**President’s address to Clonliffe Harriers AGM 2024**

**Introduction**Good evening members of Clonliffe Harriers you are all very welcome to the Clonliffe Harriers AGM.

Tonight’s meeting gives you the members an opportunity to review the past year from an athletic, financial and administrative point of view.
Various reports have been outlined to you tonight and you are given have an opportunity to provide your comments and observations. The AGM is an important forum to get feedback from members so we look forward to your contributions at this meeting.

**Club with wonderful history**

The club has had a wonderful history. Founded in 1886 this makes the club one of the oldest athletics clubs in the country. Each year we remember those who passed away and acknowledge their contribution to that rich history. Each of you tonight will recall past deceased members who contributed their time, talent and expertise to make this club what it is today.
The club has and continues to provide many exciting moments in the field of athletics both nationally and internationally. This continuing legacy continues to be a source of pride and inspiration for our current membership.
I am sure you will agree that no club can survive on its past achievements. Maintaining a club with the stature of Clonliffe requires had work and dedication on the part of you the members whether you are an athlete, coach, official or whatever your role as a club member. Your contribution is highly valued and much appreciated

**Current performance and looking to the future**
If you look at the performance of the club at the present and we have seen this in the Men’s, Ladies and Juvenile Captains reports there are very positive signs. Both our Senior Men’s and Women’s teams are now getting podium places. I am delighted to see the tremendous progress Clonliffe ladies are making at all levels. I am also delighted to see the progress being made by Clonliffe women and Men in Field events. Only yesterday at the National Spring Throws in Tullamore yesterday Clonliffe athletes captured titles and gold medals – Grace Casey, Simon Galligan and Frances Mansfield.

The club membership continues to grow and is now 554 members.
On any training night or Sunday morning the club is a hive of activity. We have wonderful dedicated coaches at all levels and disciplines. Our athletes, juveniles, juniors, seniors and masters represent themselves and their club with pride. They compete both nationally and internationally. The club also provides in-house opportunities for competition at all levels and disciplines.

**Club volunteers**
We have a dedicated number of Member volunteers that make all inhouse and external competitions possible. Could I pay tribute to Johnny O’Leary our Clonliffe Harrier of the Year who is at every event and happens to be the longest serving member. Members officiate at local and national level. I would like to acknowledge the work done by Paddy Marley, Noreen Keane, George Maybury, Alan WorralI, and Bernie Dunne who volunteer on behalf of the club at AAI events. The Club has a good working relationship with Athletics Ireland and we will continue to foster that relationship. I would also like to thank those Members who volunteer at Dublin Graded, Cross County and other events. Only last Saturday we had a great turnout of Member volunteers for the Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales Junior and intermediate Schools International Cross Country in Abbotstown.

**Hosting events**

The club has a tradition of hosting National and International events. Witness the success of The Brothers Cross Country and the ever expanding Morton Games. The Morton Games, thanks to the dedicated hard work of Noel Guiden and the LOC, is now a Continental Tour Bronze, The Grand Prix continues to provide much valuable competition for our athletes and guests who enter each year I would like to thank all those members who gave of their time to assist with those events.

As President I would encourage members to become more active in the club either as a coach or a volunteer. For a small effort the rewards are significant. To our athletes could I ask that you, when selected or asked, you compete for your club. One of the greatest thrills is to represent your club.

**Sponsorship**

For a Club the size of Clonliffe procuring sponsorship is important to enable the Club to achieve its objectives. As you know one of our main sponsors was Hireco. We were recently advised that this sponsorship had come to an end and we are seeking a new sponsor. I would like to thank Hireco for their generous sponsorship over many years and hope we can renew our partnership again sometime in the future. We are grateful to the Kavanagh Family in Glasnevin for their generous sponsorship of the Clonliffe 2 Mile which has been in place now since 1986. We are also grateful to all our sponsors for the Morton Games including, DCU, Commercial Hygiene Services, Bon Secours Hospital Dublin, Loki Sports, Fingal, Dublin Athletics, Athletics Leinster, Behan and Associates, Last Lap Cafe, Davy, Whiteford, Dublin Marathon and the Jerry Kiernan Foundation.

**Relationship with DCU**

Early last Summer we started training on our resurfaced track here in Morton. The Stadium also got a badly needed face lift. All evidence of the welcome arrival of DCU to the Morton Stadium.

We continue to have a good working relationship with DCU and Noel Guiden continues to work closely with the University on behalf of the Club. Hopefully there are areas where both organisations can cooperate on projects in the future.

**Jerry Kiernan Foundation**

We are grateful to the Foundation for their support for athletes and as one of the sponsors of Morton Games.

**Special word for Juveniles and Gladys**
As I walk around the track on training evenings I am amazed at the enthusiasm of our juveniles as they train under the watchful eyes of their dedicated and patient coaches. I would like on your behalf to pay a particular thanks to Gladys Cooper for her remarkable commitment to the juvenile section for more years that I can remember.

**Acknowledgments - Thanks to the Members**I would like to thank you the members for electing me as your President. My objective is to ensure that I carry out that role to the best of my ability. This can only be done with a good team. I would like to thank the outgoing Committee for their support and guidance during the year. Clonliffe is a broad church and we accommodate a wide range of views and opinions in a respectful fashion. Every positive step or indeed stride you make contributes to the success of the club. I encourage feedback from members. If you have an issue or idea please take me aside and share it.

I want to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Treasurer Brian and his team of Mark and Aoife in managing the club finances and producing the annual financial statements each year. We are thankful to have such a professional team. Both Brian and Mark also re-commenced the Club lotto with an online portal. I would ask members who are not playing the lotto to join as it is a source of Revenue for club activities.

I want thank Noel Guiden and Stephen Bateson for the trojan work both undertake each week. They are usually the first to arrive and the last to leave on a training night or day. They are at every event and their commitment is 100%. I want to thank our Lady Captain Jenny Johnson who is doing a wonderful job leading our female athletes. She together with her team organised and excellent 60th Gala celebration for our Ladies last September. It was a wonderfully successful social occasion for the club.

I want to thank Paddy and Caroline Tuite and their team for managing the bar so effectively and delivering a strong dividend for the club. The time and effort they put in to keep the bar running as a going concern cannot be underestimated. I would also like to thanks our regular bar patrons. I want to acknowledge the support and cooperation we get from the Gardaí in Santry. Their support is invaluable. We have an excellent relationship with John Ambulance who provided much needed support for our many events.

Could I just single out three social events that I was particularly impressed with, the juveniles Christmas party, the Cake race and the quiz night to raise funds for the trip to the Algarve. Gladys and her team organised a wonderful Christmas party for the juveniles. Peter Bissett and Eugenia did a great job with setting and organising the quiz night. It was great to accompany 38 Members to the Den Haag Loop 10k and Half marathon recently organised so expertly by Pamela Cooper.

**Corporate Governance**

Before concluding I want to refer to an important area for all athletic clubs. We as a Club have to be mindful of Sport Irelands Governance Code for Sport as adopted by Athletics Ireland. In a nutshell what is involved here is that we adopt the best practice in the management of our affairs. We need to be mindful of the system of rules, practices and processes by which Clonliffe Harriers is managed and that these are kept up to date. We will talk about this further later on the agenda.

**Conclusion**
So to conclude I would like to thank you the Members for your contributions to a successful year. Thanks to the Clonliffe Committee for their help and advice throughout the year. I would also like to thank our past Presidents Tommy Griffin, Maurice Ahern and Paddy Marley for their guidance and advice.

We are looking forward to an exciting Track and Field Season. The highlights for me will be the National Championships , the Morton Games, the European Championships in Rome and the Paris Olympics. We wish all our athletes well in their preparations this year. Finally I wish Efrem Gidey and Cathal Doyle the best of luck with their preparations.

Many thanks – nil desperandum

Mick Kearney

President Clonliffe Harriers

25 March 2024