the past 12 months is one you should both be proud of. I know we all were. Thank you. I hope when the opportunity presents itself that you and your family take a well deserved holiday in the coming months.

I would like to acknowledge our Chief Executive and her excellent team of officials. As a Councillor since 2011, I have certainly seen the Council evolve for the better, in my opinion. My experience is that directors and officials are a positive, professional team who will not waste time telling you why something can't be achieved but instead focus their efforts on working with us in a positive vein to deliver the best possible results for our communities and indeed our city. Thank you Chief Executive and thank you to your wonderful team and I hope we can build more on this over the coming year.

What are my goals as Lord Mayor of Cork?

At the beginning of the year we, as a Council, had wonderful plans to celebrate and recognise the many important historical events in this year of commemoration. Obviously, the onset of the global pandemic has disrupted the momentum of these events but I certainly wish to work with the Commemoration Committee and the officials to regenerate and deliver as many key historical events as we possibly can in the coming months. We will all, as a Council, hopefully play an important part in the delivery of these in the coming months.

In the interest of continuity, I wish to continue the excellent work of my predecessor, Councillor John Sheehan, the Chief Executive and our officials in working to reignite the embers of the economy of our city. The flames of economic growth were burning brightly at the beginning of the year but unfortunately the horrendous effects of the coronavirus pandemic quenched these flames. But working together, we can fan the flames and reignite the glowing embers of our local economy by supporting local businesses to get back on their feet and by working with key stakeholders to attract new business, both small to medium sized businesses as well as FDI. We need to work with all the stakeholders in the tourism sector such as hotels, restaurants, etc as tourism is a key economic driver in this region and critical to the growth of our economy. This sector needs our support like never before and we can't be found wanting.

Thirdly, I have always been very passionate about our environment, and in particular, our public realm and litter. I hope to work with the relevant directors and their teams in raising awareness and implementing relevant strategies where possible to tackle litter in our communities. My theme will be "Cork Against Litter" which I have seen work in another local authority. I hope in association with the relevant directorates in City Hall to raise awareness, to reduce and hopefully effectively manage all kinds of littering such as dog

fouling, fly tipping and the general littering of public areas by engaging with schools, local Tidy Towns groups and community associations. A clean city is a healthy city, and a clean city is also a city that will attract tourists, leave them with a positive experience and encourage them to return. Most of all, a clean city is a place that we all want to work in and live in.

I would sincerely like to thank my proposer, Councillor Des Cahill, for proposing me and your very kind words. I would also like to thank my seconder.

We are living in very strange times. I cannot remember a Cork City Council AGM conducted more or less behind closed doors but these are the times we live in and we need to embrace them and embrace them we will. Beidh lá eile!!

Many people have made many personal sacrifices in recent months. Sporting events have been cancelled, family events such as weddings, communions and confirmations have been cancelled, schools and state examinations have had to be cancelled. People have lost their jobs and people have lost beloved family members to this horrible disease. Having reduced numbers at funerals has been heart breaking for so many people. This has been a horrific time and everybody has been affected. As a team, we can work together to regenerate our city, our local economy, our communities and our people.

Cork, like a phoenix, will rise from the ashes of the coronavirus pandemic and continue to grow as the country's second city and the leading city in the southern region. As Lord Mayor, I will work tirelessly through my term to help achieve these goals and put our city back where it belongs.

Go raibh mile maith agaibh go leir.”

5. **ELECTION OF AN LEAS ARDMHÉARA**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Kavanagh requested nominations for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir D. Forde, seconded by Comhairleoir D. Boylan, Comhairleoir S. O'Callaghan was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir M. Nugent, seconded by Comhairleoir J. Maher, Comhairleoir F. Kerins was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

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

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR S. O'CALLAGHAN

Comhairleoirí J. Kavanagh, O. Moran, T. Fitzgerald, J. Sheehan, D. Boylan, D. Cahill, M.R. Desmond, K. McCarthy, T. Shannon, D. Forde, D. Boyle, S. Martin, S. O'Callaghan, F. Dennehy, D. Canty, C. Finn, C. Kelleher, G. Kelleher. (18)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR F. KERINS

Comhairleoirí K. O'Flynn, J. Maher, T. Tynan, M. Nugent, K. Collins, M. Finn, P. Dineen, F. Kerins, T. Moloney, H. Cremin. (10)

As those voting for Comhairleoir S. O'Callaghan were greater than those voting for Comhairleoir F. Kerins, An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir J. Kavanagh declared Comhairleoir S. O'Callaghan elected to the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

An Leas Ardmhéara, Comhairleoir S. O'Callaghan addressed the meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**ARDMHÉARA
CATHAOIRLEACH**