

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of the council held at 3:00 p.m. on Friday 25 June 2021 in Newbridge Town Hall, Newbridge, Co Kildare

Members Present: Councillor M Stafford (Cathaoirleach), Councillors V Behan, A Breen, A Breslin, F Brett, B Caldwell, B Clear, M Coleman, A Connolly, Í Cussen, S Doyle, K Duffy, T Durkan, A Farrelly, A Feeney, C Galvin, P Hamilton, N Heavey, C Kelly, N Killeen, I Keatley, V Liston, N Ó’Cearuíl, VP Martin, P McEvoy, F McLoughlin Healy, S Moore, J Neville, P O’Dwyer, T O’Dwyer, C Pender, R Power, E Sammon, P Ryan, M Wall, P Ward, B Weld and B Wyse.

Apologies: Councillors B Dooley and D Fitzpatrick.

Also Present: Mr P Carey, Chief Executive, Ms A Aspell, Ms S Kavanagh Mr J Boland and Mr E Ryan (Directors of Service), Ms C Barrett, (A/Director of Service), Ms F Millane A/Head of Finance, Ms C O’Grady (Meetings Administrator), Ms K Keane (Meetings Secretary) and other officials.

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Mark Stafford welcomed the members, staff, family and guests to the Annual Meeting. He also welcomed Deputy Cathal Berry, Deputy James Lawless and Senator Fiona O’Loughlin to the meeting also. He remembered all those that had passed away over the last year including John Hume, Desmond Guinness and Tom Hickey who books of condolences had been opened for. He congratulated Councillor Peggy O’Dwyer on becoming a granny recently and extended his sympathies to Councillors Coleman, Killeen and McLoughlin Healy on their recent family bereavements.

A moments silence was observed in memory of all those.

Councillor Stafford stated it had been another challenging year due to the pandemic, especially as Kildare had been part of the tri-county lockdown the previous August and a meeting of the council had to be called in early August to deal with that. He thanked the members for their support and co-operation over the last 12 months and particularly during the referred to tri-county lockdown.

He thanked Councillor Tim Durkan for his work as Leas-Cathaoirleach stating he had been a huge support to him during his term and had played a hugely important role in supporting him and the members during the move to on-line meetings of council.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the Fine Gael party, the members of the Corporate Policy Group, the Group Leaders, the staff of Members Services, the Directors of Service and in particular, Mr J Boland for his work as Deputy Chief Executive during the tri-county lockdown in August 2020. The Cathaoirleach also thanked the Chief Executive Peter Carey for his support during his term as Cathaoirleach stating he was both a visionary and a gentleman.

The Chief Executive thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach stating it had been a hugely challenging 12 months and acknowledged the role he had played during his term in attending the Covid Management meetings, the Community Response Forum meetings, noting he had been hugely supportive of the overall efforts of the council. He stated the council had got through a lot of business under his stewardship and had delivered numerous projects during this time and wished Councillor Stafford well for the future.

On behalf of the Fine Gael group, Councillor Duffy congratulated and thanked the Cathaoirleach for his work over the last year noting his significant input into the Covid Management meetings and the Community Response Forum, along with the leadership he had shown during the tri-county lockdown. He also acknowledged his skills at managing the move to online meetings and thanked him for the great respect he had shown to all the members and to the executive during his term.

On behalf of the Fianna Fail group, Councillor Doyle stated it had been a unique year and thanked the Cathaoirleach for all his hard work on behalf of the members of the

council. She added that his skills in managing the meetings were to be congratulated and thanked him for the courtesy shown to all members during his term.

Councillor Moore thanked the Cathaoirleach for his services to the entire membership of the council stating that his calm and fair approach to running the council meetings had been welcomed by all.

On behalf of the Social Democrats Councillor Killeen thanked the Cathaoirleach for his work over the last year noting his fulsome apology in relation to Mother and Baby Homes had been so welcomed by all.

On behalf of the Labour Party, Councillor Aoife Breslin thanked the Cathaoirleach for the kindness he had shown everyone and was grateful he had been at the helm over the last year noting she was very proud to have served with him as Cathaoirleach.

On behalf of the Green Party, Councillor Peter Hamilton thanked the Cathaoirleach for the work he had done stating it had been good to get to know him more during the course of his term.

The Cathaoirleach thanked the members for their kind words reminding them of the importance of the themes of collaboration, co-operation and conciliation as referenced by Councillor Suzanne Doyle in her outgoing speech the previous year. He asked the members to remember the importance of the use of language and how it is used on all communication platforms, stating that they as elected members must be conscious of this in their role and responsibility's as public representatives.

A presentation was made to the outgoing Cathaoirleach Councillor Mark Stafford by Ms A Aspell, Director of Housing and Corporate Services and Ms C O'Grady, Meetings Administrator and Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services Department.

01/0621AM

Election of Cathaoirleach

The Cathaoirleach invited nominations for the post of Cathaoirleach for the coming year. On the proposal of Councillor Paul Ward, seconded by Councillor Ivan Keatley, Councillor Naoise Ó Cearúil was nominated for the position of Cathaoirleach.

In proposing Councillor Ó Cearúil, Councillor Ward stated he was a proud Maynooth native who had been elected to the council in 2014 at the young age of 23, being the youngest councillor elected in both the county and the country at that time.

Councillor Ward welcomed Councillor Ó Cearúil's parents, family and his partner Ali to the meeting, saying it was a very proud day for them all. He confirmed that Councillor Ó Cearúil had been the first Maynooth native elected to the council and his experience as President of the Student Union in Maynooth had served him well in preparing him for his elected representative role. Councillor Ward confirmed he had been Cathaoirleach of his own Municipal District previously and had the required skills necessary to fulfil the duties of Cathaoirleach of the county of Kildare.

Councillor Keatley stated he had worked with Councillor Ó Cearúil on many issues and admired his ability to represent the views of the constituents no matter how challenging the subject matter was. He stated the term "Meanma agus Misneach" which translated to "with Spirit and Courage" was very apt considering the skillset of Councillor Ó Cearúil.

As there were no other nominations, and with 38 members voting in favour, no members voting against and with no abstentions, Councillor Naoise Ó Cearúil was elected as Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare and took the Chair.

Resolved with 38 members voting in favor, no members voting against and with no abstentions, Councillor Naoise Ó Cearúil was elected as Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare and took the Chair.

In accepting the position as Cathaoirleach, Councillor Ó Cearúil thanked Councillor Ward and Councillor Keatley for their nominations and the members for their support in electing him to the role stating he accepted it with great pride and honour. He also thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach Councillor Mark Stafford, acknowledging his

dedication and the work he had carried out during his term. He stated the last 16 months had been a very difficult time for everyone and acknowledged the efforts made by all in working continuously on behalf of the people of Kildare. He stated that the last 7 years had passed very quickly since he was first elected, with it both being challenging and rewarding. He noted it had only been possible with the immense support from his family and friends and his partner Ali, adding none of them had opted to get involved in public life but they had been an immense support to him in his role as an elected representative. The Cathaoirleach noted the upcoming review of the County Development Plan would require the stamina and patience of both the members and the staff and that it presented a great opportunity that no previous council has had in relation to climate action, remote working hubs and to maximise and build on the outputs of the Community Call response. He also sought the members support in creating a Re-opening Kildare Committee. He concluded by stating every elected member had a mandate and a right to represent those that elected them, but that he would be rigid in applying Standing Orders to ensure the efficient use of time at meetings and to ensure all were able to be heard.

02/0621AM

Election of Leas Cathaoirleach

The Cathaoirleach invited nominations for the post of Leas Cathaoirleach for the coming year. On the proposal of Councillor Seamie Moore, seconded by Councillor Suzanne Doyle, Councillor Carmel Kelly was nominated for the position of Leas Cathaoirleach.

As there were no other nominations, and with 38 members voting in favour, no members voting against and with no abstentions, Councillor Carmel Kelly was elected as Leas Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Doyle with 38 members voting in favour, no members voting against and with no abstentions, Councillor Carmel Kelly was elected as Leas Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare

The Cathaoirleach and members congratulated Councillor Carmel Kelly on her

election as Leas Cathaoirleach for the county. Councillor Kelly thanked her colleagues for their nomination stating she was humbled to be elected to the role and she looked forward to working with the Cathaoirleach in the year ahead. She welcomed his comments about re-opening the county and emphasised the need for a fit-for-purpose County Development Plan. Councillor Kelly thanked her husband and son for their unwavering support to her all over the years as she carried out her role as a public representative.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all the members and welcomed Councillor Carmel Kelly as Leas Cathaoirleach.

The Chief Executive extended his congratulations to Councillor Ó Cearúil and to Councillor Kelly on their election to the role of Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach respectively. He stated it was a very proud day for both them and their families. He stated the role of Cathaoirleach was a demanding one but that it was an exciting time for Kildare and assured Councillor Ó Cearúil of the executive's continued full co-operation and support for the year ahead, as they all worked together for the betterment of Kildare.

This concluded the annual meeting.