

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Clare County Council held in the Reflective Garden, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare on Friday, 25th June, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

Present:

Councillors M. Howard, M. Nestor, C. Colleran Molloy, A. Norton, P. Daly, J. Cooney, P. Hayes, P. Burke, A. O’Callaghan, T. O’Brien, J. Crowe, M. Begley, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, G. Flynn, D. McGettigan, P. O’Gorman, S. Talty, J. Killeen, J. Garrihy, P.J. Kelly, B. Chambers, G. Keating, C. Murphy, I. Lynch.

- Mr. Pat Dowling, Chief Executive.
- Ms. Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator.
- Ms. Margaret O’Rourke, Assistant Staff Officer.
- Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development.
- Mr. Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development.
- Mr. Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development.
- Ms. Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development.
- Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, Director of Finance and Support Services.

Absent: Cllrs. J. Flynn, P. Murphy and S. Crawford.

The outgoing Cathaoirleach addressed the meeting and stated that it was a great honour and privilege to have been Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council in a time of unprecedented change in our county and indeed the world. Cllr. Howard continued that in order to stay together as a community we were required to stay apart, to ensure our own safety and that of our loved ones. We also connected and galvanised in the face of adversity and our true spirit shone through in a way that was inspirational, a sense of resilience that together we can overcome any odds by keeping friendships alive through zoom, drive by birthdays and visits to loved ones through their windows. Families worked together with teachers to home school, religious services went online and a generation of older citizens became adept in the use of technology to continue their faith. Businesses closed their doors, but remained open for business by offering delivery services, by click and collect or postal delivery.

Cllr. M. Howard noted that frontline workers continue to deserve our admiration and thanks as they met the challenge of being a frontline defence against Covid 19, which was done with great passion and energy.

Cllr. Howard acknowledged all who lost loved ones during the year, family members, friends and colleagues and stated that people mourned from afar but always in the knowledge that the intangible community support was there.

Cllr. Howard stated that as Cathaoirleach she was intent on reaching out to the community and this was very much a two way gesture and expressed her gratitude for the support and well wishes received on her journey during the last year. She referred to the initiatives undertaken by way of sending letters to the elderly, lonely, vulnerable, sick or bereaved members of the community. The

Covid Heroes project received a huge response and Certificates were presented to more than 40 recipients.

Cllr. M. Howard expressed thanks to Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator, Management Team, Council Executive and Councillors for their co-operation and support during the year and assured that she will continue to serve in any capacity.

Item 1: Election of Cathaoirleach of the Council for the coming year.

The outgoing Cathaoirleach called for nominations for the post of Cathaoirleach for the forthcoming year. Cllr. M. Begley proposed Cllr. P.J. Ryan for the position of Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council for the year 2021-2022, this proposal was seconded by Cllrs. P. O’Gorman, P. McMahon, J. Crowe and A. O’Callaghan and agreed by all present.

As there were no other nominations, Cllr. P.J. Ryan was declared elected as Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council for the coming year.

Cllr. P.J. Ryan addressed the meeting and thanked Cllr. M. Begley and Cllrs. P. O’Gorman, P. McMahon, J. Crowe and A. O’Callaghan for nominating him for the position of Cathaoirleach.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan stated that he was deeply grateful to serve as Cathaoirleach for the next twelve months and was mindful of the importance the office holds. The Cathaoirleach extended congratulations to outgoing Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Mary Howard and outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P. Burke on a job well done during a very difficult period.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Ryan outlined projects within the county that he would like to see progress during his term as Cathaoirleach namely:

- promotion of Shannon Airport and have it on its way to operating on a better footing,
- further development of Shannon Town Centre incorporating a new street scape with the introduction of more retail outlets,
- develop the bank of the Shannon Estuary as a deep water port put in place at the mouth of the estuary to facilitate the berthing of cruise ships to boost tourism in the county,
- the Strategic Development Zone project in the south eastern part of the county needs to be prioritised for R and D and accommodation for students, the development
- development of Holy Island to fruition as it would be a major tourist attraction to east Clare
- progress on Blake’s Corner in Ennistymon.

The Cathaoirleach also stated that he would like an incentive to be introduced to refurbish existing derelict buildings in Ennis and other towns and villages throughout the county.

Item 2: Election of Leas Cathaoirleach of Council for coming year.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan called for nominations for the position of Leas Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. S. Talty proposed Cllr. J. Killeen for the position of Leas Cathaoirleacch and this was seconded by Cllr. J. Garrihy and agreed by all present.

As there were no other nominations for the post the Cathaoirleach declared Cllr. J. Killeen elected as Leas Cathaoirleach for the coming year.

Cllr. J. Killeen addressed the meeting and thanked his family and constituents for their continued support since his election to Clare County Council.

Cllr. Killeen complimented Cllr. M. Howard for her exemplary performance during the year and for the personal nature she brought to the role of Cathaoirleach by bringing humour in her activities and connecting with the people.

Cllr. Killeen outlined projects he would like to support during the coming year which include:

- Ennis development
- Improve rural Clare
- Shannon Airport
- Strengthen community engagement
- Remote working
- University town for Ennis which will keep graduates in County Clare
- Affordable housing
- Support for agriculture
- Support for aging population

Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Killeen undertook to work with Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan, Chief Executive, Pat Dowling, Council Officials and Councillors to make Clare a better place.

Cllr. G. Flynn on behalf of the technical group extended thanks to Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator and staff for arranging the meeting and acknowledged the venue in the Reflective Garden. Cllr. G. Flynn acknowledged the great work carried out by outgoing Cathaoirleach, Cllr. M. Howard during difficult times. Cllr. Flynn also acknowledged the work done by outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P. Burke. Cllr. G. Flynn congratulated Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan on being appointed as Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council and wished him well during his time as Cathaoirleach. Cllr. Flynn also congratulated the newly appointed Mayor of Ennis Municipal District and the Chairpersons of the Municipal Districts.

Cllr. P. Hayes on behalf of the Fianna Fáil group addressed the meeting and noted that it was the first physical meeting of Clare County Council that has taken place since January. Cllr. P. Hayes stated that working in partnership is key to the ongoing operations of Clare County Council and acknowledged that there are challenges that will be worked on going forward. Cllr. P. Hayes thanked outgoing Cathaoirleach, Cllr. M. Howard for the wonderful and personable manner in which she undertook her duties as she led as first citizen of County Clare. Cllr. Hayes thanked outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach for the very independent manner he conducted the business of Leas Cathaoirleach during the year. Cllr. P. Hayes congratulated newly appointed Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan and Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Killeen and looked forward to working together going forward.

Cllr. J. Cooney on behalf of the Fine Gael group complimented outgoing Cathaoirleach, Cllr. M. Howard for doing a fantastic job as first citizen of the county and extended credit for the way she connected with people on radio, paper and online during a very difficult time. Cllr. J. Cooney complimented outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P. Burke on his role as Leas Cathaoirleach and for being a great support to Cllr. Howard. Cllr. Cooney noted that County Clare has benefitted due to the powersharing agreement in recent years and extended the full support of the Fine Gael grouping to incoming Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P.J. Ryan and Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Killeen as he wished them well in their new roles.

The Chief Executive, Pat Dowling, thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach Cllr. M. Howard for her support during the year in running the business of Clare County Council and for the way the

meetings were conducted. Mr. Dowling congratulated Cathaoirleach Cllr. P.J. Ryan on his position as first citizen of County Clare. Mr. Dowling also extended congratulations to Cllr. J. Killeen on his appointment as Leas Cathaoirleach for the year ahead. He wished them well in their new roles and undertook to work closely with them and also assured them of the respect and support of Clare County Council employees for the coming year. The Chief Executive congratulated the newly appointed Mayor of Ennis Municipal District and the Chairpersons of the Municipal Districts and assured them of the ongoing support from staff in the local Municipal District Offices. Mr. Dowling stated that the partnership that exists is valued and will continue to grow in order to plan for the future with ambition and confidence. Mr. Dowling congratulated and welcomed the Ryan and Killeen families.

Mr. Dowling thanked his colleagues in Clare County Council and stated that they are public servants devoted to helping the people of Clare. The Chief Executive noted that it is special to have the event in the Reflective Garden where staff and Councillors who have gone before us can be remembered.

Item 3: Schedule of Ordinary Meetings for next twelve months.

The Schedule of Meetings was circulated with the agenda and was proposed by Cllr. P. Hayes, seconded by Cllr. G. Flynn and agreed by the members present.

Item 4: Approval for payment of the Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach allowances for the forthcoming year.

Approval for payment of the Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach allowances for the forthcoming year was proposed by Cllr. A. Norton, seconded by Cllr. M. Begley and agreed by the members present.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: *Jim Reynolds*
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____