

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Leitrim County Council held in the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim on Friday, 25 June 2021 at 12 noon

Members Present: Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
Councillor Enda McGloin
Councillor Sean McGowan
Councillor Brendan Barry
Councillor Gerry Dolan
Councillor Caillian Ellis
Councillor Pdraig Fallon
Councillor Paddy Farrell
Councillor Des Guckian
Councillor Felim Gurn
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
Councillor Ita Reynolds Flynn
Councillor Enda Stenson
Councillor Justin Warnock

Councillor Mary Bohan (Cathaoirleach) presiding

Apologies: Councillor Frank Dolan

Officials Present: Lar Power, Chief Executive
Samantha Healy, A/Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator
Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer

MM.92.21 Election of the Cathaoirleach

The outgoing Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan addressed the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed her sincere thanks to Mr Lar Power, Chief Executive, the Management Team and all the staff of Leitrim County Council for their support and co-operation during the last year. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan paid tribute to Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire, Leas Cathaoirleach as an exceptional colleague to have in Leitrim County Council and thanked her for her support.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan paid tribute to the staff of Leitrim County Council for their outstanding work particularly during the pandemic and she acknowledged that the last year has been a difficult year for staff working from home. She paid tribute to the Health Care workers, workers in the shops and supermarkets and stated we must continue to support these businesses, as when people were not allowed go outside their 5 km limit at the height of the public health restrictions, these small businesses were there to support their communities. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan paid tribute to the fantastic

voluntary sector in County Leitrim for all the help they have given during the pandemic by delivering meals, supporting the elderly, picking up prescriptions etc.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said Councillor Frank Dolan was unable to attend the meeting today as he was in hospital, and she wished Councillor Frank Dolan a speedy recovery. All the Members concurred with this sentiment.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said the one regret she has in terms of her year as Cathaoirleach, through no fault of the staff or members of Leitrim County Council, is the lack of progress in regard to the Rural Planning issue. Councillor Bohan insisted that this is an issue for which Leitrim County Council must continue to strive to find a solution.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan said Zoom/Teams meetings were quite difficult to manage and she hoped that she was fair and impartial in chairing meetings. Councillor Mary Bohan thanked all the members for their co-operation over the past year.

The Members paid tribute to Councillor Mary Bohan as an efficient, dedicated, supportive, helpful Cathaoirleach and that she was fair in conducting online meetings in her role as Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council. The Members congratulated her as one of the longest serving members in the country and they acknowledged that it was disappointing that she was unable to attend community events in her role as Cathaoirleach due to the pandemic.

Mr. Lar Power, Chief Executive, extended his gratitude to Councillor Mary Bohan on behalf of the management and staff of Leitrim County Council. Mr Power said Leitrim County Council provided the services as best they could in line with the Public Health and Government Guidelines.

On behalf of the members and staff, Mr. Lar Power presented a token of appreciation to Councillor Mary Bohan to mark her term as Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council.

Councillor Mary Bohan proceeded to deal with the first item on the agenda of the Annual Meeting and invited nominations for the Election of Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council.

Councillor Caillian Ellis proposed that Councillor Paddy O'Rourke be elected Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council for the term 2021/2022. This was seconded by Councillor Justin Warnock

Councillor Mary Bohan invited any other proposal for the Election of Chairperson, and no counterproposal was received. Councillor Mary Bohan deemed Councillor Paddy O'Rourke elected as Chairperson of Leitrim County Council for the term 2021/2022.

Proposed by Councillor Caillian Ellis, seconded by Councillor Justin Warnock AND RESOLVED;

“That Councillor Paddy O’Rourke is elected Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council for the year 2021/2022”.

Councillor Paddy O’Rourke accepted the nomination as Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council. In his opening address, he extended his gratitude to his proposer and seconder. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O’Rourke paid tribute to outgoing Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mary Bohan. Councillor Paddy O’Rourke said one of his initial challenge’s is to get the County up and running again and he paid tribute to the staff for rolling out all the services as we recover from the pandemic. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O’Rourke urged people to continue to co-operate with the public health guidelines and although the situation is better now than last January, new variants are emerging, and it is important to continue to be careful. The immediate challenge is to continue to work in drawing down all available funding opportunities thereby making Leitrim a better place to invest, live, work and visit.

The Chief Executive and the Members congratulated Councillor Paddy O’Rourke on his election as Chairperson of Leitrim County Council for the 2nd time and said this was a great honour for him, his family and Carrigallen.

MM.93.21 Election of the Leas Cathaoirleach

Councillor Paddy O’Rourke invited nominations for the position of Leas-Cathaoirleach.

Councillor Sean McGowan proposed the nomination of Councillor Paddy Farrell as Leas-Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council. This was seconded by Cllr Mary Bohan. Councillor Paddy O’Rourke invited any other proposal for the Election of Chairperson, and no counterproposal was proposed. Councillor Paddy O’ Rourke deemed Councillor Paddy Farrell elected as Leas-Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council.

Proposed by Councillor Sean McGowan, seconded by Councillor Mary Bohan AND RESOLVED;

“That Councillor Paddy Farrell is elected Leas- Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council for the year 2021/2022.

Councillor Paddy Farrell accepted the nomination as Leas-Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council. He thanked his proposer and seconder and his fellow Councillors for their support. Councillor Paddy Farrell extended his good wishes to Councillor Paddy O’Rourke as Cathaoirleach and assured him of his full support as Leas-Cathaoirleach over the next 12 months.

The Members congratulated Councillor Paddy Farrell on his election as Leas-Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council.

Councillor Des Guckian stated this meeting was a bit of a farce, as the meeting could have been held online or at the end of the last meeting and Leitrim County Council would

therefore not have had to incur the costs associated with holding this meeting. Councillor Guckian expressed his concerns about the coalition and that this is not inclusive, and it is greedy and non-democratic. Councillor Guckian said he represents the people who have elected him, and he expressed his concerns that Leitrim is being sold now more than ever to speculators and vulture funds and he referred to issues such as Rural Planning, Forestry and wind farms and said all members have to stand up and oppose this.

Mr Lar Power, Chief Executive congratulated Councillor Paddy Farrell on his election as Leas Cathaoirleach of Leitrim County Council and he also thanked outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire.

MM.94.21 Note change in membership of Housing Community & Culture SPC and Environment, Climate Action & Agriculture SPC

It was noted that Councillor Thomas Mulligan was joining the Housing, Community & Culture SPC from the Environment Climate Action and Agriculture SPC.

MM.95.21 Appoint Chairperson of Housing, Community & Culture SPC

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke invited nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Housing, Community and Culture SPC.

Councillor Enda McGloin proposed the nomination of Councillor Thomas Mulligan as Chairperson of the Housing, Community and Culture SPC. This was seconded by Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire.

Councillor Brendan Barry proposed the nomination of Councillor Padraig Fallon as the Chairperson of the Housing, Community and Culture SPC.

As there was no seconder for the counterproposal Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke deemed Councillor Thomas Mulligan as the Chairperson of the Housing, Community and Culture SPC.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan thanked his proposer and seconder and looked forward to working with the Members on this SPC.

MM.96.21 Note dates and times for meetings of Leitrim County Council until the next Annual Meeting

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said the general consensus is that the existing arrangements are satisfactory and that they be kept in place until the next Annual Meeting.

Councillor Enda McGloin supported this.

Councillor Des Guckian said the plenary Council meeting should be held monthly.

Councillor Brendan Barry sought clarification as to the date of the next plenary Council meeting.

Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator said the next plenary Council meeting will be held face to face on Monday, 12th July 2021 at 11.30 am in the Ballroom of the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon. The Carrick-on-Shannon Municipal District Meeting will take place face to face prior to this meeting at 10 am in the Enterprise Suite of the Bush Hotel. The duration of the Plenary Council meeting is limited to 1 hr 55 minutes.

It was noted that no presentations are scheduled for the July meeting.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke proposed that the pertinent SPC would consider the format of future presentations at Council Meetings and revert to the Corporate Policy Group with recommendations. He noted that presentations take up a lot of time at Plenary meetings.

Mr Lar Power said presentations could be delivered via workshops or via an online format.

Councillor Mary Bohan said that a lot of business has to be gone through in 1 hr and 55 minutes and sought clarification if there could be a break and come back again to finish the business of the meeting.

Mr Lar Power said the advice in accordance with the HSE and Government Guidelines is that persons at a meeting should not be more than 1 hour and 55 minutes in close contact with each other and he said there are matters in relation to meetings that could be done virtually.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan sought clarification on what arrangements are going to be put in place for those people who are not able to attend meetings face to face due to health reasons.

Kieran Brett said blending arrangements will be made available in the future.

Councillor Brendan Barry welcomed the fact that all could attend this meeting today in person. Councillor Barry acknowledged Councillor Guckian's earlier comments in regard to the Cathaoirleach position been decided a few years ago.

Councillor Barry agreed with Councillor Mary Bohan on the issue of rural planning and said it is up to the Minister for Local Government to amend the existing regulations. Cllr Barry suggested that the new regulations be introduced by the Minister as proposed in Deputy Martin Kenny recent bill which he put before the Oireachtas.

Councillor Sean McGowan proposed that Carrick-on-Shannon and Ballinamore MD meetings be held in the Council Chamber from September.

Mr Kieran Brett said once refurbishment works are complete in the Council Chamber,

Carrick-on-Shannon MD Meetings will be held in the Council Chamber and if the works are not complete by then a room in The Dock will be made available for Carrick MD Meetings.

Ms Samantha Healy confirmed that members of Manorhamilton MD had, earlier this week, agreed that MD meetings will be held face to face in the Bee Park Resource Centre in Manorhamilton.

Councillor Caillian Ellis said the Scouts Den in Ballinamore would be a suitable venue for the Ballinamore MD meetings and this will be considered at the Ballinamore Annual meeting on Monday next.

Councillor Justin Warnock said the views of the Members should be reflected in the County Development Plan regarding issues such as forestry, windfarms and rural planning.

Councillor Sean McDermott concurred with the members in relation to the challenges raised in regard to windfarms, forestry, one off rural housing etc and he said if this is let continue his community and others will not survive and all the relevant authorities must work together to find a solution.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said all members shares the same sentiments in regard to the challenges outlined.

MM.97.21 Vote of Congratulations

The Members unanimously extended a vote of congratulations to the following: -

- Dean Clancy, Boxer from the Sean McDermott Boxing Club in Manorhamilton on winning the European Gold U22 63kg Title.
- Shane Kelly, Cloone Jockey on winning the Wokingham Stakes at the Royal Ascot recently.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan proposed that consideration should be given to the Professional Sports Man, Shane Kelly in recognition of this great sporting achievement. All members supported this.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke said the Executive and staff will consider this and see how this successful sporting achievement can be acknowledged in light of the current restrictions in place and revert back to the members in this regard.

- Glencar Manor Ladies Team on winning the Connacht LGFA Intermediate Club Championship.
- The members extended their good wishes to the County Leitrim Senior Ladies in the Lidl ladies National Football League Division 4 Final 2021 which will be held in Clones on Sunday next against Louth.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Paddy O'Rourke thanked the Members, Staff and the Media for attending the meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting at 1.03 pm

Signed:

Councillor Paddy O'Rourke
Cathaoirleach

Kieran Brett
Meetings Administrator

Dated: Monday, 12 July 2021