

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF ANNUAL MEETING OF  
TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL HELD  
IN THE DOME, THURLES  
AT 11 A.M. ON FRIDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2020.**

**Present** Cllr MI Murphy, Cathaoirleach.

Cllrs: Ambrose, S; Anglim, M; Black, T; Bonfield, F; Bourke K; Bugler, P; Burgess, D; Carroll, J; Coonan, N.J; Crosse, J; Darcy, G; Dennehy, N.; Dunne, D; English, P; Fitzgerald, M; FitzGerald, MI; Goldsboro, I; Hanafin, S; Hannigan, J; Hanna-Hourigan, M; Kennedy, R; Lee, S; Lowry, M; McGrath, H; McGrath (Rocky), J; McGrath, M; Molloy, R; Moloney, A; Moran, E; Murphy, Marie; O'Meara, K; O'Meara, MI; Ryan, J; Ryan, P; Ryan, S; Smith, M.

**Apologies** Cllr. S Morris, A. Ryan

**Also Present** Joe MacGrath, Chief Executive, S. Carr, C. Curley, , K. Cashen, P. Slattery, DOS, E. Lonergan A/DOS, L. McCarthy, Head of Finance, G. Walsh, Meetings Administrator.

**Guest** Deputy J. Cahill, Mary, Rebekah, Isabelle and Robert Smyth.

**Welcome and Opening Prayer** The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael Murphy welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting of Tipperary County Council, thanking the Semple Stadium Committee for facilitating the meeting in the Dome and at the outset called on the Meetings Administrator to brief the Councillors on the Council's Covid-19 protocol for attendance at meetings, particularly noting that it was the first time that a meeting of the Council was taking place in the Dome, Semple Stadium, Thurles.

The Meetings Administrator prior to reciting the opening prayer referred to a number of key points that members should have regard to while attending the meeting: -

- General Health & Safety Information re. fire exits, toilets, mobile phones.
- Covid-19 related matters re. hand sanitising, physical distancing of 2 meters within the venue and the non shaking of hands.

**Vote of Sympathy** The Cathaoirleach Cllr MI Murphy, proposed a vote of sympathy to the family of Detective Garda Colm Horkan who had lost his life as a result of a fatal incident while on duty. A minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect.

**Address by outgoing Cathaoirleach** Cllr Michael Murphy referred to the honour and privilege it had been to be Cathaoirleach of Tipperary County Council. He had enjoyed the role and thanked Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr S Hanafin, the Cathaoirleach of the Municipal Districts and his fellow councillors for their support. He thanked the Chief Executive, who he had developed a good working relationship with a shared similar vision for the County. He thanked the Meetings Administrator and staff for their assistance during his term of office.

Cllr Murphy reflected on the year and the many highlights one of which had included the conferral of a Civic Reception in December at the Horse-and-Jockey Hotel to the Tipperary Senior Hurling Team, the Tipperary Under 20 Hurling Team and the Tipperary Ladies Intermediate Football Team in recognition and appreciation of their significant achievements in winning their respective All Ireland Championships during 2019. The honour of delivering the homecoming address in the Dome for the All Ireland Hurling Teams had been a special occasion.

Other highlights attended during the year included;

- Attending Google H.Q. to see Sharon Cunningham of Shorla Pharma based in Questum, Clonmel receive her Award as Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur 2019.
- The official opening of the New Tipperary Museum of Hidden History.
- Attending the Australian Embassy for a special ceremony to mark the arrival of the Victoria Cross Medal awarded to Lorrha native Martin O'Meara.
- Attending the Tipperary National Peace Award Ceremony, the recipient of which was former Irish President and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson.
- The success of Tipperary County Council in receiving significant funding under the Urban Regional Development Fund (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF) which would advance projects throughout the County.

Cllr Murphy remembered with sadness the passing of former members Jack Crowe and Liam White.

Personally he referred to his own family bereavement suffered during his term, the passing of his mother Kitty and was deeply appreciative of the Special Meeting held in her honour.

His term of office had seen the challenges of the public health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact this had on all areas of life. Cllr Murphy was proud of the response to this crisis by the Council and the support that had been given to communities. He thanked front line services for their service and dedication and thanked the media for the vital role they provided. Noting that the country was now in a recovery phase, he indicated that supports were now necessary for businesses to restart. He was confident that the community spirit that was so evident would allow the County to prevail stronger than ever.

The Party Whips and Cllr. Michel Lowry on behalf of the Independent Group paid tribute to the outgoing Cathaoirleach on his excellent term of office, a role he had carried out with dignity and leadership. Cllr Murphy conducted meetings in an impartial and respectful manner and was constructive and knowledgeable on matters discussed. Members were conscious it had been a difficult year, particularly the loss of his mother and the unprecedented challenges of the health crisis.

The Chief Executive, Mr. Joe MacGrath, on his own behalf and on behalf of the Management and staff congratulated the Cathaoirleach on an outstanding and successful year. He had many proud moments during his term which saw a

broad range of significant events and achievements. The Covid 19 pandemic had brought new challenges that impacted all aspects of community and political life and Cllr Murphy had given his time daily to be updated and aware of the evolving situations. The Chief Executive thanked Cllr Murphy for his courtesy, leadership and availability. He thanked Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr S. Hanafin for his support.

## **2.1 Election of Cathaoirleach**

The outgoing Cathaoirleach then sought nominations for the position of Cathaoirleach.

It was proposed by **J. Carroll** , seconded by **Cllr. R. Kennedy:-**

That **Cllr Michael Smith** be elected Cathaoirleach of Tipperary County Council for the year 2020-2021..

Cllr. Smith's proposer and seconder referred to the qualities of Cllr. Smith whose family had a long history of public service and remarked on the vast experience that Cllr Smith would bring to the role of Cathaoirleach.

As there were no further nominations Cllr Smith was deemed elected.

## **Address of Incoming Cathaoirleach**

Cllr. Michael Smith thanked his proposer and seconder and the members that elected him as Cathaoirleach. He stated it was an honour and privilege to hold the office of first citizen of Tipperary, the premier county. In 1986 his father was elected as Mayor, followed by his uncle Dan in 1995 and he now continued the proud history of his family involvement in local government.

Cllr Smith referred to the role of Cathaoirleach and outlined his intention to propose a number of changes at the next Corporate Policy meeting which would include a change to the time of Council Meetings, a new format for presentations, Notice of Motions to be revised and a limit on the number of workshops or in-committee meetings with the exclusion of the County Development Plan process. He referred to the Budget process whereby the draft budget was presented to the members noting that it was his intention to request the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance to outline at an early stage the financial position of the Council. Each Councillor who wished to have an input into the budget proposals would have the opportunity to do so before any draft was published.

The new Cathaoirleach referred to Housing countrywide, the County Development Plan process and nursing home provision in Roscrea among his priorities for the next 12 months. He referred to the need for the Council to be creative and find solutions and referred to the many families living in overcrowded conditions and the problems these families faced in catering for the health, education and emotional needs of their children. He referred to the number of vacant properties and his ambition to have these dealt with. He would work with the Chief Executive, Director of Housing and the Chair of the SPC to bring about real change.

He referred also to the new County Development Plan and his aim to have the process of making the plan open, transparent and inclusive and particularly to take into account councillors views on the future of rural housing. Cllr Smith stated it was imperative that we get the process right for the future growth of

urban and rural areas. The plan was a a blue print for the economic and social development of the county of Tipperary. Two planning workshops were proposed in July and it was important that as many consultations with the executive would be facilitated if that was required by the members.

Cllr Smith referred to the social, community and economic health of Tipperary and how the country had been transformed by the Covid 19 Pandemic. This presented huge challenges for delivery of services and future project commitments. It also presented opportunities which could be explored. The government's announcement of the restart fund targeting micro and small businesses that had suffered losses of turnover was welcomed. As a council Cllr Smith suggested that assistance could be given through changes to the commercial incentive scheme to assist new businesses to develop and grow. More funding needed to be made available for smaller towns to enhance the streets, footpaths and open spaces. It was his intention to invite all the newly elected Cathaoirleach's of the Municipal Districts to a meeting with the Chief Executive to explore this and other opportunities to revitalise our towns and villages across the county. A detailed discussion could then take place with all the members following the executive examining any proposals put forward.

An issue close to his heart was finding funding to secure the future of public nursing home care in Roscrea and he indicated that he would be seeking a meeting with the new Minister for Health about the situation as soon as possible.

In concluding Cllr. Smith outlined specific projects he wished to see progress on during his term of office including: -

- A walkway and cycle route in his area, Clonkenny
- Thurles link road
- Killaloe /Ballina Shannon Crossing
- Nenagh to Lattregh road upgrade
- N24 Limerick to Waterford motorway
- Provision of a public nursing home in Roscrea

Finally, Cllr Smith thanked his family for their ongoing support, his wife Mary, children Rebekah, Isabelle and Robert and his parents.

### Election of Leas Chathaoirleac h

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. M. Smith sought nominations for the position of Leas-Chathaoirleach.

It was proposed by **Cllr. J. Crosse** and seconded by **Cllr. G. Darcy** that **Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan** be elected as Leas-Chathaoirleach of Tipperary County Council for the term 2020/2021.

As there were no further nominations Cllr Hanna Hourigan was deemed elected.

Cllr. Hanna Hourigan thanked her proposer and seconder. She looked forward to working with and supporting Cllr. Smith as Cathaoirleach in the year ahead.

The Party Whips and Independent Representative congratulated the new Cathaoirleach and Leas-Chathaoirleach on their elections

Outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr S. Hanafin thanked members for their kind words and complimented outgoing Cathaoirleach Cllr M. Murphy on an outstanding year in office.

The Chief Executive congratulated the Cathaoirleach on his election. He remarked on the opening address of the Cathaoirleach setting a positive tone for the County and the reference to a number of issues that he wished to progress. The Chief Executive and officials looked forward to working with the Cathaoirleach.

Congratulations were also extended to the incoming Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr. M. Hanna Hourigan..

The Chief Executive thanked Semple Stadium staff for making The Dome available for the Annual Meeting and future meetings of the Council while social distancing restrictions were in place. He also thanked the Meetings Administrator and staff for their preparation of the venue for the meeting.

**Conclusion**

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed/\_\_\_\_\_   
 Cathaoirleach.

Date/\_\_\_\_\_

Signed/\_\_\_\_\_   
 Meetings Administrator.

Date/\_\_\_\_\_