

1. Abolition of Town Councils a major mistake.
2. What has been saved? Democracy at local level wiped out with the stroke of a pen.
3. Cashel had various forms of local government for close on 800 years, Corporation, Town Commissioners, Urban District Council, Town Council and there was a connect between the people and the authority.
4. Status of the town, with 388,000 visitors to the Rock of Cashel last year, was seriously affected.
5. Municipal districts too large. Some towns lucky to have any representation on them, i.e. Tipperary Town elected just one out of seven while Cashel elected two councillors.
6. Present set up will only suit the party system into the future. Unless new Independent candidates are very high profile, then they will have great difficulty getting elected. I was lucky last time round because I had years of experience at Council level. If I was starting out it would be impossible to get elected in such a large Municipal District.
7. In this area our parishes were divided, i.e. Cashel/Rosegreen where Rosegreen is now in the Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District and Boherlahan/Dualla where Dualla, Ballinure etc. is also in Carrick-on-Suir. Neither have any connection with Carrick and both always had strong links with Cashel Town at every level, sporting, health, social, trading, educational etc.
8. Under the present system Cashel citizens resident just two kilometres from their town are now expected to deal with Carrick and vote for candidates from that Municipal District. At the last election I lost over 3,500 of my electorate to another Municipal area, people I had been dealing with for decades. We need to return to a Cashel Urban District Council.
9. Abolishing Town Councils in the guise that the tax payer would be saved significant sums of money was not factual. If the nine members of Cashel Town Council had drawn down 100 per cent of their entitlements on their last year in office the total for the nine, including the Mayoral allowance and conference allocation, would be in the region of €55,000, a small price to pay for good local governance and democracy. Meanwhile that same year our Oireachtas members from this area received an average of €150,000 in EXPENSES each. From many years of experience, and as a doubting Thomas, I don't believe this exercise will result in much change before the 2019 local elections. I would love to be proven wrong.

Tom Wood