**Minutes of Special Meeting of Cavan County Council held in The Council Chamber, Courthouse, Cavan on Friday 20th January, 2023 at 3.00p.m.**

Councillor J.P. Feeley, Cathaoirleach presiding

Present; Councillors M. Argue, W. Bennett, C. Brady, P. Brady, B. Fay,

 A. Fitzpatrick, C. Kelly, C. Lovett, P. McDonald, P. McVitty, S. O’Reilly,

S.P. O’Reilly, T.P. O’Reilly, T. Smith, V. Smith, P. Walsh.

In Attendance; T. Ryan, Chief Executive

 B. Jennings, Director of Service

 P. Connaughton, Director of Service

 E. Doyle, Director of Service

 M. McNally, A/Head of Finance

 L. McGavigan, Senior Executive Officer

 E. McGinn, Senior Staff Officer

Councillor J.P. Feeley welcomed all to the meeting particularly members of the Smith Family, Bawnboy.

Councillor J.P. Feeley noted that this Special Meeting is being held to pay tribute to the late Councillor S. Smith who passed away on Sunday 15th January 2023 peacefully at home.

Councillor Feeley offered his sincere condolences to his wife Anne, children Emer, Áine, Conor and Killian, their spouses, his grandchildren, his brothers and sister and the wider family on the death of Sean. Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that Sean was first elected to Cavan County Council in 1979 and continued his father’s John F. Smith’s record of public service continuously for the next forty three years. Sean held the position of Cathaoirleach on two separate occasions over that time. Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that not only had he given extraordinary service to his community and county over those years, he also represented County Cavan on many bodies including the Association of County and City Councils and the previous General Council LAMA, the Northern & Western Regional Assembly, the Transportation, Infrastructure and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee and most recently the Cavan Monaghan Educational and Training Board. He stated that Sean was a passionate advocate for local education particularly for St. Mogue’s College Bawnboy and St. Bricin’s College, Belturbet. Councillor J.P. Feeley stated that he knew Sean all his life and he always valued and respected his wise judgement, clear thinking, insight and practical approach. He stated that he brought his years of experience, determination and good humour to bear on his work on behalf of his constituents and communities around the County. He stated that he was a strong advocate on agricultural issues being a hard working and progressive farmer. He stated that his commitment to farming interests and community was best exemplified in his work on securing the re-opening of the Ballinamore/Ballyconnell Canal now the Shannon-Erne Waterway and working with landowners to ensure that this would not negatively impact on their farms. Councillor Feeley noted that Sean rarely ever missed a meeting and he attended the January monthly meeting online. Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked Sean’s family for their help in making it possible for him to join meetings online.

Councillor P. Walsh, Leas Cathaoirleach of Cavan County Council and Cathaoirleach of the Cavan Belturbet Municipal District stated that it was a privilege to have sat alongside Sean in the Council chamber and serve with him for so many years. Councillor Walsh stated that Sean treated everybody with respect and dignity and she will miss him as a friend and colleague.

Councillor P. McVitty joined in the votes of sympathy to the Smith Family and stated that he had served on the Council for twenty-three years with Sean. Councillor McVitty noted that despite their differences in politics, they both shared a singular dedication and that was working for proper services for their area.

Councillor B. Fay stated that Sean was a rock of sense and as a new Councillor to the chamber Sean was always willing to give him advice and guide him.

Councillor M. Argue joined in the votes of sympathy with the Smith family and noted that from listening to her brother Niall, Sean was the hardest marked footballer on the field. Councillor Argue stated that Sean was a true GAA man, and he loved his family dearly.

Councillor C. Kelly extended his sympathy to the Smith family and stated that he served on Cavan County Council for thirty-eight years with Sean and they had a great friendship. Councillor Kelly noted that Sean was never afraid to tell you when you were wrong and noted that once a debate ended whatever the disagreement was, Sean was always prepared to move on. He stated that Sean was a sincere man who will be sadly missed by all Councillors in the Council Chamber.

Councillor T.P. O’Reilly offered his condolences to the Smith family and stated that even though he had only known Sean a short time he was a gentleman and a proud family man.

Councillor P. Brady expressed his condolences with the family and noted that Sean had a great love for football and was a proud man the day Templeport won the junior championship. He stated that Sean was passionate about his party, his family, his homeland and County. He stated that he fondly remembers Sean coming up to congratulate him after he got elected for the first time.

Councillor S. O’Reilly joined in the votes of sympathy with the Smith family and remembers his first meeting as a member of the CMETB where he made a passionate speech about saving the two West Cavan Secondary Schools. She stated that she was honoured to serve with Sean on Cavan County Council.

Councillor P. McDonald offered his condolences to the Smith Family and noted that there was a huge link broken in the Smith chain. He stated that Sean always put his community first and he will be a huge loss to Cavan County Council.

Councillor A. Fitzpatrick offered his condolences to the Smith family and stated that he was overwhelmed when Sean travelled to Tullyvin to congratulate him on being elected to Cavan County Council. He stated that he could always depend on Sean for good advice.

Councillor C. Lovett offered his condolences to the Smith family and stated that while he only knew Sean a few years he was an absolute gentleman and he will continue to admire Sean. He stated that when he was elected Sean spoke to him at length and was always there for advice.

Councillor W. Bennett offered his sympathy to the Smith family and stated that he sat on Cavan County Council for eighteen years with Sean. He stated that he always admired Sean’s work ethic and many a discussion they both had as dairy farmers.

Councillor C. Brady stated that she knew Sean before the political scene as she worked with his wife Anne in the Isle of Man and considered Sean a dear friend. She stated that Sean had a huge interest in education and was a man with a common sense approach.

Councillor S.P. O’Reilly joined in the votes of sympathy to the Smith family and noted that Sean was an extremely proud family man. He stated that Sean talked about his children and was so proud of their achievements. He stated that Sean was the proudest man in County Cavan the day his brother Brendan became Minister for Agriculture. He stated that Sean was like a father to all in the Chamber of Cavan County Council. He stated that Sean was the epitome of what it was to be an elected official.

Councillor V. Smith offered his sympathy to the Smith family stating that he served on the Council with Sean for fourteen years and he was a pure gentleman. Councillor V. Smith stated that Sean was a true sportsman who took pride in his club and County.

Councillor T. Smith offered his sympathy to the Smith family and stated that while he only served a short time on the Council with Sean he was a very compassionate man and a proud farmer.

Mr. Tommy Ryan, Chief Executive Officer joined in the votes of sympathy to the Smith family and noted that when he joined the Council seven years ago, he visited each Councillor and visited Sean in Bawnboy where he a got a great welcome. He stated that Sean was a people person who gave of himself to so many in a selfless and honourable manner. He stated that Sean was committed to public office and did his job well.

Mr. Paddy Connaughton, Director of Service offered his sympathy to the family and stated that from a personal point of view he had lost a very good friend and was proud to have known Sean. Mr. Connaughton stated that Sean was a hard man to say no to, because you knew that, if you did, he would keep coming back. He stated that Sean had great determination and a great sense of fairness. He stated that Sean epitomised all that is good about Cavan.

Mr. Brendan Jennings, Director of Service joined in the condolences to the Smith family and stated that Sean was always professional in what he did, and the sort of man that made you want to work for him. He stated that Sean knew what was important to the people of West Cavan. Mr. Jennings also noted the great interest Sean had in the GAA.

Mr. Eoin Doyle, Director of Service advised the Smith family of the respect the staff of Cavan County Council had for Sean. Mr. Doyle noted that political life is not an easy life but Sean left a legacy of achievements behind him that his family can be very proud of.

Mr. Margaret McNally, A/Head of Finance joined in the votes of sympathy to the Smith family and noted that she only knew Sean a little over four years. She stated that in those four years Sean was a pleasure to deal with and a true gentleman.

Councillor J.P. Feeley thanked the members and officials for their contribution and attendance at the meeting. Councillor Feeley also thanked the Smith family for attending the meeting.

The meeting concluded with a minute’s silence.

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Cathaoirleach: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_