

## City set for inaugural 'Vadrafjord'



Pictured at the launch of Vadrafjord, which takes place on Sunday 16th November in aid of Waterford Hospice, were: Donal O'Brien (The Reg), Des Kelly (Waterford Hospice), Konor the Clown, Kieran Foley (The Munster Express), Aisling O'Brien (The Reg), Ger Hearne (organizer), Deputy Mayor of Waterford City & County Cllr Jason Murphy, Tony Kavanagh (Waterford Hospice) and Andrew Power (volunteer). Photo: Mick Wall.

VADRAFJORD is an exciting new event for Waterford which takes place this month.

The event, which starts and finishes on Bailey's New Street, will showcase the beautiful Viking Triangle area of the city, while also supporting a good cause.

The five mile family run/walk takes place on Sunday November 16th and will support Waterford Hospice.

Deputy Mayor of Waterford City and County Fianna Fail Cllr Jason Murphy is lending his support to this exciting new event.

"I was delighted to be asked by the organising committee to become involved in this fantastic family event for a great local cause, Waterford Hospice," he said.

"The Hospice provides an invaluable support to patients and families at the most emotional and stressful time in their lives. They provide palliative care and pain relief in a most sensitive and dignified manner whether in a nursing home environment or at home. This care is provided free of charge irrespective of income and over 60 per cent of the Hospice's funding is made up of voluntary donations and fundraising."

He added: "I really hope we get a massive crowd on the day as every euro raised will go directly to Waterford Hospice to help enable them to carry on their fantastic work for the people of Waterford and South Kilkenny."

Given last weekend's hugely successful 'A Walk to Remember', it's clear that there is a huge amount of goodwill towards Waterford Hospice.

And given the amount of funding needed in order to build the proposed palliative care unit, the charity needs support now more than ever.

Director on the Board of Waterford Hospice Des Kelly explained that confusion currently surrounds the expected completion date for the new palliative care unit for Waterford and the South-East.

"People are aware we are waiting for our new palliative care unit which has been promised for the last number of years but has been delayed again," said Des.

"That was a huge disappointment to us. We feel we've been badly let down. There is now huge confusion over our palliative care unit. The powers that be don't seem to be able to give us a definite date as to when this project will be delivered for Waterford."

Des explained that some politicians have claimed the project will be completed by a date in 2016.

"But the HSE have told us 2018 and I've been assured it will be 2017 so we don't know where we stand," he explained.

"The groundwork has been done, the architects have been appointed, and we've seen preliminary sketches. Hopefully it will come to fruition."

He added: "We've been asked to come up with €6 million for this unit. We have €3.5 million collected already. The gun was put to our head. We were told we wouldn't get the unit unless we came up with six million. I'm not blaming the HSE, but I think our politicians have a lot to answer for."

De said there has been enormous support from local people towards the project.

"It costs €600,000 a year to run our existing home care service. We have to come up with €400,000 for this as well as the €6 million for the palliative care unit. But the people of Waterford and South Kilkenny have always supported us," he said.

And given this great support, the inaugural Vadrafjord event (named in honour of Waterford's Viking heritage) is also sure to be a success.

Starting at Bailey's New Street in the Viking Triangle, the Vadrafjord route heads out The Mall, Manor Street, onto the Cork Road, into Kilbarry and towards The Folly, out to Ardkeen and back into the city centre through Newtown.

The route has been set at five miles in order to appeal to all ages and abilities.

Ensuring family fun abounds, Konor the clown will be in attendance and music will be provided afterwards at The Reg.

It's hoped that the event can be further built on in the future and that Vadrafjord can become a permanent fixture on the Waterford sporting and social calendar.

Given that the event also aims to highlight the city's Viking Triangle and our wider Viking heritage, the possibilities for expanding this exciting event seem very positive.

Organiser Ger Hearne has previously organised successful charity events at The Park Inn for St Paul's Parish so Vadrafjord is sure to benefit from this vast experience.

Along with The Munster Express, Vadrafjord is also supported by Ferrybank AC, The Reg and Alfie Hale Sports.

Vadrafjord takes place in Waterford on Sunday November 16th at 2pm. Registration at The Rweg from 12.30pm.