

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 8TH JUNE, 2018 AT 3.00 P.M.

Chair: David Fitzgerald.

Cllrs: Eamon Aylward, John Brennan, Tomás Breathnach, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Peter Cleere, Fidelis Doherty, Matt Doran, Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy, Ger Frisby, Pat Fitzpatrick, Breda Gardner, David Kennedy, Andrew McGuinness, Joe Malone, Michael McCarthy, Pat Millea, Malcolm Noonan, Patrick McKee, Patrick O' Neill and Maurice Shortall.

Officials: Colette Byrne, Tim Butler, Sean McKeown & Anne Maria Walsh.

Apologies: Cllrs. Melissa O'Neill & Sean Tyrrell.
Ms. Mary J. Mulholland & Mr. Martin Prendiville.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald welcomed Elected Members, family and friends to the Annual Meeting.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald proposed a vote of sympathy to the family of Michael Shortall, retired Official of Kilkenny County Council. Cllrs. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Matt Doran, Maurice Shortall, David Kennedy & Breda Gardner were associated with the vote of sympathy.

Cllr. Breda Gardner extended a vote of sympathy to Katherine Peacock, PPN Facilitator on the death of her brother.

A minute silence was observed as a mark of respect.

Before Item 1, Cllr. David Fitzgerald stated that it was a wonderful opportunity for him to be Cathaoirleach and represent Kilkenny over the past year. He thanked the following:

- Elected Members for their support during the year and the courtesy shown to him as Cathaoirleach.
- Cllr. Pat Dunphy as Leas Cathaoirleach who assisted him throughout the year.
- Ms. Colette Byrne and Directors of Services for their support and patience and for their commitment to Kilkenny.
- All staff for their work and their interaction with all Elected Members.

His wife Paula, children, family and friends for their support over the last year.

All the people of Kilkenny for the kindness shown him and for the honour of representing them at many events throughout the County, the region and nationally.

He hopes that he has represented you all well and all the people of Kilkenny over the last year. He acknowledged the presence of Deputy Bobby Aylward and Deputy John McGuinness in the Chamber.

Tributes were paid to Cllr. David Fitzgerald by Cllrs. M. Noonan, MH. Cavanagh, D. Kennedy, M. Shortall and B. Gardner. Members paid tribute to Cllr. Fitzgerald on his year as Cathaoirleach for his courtesy, fairness, professionalism and efficiency in dealing with all Members and the manner of conducting the business of the meetings. They thank him for his attendances at many functions/events across the County and Country and was available at all times to communities and organisations.

Ms. Colette Byrne, Chief Executive on her own behalf and on behalf of the staff thanked Cllr. Fitzgerald for his professionalism and support during the year. As first citizen you represented us all at local, regional and national level.

1. Election of Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Ger Frisby proposed Cllr. Eamon Aylward as Cathaoirleach for the coming year. He referred to Cllr. Aylward's career in politics over the last ten years. He referred to the long history of the Aylward family in politics starting with his grandfather Bob who was elected in 1945 to the Senate. He referred to the many roles Cllr. Aylward has received both in his local community and as an Elected Member.

Cllr. Pat Dunphy seconded the proposal of Cllr. Eamon Aylward as Cathaoirleach. Cllr. Dunphy spoke about Cllr. Aylward's years as an Elected Members and in particular his contribution to the Piltown Electoral Area.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald asked for any other proposals. As there were no other proposers Cllr. David Fitzgerald declared Cllr. Eamon Aylward to be elected as Cathaoirelach of Kilkenny County Council and invited him to take the Chair and Chain of office.

Cllr. Eamon Aylward addressed the Council as follows:

"Fellow Councillors, Chief Executive, staff members, family friends.

Before I get to my own statement I would like to echo the many tributes paid to Cllr. David Fitzgerald on what has been a very successful term as Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council. I understand that he has set a very high standard for me, but I intend to do all I can to ensure that the next twelve months are productive and fruitful.

Firstly, I wish to thank you the Members for putting your trust in me and giving me the honour of being your Cathaoirleach for the next year. Thanks to Ger and the rest of my Fianna Fail colleagues for nominating me and to Pat for seconding my nomination. Thank you to the people of the Piltown Municipal Area for the opportunity to be here in the first place. It's a very special day for me and I am delighted to be joined by my family. I want to acknowledge two long term members of this Chamber, Liam and Bobby Aylward who gave many years service to this Council, I want to thank both of you for your help and advice over the years, I also want to pay tribute to my grandfather Bob who started the ball rolling in 1945 and of course the real politician in the family my grandmother Kitty. My brothers and sisters are all here today and I want to thank them for their help and support especially at election time when the pressure comes on for canvassing. To my mother and father you are always there with a word of support and advice, my father started my interest in politics and as Liam & Bobby will testify he has a phenomenal knowledge of politics and a great director of elections.

To my wife Lorraine I want to thank you for everything over the last 9 years and keeping me sane most of the time. It's fair to say that Lorraine is a reluctant politician wife but you're really a natural at it and you have been a tremendous support to me. My 3 boys Darragh, Shane & Eoin have literally grown up with politics in the house, Eoin wasn't even born when I was first elected. There is a saying that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree and this can be applied in our house, when I came home from work one evening I was asking Darragh how his day went at school and he told me he had been elected as Chairman of the Student Council in Scoil Aireagail, Ballyhale, so as I was congratulating him, Shane shouts in to say he had been elected as Secretary of the Student Council, I laughed to myself and said, the next generation of Aylward politicians are already in training.

I am looking forward to the year ahead and I want our meetings to be efficient but effective and for that to happen I will need your support and cooperation. I am determined to Chair our monthly meetings fairly and to ensure that every member is given full opportunity to contribute to each meeting, but I do intend to get through each monthly agenda as efficiently as possible.

As Cathaoirleach for the next twelve months, there are a number of areas where I'd like to focus particular attention.

Housing and homelessness are major issues across the country and we are no different here in Kilkenny, the Housing Department have many projects in the pipeline to deliver housing units to tackle this problem I want to see these progressed as quickly as possible so homes can be provided for those that most need them. The Council will not solve this problem on its own and it's important to have private housing schemes coming to the market also and planned developments in the Western Environs will help with this. Housing availability is now a major consideration for Multi-National Companies when they are considering their options for setting up new operations in an area & we must ensure that Kilkenny is in a position to meet those needs.

Kilkenny is a great place to live and work but we cannot stand still. The Abbey Quarter is central to the economic, educational, social and creative development of Kilkenny City and County and it's time we pushed on with this development, investment in this site is an investment in our future. In my opinion, a campus for the long awaited Southeast University in the Abbey Quarter is vital. IDA visits must be increased to this county and as a Council we must continue to ensure Kilkenny is an attractive place to set up your business. It's not all about FDI and local enterprises will continue to be supported by the Local Enterprise Office, remember Glanbia was a small local enterprise once.

The tourism numbers in Kilkenny each year are huge and what we have to offer tourists is second to none in this country. However the challenge is to ensure those tourists that visit Kilkenny spend more bed nights here. If we achieve this we can develop the tourism potential outside the city which has a huge amount to offer north, south, east and west. The addition of the new Butler Gallery and the Kilkenny Greenway in the south a project close to my own heart will boost what we have to offer.

Our rural towns and villages are struggling and need help developing. As Cathaoirleach I will insist that issues such as broadband, rural crime, safety in the home, transport and local tourism issues are all kept on the Council agenda. Initiatives such as the Town & Village Renewal Schemes are welcome but more needs to be done.

Improvements continue to be made to our National Road network and it's great to see the progress on the new bridge at New Ross which will be completed next year, but priority must be given to the development of a fly over at the Tower Junction on the Piltown Bypass, this is the only safe solution for this extremely dangerous road and must be progressed rapidly and I will be pushing this continuously. Additional funding is required to bring our Regional & Local Roads up to standard.

Littering has become a national disgrace in this country and over the next 12 months I want to see a sharper focus on tackling illegal dumping across our county. It's my opinion that anyone that is prosecuted in court for Illegal Dumping should be named and shamed.

The South-East region has suffered over the years from lack of investment from successive governments over the years, we cannot be treated as second class citizens anymore, all the counties of the region must work closely together to deliver a University for the South East, 24-hour cardiac service and an upgrade to the N24 & N25 National Primary Routes. The proposed development of the North Wharf in Waterford will have a major impact on Co. Kilkenny and we must be kept informed of developments on an ongoing basis. Cooperation is the way forward not moving county boundaries.

I pledge to do my very best for this council over the next 12 months and I look forward to working with you and the council officials for the betterment of this county and its citizens. Go raibh maith agat.

I look forward to the year ahead".

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Eamon Aylward was congratulated by Cllrs. MH. Cavanagh, M. Noonan, D. Kennedy, T. Breathnach, B. Gardner and M. Doran. Members offered their support throughout the year and wished him well. Members welcomed the Aylward family and stated that it is a proud day for his family and wished them all well for the following year.

Ms. Colette Byrne on her own behalf and on behalf of all the staff wished Cllr. Aylward well and advised that the Executive will work in partnership with you. She wished Cllr. Aylward's wife Lorraine and family the best for the year and hoped that they would enjoy it.

2. Election of Leas Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick proposed Cllr. Andrew McGuinness as Leas Cathaoirleach. He referenced to his career as an Elected Member since he was first elected in 2004 and the long tradition in politics with the McGuinness family. Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh seconded the proposal of Cllr. Andrew McGuinness as Leas Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. Eamon Aylward called for any further proposals. As there were no other proposals Cllr. Eamon Aylward declared Cllr. Andrew McGuinness to be elected as Leas Cathaoirleach. Cllr. McGuinness thanked his proposer and seconder. He congratulated Cllr. Eamon Aylward on his election as Cathaoirleach and looked forward to working with him in the year ahead. He thanked Cllrs. Fitzgerald and Dunphy for their work during the past year.

Cllr. Eamon Aylward congratulated Cllr. Michael McCarthy and Cllr. Ger Frisby on their election as Chairs of the Castlecomer and Piltown Municipal Districts.

3. Dates for Ordinary Meetings

It was proposed by Cllr. Ger Frisby seconded by Cllr. M. H. Cavanagh and agreed:

"That the dates for the Ordinary Meetings of Kilkenny County Council will be as follows:

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| ▪ 18 th June, 2018 | ▪ 21 st January, 2019 |
| ▪ 16 th July, 2018 | ▪ 18 th February, 2019 |
| ▪ 17 th September, 2018 | ▪ 18 th March, 2019 |
| ▪ 15 th October, 2018 | ▪ [Bank Holiday - new date to be agreed] |
| ▪ 19 th November, 2018 | ▪ 15 th April, 2019 |
| ▪ 17 th December, 2018 | ▪ 20 th May, 2019 |

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____