

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

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
CIVIC OFFICES, DUNGARVAN, CO. WATERFORD.**

**PRESENT**

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

**APOLOGIES**

Cllr. Declan Doocey and Cllr. Joe Kelly.

A welcome was extended to Senator Dan Dolan who was in attendance at the meeting.

**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. L. McGree, Senior Planner, Planning Department.

Mr. R. Walsh, Head of LEO, Economic Development.

Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator.

Ms. A. Maher, Corporate.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes**

Proposed by Cllr. Quinlan and seconded by Cllr. Brennan

**2. Matters Arising**

Congratulations was expressed by all members and the Executive to Eamonn McEaney for the honour to be bestowed upon him by the Norwegian Ambassador, Else Berit Eikeland. He will be appointed officer (knight first grade) of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit.

Cllr. Clune requested clarification on the announcement in relation to the North Quays and an update on the tenant's handbook.

Cllr. Mulligan asked about clarification on the amount announced for the North Quays project.

Cllr. D. McGuinness enquired if there is an update on the funding request to the Department.

Cllr. Cummins asked about the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and whether there was any further dialog between the Council and the Regional Assembly and the Department about the expansion to include Tramore. He asked if there has been any progression with engagement with Cork in relation to their downsizing scheme.

M. Walsh, CE replied that he is waiting on formal communication from the Department and noted that good progress is being made in relation to the relocation of the train station. He stated that no response has been received in relation to the funding request to the Department. He requested the members to consider deferring the date of the budget meeting to the 29<sup>th</sup> November in order to review the matter fully. It was proposed by Cllr. Tobin and seconded by Cllr. Phelan to defer the budget meeting as outlined and agreed to hold the meeting at 4pm.

I Grimes, DOS, outlined that the Housing SPC are due to meet and will update following this meeting, he is waiting on details from Cork City Council regarding the downsizing scheme and will consider the scheme once he has full details.

L. McGree, Senior Planner outlined that a review of the Metropolitan area had been requested as part of the submission and he is due to meet with the Regional Assembly to discuss further.

Cllr. Conway asked again about CPO's and whether money owed on derelict sites is deducted from the sale price.

I Grimes, DOS confirmed that any outstanding money is deducted from purchase price.

It was proposed by Cllr. Quinlan and seconded by Cllr. O'Sullivan to suspend standing orders to deal with item 7 on the agenda before item 3, agreed by all.

## **7. Presentation by Comhairle na nÓg**

Presentation given by Tammy Whelan and James Murray from Comhairle na nÓg and they outlined that they have previously focused on the theme of homelessness and this year the theme was mental health. Next year they will focus on Climate Change.

All councillors commended the work of Comhairle na nÓg and commended both presenters on their work and wished them well on their future work.

## **3. Planning**

- (a) Planning lists as circulated were noted.

## **4. Land Disposals**

Land Disposals were proposed by Cllr. Nugent, seconded by Cllr. Cummins and agreed by all.

## **5. Finance**

- (i) Seek approval that Waterford City & County Council can drawdown €6.5M worth of new loans from the Housing Finance Agency to fund borrowers of new home loans under the RIHL Scheme as they arise.  
Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan, seconded by Cllr. Brazil and agreed by all.

- (ii) Renewal of Bank Overdraft Facility of €18M for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.  
Proposed by Cllr. Tobin & seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan.

## **6. Monthly Management Report.**

Cllr. Mulligan enquired in relation to the North Quays and mentioned reduced retail offering compared to the SDZ, he asked has the Michael St/New St. Development planning and will be this be done in tandem with the North Quays development. He outlined an option to have an Operations and Marketing Manager who can look after presentation & planning, grants, marketing, vacancy levels, city square vacancies. He asked why it takes a number of years to progress capital housing projects, with some referring to 2016.

Cllr. Quinlan referred to HAP properties and the eviction of tenants from properties where the Council are going to cut off payments to the landlord with no alternative accommodation provided, he feels the Council should stop this practice without prior consultation with the families. In relation to the comments released from Minister Murphy's Department in relation to planning and stopping people making objections he requested the council to write requesting no change is made.

Cllr. Griffin referred to the budget deficit of €3.3m and requested a working group of local business with the council to look at options and ideas in relation to economic development and planning.

R. Walsh, SEO stated he feels there is good engagement and brainstorming already with the groups such as the LCDC. If there is interest on an annual basis of meeting with the businesses the council would take this on board and progress if the need is there.

M. Walsh, CE outlined that the SDZ is now in place and noted that the Michael St /New Street area is now in the process of nearing a closing of sale which he feels will be concluding in a number of weeks. In respect of Minister Murphy's item on planning the council will be obliged to implement any changes in legislation as issued.

I Grimes, DOS explained that Minister Eoghan Murphy is streamlining the process for delivery of capital projects. There are some historical schemes that had technical issues. In relation to the HAP inspections and the withdrawal of properties under this scheme he will review his information is communicated. They can avail of the HAP place finder to find alternative accommodation if needed.

Cllr. Daniels enquired if the council has any indication of the land parcels owned by the IDA and requested a meeting with the IDA. In relation to the Climate Action charter which was signed off on he enquired if there is any finance available for this its implementation.

Cllr. Hearne complimented I Grimes and the housing team acknowledging that this is the first time there is no one in emergency B&B accommodation. He enquired if there needs to be a task force with agencies to address the issue of unemployment.

Cllr. Nugent mentioned the great news in relation to funding received for the development of Mount Congreve and asked when work will commence. He welcomed the recognition and acknowledgement of the work carried out by Eamonn McEaney by the Norwegian Ambassador.

R. Walsh, SEO stated the funding for Mount Congreve is very welcomed and is a very significant investment for the facility and will make it a world class tourist attraction. Procurement for carrying out of works is due to commence in January 2020. He will check out area of task force.

F. Galvin, DOS explained that the Climate Action Charter will commit the council to items in various areas, like retrofitting of houses and some funding will be made available in the future for these projects.

M. Walsh, CE explained that in terms of the IDA he is aware that the IDA have various sites and that it will be a priority to have these sites developed.

I Grimes, DOS thanked Cllr. Hearne for comments regarding homeless services and will pass them on. He outlined that there is capacity for the rough sleepers in various places like Oasis House and McGuire House. The council currently works with the Garda and other services and are fully aware of those sleeping rough and are in continuous contact.

Cllr. O'Sullivan asked for a copy of the tourist attractions presentation. She enquired about the removal of part of the skate park recently and asked that this be repaired and replaced.

Cllr. Tobin enquired about the wind energy guidelines and asked that a letter is sent to the Minister to clarify when these guidelines will be available. He enquired as to who owns the land in relation to the two current applications for masts in Ballinroad and Seapark.

Cllr. Conway enquired about derelict sites and asked if a copy of the register can be made available to the councillors should they want it.

H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator confirmed that presentations as requested will be uploaded onto Decision Time for the councillors.

F. Galvin, DOS explained that his department are currently assessing the item for replacement in the skate park/playground.

M. Walsh, CEO stated he will need to check on the ownership of the lands. In relation to wind energy guidelines these were to be finalised before the end of the year.

Cllr. Phelan enquired about destination towns funding and what towns are involved, supported request for information regarding masts and asked is it a case that if the planning authority does not approve within the timeframe that the permission is granted by default. He asked if there is any commitment or plan or scheme to work with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties in relation to climate action items in the charter. It is outlined that 74% of the total budget is spent to date and enquired if that is as predicted for this stage in the year.

Cllr. Shanahan requested the Area Action Plan for Kilbarry and sought an update on the traveller accommodation issue.

Cllr. O'Cathasaigh mentioned the strategy papers in connection with the Green Infrastructure Strategy and asked that councillors have sight of these strategies so that they have the knowledge for preparing the Development Plan. He raised the issue in relation to insurance for bike hire companies and asked was there a role for the council to help and provide a resolution on this.

F. Galvin, DOS stated that the Climate Charter provides for engagement with private sector and this will be pursued as part of its implementation.

R. Walsh, SEO stated that the bike hire insurance issue is being reviewed and upcoming conference regarding the Waterford Greenway will include this topic and national policy will need to tackle it.

M. Walsh, CE explained that one application has come under the Destination Town Programme with the potential of receiving €750,000 but a 25% contribution will also be needed from the Council.

R. Walsh, SEO stated that the strategies that feed into the development plan will feed in to this through the SPC's and they will have to be given to the Councillors.

L. McGree, Senior Planner informed the members that the Planning SPC will be setting out a timetable for the new Development Plan and will be brought to council along with pertinent issues as the process progresses. Most planning decisions are made with an eight week period and the chance of the planning authority defaulting on this timeline is unlikely. He confirmed that the Kilbarry Area Action plan will be brought to the Metropolitan District Meeting.

B. Pollard, Head of Finance, confirmed that the expenditure to date is at 74% and is as predicted.

Cllr. Cummins enquired about the North Quays and the current tender and contract appointment for the garage and industrial units. He welcomed the figures as presented in relation to homeless services and the reductions of 32% on previous year illustrating that the project is being effective. He outlined that within the repair and lease scheme there are 166 units at various stages, it is a lengthy process and requested a breakdown of the various stages.

Cllr. Clune asked if information can be supplied in relation to the EPA report on waste water and specifically where one town in Waterford is failing the required standards. He enquired if the feasibility study in relation to Mercyhurst has been completed.

Cllr. D. McGuinness raised the issue of lack of repairs by HAP landlords and asked can the council do anything to highlight the problem suggesting the publishing of offending landlords. HAP is failing families and enquired if there are solutions to how the scheme is operating. In relation to planning the

National Maritime Scheme is due for discussion and he would like the council to be involved in discussions and also the proposed wind farm off the coast of Waterford. He requested details on the possibility of the fire service providing a first responder service.

I Grimes, DoS will request breakdown of timelines in relation to the repair and lease scheme. With regard to HAP and publishing of list of landlords not carrying out repairs this is not possible under GDPR regulations. He advised that HAP is a national scheme so members could lobby national representatives in relation to the issues. He will discuss first responder issue with the Chief Fire Officer and revert.

F. Galvin, DOS outlined that the matter around failing the EPA standard is the responsibility of Irish Water and outlined the issue is as a result of the requirement for remedial works to be carried out in the plant.

M. Walsh, CE outlined that correspondence has been received from the Minister in relation to the National Maritime Scheme, public consultation has been held on the west coast with further events to be held shortly and one of the meetings listed is to be held in Dungarvan. In relation to the North Quays he will revert with tender dates and outlined that works to relocate cables and demolition works are due to commence in Q2 of 2020.

Cllr. Ryan raised the question of a review of the CBL system and provision of feedback to applicants. In relation to the housing adaptation grant he enquired if there is there any way to streamline this grant and make it more efficient. He requested an update on the Rogue Gallery and enquired if the council is reviewing the option of a bike rental scheme for the city...

Cllr. O'Leary welcomed the funding for Mount Congreve and the potential employment it will create.

Cllr. Fitzgerald asked about the Care and Repair Scheme where Tallow/Cappoquin is going to be a pilot for the county area and enquired if other parts of the city and county will be included.

I Grimes, DOS explained that the IT system for CBL can't support the council to respond individually but he is reviewing options to improve it. Housing adaptations grant available cover two types, one for private houses where he is not aware of any delays and the other relates to council stock, he is aware of delays to our own stock one which is due to demand and the funding received and is currently being reviewed. In relation to the Care and Repair Scheme this is a scheme which is being reived and will be extended to all areas in the future. Pilot areas at the moment have been identified but this scheme should be fully operational next year for all areas.

K. Kehoe, DOS stated that the arts officer is currently working on a solution for the Rogue Gallery, currently don't have a suitable building but looking at options.

F. Galvin, DOS stated he will be looking at the viability of a scheme for bike rental next year.

R. Walsh, SEO agreed that there will be employment gains for Mount Congreve and local area and that the services in this area would benefit from the development.

Cllr. Brennan requested a date for a presentation from Bus Éireann regarding the bus service, supported and complimented the work of the councils homeless services. She queried the time taken to process some housing projects such as Larchville. Informed the members of 3 finalists in Pride of Place, Déise Day Care Centre, Comhairle na nÓg and Alexander Street Residents Association and wished them well. In regard to the Care & Repair Scheme she enquired if this is in demand or do we need to publicise more. In relation to the Rogue Studios she enquired if there are suitable buildings in the ownership of the council that could be used.

Cllr. Barry welcomed the council ceasing using B&B for emergency accommodation and requested a workshop and presentation on the work of the Homeless Services Unit in Parnell Street. He enquired if the service covers parts of Kilkenny and Wexford. In relation to Mt. Congreve he endorses and congratulations the Council on their work on this project and welcomed the positive impact on tourism. .

Cllr. Murphy requested details on the process for people serving suspension from HAP housing supports

Cllr. Tobin asked about the guidelines on wind turbines and noted that there is company who is not compliant with their planning permission and requested update on proceedings in relation to the development.

Cllr. J. Power asked about HAP and the non-compliant issues under this and other schemes.

The Mayor welcomed the funding for Mt. Congreve and enquired why no funding has been allocated to the Council for the Blackwater Scheme.

I Grimes, DOS Housing responded about the B&B usage and confirmed the Council will not be reverting to using them in the future. The request for a workshop can be accommodated and outlined that there is an open invite to any councillor who would like to visit and see the Homeless Services Unit. In response to query about Larchville he acknowledges while there have been delays in this area, the original budget did not include the relocation of services but this has been reviewed and resolved. In relation to the Care and Repair scheme Waterford Area Partnership administer this and it is volunteers who are involved and at the moment they are sourcing volunteers for all areas of Waterford which will facilitate its expansion. He outlined that the council is not responsible for the delivery of homeless services outside of Waterford. With regard to HAP suspensions he outlined that this is applied after two offers of reasonable accommodation are refused generally and the application suffers being suspended for 12 months. These are the guidelines and any suspension can be appealed, suspension from HAP is a national requirement. In relation to non-compliance rates for private rented properties under HAP they are carried out under guideline requirements and tend to be minor breaches.

F. Galvin, DOS said that issue regarding bus services is a Metropolitan District issue.

R. Walsh, SEO confirmed that they are disappointed with the result of the RDF Blackwater Valley application, it will be reviewed and resubmitted or an alternative funding source might be sourced for this scheme.

L. McGree, Senior Planner replied in relation to the Wind Farm outlined that the enforcement notice has expired and is before the courts, the planning office is looking at this now and engaging on this matter. An application for retention and also another to An Bord Pleanála have both been submitted. The development is not compliant as it is and once the Courts decide on the judicial review then action can be agreed.

K. Kehoe, DOS replied in connection with the Rogue Gallery outlining that potential suitable property is in council ownership but would require an investment of in excess of €200,000 to bring the property up to the necessary standard and is not an option currently.

## 8. Correspondence

Approved by Cllr. Barron and seconded by Cllr. Nugent.

## 9. Notice of Motions

### 1. Motion in the name of Cllr. Marc O’Cathasaigh and Cllr. John Hearne

*“That Waterford City and County Council would call on the Department of Health to provide a clear commitment to staffing increases in our public mental health services commensurate with population increases and increased demand on services since its framework document A Vision for Change was published in 2006.*

*Concrete figures for planned recruitment within each of the mental health professions across the various care groups - Child & Adolescent Mental Health, Adult Mental Health, Older Adult Mental Health, Primary Care, Forensic Mental Health, Mental Health & Intellectual Disability, Long Stay Inpatient and Community Rehabilitation Mental Health Services - should be part of the Department’s response to this council.”*

**Reg. No. 147** (dated, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2019)

The motion was unanimously agreed.

## 10. AOB

Cllr. Phelan outlined details of RSES workshop with the Southern Regional Assembly and informed members that the presentation from the workshop will be uploaded to Decision Time.

Cllr. Geoghegan commented in relation to Notice of a Motion from Sligo County Council stating that Coillte are erecting signage on their walking trails to warn the public about risk of Lyme's disease. He outlined that there is a problem with this in parts of the Comeragh Mountains and requested the council to consider signage, the issue was also raised at the Environment SPC.

Cllr. Shanahan requested that the Chief Executive invites Eamonn McEneaney to give a presentation to the full council at their next meeting to outline the developments of the new museums, this was seconded by Cllr. D.McGuinness and agreed by all.

The meeting concluded.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor**

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_