



**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Athy Municipal District
held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, 20 July 2026
in the Council Chamber, Áras Chill Dara, Naas**

Members Present: Councillor I Keatley (Cathaoirleach), Councillor M Leigh (Leas-Chathaoirleach), Councillors A Breslin, V Behan and B Dooley.

Officials Present: Mr S Deegan (A/District Manager), Ms M Richardson (Meetings Administrator) Ms K Leslie (Meetings Secretary) and other officials.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked the members for the opportunity to serve as Cathaoirleach of the Athy Municipal District, which had been a privilege and an honour. He noted that it had been a massive year, with the opening of Emily Square and the Shackleton Experience being two of the standout days. He also thanked council staff for their tireless work, giving special mention to the District Manager and staff in the Athy Municipal District Office.

AYA01/0726

Election of Cathaoirleach

Councillor Keatley invited nominations for the position of Cathaoirleach of the Athy Municipal District.

Councillor Breslin proposed Councillor Leigh, and this was seconded by Councillor Dooley.

Councillor Breslin informed the members that this was Councillor Leigh's second term as a councillor, having been co-opted to the council to fill the vacancy created by the election of former Councillor Mark Wall to the Seanad in 2020 and then re-elected in 2024. He did fantastic work on the ground and had a strong sense of community spirit and social justice. This would be a challenging year for the municipal district with Full Council having voted to



reduce their LPT allocation and Councillor Leigh would do well in any upcoming negotiations. She also thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach for steering the ship well and always being fair.

Councillors Dooley and Behan echoed these sentiments, congratulating Councillor Leigh and praising his work ethic, dedication and progressiveness, as well as thanking the outgoing Cathaoirleach.

As there were no other nominations, Councillor Leigh was deemed elected.

Resolved in accordance with Section 37 (a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 2021 as amended that on the proposal of Councillor Breslin, seconded by Councillor Dooley and agreed by all members that Councillor Leigh be deemed elected as Cathaoirleach of the Athy Municipal District.

Councillor Keatley congratulated Councillor Leigh and welcomed his family and friends to the chamber. He paid tribute to his friendship with Councillor Leigh which went back to their school days and remarked that this was a momentous occasion.

Councillor Leigh took the Chair. He described himself as an accidental politician who had joined the Athy branch of the Labour Party back in 2014 out of a desire to help his local community. He was humbled and honour to be elected as Cathaoirleach and promised to serve with integrity and dedication. He thanked his wife, Beatrice, for her unwavering support, Senator Mark Wall for attending the meeting, and council staff for adding realism to the members' requests. He also thanked the members and the outgoing Cathaoirleach, whose steady leadership had built a solid foundation for him. He described Athy as the most collegiate municipal district and noted that difficult times lay ahead as they attempted to mitigate the decision to reduce Athy's LPT allocation, leaving them with a deficit of €217,000.



AYA02/0726

Election of Leas-Chathaoirleach

The Cathaoirleach invited nominations for the position of Leas-Chathaoirleach of the Athy Municipal District.

Councillor Behan proposed Councillor Dooley, and this was seconded by Councillor Keatley.

Councillor Behan informed the members that Councillor Dooley would offer tremendous support in this role.

Councillor Keatley described Councillor Dooley as a fantastic advocate who had proven himself time and time again. Councillor Breslin advised that he was a great team player who displayed excellent leadership.

As there were no other nominations, Councillor Dooley was deemed elected.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Behan, seconded by Councillor Keatley and agreed by all members that Councillor Dooley be deemed elected as Leas-Chathaoirleach of Athy Municipal District.

The Cathaoirleach remarked that he looked forward to working alongside Councillor Dooley.

The meeting concluded.