

**COMHAIRLE CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13th FEBRUARY, 2020 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CITY HALL, THE MALL, WATERFORD.**

PRESENT

Cllr. John Pratt (Mayor)	Cllr. Joe Kelly
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Eddie Mulligan
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Breda Brennan	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Seamus O'Donnell
Cllr. Joe Conway	Cllr. John O'Leary
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan
Cllr. John Cummins	Cllr. Thomas Phelan
Cllr. Davy Daniels	Cllr. Jody Power
Cllr. Conor D. McGuinness	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Seamus Ryan
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. James Tobin
	Cllr. Adam Wyse

Apologies

Cllr. D. Doocey, Cllr. G. Barron, Cllr. J. Hearne.

Officials in Attendance

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive
 Mr. I. Grimes, Director of Services, Housing, Community & Emergency Services
 Mr. F. Galvin, Director of Services, Roads, Water & Environment
 Mr. K. Kehoe, Director of Services, Corporate, Culture, HR & IS
 Mr. B. Pollard, Head of Finance.
 Mr. M. Quinn, Director of Services, Economic Development.
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator.
 Ms. A. Maher, Corporate.

Mayor proposed to amend the Standing Orders to allow the presentation on The Silver Museum and Clock and Watch Museum to be made before the Management Report. This was proposed by Cllr. Cronin and seconded by Cllr. Daniels. Congratulations were expressed to Matt Shanahan and Marc Ó Cathasaigh who were successful in the General Elections along with Mary Butler and David Cullinane.

1. Matters Arising

Cllr. Conway raised a query on the vacant houses which were subject to CPO and asked for a breakdown of numbers currently occupied.

Cllr. Daniels requested information on when CPO'd properties will be on the open market.

Cllr. Brennan enquired if date for Bus Éireann TFI presentation has been arranged.

Cllr. Griffin referred to the 5G proposal for the area and if the council is receiving adequate information.

I.Grimes, DoS confirmed that of the 20 properties which were purchased, 9 will be on the open market, K. Kehoe, DoS confirmed meetings held with an auctioneer to progress properties onto the market in coming weeks. In relation to 5G two workshops have been held and information will continue to be circulated as the council received updates.

Cllr. Kelly requested update on the withdrawal of Civil Defence from the Christmas hamper appeal. I.Grimes confirmed that he will speak to Civil Defence Officer and get him to discuss with Cllr. Kelly. F. Galvin, DoS confirmed that the request for a meeting with TFI will be followed up on.

2. Planning

(a) Planning lists as circulated were noted.

3. Land Disposals

Land Disposals were proposed by Cllr. Phelan and seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

9. Presentation on Silver Museum and Clock & Watch Museum

Presentation given by Eamonn McEaney in conjunction with Donnchadh O’Ceallacháin and Rosemary Ryan. They outlined the history of many of the items to be on display in the museums and expressed thanks to all those who have donated items.

The Mayor and members expressed their thanks for the presentation wishing all the team the very best with this new venture. E. McEaney outlined that marketing of the museums will be essential and hopes that the museums will be included in the publicity of the City and County.

4. Monthly Management Report.

Cllr. Murphy enquired about the financial commitment for the North Quays project and once the planning has been progressed if the works can proceed without the funding being in place.

Cllr. Quinlan enquired if notice boards could be erected similar to those in Kilkenny that show the planned festivals and events for the coming year and also need for a festivals office, asked if the housing staff are ranking cases with a disability into priority 1-3, does the council have a policy in relation to material contraventions and changing of sites from commercial to residential considering the commencement of a new development plan.

Cllr. D.McGuinness enquired if additional information could be provided in relation to housing and housing allocations such as the number of tenancies created and number of refusals, he noted that the number of complaints dealt with under the Waste Management Act are evident in the report but not for the Litter Management Act. He asked for the use of CCTV as preventative function to tackle illegal dumping is undertaken, citing that Wexford County Council have done this and secured convictions.

I.Grimes, DoS confirmed that no council staff are providing any ranking for medical cases, this work is done by healthcare professionals who engage with us in determining the priority for each case. He noted comments regarding the housing figures and deemed the information adequate for the purpose.

F. Galvin, DoS will consider suggestion for CCTV outlining that mobile CCTV is used but with varying success, noting that GDPR has to be considered.

M. Quinn, DoS confirmed that not in a position to have a festivals office at the moment and noted that material contraventions are brought forward to the members where appropriate.

M. Walsh, Chief Executive outlined that continually working with Falcon Estates and that funding needs to be determined over the next few months or it could have an effect on the project. It is important to get agreement in relation to the funding for building of the bridge and other major items for the project. He is satisfied that no one is seeking to alter the agreed funding for the project.

Cllr. Clune queried the amount of €13.1m arrears in January and queried what steps are taken currently to address it outlining that a reduction in arrears is needed.

Cllr. Fitzgerald enquired if there are any changes due to the Tenant Purchase Scheme and requested an updated list of personnel for the council to be circulated to all members.

Cllr. Brazil enquired about a planning application that was recently refused on the basis of difficulties with water and waste water provision, this is of concern considering that is an identified housing need and the same site had previously been given planning permission.

B. Pollard, HoF outlined that the arrears are preliminary results, regular reviews are being undertaken, resources are being put in place to address the issue and improve on the collection rates and ambitious targets are being set 2020 and 2021.

I. Grimes, DoS commented in relation to the rent arrears stating that many of the cases are historic and the section are working on tackling them. Policies have been introduced over past 12 months whereby no repairs are carried out if no rent is being paid and payment plans are being entered into. He is not aware of any changes to the Tenant Purchase Scheme, any such changes would be by ministerial approval.

K. Kehoe, DoS confirmed that list of contacts was circulated to councillors in June but will have it updated considering recent staff changes.

M. Quinn, DoS aware of the mentioned planning application and noted that the permission was refused as the adequate services were not in place to support the development.

Cllr. Griffin requested in light of the new development plan that councillors are informed of areas where developments are due to take place, suggesting visits to the locations in the city and county so that informed decisions can be made.

Cllr. Barry enquired about the Home Energy Heating Grants for replacing gas and oil boilers considering that the SEAI grants are due to be discontinued and provision of details for how the process will work going forward. He enquired if tenants could have boiler services carried out themselves and then have cost refunded, also enquired about the new LED scheme for public lighting.

F. Galvin, DoS outlined that the retrofitting of LED lights is being done on a regional basis, hopeful that a contractor will be appointed and due to commence work towards the end of 2020.

M. Quinn, DoS outlined that there will be good engagement with the councillors and their input will be sought for the development plan, he will consider suggestion of area visits.

I. Grimes, DoS confirmed that the changes to the 3 grants schemes operated were only introduced recently and that the council website will be updated shortly. In relation to the boiler services and maintenance this must be carried out by the council and confirmed that a new tender for boiler services has been secured.

Cllr. Ryan noted an increase in housing applications and enquiries to homeless services. He outlined that the CBL scheme needs to be reviewed as applicants get no feedback from the system. Enquired if the vacant houses in Clonard Park are included for works as there is an issue with illegal dumping.

Cllr. Mulligan reiterated his request for an operations and marketing manager to assist in developing the city centre, need to address traffic management, shop fronts and vacancies and option of looking at a 10-15 year plan for its development similar to the approach of Limerick.

Cllr. Daniels requested clarification in relation to Michael Street and the North Quays and ring fencing of funding. Enquired if funding is in place for the Airport and if acquisitions completed.

Cllr. O'Leary asked in the allocation for the town and village renewal scheme will be increased this year, he noted changes need to happen with Irish Water to enable development at Lemybrien to commence.

I. Grimes, DoS outlined that the CBL system doesn't facilitate any feedback, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government are reviewing the system nationally. Informed the members that houses in Clonard Park that were damaged by fire are currently being worked on.

M. Quinn, DoS commented that the Department decides on the level of funding provided, outlined that Irish Water are responsible for the provision of services and need to ensure that capacity is in place for all developments. He informed members that workshops on the branding and launch of the City are due to take place at the end of March, this will involve all key stakeholders and promoters and will bring opportunities for promoting Waterford.

M. Walsh, Chief Executive outlined he is seeking phasing of total funding and clarity on this currently. The schemes for the North Quays are approved in principal and only clarity on the funding for the totality of the schemes is being looked for now. He noted that the EGM for the Airport is due to be held.

Cllr. Wyse enquired how much longer before confirmation will be given on the Airport.

M. Walsh, Chief Executive confirmed that it will be another 2 months for a decision.

Cllr. Phelan asked that with the focus on housing during the current crisis and the backlog of waiting times that a breakdown of figures are provided. He enquired if the marketing of Waterford Treasures and for the City could be investigated.

I. Grimes, DoS confirmed that waiting time information can be looked at but each applicant has 3 areas of choice, he will have the matter discussed at the Housing SPC, he outlined that waiting time for repairs has been significantly reduced.

M. Quinn, DoS confirmed that his department is working in partnership with a group on marketing and a full programme will be rolled out, stakeholders in the tourism sector are all involved and represented. The promotion of Waterford is very important and the proposal will be presented to the councillors.

6. Audit Report 2018

Cllr. Clune requested a specific meeting to deal with detail of the report and suggested it is added to the agenda for the special meeting on the 25th February.

Cllr. Phelan asked for details on CIE land in relation the Greenway.

Cllr. Geoghegan seconded the proposal for the meeting on the 25th February, supported by Cllr. D. McGuinness.

M. Quinn, DoS confirmed that CIE did approve the signing over of the land and they are exchanging documents currently.

Deferral of agenda item for discussion on 25th February, 2020 was proposed by Cllr. Clune and seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

7. Annual Service Plan 2020

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Brennan.

8. Draft Single Use Plastic Policy – for approval

Cllr. Clune and Cllr. Ryan outlined steps need to be taken on banning of single use plastics.

Cllr. Geoghegan enquired if festivals or events supported by the council would be effected.

Cllr. Fitzgerald suggested a milk bottle usage scheme should be introduced.

Cllr. McGuinness would support this policy and the in relation to the reverse vending machines which were discussed recently asked if there was an update on this or progress made in relation to this.

F. Galvin, DoS outlined that the policy is about the council's internal use of plastics and implementing within events sponsored by WCCC, the council will work with groups to assist in identifying alternatives.

The council does not have the authority on enforcing a global restriction across its jurisdiction and outlined that a new EU directive on single use plastics is due in 2021.

Cllr. Ryan stated that the council needs to engage with local groups/businesses in relation to the matter. F. Galvin, DoS outlined the council is engaged in a number of initiatives like the Refill.ie and 2GoCup and works with Chamber of Commerce.

Policy proposed by Cllr. Tobin, seconded by Cllr. Phelan and agreed by all.

10. Correspondence

Proposed by Cllr. Tobin and seconded by Cllr. Phelan.

11. Notice of Motions

1. Motion in the name of Cllr. Ó Cathasaigh (*deferred from November meeting*)

“Noting the declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency by Dáil Éireann and reports of the United Nations on the economic, societal and environmental threats posed by climate change and biodiversity loss, Waterford City and County Council declares a climate and biodiversity emergency in the County of Waterford, and shall establish a Climate Action Committee comprised of elected members and representatives of civil society to meet within three months, whose remit would include prioritising transport, energy and flood protection measures consistent with a sustainable approach to the Climate Emergency.”

Reg. No. 133 (dated 2nd July, 2019)

Cllr. Ó Cathasaigh not present and as per section 28 of standing orders the motion is dropped.

2. Motion in the names of Cllrs. Donal Barry, Breda Brennan, Declan Clune, Conor D. McGuinness, Pat Fitzgerald, Jim Griffin, John Hearne and Joe Kelly.

*“That Waterford City and County Council: * Opposes any attempts by the Irish state to commemorate, memorialise or otherwise rehabilitate the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police, which were key agencies of British occupation and oppression in Ireland* Calls on this Government and future Governments to oppose any state involvement in events commemorating the RIC and * Undertakes not to fund, support or collaborate in any attempts to commemorate the RIC or other forces that used violence to oppose Irish independence* Instructs the Mayor of Waterford, or Deputy Mayor, to refrain from attending or supporting any such event in the future”*

Reg. No. 152 (dated 8th January, 2020)

Proposed by Cllr. Mc Guinness, seconded by Cllr. Tobin and agreed by all.

10. AOB

The establishment of a Finance Committee was previously agreed, nominations confirmed as follows: Cllr. Phelan (Labour), Cllr. Griffin (Sinn Fein), Cllr. Geoghegan (Fine Gael), Cllr. Quinlan (Fianna Fáil). Independent group and Green Party to follow.

The meeting concluded.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____