



EDITOR'S COMMENT

Following numerous conflicting reports – most notably the Smiddy Report, the Keogh & Reidy Report, the Bovaird Report and more recently the Mackinnon Report – over the proposed merger of Cork's city and county councils into a single authority for Cork, the extension of the city's boundary is now under review as a possible alternative.

In this issue of 'Council Review' UCC's lecturer in politics at the Department of Government, Dr Aodh Quinlivan, who is the Director of the Centre for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG), candidly outlines his own viewpoint on why a merger would never work in Cork.

He claims that the overwhelming weight of international research evidence suggests that local government amalgamations do not lead to efficiencies, savings and economies of scale.

In Dr Quinlivan's opinion, the main positive is that the "merger madness is off the table", and points out that while Cork County Council concedes that a boundary extension is needed, he says this is progress, even though the size of the extension is clearly problematic.

He believes that what is needed now is a decisive decision by the Implementation Group as to where the line will be drawn, followed by a ministerial order/legislation to make it happen.

He is the author of six books, the most recent of which was just published in September. So, it's quite timely then, given the continuing debate and analysis over Cork's boundary extension, that '*Dissolved: The remarkable story of how Cork lost its Corporation in 1924*' will be launched in the Council Chamber of Cork City Hall on Thursday 26 October, by the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Tony Fitzgerald and UCC President Prof Patrick O'Shea.

When a resolution is finally reached over Cork's boundary extension, it would not be too surprising if other local authorities, such as Galway's City and County Councils, were to revisit the proposed amalgamation to create a single authority for the county.

This may have been rejected in Galway some months ago, but there's nothing to say that will not be back on the agenda sometime soon. After all, the mergers of city and county councils have worked quite effectively in Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary!

Grace Heneghan
Editor
grace@oceanpublishing.ie

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A total of 23 local authorities have made the shortlist for the 14th Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2017, which will be presented later this year in Dublin.

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With Cork in the midst of yet another increasingly bitter Civil War about where the boundary line should be drawn between the jurisdictions of both city and county councils, at least one positive from the latest battle is that the 'merger madness' has been discredited and is off the table, writes Dr Aodh Quinlivan, Director of UCC's Centre for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG).

30 EUROPEAN VOLUNTEERING CAPITAL

As Sligo's year-long tenure as European Volunteering Capital (EVC) 2017 draws to a close, Dorothy Clarke, Director of Services at Sligo County Council, reflects on what this high-profile EU award has meant for the northwest county.

35 FUTURE OF TOWNS SUMMIT 2017

As uncertainty surrounds BREXIT for consumers and retailers alike, an all-island summit that aims to help resource our towns and villages to regenerate and work together to bring positive change to communities around Ireland will take place on 18 October in Sligo.



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37 - 79 REBUILDING & REGENERATION

Arising from the first phase of the review of Rebuilding Ireland – the Government's action plan on housing and homelessness – 'Council Review' takes a look at the raft of measures announced by the Housing Minister Eoghan Murphy at the recent Housing Summit in Dublin. We also profile the developers and the housing associations who are collaborating to provide social and affordable housing developments across the country.

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COUNCIL REVIEW

14 Upper Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin 2.

Tel: 01-6785165

Fax: 01-6785191

Email: councilreview@oceanpublishing.ie

Web: www.oceanpublishing.ie

Editor

Grace Heneghan

Managing Director

Patrick Aylward

Graphic Design

Catherine Doyle

Advertisement Co-ordinator

Audrey Fitzgerald

For circulation and subscription queries
please email: admin@councilreview.ie

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The signing of a contract to transform the East Tip on Haulbowline Island into a state-of-the-art public park marks a significant milestone for Cork County Council in its role as Agent to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine for this remediation project.



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An Irish software start-up has teamed up with Clare County Council to boost lifeguarding operations by trialling the use of drone technology, which will be deployed as automated beach patrols for the first time ever in Ireland.

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Celebrating the first anniversary of its hybrid car share initiative, rolled out in Dublin last year, Toyota Ireland is now starting consultations with county councils around the country to research potential locations that would benefit from this type of 'pay as you go' service.

104 NATIONAL LITTER SURVEY

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105 CARBON MONOXIDE AWARENESS

Ireland's sixth annual Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week again highlighted the dangers associated with carbon monoxide and created an awareness to educate the public on preventative measures to combat this 'silent killer'.

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This new section features recent appointments, promotions and recruitment opportunities across the public service sector.



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110 SERVICE DESIGN

Cork County Council has partnered with Cork Institute of Technology to establish Ireland's first public sector service design centre. Based in County Hall Cork, Service rePublic aims to help people to have better lives by delivering the best services for all.

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