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**MIONTUAIRISCÍ AN CHRUINNITHE SPEISIALTA DE COMHAIRLE CONTAE
CHIARRAÍ A THIONÓLADH I SEOMRA NA COMHAIRLE, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE,
TRÁ LÍ, AR AN MÁIRT, 25 FEABHRA 2020**

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, TRALEE ON TUESDAY,
25 FEBRUARY 2020**

PRESENT/I LÁTHAIR

Councillors/Comhairleoirí

Tom Barry	Robert Beasley	Michael Cahill
Patrick Connor-Scarteen	Brendan Cronin	Deirdre Ferris
Jim Finucane	Breandán Fitzgerald	Fionnán Fitzgerald
Seamus Fitzgerald	Cathal Foley	Donal Grady
Jackie Healy-Rae	Johnny Healy-Rae	Niall Kelleher
Michael Kennelly	Sam Locke	Dan McCarthy
Jimmy Moloney	Norma Moriarty	Terry O'Brien
Niall O'Callaghan	Bobby O'Connell	Michael O'Shea
Mikey Sheehy	Johnnie Wall	

APOLOGIES/LEATH SCÉAL

Michael Gleeson Marie Moloney

IN ATTENDANCE/I LÁTHAIR

Ms. M. Murrell, Chief Executive	Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Dir. Rds, Trans & Marine
Mr. J. Breen, Director Water Services	Mr. M. O'Donoghue, Director Housing
Mr. C. O'Connor, Director Corp. Servs.	Ms. J. McCarthy, Meetings Administrator
Ms. D. Griffin, SO Corporate	Mr. O. O'Shea, Press Officer
Ms. O. O'Shea, CO Corporate Support	Mr. C. Nagle, Tralee MD Engineer
Ms. J. Foley, Tralee MD Officer	

The meeting commenced at 10.40 a.m.

Cllr. Niall Kelleher, Cathaoirleach, took the Chair. He welcomed Deputy Pa Daly and Deputy Norma Foley to the meeting and congratulated them on their election to Dáil Éireann. He welcomed former Deputy Martin Ferris and Toiréasa Ferris to the chamber.

Vote of Sympathy

Cllr. Mikey Sheehy proposed a vote of sympathy to former Deputy John Brassil on the passing of his Mother-in-law, Mrs. Mary Markey. May she rest in peace.

All Elected Members and management wished to be associated with the vote of sympathy.

25.02.2020.01 Filling of Casual Vacancies

Cllr. Robert Beasley PROPOSED that Ms. Deirdre Ferris would be co-opted to replace Pa Daly on the Council. He said Deirdre is a hard working person, she puts the needs of others first and will be a great Councillor.

Cllr. Cathal Foley SECONDED this proposal. He said it is a proud day for Deirdre, her parents and her family. She has a lot of experience in politics and in dealing with people and will bring a great presence to the Chamber.

Ms. J. McCarthy, Meetings Administrator, referred to Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and said a casual vacancy shall be filled by the co-option by the Local Authority of a person to fill the vacancy, subject to such person being nominated by the same registered political party who nominated the person for election and written consent from the person being nominated. She confirmed that correspondence has been received from Sinn Féin confirming that they have nominated Ms. Deirdre Ferris to fill the position vacated by Pa Daly and consent to being nominated has been received from Ms. Deirdre Ferris.

As there were no other nominations, Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher declared Ms. Deirdre Ferris to be co-opted to Kerry County Council to replace Pa Daly, and invited her to take her seat.

Cllr. Deirdre Ferris took her seat and thanked the members of the Sinn Féin party for nominating her and expressing confidence in her to undertake this role. She congratulated Deputy Daly and Deputy Foley on their election to Dáil Éireann and said they will continue working for the betterment of the people of Kerry. She said it is an honour to represent the people of Kerry and Tralee Municipal District. She thanked her husband, Conor, and her children for their encouragement and support which has enabled her to take up this role. She thanked her family for their support, in particular her sister, Toiréasa. She said she has been involved in local politics for 20 years and this experience will help her in this role, where first and foremost are the people we represent. She said Kerry is a great county to live in, but there are challenges to be met, e.g. the housing crisis. The HAP scheme is not a long term solution for housing. A proper housing programme is required within the county to help solve this crisis. Coastlines have experienced significant damage over recent weeks following severe weather events. This will impact on the county's industry and economy, and most especially on people living in coastal communities. Kerry County Council must do all it can within its remit to help those communities. The county needs economic development of our towns and rural villages, to address rural decline and loss of services. The health care sector must be addressed. The basic infrastructure, e.g. our roads, are essential to economic benefits in the county. No matter the politics, working together to get this work done is most important.

Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris and said he looked forward to working with her over the term of Council for the betterment of the county.

Cllr. Tom Barry welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris and congratulated on her co-option to Kerry County Council. He said Cllr. Ferris will serve the people of Tralee and Kerry well as an Elected Member. He wished Deputy Pa Daly the best as a TD.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea, on behalf of the Fianna Fáil group, welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris and said the issues she raised are big issues for the county which must be addressed.

Cllr. Jim Finucane, on behalf of the Fine Gael group, welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris and said she will be supported by all Elected Members in the chamber who are equally committed to the county and its communities.

Cllr. Johnny Healy-Rae wished Cllr. Deirdre Ferris the best for the future as an Elected Member of Kerry County Council. He wished Deputy Pa Daly well as a TD.

Cllr. Terry O'Brien, on behalf of Labour, welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris to the Chamber and congratulated her on her co-option and said he looked forward to working with her. He wish Deputy Pa Daly all the best as a TD.

Cllr. Brendan Cronin welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris to the Chamber and wished her every success in her role as an Elected Member. He congratulated Deputy Pa Daly on his election as a TD.

Cllr. Sam Locke congratulated Cllr. Deirdre Ferris on her co-option to Kerry County Council and said he looked forward to working with her. He also congratulated Deputy Pa Daly on his election as a TD.

Cllr. Donal Grady wished Cllr. Deirdre Ferris the very best in her role as an Elected Member and welcomed her to the Council Chamber. He wished Deputy Pa Daly all the best in his role as a TD.

Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris to the Council Chamber and agreed that Elected Members working together and getting the job done is most important.

Cllr. Dan McCarthy welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris to the Council Chamber and wished her the very best in her role.

The Chief Executive welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris to the Council Chamber on behalf of the management team. She wished Deputy Pa Daly well in his role as a TD.

Cllr. Mikey Sheehy PROPOSED that Mr. Johnnie Wall would be co-opted to replace Norma Foley on the Council. He said Johnnie is well known to local politics, having been first elected in 1985 and served as Mayor of Tralee. He is also embedded in community work in Tralee and Kerry, being involved in Tidy Towns and in the VEC over the last number of years. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election as a TD and said she served Kerry County Council with great distinction. He also congratulated Deputy Pa Daly on his election as a TD and welcomed Cllr. Deirdre Ferris to the Council Chamber.

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney SECONDED the proposal to co-opt Mr. Johnnie Wall to replace Norma Foley on the Council. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley and Deputy Pa Daly on their election to Dáil Éireann.

Ms. J. McCarthy, Meetings Administrator, referred to Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and said a casual vacancy shall be filled by the co-option by the Local Authority of a person to fill the vacancy, subject to such person being nominated by the same registered political party who nominated the person for election and written consent from the person being nominated. She confirmed that correspondence has been received from Fianna Fáil confirming that they have nominated Mr. Johnnie Wall to fill the position vacated by Norma Foley and consent to being nominated has been received from Mr. Johnnie Wall.

As there were no other nominations, Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher declared Mr. Johnnie Wall to be co-opted to Kerry County Council to replace Norma Foley, and invited him to take his seat.

Cllr. Johnnie Wall took his seat and thanked the members of the Fianna Fáil party for nominating him to undertake this role. He said it is a privilege to represent the people of Tralee and the greater Tralee area. Since the demise of Tralee Town Council the focus on Tralee has diminished and this must be addressed. Tralee must be attractive as a location for high end technology firms, and a proactive approach taken on linking second and third level education facilities. Tralee must be a healthy, happy place to live. Housing, jobs and regenerating Tralee as a place in which people want to live is a focus.

Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher congratulated Cllr. Johnnie Wall on his co-option to Kerry County Council and welcomed the experience he will bring to the Chamber. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election to Dáil Éireann.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea, on behalf of the Fianna Fáil group, welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Council Chamber and acknowledged his distinguished service with the former Tralee Town Council. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley and Deputy Pa Daly on their election to Dáil Éireann. They are experienced politicians who know the issue that must be addressed in Kerry, in particular calling on them to redress the balance of regional employment development.

Cllr. Terry O'Brien, on behalf of Labour, welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Council Chamber and said he had worked with Cllr. Wall in the former Tralee Town Council and he is very enthusiastic in his work as a politician. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election as a TD.

Cllr. Jim Finucane, on behalf of the Fine Gael group, welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Council Chamber and said he has a strong legacy for being innovative in his work. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election as a TD. He said two very strong members from the Tralee Municipal District have been elected to Dáil Éireann which is a huge bonus for this Council and Tralee.

Cllr. Cathal Foley, on behalf of the Sinn Féin group, welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Council Chamber and said he will bring great experience, energy and enthusiasm to the Chamber. He congratulated Deputy Pa Daly and Deputy Norma Foley on their election to Dáil Éireann.

Cllr. Sam Locke welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall and said he has great dedication to politics and working with communities. He said he looks forward to working with Cllr. Wall in Tralee Municipal District and for the county. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election as a TD. He said these two newly elected TDs have worked in this Chamber for the betterment of the county and he called on them to work together in Dáil Éireann with Kerry as their priority.

Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall and said the issues highlighted by Cllr. Wall are priorities for Kerry County Council. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election as a TD.

Cllr. Dan McCarthy welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Council Chamber and said his experience will be of great benefit. He wished Deputy Norma Foley and Deputy Pa Daly the best in their roles as TDs and asked that they prioritise issues for Kerry.

Cllr. Brendan Cronin congratulated Cllr. Johnnie Wall on his co-option to Kerry County Council and said his experience will be of great benefit in the Chamber. He wished Deputy Norma Foley and Deputy Pa Daly the best as TDs and called on them to work for the betterment of County Kerry in Dáil Éireann.

Cllr. Jackie Healy-Rae congratulated Cllr. Johnnie Wall on his co-option to Kerry County Council and said he brings with him a wealth of experience from his time as a member of Tralee Town Council. He congratulated Cllr. Deirdre Ferris on her co-option and said she too brings great experience having been involved in politics from a young age. He congratulated Deputy Norma Foley and Deputy Pa Daly on their election to Dáil Éireann. He wished Mr. Martin Ferris and Ms. Toiréasa Ferris all the best for the future.

Cllr. Donal Grady welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Chamber and wished him the best in his role. He wished Deputy Norma Foley all the best on her election as a TD. He said all five TDs served in this chamber and know what is needed for the betterment of County Kerry.

The Chief Executive welcomed Cllr. Johnnie Wall to the Chamber. She said there is a huge amount of work ongoing in Tralee Municipal District and across the county. She said she and the management team look forward to working with Cllr. Wall. She congratulated Deputy Norma Foley on her election as a TD. She said both newly elected TDs have a good understanding of the needs of the county and she wished them the best in their endeavours.

25.02.2020.02 Filling of vacancies on Outside Bodies

Cllr. Cathal Foley PROPOSED that Cllr. Deirdre Ferris be nominated to fill one of the vacancies on the Kerry Education and Training Board.

Cllr. Robert Beasley SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea PROPOSED that Cllr. Johnnie Wall be nominated to fill one of the vacancies on the Kerry Education and Training Board.

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

25.02.2020.03 Filling of vacancies on Housing SPC

Cllr. Michael O'Shea PROPOSED that Cllr. Johnnie Wall be nominated to fill one of the vacancies on the Housing SPC.

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

Cllr. Robert Beasley PROPOSED that Cllr. Deirdre Ferris be nominated to fill one of the vacancies on the Housing SPC.

Cllr. Cathal Foley SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

25.02.2020.04 Appointment of Chairperson for Housing SPC

Cllr. Michael O'Shea PROPOSED that Cllr. Johnnie Wall be nominated as the Chairperson of the Housing SPC.

Cllr. Jimmy Moloney SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

25.02.2020.05 Filling of vacancy on Joint Policing Committee

Mr. Christy O'Connor, Director of Service, advised that a vacancy has arisen on the Joint Policing Committee following the resignation of Cllr. Seamus Fitzgerald from this committee.

Cllr. Michael O'Shea PROPOSED that Cllr. Fionnán Fitzgerald be nominated to the Joint Policing Committee.

Cllr. Bobby O'Connell SECONDED this proposal and it was agreed.

Local Improvement Scheme

Cllr. Michael O'Shea thanked Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Director of Service, for circulating the list of Local Improvement Schemes. He asked if there was political influence in the preparation of the list, as he understood there was a scoring criteria applied to applications. He said this matter must be clarified for the people of the county.

Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher asked for clarification on funding received in 2019 for the Local Improvement Scheme. He acknowledged that estimate costs have been provided for the top 50 schemes on the list and asked if an approximation of costs could be provided for the other schemes on the list.

Cllr. Johnny Healy-Rae asked for a copy of the criteria that applied to assessment of the Local Improvement Scheme applications.

Cllr. Michael Cahill said based on recent levels of funding it will take 25-30 years to complete the list of Local Improvement Schemes. He asked that Kerry County Council engage with the Department of Community and Rural Development and the Department of Finance regarding the use of grant aid to pay off a loan to fund the Local Improvement Schemes.

Cllr. Brendan Cronin said the key element for the Local Improvement Schemes is the provision of funding from central government.

Cllr. Breandán Fitzgerald said funding is now required for the Local Improvement Scheme along with funding for the Scéim na mBóithre Áise. Funding for that scéim was cut 10 years ago and has not been reinstated.

The Chief Executive said the position regarding the length of time in preparing the list had been reviewed, and in having sight of the list now, it can be appreciated why this process took so long. It is a comprehensive scheme and it was not an easy task. This process went through the Operations SPC and came to this Chamber in relation to the marking scheme and the approach on how the various roads would be marked. This was agreed by Council as a collective decision and the marking scheme was adopted. The executive function and process of assessing applications

then began. Engineering staff were assigned to assess applications and assess the roads on the ground. On that basis, and on the scheme adopted by Council, the list of Local Improvement Schemes was prioritised. There was no political input in the executive process. In relation to costing of the schemes, the Director of Service outlined at the February Council meeting that the top 50 schemes would have estimated costs. In moving beyond the top 50, the road could have deteriorated by the time works proceed, therefore, it would not be fair to cost those roads at this point.

Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Director of Service, said there was no political influence in preparing the priority list. The marking scheme went through the Operations SPC and was adopted by full Council. The marking scheme was strictly applied in accordance with the adopted scheme. It was outlined in correspondence to the Elected Members that estimated costs were prepared for the first 50 schemes on the priority list. Letters will now issue to all applicants; to those that qualified and where they are on the priority list, and to those who were not successful with an explanation of why their application was not successful. The primary reason applications were not successful were that the application did not meet legislative requirements, because of the length of the road and some duplicate applications were received. The length of time it will take to complete the roads on the list will be dependent on the level of funding received. Kerry County Council could not raise a loan on the basis that we do not know what funding we will get this year or in future years. We will be following up with the various Departments regarding the level of funding.

In response to a request from Cathaoirleach Niall Kelleher for an estimate of the total cost of the qualified schemes, Mr. C. O'Sullivan said this would be reviewed and an estimate, with a word of caution attached, could issue.

COVID-19 Coronavirus

Cllr. Donal Grady said this country is not prepared to deal with the coronavirus and called on government to put steps in place to address this.

Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan said from a tourism point of view this is very worrying and must be addressed. Many tourists will not travel to Ireland and County Kerry this year. Appropriate measures must be put in place.

Cllr. Mikey Sheehy said at the Regional Health Forum South last week he has asked how prepared the HSE is to deal with the coronavirus. A generic reply was issue. He said he also queried what measures are in place for GPs, Paramedics, Ambulance staff and Lab staff, for triage services and cleaning staff within hospitals. The response was that Ireland is currently in containment phase and there is no positive result of COVID-19 in this country. People must be kept informed regarding this virus.

Cllr. Cathal Foley said as a tourism county we must be sure not to scaremonger either.

Cllr. Sam Locke said the WHO are informing people on a daily basis regarding COVID-19 and we must not panic our citizens.

Loo Bridge

In response to Cllr. Dan McCarthy's query regarding works on Loo Bridge, Mr. C. O'Sullivan, Director of Service, said works are progressing well and are ahead of schedule at the moment. A further update will be circulated to Elected Members.

The meeting concluded at 11.55 a.m.

Joan McCarthy
Meetings Administrator

Cathaoirleach of Kerry County Council