

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF CORK CITY COUNCIL**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2022**

- PRESENT** An tArdmhéara Comhairleoir C. Kelleher.
- NORTH EAST** Comhairleoirí J. Maher, T. Tynan, J. Kavanagh, O. Moran, G. Keohane.
- NORTH WEST** Comhairleoirí T. Fitzgerald, M. Nugent, J. Sheehan, K. Collins, F. Ryan, D. Boylan.
- SOUTH EAST** Comhairleoirí D. Cahill, M.R. Desmond, T. Shannon.
- SOUTH CENTRAL** Comhairleoirí M. Finn, D. Boyle, S. O’Callaghan, F. Kerins.
- SOUTH WEST** Comhairleoirí F. Dennehy, D. Canty, C. Finn, G. Kelleher, T. Moloney, E. Ryng.
- ALSO PRESENT** Ms. A. Doherty, Chief Executive.  
Mr. B. Geaney, Assistant Chief Executive.  
Ms. A. Murnane, Meetings Administrator.  
Ms. K. Fitzgerald, Administrative Officer, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.  
Ms. C. Currid, Staff Officer, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.  
Mr. P. Moynihan, Director of Services, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.  
Ms. A. Rodgers, Director of Services, Community, Culture & Placemaking.  
Mr. G. O’Beirne, Director of Services, Infrastructure Development.  
Mr. N. O Donnabháin, Director of Services, Housing.  
Mr. M. Larkin, Director of Services, People & Organisation Development.  
Ms. M. Gallagher, Head of Legal Affairs.  
Mr. T. Duggan, City Architect.  
Ms. L. Kidney, Senior Executive Officer, Roads & Environment Operations.  
Mr. S. Coughlan, Senior Engineer, Strategic & Economic Development.

An tArdmhéara, the Chief Executive and Elected Members entered the Council Chamber in procession led by the Mace Bearers.

An tArdmhéara recited the opening prayer.

1. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

On the proposal of Comhairleoir T. Fitzgerald, seconded by Comhairleoir O. Moran, An Chomhairle agreed to suspend standing orders (a) to allow media cameras to enter the Council Chamber, and (b) to allow the meeting to be streamed and recorded.

2. **COMHAIRLEOIRÍ T. TYNAN AND F. RYAN ADDRESS THE MEETING**

An tArdmhéara invited Comhairleoirí T. Tynan and F. Ryan to address the meeting regarding their concerns over the Government's performance, after which they departed to join a protest outside city hall.

3. **AN tARDMHÉARA'S ADDRESS**

An tArdmhéara acknowledged the presence at the meeting of An Taoiseach, Mícheál Martin TD, former Lord Mayor and their guests, and Senior Management Team of Cork City Council.

An tArdmhéara addressed the meeting as follows;

'It is my great pleasure as Lord Mayor of Cork to this evening offer the warmest céad míle fáilte to An Taoiseach, Mícheál Martin.

Tonight, history is once more being made in this Chamber. We are honoured that Cork City Council is being addressed by An Taoiseach but of particular pride is that this Taoiseach is one of our own, a Turners Cross native, a former Lord Mayor of Cork and former Cork City Councillor.

Mícheál Martin is of this city and for this city. He has worn this chain of office and donned the ceremonial robes that my fellow Comhairleoirí wear all around me for this special meeting.

Mícheál Martin was first elected to Cork City Council in 1985, serving as Lord Mayor from 1992 to 1993.

He was elected Teachta Dála for Cork South Central in 1989, and in the 33 years since, he has never lost an election.

Aged 36, he was asked to take a seat at Government, the youngest member of Bertie Ahern's first cabinet where he served as Minister for Education and Science.

He subsequently served as Minister for Health and Children, Minister for Enterprise Trade and Employment and as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Mícheál was appointed leader of Fianna Fáil in 2011 and was sworn in as the 15th Taoiseach of Ireland by President, Michael D. Higgins on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

Since taking up office two years ago, he has led the country through the once-in-a-lifetime challenges of a global pandemic, Britain's departure from the European Union with its subsequent significant impact on the Good Friday Agreement and Anglo-Irish relations, and now, along with his fellow European leaders, he is at the forefront of defending democracy and freedom in the face of unilateral aggression and authoritarianism from Moscow.

It is my great honour as Lord Mayor of Cork to hand you over to An Taoiseach, Mícheál Martin.'

#### 4. AN TAOISEACH'S ADDRESS

An tArdmhéara invited An Taoiseach, Mícheál Martin, TD to address the meeting.

An Taoiseach addressed the meeting as follows;

‘Lord Mayor, Former Lord Mayors, Councillors, Chief Executive Ann, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is pleasure and a privilege to be invited by you to address this special meeting of Cork City Council.

Cork city hall has always been a very special place for me and my family. I have spent countless hours here and not just because of its central role in the life of our city.

It was here, in the hall below us, that my father fought many of the boxing matches which earned him the name ‘the Champ’ which we were always so proud of.

We also knew that it was here that the representatives of the people of Cork made ours the first Council to give allegiance to Dáil Éireann and where so many great figures in our struggle for independence had gathered.

It is here that my political career began, and I learned powerful lessons about the honour of serving the people of Cork and how much can be achieved with constructive politics.

This is also the place which has so often been a powerful symbol of community at the most challenging times. It is where we come to honour great achievement, mark the passing of our heroes, and show our support for those who are suffering.

It is deeply fitting that Cork city hall hosted one of our country’s most successful Covid vaccination centres and that it played both a practical and symbolic role in helping our city through a terrible pandemic.

Most of all, I believe that the work of those who serve in this wonderful building has been central to creating opportunity for the people of Cork and making us a world leader in many fields.

My 12 years as a member of what was then Cork Corporation remain formative for me. Whatever I have done since has been very much rooted in the spirit and values I learned here. And whatever offices I have had the honour of holding, being elected the Lord Mayor of Cork remains a highlight for me.

For me being elected as a Councillor to represent the people I had grown up with was a moment of great emotion and not a small amount of trepidation. I was the first member of my family to either run for or win a public office and I was nervous when entering a council chamber with such history and so many big personalities.

It was a time of profound challenges for Cork. With the closure of some of our largest employers, and in the midst of a deep recession, there was a lot of uncertainty about the future. Nationally people were writing stories about Cork being on the rocks.

But just as it has at every critical moment in its history, hope was strong and there was a shared commitment to restore Cork's historic place as a dynamic and innovative city.

It was a diverse Council. We represented different parties and had many robust debates, but through it all there was a shared commitment to making politics work for Cork. We were political opponents, but we were never enemies and we understood that constructive politics would achieve far more than the sort of total opposition which has too often been seen elsewhere.

For me this spirit of cooperation meant that we worked together on the essential tasks within the city, but we also worked together to maximise Cork's influence nationally.

And we also brought the wider community into a shared effort to promote Cork's interests. Close cooperation with our great schools and educational institutions, with business, with our sporting organisations and with the many voluntary organisations which make such a huge contribution to our city – this was part of our core work.

Personally, I benefitted from the encouragement and mentoring of older colleagues of all parties. We competed for votes at election time, but we worked together for all parts of the community. Toddy O'Sullivan, Tom Brosnan, Liam Burke, Paud Black and others were always willing to give their wise counsel to a young colleague.

I think there is a lot which can be learned from an approach to politics which doesn't see every issue as a fight and doesn't try to have a permanent campaign.

On a personal level it's about showing respect for each other, demonstrating good faith in your dealings, and looking for shared goals.

I'm not so naïve that I think you can or should have politics without having fights or without upsetting anyone, but I have no doubt that you achieve far more for your community and your country when you take the path of showing respect for others and focusing on the substance of policy far more than the strategies of politics.

There is a type of populism which claims that as long as any problem exists politics has failed. Every politician can be dismissed as out of touch or unconcerned with ordinary people.

I reject this type of politics because I know how much has been and can be achieved through democratic institutions.

What I also learned here was about how lucky we are with our public servants and how cooperation between them and public representatives can achieve great things.

During the pandemic, this cooperation made sure that the city's services continued to function, and action was taken to adapt as much as possible. Many businesses were given a chance to reopen, while the roll-out of the vaccination programme meant that we rapidly got the benefits of this transformative protection.

For me Cork is a growing, diverse, and international city. We have many issues to confront. Many parts of our community need investment and support, but the fact is that

we can look positively to the future because we have shown time and again that we can overcome even the toughest obstacles.

Where once we were a leader in a series of very traditional industries, today we are at the cutting edge internationally.

For example, Apple is known in every part of the globe for its creativity and business leadership. When it first came to Cork it was a very different company. It has evolved dramatically over nearly four decades.

That Cork has remained such a vital part in its operations is a remarkable achievement and the plans to create 1,300 new jobs shows its faith in Cork.

In technology, finance, in biotechnology and many other fields, the people and communities of Cork are world leaders.

And of course, we have a wonderfully vibrant and innovative community of smaller and medium sized businesses which give a unique character and life to our city.

When you look at them, and our colleges, our schools, our cultural institutions and so many areas of activity, there is every reason to be optimistic for the future.

Projects from the regeneration of the Docklands and the refurbishment of Grand Parade to investments in our hospitals, schools and active travel are putting in place a foundation for Cork's future success.

Just as many areas of our city have been transformed in the past and we have overcome many deep-seated social problems, I know that we have to continue an agenda of regeneration and inclusion for the benefit of all of our citizens.

I follow closely the work of the City Council and I very much appreciate the ideas and the practical solutions which are so often central to your work.

We have many political traditions here which we should value and honour.

As our country marks the 50th anniversary of our transformative membership of the now European Union I am very proud of the central role which our own Jack Lynch played in steering us into a shared European space in which we could thrive.

Just as it was when he was on the sporting field, his character was about focusing on substance over showiness. During his longest period as Taoiseach, he was resolute that achieving membership of the European Economic Community, as it was then, was an absolute priority.

It was a huge achievement involving overcoming questions about whether Ireland was too poor to join. In the triumphant membership referendum, which he won he easily defeated the arguments of those who wanted Ireland to remain in isolation.

We have every reason to be proud of Lynch and this legacy.

As I've said, I have always drawn great strength from being from this city. From being involved in its community and sporting life, from participating in many great organisations and from serving as an elected representative for the place I have always been proud to call my home.

The duties of the offices I have had the honour to hold have taken me away far more than I would have liked. This is something my family has put up with and never stopped giving me incredible support.

The most important thing for me has always been that, wherever I am in the world I always know that they are here amongst our own, protected and supported by a wonderful community.

That is why, for me, the highest honour of all has always been the honour of being elected by my fellow citizens of Cork to represent them and their values.

Thank you once again for the invitation to address you all at this special meeting.'

## 5. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ADDRESS**

An tArdmhéara invited the Chief Executive, Ann Doherty to address the meeting.

The Chief Executive addressed the meeting as follows;

'It is truly an honour to have the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin at this evening's special meeting.

Thirty years ago, a 32-year-old Mícheál Martin who was also at the time a TD, sat as Ardmhéara at this top table chairing the meetings of the then Cork Corporation alongside my predecessor, former City Manager, Tommy Rice.

Since he had entered local politics, Mícheál had been widely tipped as 'one to watch' and I am delighted for Cork and for the country that he achieved the Office of Taoiseach.

In 1992 this country was a different place. There were 290,000 people out of work and one of the highest rates of unemployment was in this city and county. The 'X' case was polarising the country. Albert Reynolds had recently become Taoiseach and John Major would soon confound his critics by leading the Conservatives to another victory.

Of course, as a country and a city, 30 years on, we are not without challenges: Albert Reynolds and John Major may have jointly laid the foundations for the Good Friday Agreement, but the Taoiseach's Government is now charged with defending it and ensuring the hard-won gains of the last 24 years are not weakened or corroded by external forces. We may have endured the worst of the global pandemic but our greatest existential threat, climate change remains an ever-present reality.

Thirty years after you removed your famous chain of office for the last time, you can see momentum behind your home city of Cork. Cork is leading on sustainable development, is poised to emerge as a city of scale and the level of employment in foreign direct businesses in Cork has doubled over the last 10 years.

Cork's growing FDI profile is also mirrored in the local indigenous sector, in growth areas such as ICT, cybersecurity, fintech and food technology among other high value sectors. We now have two universities in the city.

I would like to thank you and your Government for your ongoing support for this city and its vision to grow as a city of sustainable urban growth. We intend to build on that momentum in the coming years by continuing to work and collaborate with our partners in Government, the private and public sector.

Thank you, Lord Mayor.'

6. **PARTY REPRESENTATIVES ADDRESS THE MEETING**

An tArdmhéara invited party representatives to address the meeting.

Comhairleoirí M.R. Desmond, M. Finn, D. Boyle, J. Maher, M. Nugent, and D. Cahill addressed the meeting on behalf of their respective groups.

7. **AMHRÁN NA BHFIANN**

An tArdmhéara thanked An Taoiseach and invited him to join An Chomhairle at the steps of city hall for an official photograph.

An tArdmhéara invited people to stand for Amhrán na bhFiann, played by harpist, Fiachra O' Corragáin, and sung by those present at the meeting.

Sinne Fianna Fáil, atá faoi gheall ag Éirinn,  
Buíon dár slua thar toinn do ráinig chugainn,  
Faoi mhóid bheith saor,  
Seantír ár sinsear feasta,  
Ní fhágfar faoin tíorán ná faoin tráill.  
Anocht a théam sa bhearna bhaoil,  
Le gean ar Ghaeil, chun báis nó saoil,  
Le gunna-scréach faoi lámhach na bpiléar,  
Seo libh canaig' amhrán na bhFiann.

This concluded the business of the meeting

**ARDMHÉARA**  
**CATHAOIRLEACH**