



## **AILG launches Strategic Partnership with Maynooth University**

*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021*

The Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) have signed a two-year Strategic Partnership with Maynooth University and their International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). The reason for this partnership is to advance AILG's Professional Policy, Research and Advocacy Programme.

The agreement was signed by AILG President Cllr Mary Hoade and Professor Brian Donnellan, Vice President of Engagement and Innovation at Maynooth University.

As part of the strategic partnership, an independent research study on "The 21st Century Councillor in Irish Local Government" will be undertaken by Maynooth University, with support and collaboration from the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG).

Remarking on the potential of this new partnership, President Councillor Hoade said:

"I am delighted to announce the strategic partnership today with Maynooth University which marks an exciting new chapter for the Association. This research project will contribute hugely to better understanding the training needs and capacity building supports required by Ireland's 949 elected members.

The role of the Councillor has evolved and changed rapidly in the past few years, with elected members now viewed as stewards of place, advocates for change, place-makers, entrepreneurs and place-based leaders. As the national representative body that represents and supports the role of our elected councillors, we believe it is vital to put the Councillors voices to the forefront of local government and to see research that seeks to investigate, understand and promote the ability of Councillors to provide civic leadership, devise public policy, oversee and enable service delivery and engender democratic participation and engagement, among other functions. "

The partnership also will seek to explore ways to work together on new policy papers to support AILG policy development on topical issues emerging at Local Government and local authority level and will also include the development of a Certified Training Programme for Elected Members. Commenting on Maynooth University's role as a civic university committed to addressing multi-scalar challenges, nurturing innovation and contributing to the public good, Prof. Brian Donnellan said: "Maynooth University is looking forward to the contribution of this new strategic partnership to the research, teaching, civic and societal mission of the University. We are delighted to support the mission of the AILG in the development and implementation of local government policy and excited at the prospect of co-creating a vision for future services at the local, regional and national level."

This partnership is recognised as being mutually beneficial to both AILG and MU as they contribute to policy that is evidence-informed, and provide the relevant supports to both elected officials and wider society in place-shaping and building strong democratic communities.

**Ends**

#### **NOTE TO EDITOR**

The Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) is the primary body representing the democratically elected members and their member local authority. It is a networking, policy development and training resource for the elected members of Ireland's thirty-one county and city councils.

For further information please contact

Elaine Lynch (AILG Communications Officer)

Tel: 087-3470274

Email: [e.lynch@ailg.ie](mailto:e.lynch@ailg.ie)

[www.ailg.ie](http://www.ailg.ie)