

Kevin Sharkey pulls out of presidential race citing 'corruption', gives backing to Gemma O'Doherty

Sharkey is the first person to pull out of the race.

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ARTIST KEVIN SHARKEY has pulled out of the race for the presidency citing the 'corruption' of Ireland's local authorities.

Sharkey announced his decision in a statement saying that he will henceforth be focusing on his new collection of paintings.

"Kevin Sharkey is out," the release says.

"I am withdrawing from the presidential race due to the corruption of the local councils all over Ireland," he said.

I am also looking forward to the release of my first single.

He added thanks to the councils and councillors who had promised him their endorsement and asked them to transfer that support to fellow independent challenger Gemma O'Doherty, "as she is a woman of huge integrity and is currently bravely shining a light on the rampant corruption that is destroying our beautiful country and democracy".

To get on the presidential ballot, a person must have the support of four local authorities or 20 members of the Oireachtas. The last date for a nomination is Wednesday 26 September. The election itself is slated for Friday 26 October 2018.

Donegal native Sharkey has been a full-time artist since the early 90s and had made no secret of his intention to run for the Áras from early August onwards.

His new painting exhibition, dubbed 'The Presidential Collection 2018' (with paintings entitled 'The Power of Corruption', 'Crooked Councillors', and 'Bribes are Us'), kicks off in the Basement Gallery in Dublin on Friday 21 September.