

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Clare County Council held in the
Council Chamber, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare on
Monday, 29th June, 2020 at 3:15 p.m.**

Present:

Councillors M. Howard, M. Nestor, C. Colleran Molloy, P. Murphy, A. Norton, P. Daly, J. Cooney, P. Hayes, P. Burke, A. O'Callaghan, T. O'Brien, J. Crowe, M. Begley, P.J. Ryan, P. McMahon, G. Flynn, D. McGettigan, P. O'Gorman, S. Talty, J. Killeen, J. Garrihy, P.J. Kelly, B. Chambers, G. Keating, C. Murphy, I. Lynch.

- Mr. Pat Dowling, Chief Executive.
- Ms. Ann Reynolds, Meetings Administrator.
- Ms. Margaret O'Rourke, Assistant Staff Officer.
- Ms. Anne Haugh, Director of Social Development.
- Mr. Liam Conneally, Director of Economic Development.
- Mr. Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development.
- Ms. Carmel Kirby, Director of Physical Development.
- Ms. Noeleen Fitzgerald, Head of Finance.
- Mr. Seán Lenihan, Senior Engineer, Physical Directorate.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Clare Colleran Molloy presided.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy stated that she had received a request for permission to video record the meeting and sought agreement for same. This was agreed by the members present.

The outgoing Cathaoirleach addressed the meeting and paid respect on behalf of the people of County Clare to the family and friends of Det. Garda Colm Horkan and the extended Garda Siochana family on his barbaric murder. She also paid respects to the 1735 people who have succumbed to the Covid 19 pandemic and to their grieving families and loved ones.

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy stated that it was a privilege to accept the role of Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council on 17th February last and recalled the impact Covid 19 has had since that date. She reflected on the beautiful county that we all share and the need to stop and appreciate the incredible vistas that the county offers from the views of Lough Derg, the shoreline along the Kilkee cliff walk, the Flaggy shore, Lahinch beach and beyond. She reflected on her experience as Mayor of County Clare to be solitary at the majestic Cliffs of Moher, entirely by herself, on a day when some 10,000 visitors should have been there enjoying the facility.

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy thanked Pat Dowling, Chief Executive and his Management on the excellent work undertaken to ensure continued essential services to the people of Clare by Council staff and for the leadership exhibited in the Community Covid Response Forum which successfully facilitated the huge voluntary efforts to assist the situation for the vulnerable in our community.

She referred to the inaugural meeting of the Clare Economic Taskforce and expressed confidence that the members of the Taskforce have a wealth of experience and knowledge that will help to inform the local and regional response to the challenges that have arisen, and will assist and guide the members of this Council to face these challenges successfully.

Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy referred to the newly formed and historic government starting with the difficult task of governance in this time of economic, health, housing and climate crisis. She expressed frustration that there will be no senior Minister along the seaboard from Limerick to Donegal and stated that it is essential that with seven Oireachtas Members in County Clare that demand for our county is met.

The elected members present thanked Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy for her excellent work as an ambassador for County Clare during a very challenging time.

Item 1: Election of Cathaoirleach of the Council for the coming year.

The outgoing Cathaoirleach called for nominations for the post of Cathaoirleach for the forthcoming year. Cllr. J. Cooney proposed Cllr. Mary Howard for the position of Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council for the year 2020-2021, this proposal was seconded by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan and agreed by all present. Cllr. J. Cooney gave a synopsis of Cllr. Howard's achievements since being elected to Clare County Council and outlined Cllrs. Howard's involvement in local voluntary organisations. This was echoed by Cllr. A. O'Callaghan on behalf of the Fianna Fáil group.

As there were no other nominations, Cllr. M. Howard was declared elected as Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council for the coming year.

Cllr. G. Flynn on behalf of the technical group wished Cllr. M. Howard well and offered to support her during her time as Cathaoirleach.

The elected members joined in wishing Cllr. M. Howard every success as Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council.

Cllr. M. Howard addressed the meeting and thanked Cllr. J. Cooney and Cllr. A. O'Callaghan for nominating her for the position of Cathaoirleach. She stated that it is a lifelong dream to represent her county and to be elected to the position of Cathaoirleach is humbling, exhilarating and a wonderful experience. She thanked her family, friends, fellow Councillors, staff of Clare County Council and especially the community who have shaped her throughout her life. Cathaoirleach Howard acknowledged the inspirational role models her parents were to her and her siblings.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Howard stated that 2020 has been a remarkable year for the world and outlined the impact it is having on peoples everyday lives. She acknowledged the willingness of volunteers and the overwhelming sense of community that has been strengthened since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Referring to the year ahead, Cllr. Howard stated that she looks forward with hope and that her tenure as Cathaoirleach will be guided by her principles and her heartfelt wish to see Clare as a destination for people to come and live, to work and enjoy. She expressed her desire to see Clare County Council support its citizens and rebuild our communities in a sustainable way that is resilient and addresses issues such as climate change, inclusive communities and mutual respect. The Cathaoirleach extended a special word of thanks and appreciation to those who worked selflessly and tirelessly since March, those who worked so we may stay home, our frontline workers, our nurses, doctors, carers, lab technicians, pharmacists, our post men and women, delivery drivers, our frontline businesses including all our retail staff. She stated that they all stepped up to the plate and that she acknowledges and appreciates their efforts, all who make up the rich cultural and social tapestry of our proud county.

She concluded by saying that she will wear the Chain of Office with pride, dedication and good humour and looks forward to being a humble servant for the county that she loves.

Item 2: Election of Leas Cathaoirleach of Council for coming year.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. M. Howard called for nominations for the position of Leas Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. G. Keating proposed Cllr. P. Burke and this was seconded by Cllr. P. Hayes and agreed by all present.

As there were no other nominations for the post the Cathaoirleach declared Cllr. P. Burke elected as Leas Cathaoirleach for the coming year.

The elected members were unanimous in extending best wishes to Cllr. P. Burke in his role as Leas Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. P. Burke addressed the meeting and stated that it is a great honour to be elected Leas Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council for the second time. He complimented the outgoing Cathaoirleach Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy and congratulated Cllr. M. Howard on her election as Cathaoirleach. He welcomed his family to Glór on this historic occasion when both Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council are members of the Fine Gael party. Cllr. Burke stated that he looked forward to working with Cllr. Howard and represent County Clare in the year ahead.

Item 3: Schedule of Ordinary Meetings for next twelve months.

The Schedule of Meetings was circulated with the agenda and was proposed by Cllr. G. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. P. Hayes and agreed by the members present.

Item 4: Approval for payment of the Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach allowances for the forthcoming year.

Approval for payment of the Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach allowances for the forthcoming year was proposed by Cllr. G. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. A. Norton and agreed by the members present.

The Chief Executive, Pat Dowling, thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach Cllr. C. Colleran Molloy for the resilience shown in her role during a very difficult few months. Mr. Dowling congratulated Cathaoirleach Cllr. M. Howard on her elevation to first citizen of County Clare. Mr. Dowling extended congratulations to Cllr. Pat Burke on his appointment as Leas Cathaoirleach for the year ahead. He wished them well in their new roles and he assured them of the co-operation of all staff during their year in Office.

It was stated that the next meeting will be held on Monday, 13th July, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.

The meeting then concluded.

Signed: _____
Riarthóir Cruinnithe

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____