



14th January 2014

**PRESS RELEASE:**

**PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS  
ISSUE OF DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION**

The idea that Local Government should represent communities, and not Political Parties, is the subject of a public meeting in Cork next week. The meeting will encourage individuals to step forward as independent People's Candidates, it is hosted by The People's Convention (CPPPC) under the title "**The People must be Represented, not Parties!**".

Guest speakers include Luke 'Ming' Flanagan TD and Dr. Liam Weeks of the Department of Government at UCC, they will examine the role of independent representation and what that might mean in Ireland. Deputy Flanagan is known for encouraging as many people as possible to contest the local elections, highlighting that each seat taken from the Party system reduces their power. Dr. Weeks has an international reputation as a political scientist and is widely published; he is editor of the [Independent Forum](#) and other publications.

The People's Convention will use the meeting to introduce a number of already declared independent People's Candidates standing in the coming local elections in Cork city and county. The meeting is to encourage others to take the responsibility of representing their community, CPPPC wants to see independent People's Candidates contest ALL seats on City and County Council.

Spokesperson for CPPPC, Diarmaid Ó Cadhla, said: *"the scandal of Irish Water spending €50 million on consultations and the fact that they are exempt from answering questions about it under the Freedom of Information Act is an utter scandal"*.

Ó Cadhla also highlighted the recent cuts on home improvement grants to senior citizens and increasing the qualifying age. Ó Cadhla said: *"the targeting of senior citizens and people with disabilities could not be the preferred policy of the Irish people, this shows that we are not being represented... someone else is dictating policy"*.

The statement says that Cork City Council fails in its Constitutional duty, 'to provide a forum for the democratic representation of local communities' (Art 28A). Ó Cadhla said *"it is not good enough for City Council to work behind closed doors, they have no right to do any business that is not the people's business, that is what we must establish"*.

Ó Cadhla concludes: *"Local Government can have meaning if the Council actually represents the people, not the Party clubs, the May elections present the people with an opportunity, we must grasp it"*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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