



Kieran McCarthy

INDEPENDENT COUNCILLOR



Building our community together

Local Elections, 24 May 2019

www.kieranmccarthy.ie www.corkheritage.ie

Hello!

Dia Dhuit, My name is Kieran McCarthy and I am running to continue my tenure in your community as an Independent councillor in the upcoming local elections. Over the past five years, I have completed my manifesto as set out in 2014.

I wish to thank people for their insights, help and courtesy in driving my work forward as a councillor. It remains a steep learning curve to maintain an Independent platform in the world of local politics but an enjoyable and thought provoking journey nonetheless.

I would now like to continue to build on your specific interests in the development of our area and the city. I wish to take this opportunity to tell you what my values and vision are for our community and what I hope to achieve for the area if re-elected. Inside this flyer you will find information on my ideas, passions, work in City Hall and my community initiatives.

Please feel free to contact me with your concerns and issues. The details are at the back of this brochure.

The New Cork City South East Local Electoral Area, 2019



The revised south east local electoral area will be a six-seater – losing one seat from its present seven. It encompasses the “local electoral areas of Ballinlough A, Ballinlough B, Ballinlough C, Browningstown, City Hall B, Knockrea A, Knockrea B, Mahon A, Mahon B, Mahon C, the parts of the electoral division of Douglas that fall within the Cork City boundary but are not included in the Cork City South Central electoral area; and the parts of the electoral division of Monkstown Rural that fall within the Cork City boundary”.

The new South East Local Electoral Area has many challenges such as affordability of houses, sustainability of transport routes, the need for regeneration in old villages such as Douglas, Blackrock and Ballintemple and the need to enhance and develop parkland and walks for recreational needs from Docklands and Ballinlough to Mahon and Rochestown. There is a long list. There are also exciting prospects in resolving such challenges. Top of the resolution mechanisms is finance, which must be leveraged by Cork City Council and given by government to develop Cork as Ireland’s southern capital and a European regional city hub.

KIERAN'S WORK

Cork City Council, 2009-2014, 2014-2019

- **Member of Planning Functional Committee** advocacy on: regeneration of inner city, enterprise & business promotion of the city, dereliction, vacant shop units, revamp of Cork Docklands Plan, heritage incorporation and adequate place making in city development plans to include community resources and recreational areas.
- **Member of Housing Functional Committee** advocacy on: residents for vacant social housing units, reducing homelessness via more effective deployment of homeless funding across agencies, affordable housing development and community development viz-a-viz promotion of community warden schemes and activities.
- **Member of Tourism, Events, Arts, Marketing Strategic Planning Committee** advocacy on: development of policy and creation of strategies to promote festivals, arts, heritage, tourism and cultural development in the city and a work programme for Elizabeth Fort and the use of the old Shandon Craft Centre.
- **Member of Southern Regional Assembly** advocacy on: developing a regional spatial strategy as part of National Planning Framework, deployment of urban funding from EU Cohesion Policy programme, pushing for the Irish roll-out of Local Authority EU Funding Officers in every local authority in the Republic of Ireland.
- **Member of Board of Directors, National Sculpture Factory, Cork** advocacy on: expansion of services, education and cultural development.
- **Board of Directors, Firkin Crane, Shandon** advocacy on: redevelopment of centre, education, and marketing
- **Chair, Cork Coventry Twinning Committee** advocacy on: progress on new business contacts, community projects between Cork community groups and Coventry Irish Society, management of oral history project on Coventry Irish entitled *Coventry Heart, Ireland Home*.
- **Member of Irish delegation with Department of Local Government to European Committee of the Regions** advocacy on: promotion of Cork's participation in Interregional Co-operation programmes (Interreg), lobbying for urban funding for EU Regional Cities, Cork to host EU Maritime Day; entry by Cork into European Entrepreneurial Region award, European Region of Gastronomy and Smart City and Digital City challenge programmes for regional cities; representing the COR in cities and regions in Europe promoting Digital Single Market programmes and EU Urban Agenda entrepreneurship & enterprise development, science for all citizen programmes.

Kieran's Manifesto



1 **Recreation & Amenity:** I will promote and develop better facilities in the community.

In the Cork City Development Plan it is important that we devise services and plans for the South East Local Electoral Area that will enhance the sporting and cultural facilities of our community. This includes the future of our old and new parks such as Marina Park and Tramore Valley Park with links to Grange, improving and developing playgrounds, community centres, sports and youth facilities.

2 **Environment & Sustainability:** I will push Cork City's challenge to become a European Green Capital.

The Award recognises cities that are leading the way with environmentally friendly urban living. The initiative was launched by the European Commission in 2008. It aims to reward cities, which are making efforts to improve the urban environment and move towards healthier and sustainable living areas. It covers diverse urban agenda topics such as sustainable land use, local transport sustainability (bus and bicycle programmes), housing, urban forestry management, nature and biodiversity, air quality, suitable flood defence programmes, waste production and management. The award aspires to create an integrated environmental management system where all stakeholders are engaged.

3 **Marketing the City Centre:** I will promote a marketing plan for Cork.

Marketing Cork is crucial to keep it vibrant and attractive. The City Council and city and suburban traders need to develop mechanisms to face off against the challenges of online buying. The City Centre has a strong sense of place – we need to keep capturing this sense of place and continue to make it meaningful and 'personable' to citizens. Trade and business in the city is diverse. Sometimes I feel the sense of diverseness is perhaps not celebrated enough.

4 **Local Government Reform:** I will foster greater local government reform.

We need to spend wisely, changing old habits and looking to more efficient and effective ways of doing things. There needs to be greater accountability and transparency in how local government departments communicate. I believe that I have influenced and challenged the complacency of local politics and government. Change has to happen at a local level in order to impact national politics. For my part, I have tried to remain open and genuine with people and in the decisions I have made in the Council chamber. I have chosen not to attend conferences in order to redirect those costs towards supplementing my own financial investment in education programmes in Cork.

5 **Civic Awareness, Culture & Community Work:** I will encourage more community participation through the provision of community and school civic awareness programmes and events.

Learning, education, citizenship engagement, participation empowerment, social inclusion and building community capacity are all concepts I have designed, curated and woven into my community initiatives over many years now. Historical walking tours, newspaper articles & school work remain foundations of my work. I work with pupils across 20 schools in the City with the Discover Cork Schools' Heritage Project. I also work with young people through my investment of my councillor expenses and salary in creating annual youth projects such as McCarthy's Community Talent Competition and McCarthy's Make a Model Boat Project as well as adult participant projects such as the establishment of Cork City Musical Society.

Kieran McCarthy

Civic Awareness, Culture & Community Work

LOCAL HISTORY ADVOCATE

■ **Our City, Our Town** column in *Cork Independent* September 1999-ongoing:

Beginning in October 1999, my series, *Our City, Our Town*, is now nearing the 1000th article (self-funded). For me, it has been such an enjoyable experience. The first number of years focussed on the city and its development through the centuries. Over the ensuing years, the series has been concerned with the heritage of the River Lee Valley, the story of technical education, regional history and Cork 100 years ago. Visit www.corkheritage.ie for indices of the column for the past 20 years.

■ **The Walking Tours**

Beginning as a city centre tour 25 years ago, in the past decade I have developed suburban tours. The suburban tours are free to the public and are regularly given on during the spring to autumn seasons of the year (self-funded). There are now 22 different tours of different neighbourhoods of the city. Audience attendances can vary from 20 to 120 people. My aim is to create for each neighbourhood of the city a tour to capture its development, heritage and engage people in getting them interested in their local history and sharing their memories and stories.

■ **Discover Cork: Schools' Heritage Project** (2003-present day)

The Discover Cork: Schools' Heritage Project is entering its 17th year. It encourages students to compile a project on any aspect of Cork history. It is about exploring and investigating local heritage in a constructive, active and fun way. Interested students can pick any topic on Cork's local history to research and can participate as individuals, groups or as a class. Students produce a project using primary material such as fieldwork, interviews, making models and short films of their area. On average, 20 City Schools enter every year with 800 students participating across primary and secondary level. The project is funded by Cork City Council.

■ **Publications**

I am the author of 22 local history books, many of them published by publishing houses in Ireland and the UK; *Pathways Through Time*, *Historical Walking Trails of Cork City* (2001), *Cork: A Pictorial Journey* (co-written 2001), *Discover Cork* (2003), *A Dream Unfolding*, *Portrait of St Patrick's Hospital* (2004), *Voices of Cork: The Knitting Map Speaks* (2005), *In the Steps of St Finbarre*, *Voices and Memories of the Lee Valley* (2006), *Generations: Memories of the Lee Hydroelectric Scheme* (co-written, 2008), *Inheritance, Heritage and Memory in the Lee Valley*, *Co. Cork* (2010), *Royal Cork Institution, Pioneer of Education* (2010), *Munster Agricultural Society, The Story of the Cork Showgrounds* (2010), *Cork City Through Time* (co-written, 2012), *Journeys of Faith, Our Lady of Lourdes Church Ballinlough*, *Celebrating 75 Years* (2013), *West Cork Through Time* (co-written, 2013), *Cork Harbour Through Time* (co-written, 2014), *Little Book of Cork* (2015), *North Cork Through Time* (co-written, 2015), *Ring of Kerry, The Postcard Collection* (2015), *Cork 1916: A Year Examined* (co-written, 2016), *Cork City Centre Tour* (2016), *Secret Cork* (2017), *Cork in Fifty Buildings* (2018) and *Little Book of Cork Harbour* (2019).

COMMUNITY PROJECT ADVOCATE

■ **McCarthy's Community Talent Competition** (2009-present day)

The Talent Competition is 11 years old and is funded by me and produced in association with Red Sandstone Varied Productions (RSVP). It is a community initiative for young people. We generally get to audition people who have very little experience of performing. Within the audition process there is friendly feedback from our judges and if the auditionee gets through there are workshops to offer advice and support. The talent competition is all about encouraging young people to develop their talents and creative skills, to push forward with their lives and to embrace their community positively.

■ **McCarthy's Make a Model Boat Project** (2011-present day)

It's the eighth year of *McCarthy's Make a Model Boat Project*. All interested young people must make a model boat at home from recycled materials and bring it along for judging to The Lough on a date in early summer. The event is run in association with Meitheal Mara's Cork Harbour Festival. There are prizes for best models and the event is free to enter through funding which I provide.

■ **Cork City Musical Society** (2014-present day):

In 2014, I founded and invested in Cork City Musical Society as a tangent of my participation as an actor in theatre and performance. Musical societies are multiple in nature up and down the country. All bring their local communities together under a volunteer and charity umbrella – collaborating and bringing people together to create an outlet for people and to put drama and music on a stage. These productions form a key cultural vein within towns and villages. The creation of an amateur musical society brings together many strands but in particular focuses on the aspect of community building and the promotion of musical theatre amongst adults and the idea of inclusivity and self-development for all who wish to engage with it.

SKILLSETS & INTERESTS

I am a born and bred Cork man. Growing up in Ballinlough, I developed a great love for my hometown and today remain dedicated to promoting the past, present and future of my city and region.

Education:

After attending Coláiste Chríost Rí, I went on to study Archaeology and Geography at University College Cork. On completing my Joint Honours BA degree, I went on to undertake a M.Phil in Geography. Even after devoting four years to furthering my knowledge of the city, I wasn't satisfied to leave my love of all things Cork and completed a PhD in Geography on cultural heritage within the River Lee Valley and the importance of remembering, identity and protecting our historic landscapes.

Local History Advocate:

For the past twenty years, my weekly column in the *Cork Independent, Our City Our Town* has addressed the local history of Cork City but also the River Lee Valley and Cork Harbour. I have written 22 books dedicated to Cork and its region. My commitment to instilling a sense of pride in the community is demonstrated through my series of historical walking tours, *Cork Independent* local history column, publications and involvement in well-established school projects currently running in Cork. I founded the *Discover Cork: Schools' Heritage Project* in 2003. I was awarded Cork Person of the Month for my heritage work in January 2017.

Councillor Role:

I was elected to Cork City Council in June 2009 and May 2014 as an Independent City Councillor. I sit on the Housing, Planning and TEAM (Tourism, Events, Arts and Marketing) functional committees,

the TEAM Strategic Policy Committee, the City Council's Arts Committee, the City Council's Heritage Forum, Commemoration Committee and the Cork-Coventry twinning sub committee.

Member, European Committee of the Regions:

In January 2015, I was appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government to be an Irish member on the European Committee of the Regions (an opinion body of local authorities and regional assemblies from across the EU) to the European Commission and European Parliament. I hold membership of the subcommittee or Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) and have personal interests in the new Skills Agenda, informal and formal education, lifelong learning, the Digital Single Market, the European economy in machine read data, smart specialisation, science and innovation in regions and cities, cities and regions of the future, youth and sport, socio-cultural effects of IoT. I also hold membership of subcommittee or the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (COTER) and have personal interests in making sure smaller EU regional capitals such as Cork get access to Urban funding and Interregional Co-operation (Interreg) programmes. I am Rapporteur on the opinion documents, Digitising European Industry, Building a European Data Economy, and the EU Urban Agenda.

Other Interests:

I believe in living life to the full and when I have any spare time I enjoy horse-riding, acting, singing, photography, writing and getting involved in community activities. I am also an avid fan of the arts. I have been fortunate to receive the President's Gold Gaisce medal award, the President's Cup for singing in the Feis Maitiú, and the Chief Scout Award.

