

A FAITHFUL SERVANT

Former Mayor Jack Walsh dies following short illness

WARM tributes have been paid to former Mayor of Waterford Jack Walsh who died on Sunday following a very short illness. Mr Walsh, who resided at Grange Heights, served as a Labour City Councillor for 10 years from 2004 to 2014, holding the office of Mayor of Waterford City in 2008/2009.

In September, he was selected to contest the upcoming local elections for Labour in the Waterford City East Electoral Area. During his time as a Councillor, Mr Walsh, who was originally from Kilmacow, served as a Director of both Waterford Port and Regional Airport while also serving as a Governor of Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT).



Former Mayor of Waterford Jack Walsh, who died on Sunday following a short illness.

| Photo: Noel Browne

He enjoyed close associations with numerous groups and organisations in Waterford, including as Chairman of the City of Waterford Vocational Education Committee (VEC).

Labour Party Leader Brendan Howlin TD paid tribute to Mr Walsh and said he was “deeply saddened” to hear of his death. “Just two months ago, Jack Walsh was on the podium at our party conference in Dublin speaking with the great insight he always had when addressing issues of importance to Waterford and wider society,” he said.

“Steeped in the trade union movement, Jack was a proud SIPTU member, and associate member of the CWU, and was formerly President of the Waterford Trades Council. After retiring from Eircom, where he worked as an Engineering Manager, he went on to work with Waterford Area Partnership. As constituency director of elections for both Dáil and Presidential election contests he always ensured the Labour vote was targeted and turned out.”

Mr Howlin said Jack Walsh would be sadly missed by all who knew him and pointed out that public service ran in his family. At the time he became Mayor of Waterford City in 2008, his brother Cllr Tomas Breathnach was simultaneously elected as Chairman of Kilkenny County Council. Cllr Breathnach is a sitting Councillor on Kilkenny County Council while another brother, Joe Walsh, previously served as a Councillor in Kilkenny. Current Mayor of Waterford City & County Cllr Declan Doocey (FG) and the Chief Executive of Waterford City and County Council Michael Walsh also both expressed their sadness on the death of Mr Walsh.

Meanwhile, Labour Cllr John Pratt described him as “a true friend, a great colleague and a loyal member of the Labour Party family.”

Former Mayors and Labour colleagues Seamus Ryan, Pat Hayes and Ger Barron also paid tribute to Jack Walsh and expressed their condolences to the Walsh family. Numerous tributes on social media referred to Mr Walsh as a “gentleman”, with many people recounting how he had assisted their families during his time as a Councillor. Former Waterford Labour TD Ciara Conway said: “I am so sad that our Jack is no longer with us. He was a friend and a HUGE support to me through the good and bad. A gent, a family man and an out and out Labour man.” He is survived by his wife Vera, daughters Nina and Lynn, siblings, extended family, friends and constituents. Mr Walsh will lie in repose this (Tuesday) evening, January 8th at Donnacha Doyle & Sons Funeral Home, Grannagh, Kilmacow. Prayers will take place at 6.30pm followed by removal at 7pm to St Senan’s Church in Kilmacow. Requiem mass will take place tomorrow (Wednesday) morning at 11am with burial afterwards in the adjoining cemetery.