

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE**

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Held at Kiltormer GAA Complex**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 2.30pm**

**CATHAOIRLEACH:** Cllr. Jimmy McClearn

Cllr. James Charity

Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway

**I LATHAIR FREISIN:**

**Baill:** Comh./Cllr. T. Broderick, J. Byrne, I. Canning, L. Carroll, D. Collins, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, G. Cronnelly, D. Ó Cualáin, J. Cuddy, S. Curley, T. Ó Curraoin, Aisling Dolan, Albert Dolan, G. Donuhue, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, S. Herterich Quinn, M. Hoade, P. Hynes, , P. Keaveney, D. Killilea, M. Kinane, P. Mac an Iomaire, M. Maher, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, A. McKinstry, P. Murphy, A. Reddington, P. Roche, J. Sheridan, N. Thomas, S. Walsh, T. Welby

**Oifigh:** Mr. Kevin Kelly, Chief Executive (Interim)  
Mr. M. Owens, County Secretary  
Ms. C. Delaney, Administrative Officer  
Ms. U. Ní Eidhín, Oifigeach Gaeilge  
Ms. B Ryan, Acting Staff Officer

**Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.**

Prior to the commencement of the formal business Cllr. McClearn the outgoing Cathaoirleach addressed the Meeting. Reflecting on his term of office he said it had been an honour and a privilege to hold the position. From a personal perspective and

in his role as Cathoirleach he said it had been a year of two halves. Cllr. McClearn outlined some of the highlights from his term as Cathoirleach:

- Trip to Milwaukee Irish Festival
- Unveiling programme for Galway 2020
- Contract signing for upgrade N67 Ballindereen to Kinvara and N59 Maam Cross to Ballinakill
- Many other County Council and community events.

Cllr. McClearn said the Covid-19 lockdown in March presented new challenges and a change in how we did business. He noted it will have profound implications both financially and otherwise for the County. He underlined the need to work together as a team to get through difficult times ahead.

Cllr. McClearn thanked the Chief Executive, Directors of Services and all Staff for their help and support during the year. A special word of thanks was extended to Ms. C Delaney for her help, guidance and cooperation. Cllr. McClearn thanked his Fine Gael Colleagues and Alliance for their nomination. He acknowledged the work of the Leas-Chathoirleach, Cllr. Cronnelly, and his willingness to attend functions on his behalf. The work and support of all members irrespective of their political allegiance and the respect shown to position of Cathoirleach was also acknowledged.

Cllr. McClearn acknowledged the role played by communities, community & sporting organisations, medical and frontline workers during the pandemic.

In conclusion, he wished the incoming Cathaoirleach for 2020-2021 all the best for the year ahead.

Party Leaders and Members paid individual tributes to the outgoing Cathaoirleach including the following:

- Thanked him for all his hard work and congratulated him on a great year. It was noted that his many years of experience shone through in what was an exceptional and challenging year. He was considered 'a safe pair of hands' at a time when it wasn't possible to perform functions in the normal manner.

- Acknowledged by all that he conducted council business and meetings, in a fair, inclusive and impartial manner. He epitomised everything good about a chair. His quiet discipline was an example to all.
- Acknowledged his effort for putting Galway on the map both locally and internationally. He was an excellent ambassador both in and out of the County.
- Acknowledged the huge effort he put into Galway 2020 to showcase Galway County and to ensure Galway County got an equal share of planned events. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak he was unable to do all that was planned.
- Acknowledged that his family was very important to him and that the past year was a difficult one on a personal level for Cllr. McClearn. The members wished Cllr. McClearn, his wife Noreen and family all the very best for the future.

The Chief Executive paid tribute to the outgoing Cathoirleach congratulating him on a very successful year. He acknowledged the dept of experience and calmness Cllr. McClearn brought to the role during a very challenging year. He complimented him on how he represented the County over the year. Having travelled overseas with the Cathaoirleach to the Milwaukee Irish Festival, the Chief Executive said Cllr. McClearn's pride in County Galway was always evident noting the many occasions he spoke without notes displaying his passion for the county.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the help and support Cllr. McClearn showed to council staff during his term. He extended his best wishes to Cllr. McClearn, his wife and family.

**ITEM NO. 1 - ELECTION OF THE CATHAOIRLEACH OF THE COUNTY OF  
GALWAY FOR YEAR 2020/2021**

3593

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Reddington, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cuddy and **AGREED** that Cllr. Charity be elected Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway for 2020/2021. Cllr. Charity was invested with the Chain of Office and assumed the chair.

Cllr. Charity thanked Cllrs. Reddington and Cuddy for the nomination and all of his colleagues for their support. Further thanks was extended to the outgoing Cathoirleach and Leas-Chathoirleach. During his term, Cllr. Charity said he will endeavour to ensure

the highest standards are maintained and the duties of the office discharged diligently and professionally.

Cllr. Charity acknowledged it was a difficult time for many families throughout the County and the State dealing with the reality of Covid -19. He noted the restrictions in marking our respects to those who have passed and said when appropriate a dignified ceremony should be held to honour and remember them. In his first official act as Cathoirleach he called for a minute's silence for the citizens of County Galway and others who have passed away during the crisis.

A minute's silence was observed.

Cllr. Charity outlined the challenges facing the Local Authority in the year ahead. He highlighted the economic devastation caused in past few months and the task facing elected members and community representatives to lead and assist localities adapt to those challenges. He noted that difficulties in the area of housing and homelessness remain a huge issue. Regarding local authority funding, he said it was imperative that the incoming Government ensures Galway County Council is in a position to respond to the needs of SMEs supporting their efforts to rebuild our economy, provide employment and stimulate recovery.

Cllr. Charity outlined his priorities for his term of office. His principal focus will be ensuring the Local Authority supports SMEs while continuing to maintain the services citizens are entitled to expect. The issue of animal welfare together with illegal dumping will also be a priority.

In conclusion Cllr. Charity thanked and acknowledged the work of all frontline staff and those maintaining supply chains throughout the Covid-19 crisis.

Party Leaders and Members offered their individual congratulations to the newly elected Cathoirleach acknowledging it was a very special day for him and his family. They extended best wishes to him for the year ahead.

The Chief Executive joined with members congratulating Cllr. Charity and his family. He said he looked forward to working with him on the many issues facing the Council in the year ahead.

**ITEM NO. 2 - ELECTION OF THE LEAS-CHATHAOIRLEACH OF THE COUNTY OF GALWAY FOR YEAR 2020/2021.**

**3594**

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Maher, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Mannion, and **AGREED** that Cllr. Roche be elected Leas-Chathaoirleach. of the County of Galway for 2020/2021. Cllr. Roche was invested with the Chain of Office.

Cllr. Roche thanked Cllrs. Maher and Mannion for the nomination and for affording him the opportunity to take up the role. He assured his full support to the Cathoirleach for the year ahead and wished the outgoing Cathoirleach and Leas-Chathaoirleach all the best.

Cllr. Charity congratulated Cllr. Roche and acknowledged the wealth of experience he brings to the role of Leas-Chathaoirleach.

**ITEM NO. 3 - FIXING A SCHEDULE OF DATES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS** **3595**

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Cuddy, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Connolly and **AGREED** that the dates for ordinary meetings of Galway County Council would be as follows:

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|------------------|--|
| <b>June</b>      | <b>29<sup>th</sup> June 2020</b>           |
| <b>July</b>      | <b>27<sup>th</sup> July 2020</b>           |
| <b>August</b>    | <b>No meeting (as per Standing Orders)</b> |
| <b>September</b> | <b>28<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>      |
| <b>October</b>   | <b>19<sup>th</sup> October 2020</b>        |
| <b>November</b>  | <b>23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020</b>       |
| <b>December</b>  | <b>14<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b>       |

A discussion took place regarding the scheduled time of the monthly meetings. Cllr. Albert Dolan suggested that meetings be pushed to the later time of 2:00pm to facilitate members working fulltime attending meetings. Cllr. Killilea asked if the provision of Chains of Office for the Municipal Districts could be considered. Regarding the two-hour timeframe currently in place for meetings, Cllr. Cuddy raised the point of the upcoming County Development Plan. He said it will be necessary to have more frequent meetings to deal with this.

The Chief Executive clarified that the time of the meeting is a matter for the Members to decide. Having experience of both early and late meetings he noted that it is important to ensure a quorum if a later start time is agreed. It is not conducive to good decision making if a lot of members are not present.

In response to the question regarding venue options for future meetings the Chief Executive said the position will be reviewed. Going 'on circuit' is not feasible as there is a lot of preparatory work involved. The aim will be to identify a fixed venue.

It was agreed that the the question regarding the start time of the meeting would be referred to the CPG for discussion.

**Criochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin**

**Submitted Signed and Approved:**

Cathaoirleach:

James Charby

Date:

29/6/20