

# LIMERICK LEADER

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## LIMERICK LEADER DINE IN LIMERICK WEEK – NOW ON!

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# McLoughlin to challenge Fine Gael for mayoralty

- Rugby legend would 'put his heart and soul into job'
- But Mayor Kiely claims: 'It's there for me if I want it'

Nick Rabbitts

LABOUR looks set to run a candidate in the upcoming mayoral election, with former rugby star Gerry McLoughlin likely to make a challenge for the chain.

But current Mayor Kevin Kiely has not given up on securing a second term in office, criticising his Fine Gael colleagues for making an issue of it, and claiming: "It is there for me if I want it."

Although Labour is not due to meet until Monday, party leader Joe Leddin has indicated his party will run a candidate against southside councillor Maria Byrne, Fine Gael's official candidate.

City East councillor McLoughlin said he would put his "heart and soul" into the job, if he won election as Mayor next Monday, while northside councillor Tom Shortt said he thinks Labour supporters would "expect" the party to take advantage of a divide in Fine Gael to secure the mayoralty. Elsewhere, Cllr Joe Leddin confirmed his support for Cllr McLoughlin.



**Cllr Gerry McLoughlin: "We need someone in the chair who can represent everyone"**

To secure a term as mayor, Cllr McLoughlin would have to win the support of at least one member of the Fine Gael group - which holds a majority at City Hall - as well as the two independent councillors, Sinn Féin and Fianna Fáil.

But with rumours that Mayor Kiely may seek a second term in office, it is not inconceivable that he will come to a deal with the opposition groups, which could secure Labour a mayoralty at least once during this council's term.

A former Shannon, Munster and Ireland prop, Cllr McLoughlin is the longest serving Labour

councillor not to have been mayor, following Cllr Joe Leddin's term in 2006-07.

Cllr McLoughlin told the Leader: "I would put my heart and soul into the job. It is a tremendous honour. I would be involved in many civic groups, representing different people, and I think I would give a fair representation. We need someone in the chair who can represent everyone."

Cllr McLoughlin argued that under Fine Gael's five-year plan, there would be no representative from the City East constituency. He does not think this is fair.

"City East is a huge part of Limerick. It's important people realise one person from each area of the city should have the opportunity [to be mayor]. It's not good for democracy for five mayors to come from the same party. Fine Gael could still have three mayoralties, but it should be spread around. Fine Gael having its arms around everything smacks of a dictatorship," Cllr McLoughlin said.

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## Double take: window model sells a dummy to city shoppers



**Spot the dummy: Dan Mooney in the window of Connolly Man, Patrick Street, this Thursday**

## Mooney's the mannequin for the job

Suzanne O'Brien

SHOPPERS did a double take as they passed a window display with a twist on Patrick Street this Thursday - which was home to a living mannequin for the day.

The living mannequin in question, who surprised passers-by with an occasional twitch and a wink, was Limerickman Dan Mooney, posing as a dummy for the day in the window of Connolly Man as part of his self-set challenge entitled 'Project 366'.

After securing a permanent job in the public sector early this year - around the same time many of his friends were planning their round-the-world trips - Dan decided to set him-



**Aine Madigan and Aija Dovgale of Connolly Man on Patrick Street checking out their new live mannequin, Dan Mooney**

PICTURE: ADRIAN BUTLER

self a personal challenge to complete one new experience a day for a year.

"I found myself going from

work to home, from work to home, everyday. Meanwhile my friends were going here, there and everywhere.

"The best thing I could come up with was to experience one new thing everyday so I began to make a list of possibilities in January," said Dan.

"Project 366" then began on the day of Mooney's 26th birthday, April 14, and sees him completing one brand new activity each day until he turns 27.

The Limerick Leader joined Mooney on day 65 of the challenge where he was getting set to pose as a live mannequin in the window of the Connolly Man store on Patrick Street.

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**Roxboro roundabout: John Carew Link Road will be out of bounds for incoming traffic from next Monday**

## Carew Park Link Road to close to facilitate tunnel

David Hurley

CONTROVERSIAL proposals to close the Carew Park Link Road to inbound traffic are to be implemented from Monday to facilitate the opening of the Limerick Tunnel at the end of this month.

The link road, which opened in 2001, currently provides access to the city from the Rosbrien Interchange for motorists travelling from Croom, Adare, Newcastle West and Cork who have not taken the Raheen or Dooradoyle exits off the motorway.

A spokesperson for the roads department at Limerick City Council confirmed the changes will come into effect on Monday. Outbound traffic will not be affected but motorists travelling on the M20 will have to take the Raheen exit and enter the city via the Dock Road and Raheen, or leave the M20 at the Dooradoyle exit and come through Dooradoyle or Greenfields Road by Young Munster RFC.

"This is a dark day for the southside of the city and it will have disastrous consequences," said Cllr Jim Long, who has accused the National Roads Authority of ignor-

ing the concerns of people living and working in the area. "Our concerns were raised more than four years ago and they did not listen. The NRA are a law into themselves and they simply don't care," he said.

Sean O'Neill of the NRA rejected the criticism, saying the decision was taken following a public consultation process, which was initiated by Limerick City Council. "This was done at the request of the local authority and there was a public process.

"If they want to call it a dark day then they should look in the mirror," he told the Limerick Leader.

Cllr Ger Fahy said he is disappointed a compromise could not be found. "This is an insult to local people and I'm concerned that a lot of motorists will opt to use the Greenfields Road which will not be able to cope," he said.

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## FG crisis could be city's gain

Mike Dwane

FINE Gael's leadership crisis has split loyalties in Limerick this week among TDs and councillors but party members are in agreement it presents an opportunity to promote a city TD to the front bench.

Members are hopeful this will lead to one of Michael Noonan or Kieran O'Donnell holding an important economic portfolio in the next government if the party is returned to power.

In a dramatic development on Wednesday, Deputy O'Donnell came out in favour of Richard Bruton - less than 48 hours after Enda Kenny appointed the Limerick TD as the party's acting finance spokesman to replace the leader of the rebel camp.

Daniel Phillips, 20, from Crecora Avenue, Ballinacurra Weston was injured when the car he was driving was targeted by a gunman at John's Square at around 9.30pm on May 24 last. A number of shots were fired at the car shortly after it pulled into John's Square, near St John's Cathedral.

A second volley of shots was discharged as the black Volkswagen Passat sped away from the area. The other occupants of the car were not injured in the shooting and the gunman escaped from the area on a pedal bicycle.



**Michael Noonan: remained silent on FG leadership battle**

And while both Limerick West TD Dan Neville and Sean Kelly MEP are backing Enda Kenny, Michael Noonan this week refused to discuss the leadership question. While sources earlier this week said Deputy Noonan was likely to support Richard Bru-



**Shooting victim Daniel Phillips has shown some improvement on his condition this week**

Mr Phillips underwent emergency surgery at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital in Dooradoyle within an hour of the shooting and he was later transferred to Cork University Hospital for further treatment. Initial reports that he had died from his injuries proved incorrect and this Thursday a spokesman for the HSE Southern Region confirmed

ton, he told the Limerick Leader it would be "inappropriate as a former party leader" to voice an opinion in public. He did tell reporters outside the Dail this week that the heave had not come as a surprise as there had been concern in the party over the leadership for some time.

But as the parliamentary party remained locked indoors at the time of going to press, one source said "that doesn't necessarily mean Michael will vote no confidence in Enda Kenny, even people who are very close to him don't know how he will go".

There has been speculation Enda Kenny could cut a deal with the Limerick TD he replaced as party leader to return to the front bench as finance spokesman.

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## Gun victim out of intensive care

David Hurley

A YOUNG Limerick man who was critically injured when he sustained gunshot wounds to the head and body almost a month ago was this week transferred out of intensive care following an improvement in his condition.

Daniel Phillips, 20, from Crecora Avenue, Ballinacurra Weston was injured when the car he was driving was targeted by a gunman at John's Square at around 9.30pm on May 24 last. A number of shots were fired at the car shortly after it pulled into John's Square, near St John's Cathedral.

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he is no longer on life support and that his condition has improved from critical to stable.

A major garda investigation is continuing and one man is currently before the courts after he was charged in connection with the shooting.

Shane Mason, 28, with an address at Sean Heuston Place in the city is accused of possession of a firearm and ammunition with intent to endanger life on May 24 last contrary to section 15 of the Firearms Act. Detectives have viewed over 200 hours of CCTV footage and dozens of witnesses have been interviewed as part of the investigation. A file is expected to be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions shortly. A special incident room has been established at Henry Street garda station which can be contacted at (061) 212400.

## Green bus lane 'will cope with parking needs'

Nick Rabbitts

LIMERICK City Council has said it will be able to accommodate the "existing parking demand" on the route of a proposed new green bus lane from O'Connell Avenue to the boundary.

But local councillor Maria Byrne says 98 per cent of the community is still against the revised plan - and predicted the €2.4m scheme could become a "waste of money", once the Limerick Tunnel opens.

This week, proposals for Limerick city's third green bus route - stretching over 2.2km between the Mallow Street/O'Connell Street junction to the county boundary at the end of the South Circular Road - were placed on display at City Hall.

These show that the bus lanes will only operate between 7.30-9.30am, and 4.30-6.30pm, with engineer Rory McDermott stating: "The existing parking demand is accommodated in the design."

Parking is available all the way down the proposed priority bus route, in some cases on both sides, after residents expressed fears over a loss of parking amenity.

And although the bus lanes will initially only operate at peak traffic times, Mr McDermott said they could also be opened up for day-long use after a trial period. Fine Gael councillor Byrne - who lives along the route - says the community is still very much against the proposals, fearing a reduction in car parking spaces, as well as having concerns over the safety of elderly residents.

She confirmed the O'Connell Avenue/Ballinacurra Residents Association - which set up a special sub-committee to deal with the bus lanes issue - has sought a meeting with city hall management, but are yet to hear back.

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