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MIONTUAIRISCÍ AN CRUINNITHE BLIANTUIIL DE COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHIARRAÍ A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRÁ LÍ, AR AN LUAIN 27 MEITHEAMH, 2016.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRALEE ON MONDAY 27th JUNE 2016.

PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

R. Beasley	M. Cahill	P. Connor-Scarteen
B. Cronin	J. J. Culloty	P. Daly
T. Ferris	J. Finucane	S. Fitzgerald
J.F. Flynn	N. Foley	M. Gleeson
D. Grady	J. Healy-Rae	M. Healy-Rae
N. Kelleher	M. Kennelly	S. Locke
J. Lucid	D. McCarthy	P. McCarthy
T. McEllistrim	J. Moloney	D. Nolan
T. O'Brien	B. O'Connell	M. O'Shea
L. Purtill	D. Quigg	J. Sheahan
G. Spring	A. Thornton	

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Ms. M. Murrell, Chief Executive	Mr. M. O'Donoghue, A/ Dir. Corp. Servs/Hsg.
Mr. J. Breen, Director of Water Serv.	Mr. T. Hayes, A/Director of Planning
Mr. P. Neary, A/Dir. Of Operations	Ms. K. Lynch, A/Head of Finance
Mr. L. Quinlan, Meetings Admin.	Ms. B. Reidy, S.S.O. Corporate Affairs
Ms. O. O'Shea, C.O. Corp. Support	

The meeting commenced at 12.10pm.

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. P. McCarthy took the Chair.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed all present in the public gallery to the meeting. On behalf of all the members of the Council, Cllr. McCarthy extended his sympathy to Cllr. Cahill on the untimely death of his brother-in-law, Denis Teahan.

The Cathaoirleach congratulated the newly elected Mayor of Tralee, Cllr. T. O'Brien, and the newly elected Cathaoirligh of the other three Municipal Districts, Cllr. B. Cronin, Killarney MD, Cllr. A. Thornton Listowel MD and Cllr. J.F. Flynn South and West Kerry MD.

Annual Meeting

The Cathaoirleach stated the role of the Cathaoirleach is very important for the county as he/she represents Kerry County Council and the role of the Council in the lives of the people of Kerry. He was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve as Cathaoirleach for the past twelve months. The role of the media is also very important as they keep the people of Kerry updated on events and developments in the county. He thanked the media sincerely for their assistance.

2016 is a very important year for the country as it marks the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising. Kerry played a leading role with a State event being held in Banna and other events held in Valentia, Ballykissane, The O'Rahilla and Glanageenty where Monteith stayed. The Arts Office organised and assisted the organisers with many events and he commended Ms. K. Kennelly, Ms. S. O'Keeffe and Ms. C. Lynch on their wonderful work. He thanked the organising committee of the Tralee 800 and stated there was a wonderful weekend of celebrations.

The Cathaoirleach's visit to New York for St. Patrick's Day each year is very important and during his visit he met many Kerry people who are very proud of their county. He thanked the members, senior management team and all staff for their support over the past twelve months. He also thanked his party colleagues and his wife and family for their support. In conclusion he thanked the committee of the Ballymacelligott Community Hall and O'Riadas for hosting the December Council Meeting and the Christmas Dinner.

On behalf of the Sinn Féin Party, Cllr. P. Daly congratulated the Cathaoirleach on a great year not only for him but for his family and Ballymac. Cllr. McEllistrim, Mayor of Tralee is also from Ballymac and this was a great honour for their community. He congratulated all involved in the 1916 Commemorations and added that Scoil Mhic Easmainn were delighted with the increased interest in the 1916 ideals.

Cllr. M. Gleeson stated the Cathaoirleach represented the Council on the cultural and international stage and he ensured that the 1916 Commemorations were a success. He represented the county with great interest and respect. The role of Cathaoirleach is very demanding but Cllr. McCarthy did it wonderfully. Cllr. Gleeson thanked the Cathaoirleach for his courtesy in the Chamber.

Cllr. J. Healy-Rae thanked the Cathaoirleach for his service to the county over the past 12 months. He thanked him for his courtesy and wished him well for the future.

Cllr. S. Locke thanked the Cathaoirleach for representing the county to such a high standard over the past 12 months. The role of Mayor is demanding and he thanked the Cathaoirleach for his assistance on a few projects in Tralee.

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On behalf of the Fianna Fáil Party, Cllr. N. Foley congratulated the Cathaoirleach on an excellent year in office. It is a huge honour to serve as Cathaoirleach and no one deserved it more. The members of the Municipal District of Tralee were extremely proud that one of their members held this position. The Cathaoirleach represented the members with courage and impartiality and he was always available. Cllr. Foley also complimented the Cathaoirleach's family as he had to depend on them throughout the year. She added that the Cathaoirleach represented the Council with dignity abroad and she wished him well for the future.

On behalf of the Labour Party, Cllr. T. O'Brien congratulated the Cathaoirleach on a very successful year in office. He was very fair and gave all members a fair hearing. It is incredible the number of Kerry people living in New York and they all want to meet the Mayor of Kerry at the Parade. He thanked the Cathaoirleach for continuing this tradition.

Cllr. M. Cahill congratulated the Cathaoirleach on an excellent year in office and stated he did himself, Ballymac and his family proud. He always accommodated members with emergency motions especially at the December meeting when he raised concern about the approval of the drug Orkambi for CF patients. It is important to put pressure on the new Minister for Health to approve this drug. It was a great year to be Mayor with the 1916 Commemorations and the Cathaoirleach's speeches were excellent.

Cllr. D. McCarthy congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his year in office and stated he was fair to all members and he thanked him for this.

On behalf of the Fine Gael Party, Cllr. J. Finucane congratulated the Cathaoirleach on a terrific year. The 2016 Commemoration in Banna and the interaction between Kerry County Council and the schools ignited an interest in those involved in 1916. He wished the Cathaoirleach well for the future.

Cllr. B. Cronin congratulated the Cathaoirleach on an extremely busy year when he carried out his duties and in particular those relating to the 1916 Commemorations to the best of his ability. It was a great year for the Cathaoirleach and for his parish. Cllr. Cronin wished him well for the future.

Cllr. T. McEllistrim congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his successful year in office. As a fellow Ballymac man they worked well together and he wished him well for the future.

Cllr. D. Grady thanked the Cathaoirleach for his courtesy to members and added that he was always available. It is wrong that the title of Mayor can no longer be used for this position and pressure should be put on the Government to reverse this decision. He called on the incoming Cathaoirleach to try to address this issue with a view to having it changed.

Annual Meeting

The Chief Executive acknowledged the very busy year the Cathaoirleach had and stated he worked very hard and tried to attend as many events as possible. She congratulated him on a successful year in office.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all Council staff, Mr. G. O'Brien, Mr. L. Quinlan and in particular Mr. O. O'Shea who played a wonderful role at the State event in Banna. He added that this event was very well received throughout Ireland and across the world.

16.06.27.01 Election of Cathaoirleach

Cllr. J. Moloney PROPOSED Cllr. M. O'Shea for the position of Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council and he has served on the Council for 22 years. Previously he represented the Dingle Electoral Area but he now represents the South & West Kerry M.D. Cllr. O'Shea is a great ambassador for the area. Cllr. Moloney welcomed Cllr. O'Shea's wife and family to the meeting.

Cllr. N. Foley SECONDED this proposal.

Cllr. T. Ferris PROPOSED Cllr. P. Daly for the position of Cathaoirleach and stated given his individual and social conscience there is no better person to lead this county. She added that Cllr. Daly was responsible for the provision of housing for returning emigrants and he is proud of his history and is conscious of the need to bring all people together.

Cllr. R. Beasley SECONDED this proposal.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

For Cllr. O'Shea:	Cllrs. Cahill, Connor-Scarteen, Cronin, Culloty, Finucane, Fitzgerald, Flynn, Foley, Gleeson, M. Healy-Rae, J. Healy-Rae, Kelleher, Kennelly, Lucid, D. McCarthy, McEllistrim, Moloney, O'Brien, O'Connell, O'Shea, Purtill, Sheahan, Spring, Thornton, P. McCarthy (25)
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For Cllr. Daly:	Cllrs. Beasley, Daly, Ferris, Grady, Locke, Nolan, Quigg (7)
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Not Voting:	None (0)
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Mr. L. Quinlan declared Cllr. M. O'Shea elected Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council.

Cllr. O'Shea then took the Chair.

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Cllr. O'Shea thanked his proposer and seconder and his fellow councillors for their support. He welcomed his wife, family and supporters to the meeting and he committed to working for the betterment of the county over the coming year. He read the following into the record of the meeting.

"It is indeed an honour for me to accept the chain of office as Mayor of Kerry / Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council. Indeed my aunt Mary O'Donoghue was Chairperson in 1982 -1983 and her son John was Chair in 1990-1991 while Paul O'Donoghue served as Mayor of Kerry in 2001-2002. In my extended family Timothy 'Chub' O'Connor was Chair of the Council in 1974-1975. Cllr. Gleeson is my cousin and I am confident he will be elected Cathaoirleach at some time in the future. Pat McCarthy had an outstanding year and was a tremendous ambassador for the county.

The past 22 years serving on Kerry County Council have been a privilege and this was due to the loyalty and hard work of my supporters. I was initially co-opted in 1994 following the early and sad passing of the late Cllr Patrick Finnegan. I continued to serve the Killorglin Electoral Area; moved then to the Dingle Electoral Area and currently represent the South & West Kerry Municipal District. Indeed I had the honour of being the first chair and first Mayor of the South & West Kerry Municipal District.

It must be said my work inside and outside of Council has only been possible with the incredible support of my family - Susan and my three sons, my extended family included Pat Chub O'Connor and Eileen, friends and supporters, both deceased and still with us. I also welcome my sister and niece from Farranfore to the meeting. Of course, I am also very grateful over the years for the assistance and co-operation of former county managers and the current CE, Moira Murrell, officers and staff here in Tralee and the area managers, engineers and staff across the county. The staff of this local authority have always been extremely courteous and helpful. You are all very much appreciated.

My aspiration for my term as Mayor will focus on promoting the social and economic development of Kerry.

Housing issues in Kerry - I will work towards seeing that all possibilities, including funding, is availed of towards an enhanced building programme in the area of housing

- I will work towards a reduction of housing waiting lists through the following:
 - A national approach to increase the supports for housing programmes – RAS, Lease, Availability Lease schemes
 - That the Minister of Housing and Planning would reduce the level of evictions by allowing Local Authorities to take charge of available distressed properties
 - Increasing housing rent supplement for those at risk of losing their homes
 - Pushing ahead the availability of any and all voids
 - The efficient retrofitting of properties

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- Revitalising small towns and villages by encouraging, through grant aid, the development of properties to provide social accommodation

Connectivity - A long standing issue of vital importance to Kerry is connectivity and broadband and this must be addressed nationally, as mobile and broadband connectivity are the corner stones of:

- Economic development
 - maintaining SMEs and businesses
 - encouraging entrepreneurs to create opportunities for employment in the work force and from home
- Tourism
 - promoting Kerry
 - attractions / festivals
 - accommodation
 - tourist facilities and services

Infrastructure in Kerry has improved in the past decades but must be maintained and further developed to facilitate transport, businesses and tourism.

The success of 'The Wild Atlantic Way' reinforces what Kerry has to offer in terms of tourism. But the access to the county, particularly via N 21 and N 22, is proving a deterrent to attract further sustainable development.

It is of vital importance that both national and local government continue to support Kerry Airport and Irish Rail which provide major access for both businesses and tourism to our county.

Within the **Health** remit there is an urgent need to lobby government to address the follow anomalies:

- Encourage consultants, doctors, nurses, therapists of various disciplines speech, occupational, physiotherapy, etc to provide services in Kerry
- Creation of additional primary health centres in Kerry
- Mental health and disability have become the poor relations in the health portfolio with their funding being redirected to other health services

Education – support is needed at all levels. During my term as Mayor, I shall address the importance of:

- Maintaining rural schools
- The re-instatement of guidance councillors in second level, so often the first line of contact for young people at risk and the much needed support with constructive advice and knowledge for 3rd level choices

Agriculture & Fisheries & Food – is the backbone of the economy of Kerry and must be supported with the removal of any and all obstacles. I will not hesitate to highlight with the department the need for ensuring structures for prompt payments and reduction in bureaucracy often causing reduction or loss of funding

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Coastal Erosion - I would like to see a unified and common sense approach by all government departments, OPW, Fisheries, Environment, Finance to tackle the biggest threat to our coastline and to provide resources to formulate long term policies to fight erosion.

It is very important to have communication with Government through our local TDs. As part of the new style Government I will be asking that our five Oireachtas TDs attend a quarterly meeting of Kerry County Council to hear the views from both the KCC executive and councillors on issues of importance affecting our county.

I will continue to acknowledge and support the successes and achievements of the people of Kerry young and old.

I will continue working with you, my fellow councillors and the Council Executive, for the benefit of our county.

Again my appreciation to be afforded this opportunity, and with your help, I look forward to serving Kerry as Mayor."

The Cathaoirleach stated a conference would be held in Kerry later in the year on the Wild Atlantic Way and he welcomed the announcement by the Chief Executive that funding would be available for LEADER shortly. He welcomed Senator Dennis Donegan to the meeting.

Cllr. M. Cahill congratulated the Cathaoirleach and stated it is a very proud day for him and his extended family. He is the first Milltown man to serve as Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council and it is a tremendous honour for him and his parish. Cllr. Cahill complimented the Cathaoirleach on his priorities and added there is a housing crisis in the county with in excess of 5,000 applicants on the waiting list. There is very good value available in property and he believed the Council should avail of it. Cllr. Cahill called on the Cathaoirleach and the executive to pursue his proposal regarding a cable car as it would be a great tourist attraction. The Greenway is the single biggest project for South Kerry and he welcomed the maintenance payments announced recently. Cllr. Cahill called on Management to be generous in accommodation works on the Greenway. Coastal erosion is a huge issue in the county and needs to be addressed. The Cathaoirleach referred to the health service in his address and Cllr. Cahill suggested it may be time the private sector took over public hospitals.

Cllr. B. Cronin congratulated the Cathaoirleach and his family on his election and added that it is a great honour for Milltown, his community and parish. He wished him every success for the coming year.

On behalf of the Sinn Féin Party Cllr. D. Quigg wished the Cathaoirleach, his wife and family well for the coming year. It is critical that a number of projects including the Greenway are progressed and he had no doubt the Cathaoirleach would play a role in this.

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Cllr. J.F. Flynn congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and stated it is a proud day for him and his family. He welcomed Patrick Chub O'Connor to the meeting and stated his father did a lot for Killorglin.

Cllr. D. McCarthy congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and wished him the best for the year.

Cllr. D. Grady congratulated the Cathaoirleach and his wife and family on his election and wished them well for the coming year.

On behalf of the Labour Party Cllr. G. Spring congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and stated he was sure he would represent the Council and county well. He assured the Cathaoirleach of his and Cllr. Spring's support for the coming year.

Cllr. P. McCarthy congratulated the Cathaoirleach and his family on his election and wished him well for the coming year.

Cllr. S. Fitzgerald congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and stated it is a very important position and a great honour. He had served in the Council for 17 or 18 years but the Cathaoirleach has served longer and they work well together. The Dingle Peninsula is a better place than when he was first elected in that there were improvements to water schemes, schools, roads etc. Members went on a deputation in relation to coastal erosion in the Maharees and he hoped funding would be provided to address this problem in the near future. In conclusion Cllr. Fitzgerald wished the Cathaoirleach well for the coming year.

Cllr. J. Sheahan congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and wished him well for the future. He has many years experience representing his area and he did it well.

Cllr. J. Healy-Rae commiserated with Cllr. Daly who would make a good Cathaoirleach also. He congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and he added that both he and his wife are steeped in politics. It is important for the South & West Kerry MD that the Cathaoirleach of the County represents their MD. Cllr. Healy-Rae stated he hoped a resolution can be agreed on the CPO for the Greenway in South Kerry.

Cllr. J. Finucane congratulated the Cathaoirleach and his wife and family on his election and stated it is a great honour. He wished him well for his term of office.

On behalf of the Fianna Fáil Party, Cllr. N. Foley acknowledged and commiserated with Cllr. Daly. She congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and stated it would be the pinnacle of his career and a great honour. The Cathaoirleach is noted for his hard work and determination to get a job done. He brought an immense distinction to the Fianna Fáil Party and it is a great honour for himself and his wife and family. The Cathaoirleach outlined an auspicious Agenda and she had no doubt he would deliver it.

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Cllr. M. Gleeson congratulated Cllr. Daly on participating in the democratic process which is important. Cllr. Gleeson stated he was delighted Cllr. O'Shea has assumed this office and he congratulated him and his wife. His father had great respect for Margaret Gleeson who became the Cathaoirleach's grandmother. Cllr. Gleeson stated he had the wisdom in the 1990s to see the potential of the railway and he hoped the Greenway would become a reality during the coming year. This will transform the area the Cathaoirleach represents. The N22 is disintegrating and is an obstacle to the advancement of the county. It is time there was a commitment from Government that they will provide funding for it.

The Cathaoirleach wished Cllr. Daly well and stated his day would come.

On behalf of Management and staff the Chief Executive congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election and assured him that management and staff will work well together.

16.06.27.02 Election of Leas Cathaoirleach

Cllr. J. Finucane PROPOSED Cllr. L. Purtill for the position of Leas Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. B. O'Connell SECONDED this proposal.

The Cathaoirleach declared Cllr. L. Purtill elected Leas Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council and he congratulated him on his election.

Cllr. L. Purtill thanked his proposer and seconder.

Mr. L. Quinlan reminded members to assemble at the front of the building for a group photo and he added this would be followed by lunch in Ballygarry House Hotel.

The meeting concluded at 1.35pm.

Liam Quinlan
Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council