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MIONTUAIRISCÍ AN CRUINNITHE BLIANTUIIL DE COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHIARRAÍ A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRÁ LÍ, AR AN AOINE 30 MEITHEAMH, 2017.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRALEE ON FRIDAY 30th JUNE 2017.

PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

R. Beasley	M. Cahill	P. Connor-Scarteen
B. Cronin	J. J. Culloty	J. Finucane
S. Fitzgerald	J.F. Flynn	N. Foley
M. Gleeson	D. Grady	J. Healy-Rae
M. Healy-Rae	N. Kelleher	M. Kennelly
S. Locke	J. Lucid	D. McCarthy
P. McCarthy	T. McEllistrim	N. Moriarty
D. Nolan	B. O'Connell	M. O'Shea
L. Purtill	D. Quigg	J. Sheahan
G. Spring	A. Thornton	

ABSENT/LEATH SCÉAL

P. Daly	T. Ferris	J. Moloney
T. O'Brien		

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Ms. M. Murrell, Chief Executive	Mr. M. O'Donoghue, A/ Dir. Corp. Servs/Hsg.
Mr. J. Breen, Director of Water Serv.	Mr. M. Scannell, A/Director of Planning
Mr. T. Sheehy, A/Dir. Of Operations	Ms. A. McAllen, Head of Finance
Mr. L. Quinlan, Meetings Admin.	Ms. B. Reidy, S.S.O. Corporate Affairs
Ms. O. O'Shea, C.O. Corp. Support	

The meeting commenced at 12.15pm.

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. M. O'Shea took the Chair.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Sheahan Family, Senator Paul Coghlan and Minister for State Brendan Griffin to the meeting. During his term as Cathaoirleach he wanted meetings to be constructive and concise as all

members have very busy schedules. It was a fantastic honour for him to serve not only as Cathaoirelach of Kerry County Council but also as Chair of the Regional Assembly over the past twelve months. There were a number of highlights during the year including the launch of the Local Economic and Community Plan, the meeting with TII when the single item discussed was the critical funding required for the Macroom By-Pass and they were the first group to get a positive response from TII. He welcomed the advance work which has commenced on the Macroom By-Pass. His first task as Cathaoirleach was to attend a ceremony to mark the centenary of the laying of the transatlantic cable from Valentia and he hoped this project would achieve UNESCO status. The Cathaoirleach congratulated Mr. P. Curry of the NRDO in Castleisland and Mr. P. Moran of TII on securing funding for Kilderry Bends. He spent years lobbying for funding for improvements to these bends and he now hoped work would commence before the end of the year. Kerry County Council received a housing allocation of €62m and the Housing Department has been most pro-active in delivering this programme. No houses were built for a number of years but construction has now commenced. In 2015/2016 he proposed that the Community Support Fund be established and it has been very successful in delivering funding to local communities. The lack of job creation has been one of the biggest disappointments over the past 12 months. Kerry has a lot to offer prospective investors including an excellent quality of life, top class education system etc. The IDA was amazed at how successful Liebherr, FEXCO, Astellas and DairyMaster are in Kerry and Kerry can deliver if job opportunities are made available.

The late Timothy 'Chubb' O'Connor TD was his wife's grandfather and he saw tough times in mid and south Kerry. However he travelled to Germany on a number of occasions and delivered four excellent factories for the county in the 1960s. That was some achievement and perhaps a similar strategy should be considered for Kerry now. The Cathaoirleach stressed the importance of travelling abroad to seek opportunities for the county. During his travels to the US he met very influential diaspora who are interested in delivering for the county. He recently travelled to Frankfurt for a Festival that sought to launch a tourism market with Kerry. 700,000 Germans travel to Ireland each year and he met those involved in the tourism industry there. On the Sunday he cycled a dedicated cycle track that was surfaced in asphalt and it went on for miles. During discussions with the Mayor of Frankfurt he asked him about the success of the cycleway and he confirmed the cycleway goes almost as far as Berlin and it has changed midland Germany with restaurants, shops etc. booming since it was launched. The people of Kerry should realise the positive impact the South Kerry Greenway will have on the economy of the county and it will result in job creation and increased tourism. He called on all involved in the South Kerry Greenway to co-operate to ensure the success of this project.

The Cathaoirleach wished Danny Tim O'Sullivan of London and Glenbeigh a speedy recovery from his illness. Danny Tim is a tremendous man who has helped thousands of young Kerry people who travelled to London for work. The Cathaoirleach thanked his wife Susan and his three sons for their support during the year. He also thanked Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr. L. Purtill for his assistance during the year and the Chief Executive who is pro development and is very dedicated to improving Kerry and he was sure she would deliver. He thanked the staff of the Corporate Services Department and all Council staff for their support and assistance during his term as Cathaoirleach together with the Press who are very fair to members. During the year he invited the TDs, Senators and MEPs to Council meetings and he hoped the incoming Cathaoirleach would continue with this initiative. In conclusion the Cathaoirleach thanked members for affording him the opportunity to serve as Cathaoirleach for the past 12 months.

All members welcomed the O'Shea and Sheahan families to the Chamber together with the Minister for State Brendan Griffin and they wished him every success in his new role. They commended the Cathaoirleach on an excellent year in office and wished him well for the future. He represented the county conscientiously and with distinction both at home and abroad.

On behalf of management and staff the Chief Executive thanked the Cathaoirleach for his commitment during his term of office. He had an exceptional year and represented the county with distinction. The Cathaoirleach was very progressive and supported every initiative presented to him.

17.06.30.01 Election of Cathaoirleach

On behalf of his colleagues Cllr. J. Finucane PROPOSED Cllr. J. Sheahan for the position of Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council. Cllr. Sheahan was co-opted to Kerry County Council in 2007 and was re-elected in 2009 and 2014 to represent the people of the Killarney MD. He is committed and hard working and has the capability to lead the county over the next 12 months.

Cllr. L. Purtill SECONDED this proposal.

As there were no other proposals Cllr. O'Shea declared Cllr. J. Sheahan elected Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council for 2017/2018.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Sheahan then took the Chair.

Cllr. Sheahan paid tribute to his predecessor and assured him he would continue to invite Oireachtas members to Council meetings as he would it beneficial. He then read the following statement into the record of the meeting.

"Fellow councillors, Chief Executive, members of the press, family and friends, it is an enormous honour and privilege for me to have been elected Cathaoirleach

of Kerry County Council. Before I go any further, I would like to thank my councillor colleagues for supporting me today and for giving me the opportunity to serve the people of Kerry in this role over the next twelve months.

To become Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council is indeed a great privilege. It is one which I am humbled to take on. I am very conscious that this is a role which relatively few people have occupied since Kerry County Council was established in 1899 so it is a position which I come to with great humility and respect for the role.

I would like to begin by paying tribute to my immediate predecessor, Cllr Michael O'Shea. I certainly have big shoes to fill. Michael has been a very effective chairperson and a great ambassador for the county at events around the country and abroad and I thank him for his service as Cathaoirleach over the past year.

I would like to welcome the members of my family here today and many friends who are with me for this special occasion. Thank you all for coming.

For those of you might not know me as well as the members of my family, I have been a councillor now for ten years. I joined the Council in 2007 following the election of my brother, Tom, to the Dáil. Since then, I have been fortunate to represent the people of the Killarney Municipal District and was re-elected in the local elections of 2009 and 2014. Today, I would like to thank my supporters and my party team in the Killarney area for giving me the honour of representing them over the past ten years.

I am a native of Glenbeigh and I know live in Killarney. Before entering politics, I ran a butchering business. I am married to Máiread and have two sons, Denis and Daniel. I want to thank them especially for their support in reaching this milestone in my life today.

As a councillor over the years, I have raised many issues of importance in this Chamber and elsewhere and over the coming year, there are many issues that I hope to see progressed. There are three matters, in particular, that I would like to prioritise, and which will be to the fore in my year as Cathaoirleach:

- **Roads and road safety:**

Kerry County Council, along with the government, are investing significant amounts of money in the upgrading of our road network in Kerry – last year, €13m was allocated for the roads programme in the county. But I regret to say that many of our roads are still not at the required standard and we will need to continue to lobby national government for increased funding in this regard.

In relation to roads, one observation I would like to make is about the edges or the verges of our roads. I have been involved in Tidy Towns all my life and one of the areas where I regularly collect rubbish is along the Tralee road in Killarney near my home. I have noticed that a lot of the edges of our main roads are in a poor and dangerous condition and this is something I would like to see addressed.

As well as the need for improved road conditions for motorists, I believe we need to enhance our road network for cyclists. I would very much like to see more cycle lanes being provided across the county for the safety of both motorists and cyclists. I think all future major road projects should allow for as many cycle lanes as possible.

- **Access into the county**

The second major issue I would like to prioritise is access into the county, particularly progress on the Adare and Macroom bypasses. I know that there has been progress in relation to the N22 at Macroom and Ballyvourney and I will be hoping for further progress on this very soon. There is a momentum behind the project now but we must not be complacent. Travelling to Cork from Killarney or vice versa should only take about an hour and instead it can take up to two – that should not be the case so we will continue to pursue TII and the Minister for Transport for the early delivery of this project.

Also, in relation to national and international access into the county, I believe strongly that air access is key to our economic progress locally. In that respect, ongoing support for Kerry Airport is critical. I would also like to see us working with the likes of the local authorities in Cork on air routes for emerging economies like China and elsewhere so that we can help to attract international visitors and investors into the county.

- **Housing**

The third and final major issue I will see to further progress on is the delivery of our housing programme in Kerry. It is great to see that the Council is now building houses again with the support of the Rebuilding Ireland programme and we now have new homes under construction in Tralee, Killarney and Lixnaw with further developments to be announced over the coming months. But we still have up to 4,000 applicants on our housing waiting list and this is a concern. I welcome the funding announced recently to progress the renovation of vacant Council properties and I will be working with management to ensure that there is further progress on all elements of the Housing Programme.

Annual Meeting

Finally, I would like to assure my colleagues here that I will be fair to all of them in the year ahead. You have all been elected to represent the people of your respective areas and you all deserve to be heard and to be given the opportunity to bring issues to the floor of the Council Chamber.

I would like to say to our Chief Executive, Moira Murrell, and all of her management colleagues, that I will work closely with you in the year ahead to advance the various issues of importance to the people of Kerry. I look forward to all of us working together to improve the lives of the people of the county.

I hope I will serve as a fair and effective Cathaoirleach for the twelve months ahead and I am sure, that with your support, we can achieve a lot in the coming period.”

In conclusion the Cathaoirleach wished Danny Tim O’Sullivan a speedy recovery and added that members’ thoughts and prayers were with him at this time.

All members congratulated the Cathaoirleach and his family on his election and added that it was a very proud day for him. They wished him every success for the coming year.

On behalf of management and staff the Chief Executive congratulated the Cathaoirleach and his family on his election. She assured him of the full support and commitment of staff during his term as Cathaoirleach.

17.06.30.02 Election of Leas Chathaoirleach

Cllr. B. O’Connell PROPOSED Cllr. P. Connor-Scarteen for the position of Leas Chathaoirleach. Patrick was co-opted to Kerry County Council in 2008 and has served the people of South and West Kerry since then. His family have been involved in local and national politics since the foundation of the state.

Cllr. M. Kennelly SECONDED this proposal.

The Cathaoirleach declared Cllr. P. Connor-Scarteen elected Leas Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council and he congratulated him on his election.

The meeting concluded at 1.40pm.

Liam Quinlan

Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council