

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF CORK CITY COUNCIL

HELD ON FRIDAY 24th JUNE 2022

- PRESENT** An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir C. Kelleher in the chair and subsequently an tArdmhéara, D. Forde in the chair.
- NORTH EAST** Comhairleoirí K. O’Flynn, 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, K. McCarthy, T. Shannon.
- SOUTH CENTRAL** Comhairleoirí D. Boyle, S. Martin, S. O’Callaghan, P. Dineen, 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. C. Currid, Staff Officer, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.
Ms. K. Fitzgerald, Administrative Officer, Corporate Affairs & International Relations.
Mr. F. Reidy, Director of Services, Strategic & Economic Development.
Mr. T. Duggan, City Architect.
Mr. D. Joyce, Director of Services, Roads & Environment Operations.
Mr. B. O’Hare, Financial Accountant.

APOLOGIES Comhairleoir M. Finn

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir C. Kelleher recited the opening prayer.

1. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

On the proposal of an tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir C. Kelleher, seconded by Comhairleoir S. Martin, An Chomhairle 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 C. Kelleher addressed the meeting as follows:-

The current role of Lord Mayor is an apolitical one. As Lord Mayor, you are above politics and cannot have personal policies.

Instead, as First Citizen, you are the face of the Beautiful City. As Lord Mayor, you express the warmth of our people, whether it is in welcoming visitors, offering congratulations, or expressing condolences.

As I said, a Lord Mayor does not have policies. However, a term as Lord Mayor may have a theme. By theme, I mean an event or events synonymous with your year in the role. We think of MacCurtain and MacSwiney offering their lives for Irish freedom. Sean MacCarthy welcomed John F. Kennedy to City Hall. Frank Nash received home the double winning teams of 1990 or the quiet dignity in the time of Covid of Dr. John Sheehan and Joe Kavanagh.

I want to think of my time as Lord Mayor as the time when Life Came Back after the Covid 19 pandemic.

For example, for over two years, Covid took up excessive debate in public life. It was the only thing discussed. Other issues, unfortunately, did not get the recognition or discussion they merited.

However, in the past months, we have seen an outpouring of support and solidarity for the people of Ukraine. I was proud to see the Ukrainian flag flying over the City Hall, expressing our support with their struggle.

For myself, I was proud to begin the debate on regulated injection centres for drug users in Cork. As an ordinary Councillor, I will continue to lead this debate in Cork. We cannot solve this problem by pretending it does not exist.

In economic terms, we have seen Life Coming Back with the announcement of enormous financial investment into the redevelopment of the docklands.

The return of housebuilding has seen many new developments completed within the city. We all hope this trend will continue to provide the necessary housing in Cork in the coming years.

The planned development of Bus Connects within Cork will revolutionise public transport in the coming years. We will see a 53% increase in bus services in Cork, two 24-hour routes, and buses to many previously underserved areas. These improvements can only be good for Cork.

Yet, I believe the most significant part of Life Coming Back was how people began to meet again.

We have seen the return of historical commemorations at this critical time in our history. Community groups and residents' associations are meeting again. We have seen the return of live music and shows, Live at the Marquee, the Jazz Festival, and the Cork Summer Show.

People are going to sports fixtures, and children are again meeting their friends and going on their school tour.

And no more restrictions on seating in the City Hall Canteen.

When I took office, I stressed Cork was a city rich in potential, resources, and community and that our future must involve putting these things to work for Cork. As I leave office and as Life Comes Back, I believe this is happening in the Beautiful City. As I return to being an ordinary Councillor, I will continue to advocate for putting these things to work for Cork. It is the future of our city.

As I stand down, I offer my full support and encouragement to my successor. I wish to thank the staff of Cork City Council and the Lord Mayor's office for their help during my year. I know that they will give every support to Councillor Deirdre Forde.

Finally, may I thank those who helped make this year possible. To my family, friends, campaign workers, supporters and fellow Councillors who helped me reach the role of Lord Mayor, thank you all from the bottom of my heart. It is because of you that I had this most humbling honour. This extraordinary honour allowed me to welcome the visitors, offer congratulations and express our condolences, which encapsulate the beautiful warmth of the people of the Beautiful City.

3. **ELECTED MEMBERS ADDRESS**

Comhairleoirí D. Cahill, F. Dennehy, C. Finn, K. McCarthy, E. Ryng, T. Tynan, and J. Maher addressed the meeting on behalf of their respective groups.

4. **OUTGOING DEPUTY LORD MAYOR'S ADDRESS**

Comhairleoir M.R. Desmond addressed the meeting.

5. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ADDRESS**

The Chief Executive, Ann Doherty addressed the meeting.

6. **ELECTION OF AN tARDMHÉARA**

An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir C. Kelleher requested nominations for the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

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

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

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

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR D. FORDE: Comhairleoirí K. O'Flynn, J. Maher, J. Kavanagh, O. Moran, G. Keohane, 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. (21)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR F. KERINS: Comhairleoirí M. Nugent, K. Collins, P. Dineen, F. Kerins, E. Ryng. (5)

ABSTAIN: Comhairleoirí T. Tynan, F. Ryan. (2)

As those voting for Comhairleoir D. Forde were greater than those voting for Comhairleoir F. Kerins, An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir C. Kelleher declared Comhairleoir D. Forde elected to the office of Ardmhéara for the coming year.

7. **AN tARDMHÉARA'S ADDRESS**

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

A chairde go léir, is mór an onóir dom bheith i mo sheasamh anseo anocht mar Ardmhéara nua Chorcaí. T'aim ag siúl go mór leis an bhliain atá le teacht.

Outgoing Lord Mayor, Councillor Colm Kelleher, outgoing Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Mary Rose Desmond, Elected Members of Cork City Council, Minister Coveney, members of the Oireachtas, members of the European Parliament, Seanad Éireann, Chief Executive, Ann Doherty, members of Senior Management and staff of Cork City Council, colleagues, family, friends, colleagues Cork County Council, it is my very great honour to be elected tonight, by my fellow Councillors as first citizen of Cork, the Rebel city.

Councillor Colm Kelleher distinguished himself with a very successful year. We thank him and his family for his hard work and dedication on behalf of the citizens of Cork and wish him and his family every success in the future.

I wish to thank my proposer Councillor Shane O'Callaghan and Councillor Colette Finn for their generous words of nomination, and my Fine Gael group colleagues for putting my name forward as Lord Mayor of this unparalleled city.

Needless to say, this is an immensely proud day for me and my extended family, the 3 rascals Freddy, Rory and Macdarragh in the gallery, our special girl Coreen and my beloved daughter who recently relocated to Australia with her family and is watching the meeting online.

We are also joined by some of my loyal neighbours and friends from the Rochestown and Douglas community. I can never thank them enough for all they have done for me. Your footprints are in my heart forever. To all those who entrusted me with their vote, thank you for having faith in me.

I also want to pay tribute to my political family. As you all know, it would be impossible to survive in the political arena without your support and your work on my behalf. Long hours, late nights, unsolicited advice, cold tea, sandwiches with the edges turned up and the occasional disagreements. One for all and all for one (kinda).

On this day 63 years ago, on June 24th 1959, the first ever woman first citizen Jane Dowdall was elected, she was followed by Christie Aherne, Deirdre Clune, Catherine Clancy and Mary Shields.

In the entire 20th century, Cork only had two female Mayors. In the first 22 years of this century, we have had four. Cork City's Women's Caucus was launched on International

Women's Day last year to promote women in politics by exploring barriers and challenges to political participation. It is already blazing a trail.

It is a great statement of our city that the Lord Mayor and Council Chief Executive are both women. Our daughter and granddaughters must grow up knowing that they can do anything our sons and grandsons can. For democracy to survive, politics to function and a society to thrive, inclusivity and diversity is essential. Government should be representative of the people it serves. You can be it if you can see it.

Our newly expanded Cork City presents a brilliant opportunity to nurture and strengthen our communities by delivering climate action as one of the 100 newly selected EU Climate Neutral cities and delivering an even better quality of life. Cork is a growing city with outstanding potential and our people are its heart and soul.

We are all re-connecting post Covid. I am going to work with my colleagues and the executive to ensure our city centre revitalisation plan takes centre stage. Cork City Council continues to build on its partnerships and co-operation with over 500 amazing community groups. I want to see the development of more community parklets, innovative recreational developments and sensory playgrounds in our public spaces. These would be a wonderful way to ensure all our citizens including those with special needs and disabilities can maintain and improve their wellbeing. I want a city for all its people.

To acknowledge the many families who lost loved ones during the pandemic, who couldn't give them the farewell they deserved and who were unable to grieve alongside relations and friends, I have called for a tree-lined avenue of celebration and remembrance in Tramore Valley Park. Here people could contribute a tree for their loved one and place their name on a remembrance wall. This would be a green space that the people of Cork would find solace in for decades to come and it would also recognise the trojan work done by frontline workers.

Our city is defined by its warm and welcoming people, its sense of community, its thriving art, culture and heritage, its two outstanding universities and its 40,000 student population. But we must remember and support our hardworking business community, those who create jobs and come up with ideas, those who give employment and who are critical to the economic growth of our city.

Despite the uncertainty ahead we must continue to be optimistic and ambitious, building connections through air and sea links to Europe and beyond. We must capitalise on the huge level of funding allocated by government and the European Union to Cork, to deliver homes, sustainable transport and to meet our climate responsibilities. Future generations depend on us to get it right.

Finally, I want to be a listening Lord Mayor. My door is open to anyone who has an idea or solution to any or all of our opportunities and challenges. I can promise you I will work with all my Councillor colleagues and our executive.

We will burn the midnight oil, if necessary, to ensure that the tide of a city rising truly lifts all boats.

We can do this. Corgaigh Abu. Go raibh maith agaibh.

8. **ELECTED MEMBERS ADDRESS**

Comhairleoirí D. Canty, M.R. Desmond, C. Kelleher, C. Finn, F. Ryan, T. Tynan, P. Dineen, K. O’Flynn, M. Nugent, and J. Maher addressed the meeting on behalf of their respective groups.

9. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S ADDRESS**

The Chief Executive, Ann Doherty addressed the meeting.

10. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

On the proposal of Comhairleoir S. Martin, seconded by Comhairleoir T. Shannon, An Chomhairle agreed to suspend standing orders to continue the meeting past 8pm.

11. **ELECTION OF AN LEAS ARDMHÉARA**

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

On the proposal of Comhairleoir G. Kelleher, seconded by Comhairleoir J. Sheehan, Comhairleoir D. Boylan was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

On the proposal of Comhairleoir T. Moloney, seconded by Comhairleoir K. Collins, Comhairleoir E. Ryng was nominated for the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

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

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR D. BOYLAN: Comhairleoirí K. O’Flynn, J. Maher, J. Kavanagh, O. Moran, G. Keohane, 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. (21)

FOR COMHAIRLEOIR E. RYNG: Comhairleoirí M. Nugent, K. Collins, P. Dineen, F. Kerins, E. Ryng. (5)

ABSTAIN: Comhairleoir T. Tynan. (1)

As those voting for Comhairleoir D. Boylan were greater than those voting for Comhairleoir E. Ryng, An tArdmhéara, Comhairleoir D. Forde declared Comhairleoir D. Boylan elected to the office of Leas Ardmhéara for the coming year.

An Leas Ardmhéara, Comhairleoir D. Boylan addressed the meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

**ARDMHÉARA
CATHAOIRLEACH**