

High Hopes raise Large Room roof!



By Courtney Oliver

The High Hopes Choir were afforded a Civic Reception from Waterford City & County Council on Thursday last, and were, unsurprisingly, in great voice at the event!

The formalities were followed by refreshments and a beautiful performance by the choir to celebrate the group's achievements.

City & County Mayor Adam Wyse (FF) opened the reception with some motivating words to members of the choir.

"A very difficult situation was transformed into a positive one through the High Hopes Choir. In a time that was very dark, the choir reached down and found an incredible talent."

Metropolitan Mayor, Cllr John Hearne (SF) expressed that the choir's determination to help others is incredibly inspiring. The Metropolitan Mayor added that the High Hopes Choir has "given hope to thousands of people across Ireland."

The choir's Musical Director, Phil Brennan, gave a special thanks to the eldest member of the choir, Bert. "We are lucky as a choir to have him, he is truly a legend."

Mr Brennan added why Bert wasn't able to attend the reception: "Bert's son sadly died two weeks ago. I saw him last night, and he would love to be here today."

He added: "Bert's grandson told him, 'Grandad you can sing can't you? And daddy can sing too?' Bert said 'Yeah, we are three generations of singers.'

"While all this sadness was happening in his life, it was obvious a small thing like that brought happiness back into him."

Said Cllr Mary Roche (Ind): "The choir is more than just a choir, and it's about more than music, it gives people hope.

"There are many people who continue to live in a difficult situation, and we haven't done enough as a society. On the behalf of the choir, I think it's important we commit to working hard on those issues and continue the choir's mission in our own form."

Cllr Joe Kelly (Ind) gave recognition to the group's talent and hard work, while also drawing attention to the housing issues in Ireland.

"It shows people that are homeless or going through hard times that there is a better way. In a country like this, there should be a better way. We have a terrible and horrendous housing crisis in this country, and we as councillors are trying to deal with it on our behalf."

Cllr Kelly concluded with kind and heartfelt words for the group. "The choir hugely deserved this award; they have shown everyone how life could be, and indeed how life should be. For that I think that everyone in this Council chamber, and the city and county should give them a great amount of thanks and recognition."