

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

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24th JUNE, 2020 IN WIT ARENA,
CARRIGANORE, WATERFORD.**

PRESENT

Cllr. Ger Barron	Cllr. Eddie Mulligan
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Pat Nugent
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. Davy Daniels	Cllr. Jody Power
Cllr. Declan Doocey	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Conor D. McGuinness	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Susan Gallagher	Cllr. Frank Quinlan
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Seamus Ryan
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. James Tobin
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. Adam Wyse

APOLOGIES

None.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

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

Cllr. J. Pratt, Mayor commended the front line staff during Covid 19 and asked that all follow guidelines laid out in connection with Covid 19.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of meeting held on the 14th May, 2020 proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Brazil.

2. Matters Arising

None.

3. Planning

(a) Planning lists as circulated were noted.

4. Land Disposals

K. Kehoe, DoS outlined details of the land disposals as presented.
Proposed by Cllr. E. Quinlan, seconded by Cllr. Tobin and agreed by all.

An amendment to Standing Orders was proposed by Cllr. Daniels and seconded by Cllr. Barron to take items 6,7 and 8 on the agenda before item 5. Agreed by all.

6. Filling of casual vacancies on Council created by the resignation of Laura Swift and appointment of John Cummins to Seanad Éireann in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator confirmed that a casual vacancy exists after the election of John Cummins to the 26th Seanad. As John Cummins was a member of a registered party, namely Fine Gael and under the provisions of Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, the political party has nomination rights to the casual vacancy. Notification of Frank Quinlan as the replacement for John Cummins was received. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all. The Mayor requested Frank Quinlan to take his seat on the Council.

Cllr. F. Quinlan thanked his partner, son and parents for their support, he also thanked Senator John Cummins for his nomination.

H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator confirmed that a casual vacancy exists after the resignation of Laura Swift. As Laura Swift was a member of a registered party, namely the Green Party and under the provisions of Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001, the political party has nomination rights to the casual vacancy. Notification of Susan Gallagher as the replacement for Laura Swift was received. It was proposed by Cllr. Power, seconded by Cllr. Phelan and agreed by all. The Mayor requested Susan Gallagher to take her seat on the Council.

Cllr. Gallagher thanked her proposer and seconder and the Green Party noting that she looks forward to working with everyone in Waterford.

Congratulations extended to the two new members of the council by all present.

7. Filling of Chair of Planning SPC and SPC vacancies created by casual vacancies.

The Meetings Administrator advised that the Council was required to consider the appointment of a Chair to the Planning Strategic Policy Committee consequent on the election of the Chair of this Committee, Councillor John Cummins, to the 26th Seanad. The Mayor called for nominations from the existing membership of the Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

Proposed by Cllr. Tobin and seconded by Cllr. E. Quinlan that Cllr. Cronin be appointed as Chair.
Proposed by Cllr. J. Power and seconded by Cllr. Ryan that Cllr. Phelan be appointed as Chair.

A roll call vote was requested which resulted as follows;
Cllrs. Wyse and Mulligan not present for the vote

Cllr. Phelan	Cllr. Cronin
Cllr Barron	Cllr. Brazil
Cllr Barry	Cllr Cronin
Cllr Brennan	Cllr Conway
Cllr Clune	Cllr Doocey
Cllr D. McGuinness	Cllr Geoghegan
Cllr Daniels	Cllr. Kelly
Cllr Fitzgerald	Cllr Murphy
Cllr Griffin	Cllr Nugent
Cllr. Gallagher	Cllr O’Leary
Cllr Hearne	Cllr. O’Donnell
Cllr T. Phelan	Cllr O’Sullivan
Cllr J. Power	Cllr S. Power
Cllr Pratt	Cllr. E. Quinlan
Cllr Ryan	Cllr. F. Quinlan
Cllr. Roche	Cllr Tobin
15	15

As the vote was equal and according to Section 52 of the Standing Orders a casting vote was required by the Mayor as chair of the meeting. The Mayor voted in favour of Cllr. Phelan and he declared Cllr. Phelan as appointed as Chair of the Planning Strategic Policy Committee.

The meetings administrator stated that the council was required to consider the nomination of a replacement to the Planning Strategic Policy Committees consequent to the vacancy created by the election of John Cummins to the Seanad. On the proposal of Cllr. O’Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan, Cllr. F. Quinlan was appointed.

The meetings administrator stated that the council was required to consider the nomination of a replacement to the Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committees consequent to the vacancy created by the election of Matt Shanahan to the Oireachtas. On the proposal of Cllr. Barron, seconded by Cllr. Daniels, Cllr. Roche was appointed.

The meetings administrator stated that the council was required to consider the nomination of a replacement to the Environment, Biodiversity & Climate Change Strategic Policy Committees consequent to the vacancy created by the election of Marc Ó Cathasaigh to the Oireachtas. On the proposal of Cllr. J. Power, seconded by Cllr. Phelan, Cllr. Gallagher was appointed.

8. Economic Development

(i) Economic Recovery Plan

Michael Quinn DoS outlined the detail of the Economic Recovery Plan and recommended adoption by the members.

Cllr. Griffin enquired if the council could write to the banks to request some leniency on lending.

Cllrs. Hearne, D. McGuinness, O’Leary and Kelly commended the plan and for listening to the businesses with Cllr. O’Leary asking for the CLÁR programme areas to be extended and Cllr Kelly enquiring if local builders could be used in order to also assist their recovery.

Cllr. Phelan noted that additional agencies and services may need to be worked with in relation to the delivery of the project.

Cllr. Roche stated that the immediate actions should be looked at that would give retailers immediate help and outlined the progress on outdoor seating in Waterford is positive as the area is well suited for it.

M. Quinn, DoS outlined that there are a number of programmes in conjunction with the CLAR programme where funding can be accessed. He acknowledged the point raised in relation to use of local builders and that there are procurement processes that need to be utilised but highlighted that there is engagement with local businesses and suppliers. The co-ordination group includes Waterford Chamber, Dungarvan & Lismore Chamber of Commerce, Fáilte Ireland, WIT etc. who will assist in delivering the plan. He noted that outdoor seating is being progressed and economic development team are supporting the process for implementation of it.

Cllr. Murphy asked for a comparison on turnaround of vacant properties with the new contractors to previously when local contractors were carrying out the work and requested a copy of the framework rules.

I.Grimes, DoS Housing, stated that recent figures were evaluated by NOAC and Waterford has the lowest cost by turnaround time and is in top 3 for national figures for on time delivery.

Economic Recovery Plan was proposed by Cllr. J. Power, seconded by Cllr. Murphy and agreed by all.

(ii) Street Furniture Grant Scheme

M. Quinn, DOS outlined details of the grant scheme noting that the focus is on the provision of furniture in town and village centres that will also be an addition to the public realm areas.

Mayor enquired if provision of awnings at Post Offices can be considered under the grant.

Cllr. E. Quinlan mentioned that some small business had difficulties in the provision of maps and asked if they could be assisted with this.

Cllr. Ryan enquired if residents in the city centre had been consulted about the plan for outdoor seating.

Cllr. Kelly enquired if the council was providing additional seating in general areas to facilitate opening of pubs and cafes in the area.

Cllr. Roche enquired about the cost to the council for the implementation of the scheme.

M. Quinn DOS responded that the awnings are excluded as need full planning permission. He acknowledged the issues in relation to the maps which has been resolved. He noted that consideration of residents in locations is being considered when planning for areas, they will review any concerns and liaise with residents where possible. He outlined that businesses need to maintain their own seating and the council is not currently looking at the provision of additional centralised seating. The aim of the council is to support businesses as much as possible and looking at measures to control expenditure.

M. Walsh, CE informed the members that Waterford is the only council in the country providing the grant scheme, it is a unique opportunity that has received a lot of engagement and will be of great benefit to the areas where it is implemented.

Cllr. Fitzgerald supports the initiative noting that rural publicans could use assistance also.

Cllr O'Sullivan welcomed the positive nature of the scheme noting that the members should consider supporting additional supports in the 2021 budget.

M. Quinn, DoS outlined that the restart grant is also available and is open to everyone to apply.

Street Furniture Grant Scheme was proposed by Cllr. Tobin, seconded by Cllr. Phelan and agreed by all.

5. Monthly Management Report.

Cllr. D. McGuinness outlined that there is a need to deliver more social and affordable housing and requested that a Housing SPC meeting is held in the near future due to the number of issues that need to be addressed. He requested the option of beach wheelchairs to be introduced to other beaches in the county and commended the work of the council during Covid 19.

Cllr. Tobin mentioned the outdated development plans that the city and county are currently working with and asked for consideration to be given to applicants for housing as it will be 2 years before the new development plan will be in place.

Cllr. Hearne commended the Gardaí on their work during Covid 19 and seizures of drugs during the time.

I.Grimes, DoS outlined that 1000 properties need to be delivered over the next few years and the council is actively working on the delivery of these housing units. In relation to the Housing SPC he confirmed that he is working with the chair to arrange a suitable meeting time and location taking into considering the current restrictions.

M. Quinn, DoS stated that the development plan that is a statutory process that the council is required to comply with.

Cllr. Roche requested an explanation on the “details of significant information” in relation to the North Quays project and asked what the plan was for the old sorting office.

Cllr. Wyse as chairperson of the Housing SPC stated that meetings were cancelled due to Covid 19 and a meeting will be held once it is possible.

Cllr. J. Power requested a workshop for councillors in relation to the Development Plan, outlined concern over the number of reports of illegal dumping and complimented the Community Response Centre requesting if it can be continued.

M. Quinn, DoS outlined that the significant information pertained to clarification on some environmental issues in relation to the North Quays Development. The plan for the old sorting office is for a Viking attraction which will include a virtual show, a Viking long house and village and will use technology to show our Viking history, funding is being sought from Fáilte Ireland. He confirmed the training for councillors in relation to the development plan process will be scheduled.

G. Hynes, SE outlined that there needs to be support from voluntary groups to roll out the beach wheelchairs as it would take away from the core duties of the lifeguards. He noted that investigations continue into sites of illegal dumping.

K. Kehoe, DoS explained that a number of staff from library and community sections were involved in the community response team and service remains in place.

Cllr. Conway mentioned the huge contributions as evident in the housing statistics and complimented all involved.

Cllr. E. Quinlan requested the list of council land to be used for housing and community facilities could be used for biodiversity programmes until developed.

I.Grimes DoS acknowledged Cllr. Conway’s comments and will communicate to staff noting that the homeless team have continues to work full time during the Covid restrictions

M. Quinn, DoS informed members that an update in relation to the North Quays will be arranged shortly.

Cllr. Ryan requested that options for feedback on the allocation of houses on the CBL site are looked at. He acknowledged praise to the library staff and others involved for the work carried out on the community response team.

Cllr. Barry requested asked if options for a Maritime museum could be investigated for the city. He asked that projects not achieved in the current Development Plan are included in the new plan. Complimented

the accomplishments of the Blue Flag Beach programme but unfortunate that not successful in the Marina Awards and suggested a focus on it for next year.

As meeting time was exceeded any outstanding questions and answers to be dealt with directly with the relevant staff.

9. Waterford Local Community Development Committee

(i) LCDC Annual Report

I.Grimes, DoS noted that the report is as circulated.

Report was proposed by Cllr. O'Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

(ii) Replacement appointment to LCDC

I.Grimes informed the members that Brendan Lawton from the Department of Social Protection is nominated for the LCDC. Cllr O'Sullivan proposed appointment, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

10. Annual Report 2019

K. Kehoe, DoS outlined that due to the cancellation of the April meeting notification of the Annual Report was not given to council. He informed the members that the 2019 Annual Report will be brought before council at the September meeting for their approval.

11. Finance

(i) 2019 Annual Financial Statement and Section 104

Deferred to July meeting

(ii) Borrowing approval to raise a loan from the Housing Finance Agency under Section 106 Local Government Act 2001 (as amended by the Local Government Reform Act 2014) for the purposes of executing and delivering the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency (LED Retrofit) Project.

G. Hynes, SE outlined the detail of the LED Retrofit Project requesting approval to borrow €9million for the project. He stated that the project will provide energy efficiencies along with reduced maintenance requirements. Borrowing was proposed by Cllr. Daniels and seconded by Cllr. Ryan.

Cllrs. Barron and Kelly requested detail on the timing of the project.

Cllr. Fitzgerald would welcome extension of the scheme into the private sector to assist with reduction in carbon footprint.

G. Hynes, SE stated that there is a scheduled start of December 2020 and will take 2 years to complete. Other schemes may be developed in the future for the private sector.

(iii) 2020 Budget Review

B. Pollard, HoF outlined losses in income in areas such as parking, rates and rents as a result of Covid 19 noting that here is a reduction of approximately €5m compared to the same time last year.

Cllr. Daniels queried if the rates waiver scheme will be extended and if there will be a recoupment on the revaluation shortfall. Supported by Cllr. Hearne.

Cllr. Quinlan outlined his concern in delivering a balanced budget at the end of the year.

Cllr. Roche enquired if there are national talks in relation to the addressing the deficit issue. Cllr Phelan reiterated that on basis of last year's budget difficulties that this year was even more challenging.

Cllr. Ryan noted that the council needs to receive assurance of some budget relief.

Cllr. J. Power requested that the finance committee meet to discuss the current budget challenges.

B. Pollard, HoF explained that there was a 3 month waiver on commercial rates at the moment, no further update currently. There is a requirement to have a balanced budget and the council will have to work within the parameters of this requirement.

M. Walsh, Chief Executive noted that a national case has been made to the central government in relation to the impact that Covid 19 has had on the budget. He outlined that the works programme as agreed by the members is continuing and sections are trying to recover time lost due to the lock down. There is responsibility on the executive and the councillors to be fair with the development and delivery of the budget each year and this in an exceptional year that will have additional challenges. He assured members that additional meetings will be held to discuss budget impacts if required. It will be very difficult to collect rates from the leisure/hospitality area stating that the government need to support these businesses.

12. Correspondence

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. O'Sullivan.

13. Notice of Motions

Motions deferred to July meeting

14. AOB

None

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____