



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Meath County Council

Protocol for the Office of An Cathaoirleach

(CS004/19)

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1. Introduction

An Cathaoirleach is the first citizen of County Meath and should be recognised as such at any function at which he/she is in attendance.

The Cathaoirleach should at all times be treated with the courtesy and respect to which the office and the holder of the office are entitled.

Although the Cathaoirleach is mentioned only, this protocol also applies to the Leas-Chathaoirleach where appropriate. The title Cathaoirleach refers to male or female.

2. Invitations to the Cathaoirleach

Organisations who invite the Cathaoirleach to attend their functions/events are advised to follow the procedures as outlined below so that the office of the Cathaoirleach is appropriately acknowledged.

An invitation to the Cathaoirleach to attend a function should be issued to the Cathaoirleach's Office, Meath County Council, three weeks in advance and should include the following:

- Title of the event
- The purpose of the event
- Date, time and expected duration
- Event venue
- Cathaoirleach's role at the event.

To facilitate this, an Event Invitation Form is available to groups/organisations on the Council's website (see Appendix D).

If the Cathaoirleach is unable to attend, he/she will be represented by the Leas-Chathaoirleach or by another nominated councillor.

Where it is requested or proposed that the Cathaoirleach attend an event or participate in a visit and where such attendance/participation requires additional Council resources (financial, human or organisational), the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive will jointly consider such requests/proposals.

3. Pre-Event Information

The following information should be sent to the Cathaoirleach's Office one week before the event.

- The running order, including all elements of the event and the order of speakers
- Details of the start and finish time
- Key guests attending the event
- Background information on the project/event
- Details of photographs to be taken and/or presence of media

- Details of reception/refreshments as appropriate
- Contact details of organiser.

If the purpose of the event is to launch a book/brochure a copy of the item should be sent to the Cathaoirleach's office in advance.

If a hosting organisation is issuing a press release, a copy should be forwarded to the Cathaoirleach's Office in advance. If requested, the Cathaoirleach may supply a quote to be included in the press release.

4. At the Event

A member of the organising committee, ideally the Chairperson, should be assigned to welcome the Cathaoirleach on arrival, escort him/her to the event and introduce him/her as necessary. The Cathaoirleach will generally arrive by car and a convenient parking space should be identified/reserved beforehand by the host.

The Chain of Office will be worn by the Cathaoirleach or his/her deputy at all Council events and other events, subject to security arrangements.

The Cathaoirleach should be seated in a prominent position, in accordance with the position as first citizen of the county.

In any formal introductions at the function, the Cathaoirleach should be introduced as follows:

"An Comhairleoir (name), Cathaoirleach Comhairle Chontae na Mí" or if preferred:

"Councillor (name), Cathaoirleach of Meath County Council".

The only circumstance in which the Cathaoirleach is not mentioned first in a list of introductions is when the President of Ireland is in attendance. The President as first citizen of the country takes precedence in that case.

Where there is a formal list of speakers the Cathaoirleach should speak first. If for particular reasons a different order is necessary the order should be agreed in advance with the Cathaoirleach.

A rostrum should be provided where formal speeches are being made.

At the conclusion of the function, the Cathaoirleach should be escorted to his/her car by the host or his/her representative.