


27. November 2020

Cllr. Damien Geoghegan,  
Cathaoirleach,  
City Hall,  
The Mall,  
Waterford.  
X91 PK17


Dear Cllr Geoghegan,

Thank you for your letter of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to Darragh O'Brien, TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, in connection with the extension of Michael Walsh's tenure as Chief Executive of Waterford City & County Council, the contents of which have been noted.

Yours sincerely

PP 

Niamh Redmond  
Private Secretary

  
OIFIG ARD RÚNAÍ AN UACHTARÁIN  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE PRESIDENT

15 December, 2020

Cllr Damien Geoghegan  
Mayor of the City and County of Waterford  
Mr. Gerald Hurley, CEO, Waterford Chamber  
Mr. Michael Walsh, Chief Executive, Waterford City & Council  
Waterford City & County Council & Waterford Chamber  
The Mall  
Waterford

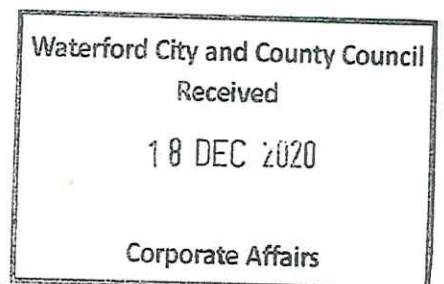
Dear Cllr Geoghegan, Mr. Hurley & Mr. Walsh,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December, 2020 to President Higgins along with your enclosure of your latest issue of Network Magazine.



The President is grateful for your thoughtfulness in writing and sends his good wishes for a safe and Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Aifric Hyland  
Secretariat



ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN  
D08 E1W3

 + 353-1-617 1000 LOCAL: 1890 430 430  [info@president.ie](mailto:info@president.ie)



24 December 2020.

Dear Councillor,

As our country moves closer to administering the first vaccine against COVID-19, I wanted to update you on the work being done by my Department and the HSE in preparing for the vaccine from an implementation, communications and engagement perspective.

### **Initial Implementation**

A large programme of work is under way to enable the vaccination programme to begin by the end of this month. Among the many issues being addressed are the preparation of consent materials and processes, the development of an ICT system and the identification and training of the necessary workforce. This is being facilitated by the High-Level Task Force, which is chaired by Professor Brian MacCraith.

More information on Ireland's COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy and Implementation Plan is available [here](#).

### **Authorisation and supply**

On December 21 the European Medicines Agency (EMA) recommended conditional marketing authorisation for the vaccine developed by BioNTech and Pfizer, for people aged 16 years of age and older. The European Commission has authorised use of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. This means that roll-out of the vaccines is starting across the European Union.

The HSE is liaising closely with the manufacturer to ensure that initial supplies are received as soon as possible. Supplies are expected to arrive in the days immediately after Christmas.

Initial supplies will not be large and stock will need to be carefully managed as each person needs to be assured of getting their second dose as required.

### **Communications and Engagement**

Our communications programme to support this vaccination programme is based on the existing, trusted relationship with HSE vaccination programmes and our overall response to COVID-19.

We will listen and gain detailed insights about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine from all the priority groups, and from groups of people who are more likely to be vaccine hesitant.





As Dr Ronan Glynn mentions in his presentation to the COVID-19 Vaccine Advocate Forum, the potential for false information and rumour to negatively influence those in our society who have genuine and very understandable questions about the new vaccine is a concern.

We will offer factual, up-to-date and accessible information to allow them to make an informed and confident decision about the COVID vaccine - for themselves, for their family, and for the people near and dear to them.

We will strongly advocate that people access information from trusted sources, and make sharing a trusted source something people want to do too.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been very clear that we're tackling two different types of challenge over the past year: one is the infection and the pandemic; the other is an infodemic - an excess of information and rumour, particularly online, which we've had to counter.

It's very important that this misinformation, disinformation and rumour is countered by ourselves, members of the Oireachtas.

While news of the European Commission's approval of the vaccine is a very positive development, it is critical that all of us keep in mind that the vaccine is not our first line of defence against COVID-19 for now, nor will be for some time to come. Everyone in Ireland, and our health service and the people we care for, will need to sustain the protective actions that have become part of how we are working and living.

I hope the below information is of use to you and I thank you for your ongoing contribution to Ireland's response to this pandemic.

Please feel free to share this information with your constituents.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Advocate Forum pre-recorded video session 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy Chief Medical Officer at the Department of Health, has convened the COVID-19 Vaccine Advocate Forum to offer information to organisations that have an integral role to play in this important part of our country's response to COVID-19. This pre-recorded video session is now available on the Department of Health website:

[www.gov.ie/en/publication/c453f-covid-19-vaccine-advocate-forum/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c453f-covid-19-vaccine-advocate-forum/)

The session includes an introduction by the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD and presentations by Dr. Ronan Glynn, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health; Dr Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, Health Products Regulatory Authority;



Deirdre Watters, Head of Communications, Department of Health and Dr. Siobhán O'Sullivan, Chief Bioethics Officer, Department of Health.

### **Information on COVID-19 vaccine**

The Department of Health and the HSE have dedicated COVID-19 vaccine information pages.

[Department of Health COVID-19 vaccine information is available here.](#)

[You can find information about the COVID-19 vaccine from the HSE here.](#)

You can also read Dr Ronan Glynn's op-ed on COVID-19 vaccines [here](#) and watch a short video of Dr Glynn explaining what vaccines are and how they work to protect us [here](#), as well as a video of him explaining how the vaccine approval process works and what the European Medicines Agency will examine [here](#).

You can read a statement from the Health Products Regulatory Authority's (HPRA) Dr Lorraine Nolan [here](#).

### **EMA recommends approval of 1<sup>st</sup> COVID-19 vaccine**

On Monday, the European Medicines Agency, has recommended that a conditional marketing authorisation for the Comirnaty BioNTech/Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine be granted by the European Commission. A video from Dr. Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive of the Health Products Regulatory Authority, is available [here](#). Dr. Nolan's video will give you more information about how the vaccine regulatory process works.

Wishing you and your family a safe and happy Christmas.

Kind regards,

Stephen Donnelly TD  
Minister for Health.

## Angela O'Shea

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**Subject:** FW: Attn Honor Dunphy (Debenhams)  
**Attachments:** Scanned from a Xerox Multifunction Printer.pdf

-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel Gannon [mailto:Daniel.Gannon@enterprise.gov.ie] On Behalf Of Minister  
Sent: 06 January 2021 11:23  
To: Contact User  
Subject: Attn Honor Dunphy (Debenhams)

Dear Ms. Dunphy,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence to the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mr. Leo Varadkar T.D.

I will bring your correspondence to the Tánaiste's attention at the earliest convenience.

Kind regards

--

Daniel Gannon  
Office of the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment

--

An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Fostaíochta Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment  
23 Sráid Chill Dara, Baile Átha Cliath 2, D02 TD30  
23 Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 TD30

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Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge  
Waterford City & County Council

Our Ref: HD/AOS/M162

10<sup>th</sup> December, 2020

Leo Varadkar TD,  
Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment,  
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Tánaiste,

The following was agreed at the November meeting of Waterford City and County Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 and asked that it be forwarded to you for your attention.

*That Waterford City and County Council:*

- *sends its solidarity and support to the former Debenhams workers seeking a just and fair settlement from their former employer*
  - *reaffirms the Council's support for workers' rights, the principle of collective bargaining, and fairness and dignity at work*
  - *calls on the Government to implement the Duffy-Cahill report; to legislate to protect workers from strategic liquidations and asset stripping by companies; and to protect collective bargaining agreements*
- calls for KPMG and Government to immediately engage with the workers and their representatives in the Mandate trade union".*

Yours sincerely,

  
Honor Dunphy  
Meetings Administrator

## Angela O'Shea

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**Subject:** FW: Attn Honor Dunphy (Sick Leave)  
**Attachments:** Scanned from a Xerox Multifunction Printer.pdf

-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel Gannon [mailto:Daniel.Gannon@enterprise.gov.ie] On Behalf Of Minister  
Sent: 06 January 2021 11:25  
To: Contact User  
Subject: Attn Honor Dunphy (Sick Leave)

Dear Ms. Dunphy,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence to the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mr. Leo Varadkar T.D.

I will bring your correspondence to the Tánaiste's attention at the earliest convenience.

Kind regards

--

Daniel Gannon

Office of the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment -- An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Fostaíochta Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment  
23 Sráid Chill Dara, Baile Átha Cliath 2, D02 TD30  
23 Kildare St, Dublin 2, D02 TD30

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Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge  
Waterford City & County Council

Our Ref: HD/AOS/M164

10<sup>th</sup> December, 2020

Leo Varadkar TD,  
Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment,  
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Tánaiste,

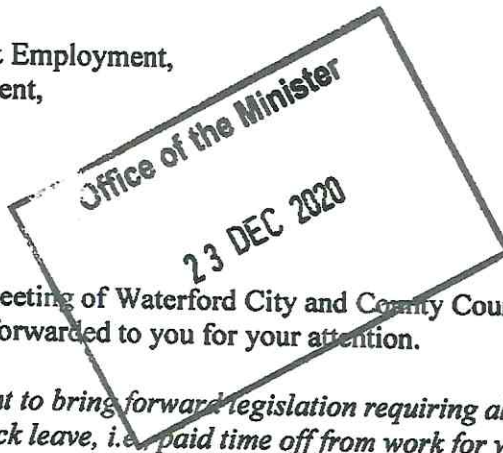
The following was agreed at the November meeting of Waterford City and County Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 and asked that it be forwarded to you for your attention.

*"That this Council calls on the government to bring forward legislation requiring all employers by law to make provision for sick leave, i.e. paid time off from work for workers when they are ill.*

*Also to amend the Parental Leave Act 1998, (force majeure leave) with a new provision. In such a case an employee who is the parent or adoptive parent of a child shall be entitled to force majeure leave where and for so long as the child is unable to attend the school or pre-school, if the presence of the employee is required at his or her home in order to care for that child."*

Yours sincerely,

  
Honor Dunphy  
Meetings Administrator



Dear Councillor,

We wish to notify you of the next online training webinar for local authority members which is being hosted by the AILG in conjunction with the OPR on **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 from 10am – 11:30am**. AILG and the OPR are currently involved in delivering a planning training programme which is specifically tailored for the elected members of planning authorities.

It is intended that the January webinar will focus on the factors that are taken into consideration by local authorities when making decisions on planning applications and also the decision-making on applications and appeals.

Elected Members can register their interest by email to [info@ailg.ie](mailto:info@ailg.ie)

The webinar entitled “**The Decision on the Planning Application and Appeal**” will cover two main topics;

(i) ***The Decision-Making Process on Planning Applications in Local Authorities***

Catherine McConnell will deliver this presentation. This presentation will focus on the factors that are taken into consideration by local authorities when making decisions on planning applications. Catherine is the Director of Services in Planning in Mayo County Council and she is a planner by profession. She has worked in a number of local authorities including Mayo, Sligo, Meath and Galway County Council.

(ii) ***Decision-Making on Applications and Appeals***

The second presentation will be delivered by Terry Prendergast. This presentation will focus on the factors that are considered by An Bord Pleanála when the Board is making decisions on planning appeals and applications (i.e. Strategic Housing Development and Strategic Infrastructure Development applications). Terry was appointed to the board of An Bord Pleanála in 2017 for a five-year term. She is a professional planner and she was the principal planner with the Grangegorman Development Agency prior to her appointment to the board. She also lectured in planning in the Dublin Institute of Technology. She previously worked as an inspector in An Bord Pleanála and she worked with the Dublin Docklands Development Authority.

The presentations will last approximately 30 minutes. There will be a 30-minute Question and Answer session after the delivery of the presentations. Questions may be submitted online throughout the course of the webinar.





# Training Webinar for Local authority elected members

## The Decision on the Planning Application and Appeal

The Decision-Making Process on Planning  
Applications in Local Authorities

Decision-Making on Applications  
and Appeals



22 January



10:00-11:30am



Register: [Info@ailg.ie](mailto:Info@ailg.ie)



Oifig an  
Rialaitheora Pleanála  
Office of the  
Planning Regulator

**AILG**  
Association of Irish Local Government  
An tAontas Rialaithe Áitiúil na hÉireann



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The presentations will last approximately 30 minutes. There will be a 30-minute Question and Answer session after the delivery of the presentations. Questions may be submitted online throughout the course of the webinar.

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H91 H6KX.

Áras an Chontae,  
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Pleanáil  
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Leabharlann  
Library  
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CC1-1a-0025

Our Ref: MO/SE

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

TO: EACH LOCAL AUTHORITY

Dear Meetings Administrator,

At the December Plenary Meeting of Galway County Council, the Members passed the following motion:

*"I propose that Galway County Council write to Minister for Justice Helen McEntee to request that the review of the 3rd National Strategy on Domestic Sexual and Gender based Violence is expedited to provide a fit for purpose strategy taking into account the additional reported rise in domestic abuse incidents occurring during COVID Pandemic restricted conditions and the urgent need for additional refuge places and adequately resourced services.*

*I propose that a copy of this motion be sent to all local authorities as correspondence".*

It was agreed to send a copy of this motion to all Councils.

Mise le Meas

*Michael Owens*

**Michael Owens**  
**Meetings Administrator**