

LIMERICK TODAY

■ Today's weather

RAIN will spread across Munster today and will be heavy at times in the afternoon and evening.

Highest temperatures of 18 to 24 degrees with moderate south to southeasterly breezes. Pollen count: mostly low but increasing to moderate occasionally whenever good dry periods develop. Solar UV Index: moderate.

It will be mild, humid and mostly cloudy tonight with outbreaks of rain in most places. Lowest temperatures of 14 to 17 degrees.

Tomorrow will be mostly cloudy with outbreaks of rain, with highest temperatures of 18 to 20 degrees.

■ Bus lane costs €1,700 per metre



Councillors demand full consultation on bus lanes

Continued from page 1 brought before the next transport committee to explain how they plan to service the new lanes.

Speaking on behalf of the residents, Cllr Maria Byrne said that St Dymphna's Terrace should be deleted from the Mulgrave Street proposals. She also said a working group should be established between residents and City Council officials to deal with issues as they come up.

Cllr Pat Kennedy criticised the length of time residents had been given to digest the information.

"I can understand the pressure the department is under but it's not good enough. I have had to ring people to tell them of the new proposal and they were stunned," he told councillors. "It is great credit to the businesses and the community of Mulgrave Street with how they have dealt with it in such a short space of time," he said.

Cllr Kennedy also put down a motion: "that Limerick City Council introduce green routes on Mulgrave Street subject to the changes demanded and agreed between residents and the business community of these areas" which was carried.

Labour's councillor Joe Leddin asked: "What commitment from Bus Éireann is there on the frequency of service? Given that Bus Éireann are now engaged in cutbacks, what are the chances we will see a bus every five to ten minutes? If there is not a good frequency, this will die in the water. This is the one chance we have to get people to leave their cars at home."

■ Obama aide jets in to Limerick

Continued from page 1

through the Dail, the full pre-clearance facilities will then be put in place. Shannon will be able to set up direct routes with many different US cities where there is currently no international route from Europe. This could lead to a lot more US and European travellers choosing to travel via Shannon Airport. As news spreads, I can see a lot of business travellers looking at the benefits to be gained by securing their pre-clearance in Shannon Airport, for example, rather than going through US security on the far side of their journey when they will face massive queues," he said.

Councillors disturbing the peace in policing committee row

Nick Rabbitts

THE membership of the joint policing committee descended into a theatrical battle for supremacy between Labour and Fine Gael at yesterday's council meeting.

Thirteen members of Limerick City Council were due to be elected onto the joint policing committee. Under its rules of membership, each party grouping must be represented on the committee, along with members from each part of the city.

But Cllr Joe Leddin, Labour, accused Fine Gael of trying to "dominate" every committee on the City Council.

Cllr Diarmuid Scully, Fine Gael, put seven candidates forward, including Cllr Pat Kennedy, who is soon to rejoin Fine Gael, while Cllr Leddin initially put four Labour members forward, including himself. However, he then "stepped back" from the running.

Fianna Fail's Cllr Kieran O'Hanlon and Sinn Féin's Cllr



Cllr Scully: We are the majority

Maurice Quinlivan were already guaranteed seats on the committee, because their parties hold just one seat respectively at City Hall.

And former Mayor John Gilligan put forward Cllr Kathleen Leddin and himself, meaning 14 members were chasing 13 seats on the com-



Cllr Leddin: I can count it for you if you like

mittee, leaving Cllr Joe Leddin to call for one Fine Gael member to join him in "stepping back".

"A bit of common sense should prevail here. Fine Gael have three or four councillors for each area, Labour have just one for each area. We need one person to step back

majority on every committee. Where is the democracy in that?"

Cllr Scully said: "But we make up the majority of the Council."

Cllr Leddin hit back: "No you do not, and if you would like I can count it for you?"

As the shouting continued, Cllr Gerry McLoughlin, Labour, spoke up: "We are setting a marker here for the next five years with this childish behaviour. We are all adults here and we should behave like them."

He also suggested that some members were behaving like "amadans", a comment which Mayor Kevin Kiely told him to take back.

Eventually, director of service Kieran Lehane suggested that they postpone the vote for the joint policing committee to allow all parties to engage in negotiations.

And Cllr Gilligan concluded: "Are we arguing over the same committee we have had to cancel on a number of occasions because no-one else bothered to turn up?"

Hunt Museum begins Wiesenthal dialogue

■ Jewish organisation meets with director at Prague holocaust conference

Anne Sheridan

THE Hunt Museum in Limerick have now "begun a dialogue" with the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, who have repeatedly alleged the founders of the museum had connections to Nazi looted art dealers.

Virginia Teehan, the outgoing director of the museum, said it is hoped these discussions "will lead to a more constructive approach to dealing with this matter".

This Monday in Prague, the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, an international Jewish organisation, reiterated its call for a fresh investigation into alleged links between the founders of the Hunt Museum, John and Gertrude Hunt, and Nazi-era art dealers.

A number of reports have found no evidence to support the claims against the Hunts.

At a conference on Holocaust era assets, the centre said it wanted access to official archives and other materials as part of an independent investigation into the provenance of the 2,000 objects on display in the Limerick museum.

Dr Shimon Samuels, the centre's director for international relations, said he was "happy to report" that talks with the Irish delegation discussed an invitation to a Wiesenthal Centre researcher "to access relevant archives, and a proposal for a proactive search for

heirs through notices to the principal Jewish and restitution websites".

However, Ms Teehan said she wished to clarify that the Hunt Museum archives are fully listed and their archives have been open to the public since 2005.

Among the Irish delegation in Prague were Ms Teehan, Yvonne O'Connor, Irish Jewish Museum, a senior civil servant in the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism and the Irish Ambassador to the Czech Republic.

A number of reports in recent years have cleared the late John and Gertrude Hunt of involvement in trafficking in looted art.

One such report was by Dr Lynn Nicholas, a world authority on Nazi-looted art, who said there was "no proof whatsoever" that they were Nazis or that they were involved in any kind of espionage or trafficking in looted art.

"Dr Nicholas was at the conference in Prague and she confirmed that she stands over the findings of the report, which concluded that the archives did not contain any information which supports the allegations of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre," said Ms Teehan.

She continued: "Dr Nicholas had full and complete access to the Hunt Museum archives. She also had access to the private papers of the Hunt family, which are held in private hands".

The Simon Wiesenthal



Virginia Teehan, right, pictured with President Mary McAleese, who defended the museum

Centre first raised questions about the provenance of some of the museum's collection in a letter to President Mary McAleese in 2004.

At that time, they urged President McAleese to withdraw the "Irish Museum of

the Year Award" that she had just bestowed upon the Hunt Museum, pending an independent investigation.

"This resulted in an admirable provenance enquiry by the museum's director but the founders'

activities were totally ignored by a three-year government appointed enquiry," said Dr Samuels this Monday.

Dr Samuels has now entered into talks with Ms Teehan on the matter.

See Page 10