COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Annual Meeting of South Dublin County Council held on 30th June **2017**.

PRESENT

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Councillors** |  | **Councillors** |
| Bonner, B. |  | King, C. |
| Coules, N. |  | Lawlor, B. |
| Donovan, P. |  | Leech, B. |
| Duff, M. |  | Looney, D. |
| Duffy, F. |  | McCann, C. |
| Dunne, L. |  | McMahon, R. |
| Egan, K. |  | Mahon, K. |
| Fanning, E. |  | Murphy, E. |
| Ferron, B. |  | Murphy, M. |
| Foley, P. |  | Nolan, R. |
| Genockey, M. |  | O’Brien, D. |
| Gilligan, T. |  | O’Brien, E. |
| Gogarty, P. |  | O’Connell, G. |
| Graham, J. |  | O’Connor, C. |
| Higgins, E. |  | O’Donovan, D. |
| Holland, S. |  | O’Toole, L. |
| Johansson, M. |  | Richardson, D. |
| Kearns, P. |  | Timmons, F. |
|  |  | Ward, M. |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**OFFICIALS PRESENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Chief Executive | D. McLoughlin |
| Directors/ Heads of Function | L. Maxwell, F. Nevin, E. Taaffe,  B. Coman, T. Walsh |
| County Librarian  Senior Executive Officers | B. Fennell.  T. Shanahan, H. Hogan, M. Staunton, C. Ward, L. Leonard |
| Administrative Officers | C. Murphy, E. Leech. |
| IT | O. Woods. |
| Senior Staff Officer | R. McGarry. |
| Staff Officer  Assistant Staff Officer  Clerical Officer | P. Brennan.  C. Seery, I. Kenny.  M. Dunne. |
| Sord | G. Redmond. |

The Mayor Councillor G. O’ Connell Presided.

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Councillors V. Casserly, A-M Dermody and W. Lavelle.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting a minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect on the recent death of Ms. Analise Gilligan and the victims of the Grenfell Tower Fire tragedy in London.

At the commencement of the meeting and in advance of the execution of statutory business as set out on the agenda, the Mayor welcomed all Members, management, staff, and the public to the Annual Meeting 2017.

**TRIBUTES TO OUTGOING MAYOR**

Tributes were paid to the outgoing Mayor by Councillors D. O’Donovan, C. King, M. Duff, E. O’Brien, M. Johansson, E. Higgins, R. McMahon, B. Leech and L. O’Toole.

The Chief Executive Mr. D. Mc Loughlin expressed his thanks to the outgoing Mayor for all his hard work, and endorsed all the comments made. He thanked Councillor G. O’Connell for everything he did throughout the year while carrying out his duties.

The Chief Executive Mr. D. McLoughlin presented the Mayor with a photographic record of his year as Mayor.

The Mayor Councillor G. O’Connell then made presentations to Ms. Cathy Seery and Ms. Elaine Leech.

The Outgoing Mayor addressed the Members:

*It is conventional for the Mayor to give an account of his or her stewardship at the AGM. A form of Chairpersons’ report! How did things go on my watch!!*

*In a whiles time I will probably look back with a better perspective.*

*For a start, the role of Mayor in South Dublin is very much tied into representing, as first citizen, all of the 278,000 people across all communities. When honoured by my peers as Mayor of this mighty County in June 2016, I said I would focus on community. Celebrate community. Hence, I have endeavoured to attend as many events as possible. But being busy is not on its own how we can measure success! I have really enjoyed the year, but neither does that mean success.*

*What I would like to do is to give the Good News Story that, as our Chief Executive Danny McLoughlin reminds us every so often in the CPG, is seldom reported. I am recounting it not to claim any credit, but to put it on the record so to speak!*

*The challenge I faced when elected Mayor, and which we all face and will continue to face, is to build an inclusive and fair society. Judged by the ideals of the 1916 proclamation we have a woefully unequal society in Ireland. We have a housing emergency that I have tried to highlight including a number of special meetings on Housing during the year. And I want to congratulate our Housing Director, Billy Coman and his staff, as our Housing Section are working flat out and using absolutely every option available to provide more homes. I feel totally frustrated at the inadequacy of the National response.*

*South Dublin has changed radically since I was first elected as a Councillor in 1991. Today we have persons from some 120 different nationalities residing in our County. That represents a fair diversity. As Mayor I have no special powers, however I have been able to encourage and support the commitment of our very active Social Inclusion Unit in building an inclusive society. I have attended numerous special ethnic events where some of these peoples organise and get together as happens in all migrant communities.*

*It has become obvious to me since becoming Mayor, witnessing at first-hand what is going on in South Dublin County, that we are not just embracing diversity but facilitating the different cultures and traditions to blend with and enrich our ancient Celtic culture. On the 25th June we had the first ever “Flavours of South Dublin” International Food Festival in Rathfarnam Castle that will further bolster that objective. I hope that my time as Mayor will further a more inclusive and integrated Ireland.*

*I have been privileged to attend many events organised by the many minority ethnic groups and non-more so than Traveller Pride Week. In that context, I am very appreciative of the support of my fellow Councillors for my proposal to establish a Traveller Community Forum in our County where Travellers can celebrate, promulgate and promote those interests that are special to their heritage, culture and identity. I hope that a better understanding between the Traveller and Settled Communities will be one of my legacies.*

*In support of the Council Community Section with its dedicated Workers, I have endeavoured to empower the many Voluntary and Community based groups and organisations we have in this County and who do such tremendous and valuable work. I was privileged to lead the annual Dankness into Light walk to the Bohernabreena reservoir and help plant one of numerous Tress Of Hope. Significantly my last act as Mayor was to plant a Tree of Hope in Palmerstown last night.*

*I have tried to address the democratic deficit in society by providing a “Mayors Conference” in the Civic Stadium to explore how the Peoples Participative Network (PPN), Elected Councillors and the Council Executive can work more collaboratively where we all “Put People First”. I hope that this seed will grow and produce fruit!*

*Similarly, I was delighted to launch the “€300K Have Your Say” participative budgeting pilot for the Lucan Palmerstown Electoral Area. When the results were announced in the Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley, history was made! For the first time in Ireland the people had actively participated in deciding a Council Budget! I hope that this ground making initiative will lead to real involvement in future years by the Citizens of South Dublin County on the priorities they identify for their neighbourhood. It will also promote true community development and contribute to building solidarity across all areas and especially with those most in need.*

*I have been amazed at the range of activities and supports provide by the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in nourishing entrepreneurial spirit, promoting and supporting jobs. In addition to winning National Awards, LEO in collaboration with the South Dublin Chamber of Commerce held a hugely successful first Enterprise Awards Event and brought an awareness of the Tourism opportunities in our County to new heights. This includes a five year strategy and a feasibility study that includes how the flagship Dublin Mountains can be both promoted and conserved for future generations. The first ever Galeforce Dublin was a huge success. Also, a Liffey Blueway and restoration of the “Silver Bridge” from Waterstown Park to Farmleigh are being pursued and the wonderful Clondalkin Round Tower and Gardens tourist attraction is ready to receive its first visitors. . I have tried to support the Irish Language and Tradition highlighting the role of Arus Chronahan with the first ever “Ceili Mere” or Mayors Ceili on St Patricks night in this wonderful setting. I hope this becomes an annual event.*

*In conclusion, but my no means least, as Mayor I would have received a lot of requests from desperate members of the public who were apologising for interrupting “as you are so busy”. No, never too busy to try and help. I was the last port of call. I have tried to help and apologise to those I failed. Staff respect the Office of Mayor and do their best to help, so if you were disappointed it’s because nothing could be done. That is the most frustrating and depressing part of being Mayor. You get to see the huge inadequacies in our society, in our world.*

*I have tried to get people to use the system, if it’s not working right then it’s my job as Councillor to correct it, not circumvent it. I have never subscribed to “stroke politics” and so make no apology for not “getting things for my area” (which some have said “why can’t you, you’re the Mayor”). People are deserving on the merits of their case. My contribution to New Politics is to live that. The reward for the people of my own area is “they put me there to be fair and hardworking”. I have tried as Mayor to be just that! Thanks for the opportunity.*

**H1/AM/17 ELECTION OF MAYOR / AN MÉARA**

The Outgoing Mayor Councillor G. O’Connell then called for the election of Mayor.

**Councillor Paul Gogarty** was proposed for Mayor by Councillor L. O’Toole, seconded by Councillor D. O’Brien.

By unanimous decision **Councillor Paul Gogarty** was elected Mayor for 2017/2018.

The outgoing Mayor presented the new Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty with the Chain of Office, and the Mayor then took the chair.

The Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty addressed the Members.

*Chief Executive, Cllrs, Staff members, invited guests,*

*I would like to thank all my colleagues for unanimously electing me as Mayor today for the coming year. I know that such appointments are usually made as part of political arrangements but nevertheless it is great honour to be appointed to serve South Dublin as you Mayor. I know I am following in some illustrious footsteps, not least my recent counterparts in this Council, our outgoing Mayor Cllr Guss O'Connell - who has done a fantastic job - as well as Cllr Sarah Holland and, before her, our now Senator Fintan Warfield.*

*Speaking of predecessors it is hard to believe that yesterday was the 10th Anniversary of the appointment of my late Father, Mayor Billy Gogarty, who sadly died during his term of office. Billy was an accidental politician, having replaced my late friend and colleague Cllr Fintan McCarthy who along with his girlfriend Sonya was tragically killed in an accident in China in 2006. Fintan been serving his county well and Billy, while never seeking out public office, took over the reins with great dignity and served as Mayor until his own untimely death.*

*He was preceded and succeeded by a number of colleagues who are with us this afternoon and who have contributed in many positive ways, including Cllr Charlie O'Connor, Cllr Mick Duff, Cllr Cathal King and Cllr Dermot Looney. I want to build on their legacy and particularly the work on LGBT and equality issues of Mayor Warfield, the focus on housing and homelessness of Mayor Holland and the community-driven participatory democracy agenda of Mayor Guss O'Connell. I want to build on all of these areas and add to them.*

*My own themes for the coming 12 months are "A Healthy County (Mind, Body, Community Spirit) - A Sustainable County - A Listening County". In following the work of my predecessors on issues such as homelessness, LGBT, disability, other human rights and participatory democracy. In continuing to focus on the services that are most needed, I also want to take a proactive and positive approach and encourage people to make the best use of what is out there already. We have a major problem with alcohol in this country, an unhealthy toxic relationship, which feeds into the drugs problem and is linked with other issues such as suicide and self-harm. We need to deal this not by lecturing but by focusing on what positive alternatives are out there and try and show the positivity that exists in every community and encourage it from the bottom up. It's not a case of reinventing the wheel, but rather connecting people to the many services and networks that are already out there.*

*I want to highlight the work of the many volunteers in our communities who work tirelessly to improve the lives of our citizens, with no thought of publicity or reward. I want to bring the work of these selfless volunteers to the fore so that others may be inspired by their good works and follow suit. I want to showcase the many services already available in our county to help people develop their minds or improve their fitness. I want to promote the benefits of healthy eating and exercise on physical and mental well-being and look at ways of helping people to develop healthy habits that will help their reach their personal and professional goals.*

*I want our citizens to feel cherished and engaged in all aspects of their lives. This also means we need to be proactive in asking questions and listening as a County to what our citizens want, including doing all in our power on issues of housing and homelessness, not forgetting to focus on step down housing for our older citizens. I look forward to engaging with different groups to hear what they are saying and ensure the message is taken on board by the Council. In this I include our older and younger citizens in particular, as well as parents, ethnic minorities and those marginalised in our society. I want to set up listening fora or build on what is already there through the Council and networks such as the PPN so that people can come with their ideas as to how to make South Dublin an even better County in which to work and live. I want to see the participatory budgeting process started with the "Have Your Say - €300k" in Lucan and Palmerstown expand in 2017 to cover other parts of our county.*

*Finally, with our roads becoming more congested and polluted, with energy bills increasing and with Ireland facing fines in the hundreds of millions, I believe South Dublin County has an obligation to be a sustainable county. This means building well-insulated homes and communities, not just houses, with access to community services and public transport infrastructure. It means making our public buildings energy self-sufficient. It means encouraging a greener lifestyle, through walking, cycling and public transport. And where people need to use cars, we should be encouraging car sharing and developing a meaningful infrastructure for electric vehicles, starting with Council vehicles and charge points at staff car parks, but also moving out to serve the wider community in public spaces owned and managed by the Council in the absence of a viable national network of charge points. In Ireland right now, we have about 2,000 electric cars on the road. In Norway, population 5 million, 25,000 were sold last year alone and electric cars now account for 29% of the total market. In Ireland Electric cars and buses are the way of the future and will make our streets cleaner and safer. The future is now and I want to set South Dublin with a target to become the leading local authority in energy-efficiency and energy self-sufficiency in Ireland, which will also have a knock on effect on job creation. I intend to set the example as Mayor and in this regard - with my existing car coming to the end of its natural life - I am making a commitment to purchase an electric car and show people that this is a realistic and cost-effective option, especially in an urban environment.*

*Once again thank you for your time and encouragement. The role of Mayor has very little hard power, but lots of opportunities to emphasise some of the most important issues of our time. I hope I can look back in a year and say that we have moved positively in the right direction. With your support we will continue to make South Dublin a better county for all its citizens.*

Tributes were paid to the incoming Mayor by Councillors E. O’Brien, C. King, M. Duff, E. Higgins and B. Leech.

Mr. D. McLoughlin Chief Executive welcomed the new Mayor.

The outgoing Deputy Mayor Councillor M. Genockey addressed the Meeting and conveyed her thanks to all the Members and staff for their assistance during her period in office. She wished to put on record a special word of thanks to the outgoing Mayor Councillor G. O’Connell for all his encouragement, guidance and mentoring during her term. She acknowledged the great privilege it was to be elected Deputy Mayor of this Council and she wished the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor every success during their term in office.

**H2/AM/17 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR / LEAS MHÉARA**

The Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty then called for the election of the Deputy Mayor.

**Councillor Breeda Bonner** was proposed by Councillor M. Duff, seconded by Councillor M. Ward.

By unanimous decision **Councillor Breeda Bonner** was elected Deputy Mayor for 2017/2018.

The Deputy Mayor addressed the Members:

*A Mhéara is a Chairde Uilig.*

*Is mór an onóir dom bheith tofa agaibh mar Leas-Mhéara. Ceapaim go mbeimid go maith le chéile mar fhoireann, mise agus An Méara Paul Gogarty. I would generally be a woman of few words and he would be known to be the opposite!*

*This is quite a big day in my life as I am retiring this year as Principal of St. Bernadette’s in Quarryvale. This time 35 years ago I attended for interview in Rowlagh. On my short journey down to the interview from Clondalkin Village I was shocked to notice that the green fields between Clondalkin and Lucan had disappeared –sometime in the seventies while I was busy being a teenager. In Primary school we had sponsored walks along those Country lanes between the two villages and there was hardly a house. Now the vast estates of Neilstown and Rowlagh had been built and Quarryvale was well under way. There was a housing crisis in the seventies, like there is today and the Governments response was to build vast housing estates around all the villages in West Dublin. Clondalkin when my family arrived in the early 60’s had undergone a rapid growth with Moyle Park, Newlands, Brigids and Monastery being built, Castle Park, Cappaghmore and Floraville followed. However the building in the late seventies saw huge Local Authority estates, South West Clondalkin / Bawnogue and North Clondalkin / Neilstown were constructed with no facilities at all, hardly any public transport and just the schools and then the churches. It is important to remember, in these times when it is fashionable to criticise the church, that the only services that were there in these new communities were provided by the priest and sisters who moved there with the people. Also the teachers who established the schools in Bawnogue and Neilstown were in reality social activists, working hard to help the communities settle into what was surely an alien environment. The families had come from the city or from settled, busy communities like Ballyfermot and Crumlin. For them the bleak new estates of Clondalkin must have seemed like the end of the earth.*

*So my career as a young 20 year old teacher began in St. Bernadette’s in 1982 and I have stayed there since then, becoming the principal of the school I had helped to build up in 1997. The school has done excellent work. We were supported by successive Governments which gave us extra resources under the disadvantaged areas and Deis Schemes and the children now are confident and attaining result on a par with anywhere in the Country. However because of the socio economic disadvantage associated with such areas, many of my past pupils became victims of the scourge of substance abuse which blighted the poor since the eighties and it is a source of great sadness to me that many of my past pupils have died as a result of substance abuse. There is a legacy of difficulty in this regard which needs to be addressed and this will be one of my priorities. The role of educators and schools in areas such as Quarryvale is recognised by the people who lived there and I have been humbled by the sincere thanks and good wishes I have received on my retirement. I am now teaching the third generation of the families that moved to Quarryvale in the early eighties and the area has settled to the extent that a house in Harelawn would be hugely sought after as the next generation seeks to stay close to the community they love.*

*I was reminded of Charlie Haughey’s quote from Othello – “I have done the state some service……and they know it!” In saying goodbye to the families of Quarryvale I was able to tell them that I would be continuing to serve them, but in a different way. I would now be freer to work in the community and I will certainly focus on the Quarryvale area. I hope to set up a Tidy Towns type groups in North Clondalkin and in South West Clondalkin. One of the first things I did as a newly co-opted Councillor was to establish Clondalkin Tidy Towns along with Councillor Tony Delaney and Máire Ní Dhomhnaill from the Council. This group has become a formidable force in Clondalkin Village and I would hope to support such groups in other areas.*

*I also hope to ensure that the new housing developments being planned in Clondalkin are established as good, well serviced communities with a proper social mix and facilities built from the start. The mistakes of past planning need to be learned from. Another priority will be to continue to ensure that the heritage of Clondalkin is respected and sensitively developed. We are delighted that the Round Tower Heritage Centre is about to open. This is the culmination of years of work by the Rally Round the Tower Group which in a display of real people power prevented the building of apartments around our iconic Round Tower seventeen years ago. This plan, which would have seen the Tower become an interesting piece of street furniture in the centre of this development, was being pushed through the Council and but for the obstreperousness of my comrade Robert Dowds and the local campaign it might have become a reality. I continued Robert’s work and put numerous motions down in relation to the Tower. I must acknowledge the game changing effect that the arrival of the new Chief Executive Danny McLoughlin had on our campaign. We were pushing an open door and it started to happen and it is like a dream come true. Robert Dowds and I are part of a group of volunteer tour guides that has been trained over the last five months and we will be happy to welcome you all for guided tours of the new centre and our historic village. There are other sites such as the church of St. Cuthbert in Kilmahuddrick which I would like to prioritise.*

*Tá suim I leith agam sa Ghaeilge agus anseo ba mhaith lion buíochas a gabháil le iar Mhéara Guss O’Connell. Thosaigh sé ar ceargailt nó twinning a bhunú idir Chluain Dolcáin agus Gaeltacht Carna. Leanfaidh mé le sin. Freisin tá muintir Chluain Dolcáin ag iarraidh stáidéis Líonra Ghaeilge a fháil do Chluain Dolcáin agus tá mé ar an gCoiste sin. Tá mé sásta go bhfuil gach Comhartha sa shráidbhaile dá theangach, agus an Ghaeilge le feiceáil go soiléir sa teaspeáintas I mBrú Chrónáin, the Round Tower Centre. Gaeilge I lár an Aonaigh, le feiceáil go soiléir I gCluain Dolcáin.*

*So I’m looking forward to a new chapter in my life, of having time to do the job of Councillor more thoroughly. While in theory it is great that the job of Councillors is part-time with people from different walks of life bringing their relevant experience, in reality it was increasing difficult for me to keep doing two busy jobs. Before I finish I must pay tribute to Gus O’Connell who did an excellent job as Mayor and I thank him for all the visits he made to Clondalkin I must also pay tribute to Martina Genockey for her work as Deputy Mayor. She is the most courageous person I know and has battled intimidation from her first foray into politics. As our General Election candidate she is the future of the Labour Party.*

*Arís, Go raibh maith agaibh go léir as ucht an onóre a bhronn tú orm. Déanfaidh mé mo dhícheall bheith dílis agus mo chuid oibre a dhéanamh go macánta.*

Tributes were paid to the incoming Deputy Mayor by Councillors P. Gogarty, E. Higgins, D. Looney, C. O’Connor and C. King.

**H3a/AM/7 ELECTION OF AREA CHAIRPERSONS** -**CLONDALKIN AREA COMMITTEE**

The Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty called for nominations for Election as Chair of the Clondalkin Area Committee.

**Councillor Mark Ward** was proposed by Councillor J. Graham seconded by Councillor Breeda Bonner**.**

As there were no further nominations **Councillor M. Ward** was unanimously elected Chair of the Clondalkin Area Committee.

**H3b/AM/17 ELECTION OF AREA CHAIRPERSONS – LUCAN AREA COMMITTEE**

The Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty called for nominations for Election as Chair of the Lucan Area Committee.

**Councillor E. O’Brien** was proposed by Councillor Gus O’Connell and seconded by Councillor C. O’Connor.

As there were no further nominations **Councillor E. O’Brien** was unanimously elected Chair of the Lucan Area Committee.

**H3c/AM/17 ELECTION OF AREA CHAIRPERSONS – TALLAGHT AREA COMMITTEE**

The Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty called for nominations for Election as Chair of the Tallaght Area Committee

**Councillor L. Dunne** was proposed by Councillor D. Richardson and seconded by Councillor M. Duff.

As there were no further nominations **Councillor L. Dunne** was unanimously elected Chair of the Tallaght Area Committee.

**H3d/AM/17 ELECTION OF AREA CHAIRPERSONS** - **RATHFARNHAM /TEMPLEOGUE –TERENURE AREA COMMITTEE**

The Mayor Councillor Paul Gogarty called for nominations for Election as Chair of the Rathfarnham/Templeogue and Terenure Area Committee.

**Councillor E. Fanning** was proposed by Councillor D. O’Donovan and seconded by Councillor F. Duffy.

As there were no further nominations **Councillor E. Fanning** was unanimously elected Chair of the Rathfarnham/Templeogue and Terenure Area Committee.

Meeting concluded at 5.45pm.

**Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Mayor**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**