

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

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9th MAY, 2019 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC OFFICES, DUNGARVAN, CO. WATERFORD**

PRESENT

Cllr. Declan Doocey (Mayor)	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. Breda Brennan	Cllr. Seamus O'Donnell
Cllr. Sharon Carey	Cllr. John O'Leary
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Cha O'Neill
Cllr. Joe Conway	Cllr. Michael J O'Ryan
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan
Cllr. Davy Daniels	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Sean Reinhardt
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Matt Shanahan
Cllr. Blaise Hannigan	Cllr. James Tobin
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Siobhan Whelan
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. Eddie Mulligan

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Cummins, Cllr. R. Murphy, Cllr. Quinlan, Cllr. Wyse

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 Deputising for CE
 Mr. K. Kehoe, Director of Services, Corporate, Culture, HR & IS
 Mr. B. Pollard, Head of Finance
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator

Cllr. J. O'Leary took the chair as Deputy Mayor

1. Confirmation of Minutes

Plenary Meeting held proposed by Cllr. Pratt seconded by Cllr. Reinhardt

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Murphy asked about adaptations to council stock and unacceptable waiting list and the funding received from the Department.

I Grimes, DoS stated the amount allocated on an annual basis is approximately €300,000 for adaptation to council stock. This allocation is inadequate considering the number of units in council stock.

Cllr. Daniels outlined in the Directly Elected Mayor it states that the development plan has been submitted by Waterford, he stated that this is incorrect.

Cllr. Tobin requested update on the wind turbine application planned for West Waterford.

J. O'Mahony, SP responded that there is no further update in relation to the proposed application.

Mayor Cllr. Doocey resumed the chair

3. Planning

(a) Planning lists as circulated were noted.

Cllr. Mulligan noted that while there is legislation in place for fast tracking housing applications over 100 houses he commented that An Bord Pleanála are demonstrating a disregard for the democratic planning process as they are not allowing oral hearings. There was a failure for the objections of the Waterford City East councillors to be recorded adequately in relation to the application. Requested that the Mayor would appeal to An Bord Pleanála to allow an oral hearing in relation to the matter.

Cllr. Fitzgerald wants it noted that he didn't object to the development in Ballygunner.

K. Kehoe, DoS stated that M. Quinn addressed the matter at the last meeting and stated that a letter would issue to An Bord Pleanála expressing concerns.

It was proposed by Cllr. Pratt to suspend Standing Orders to take item 8 before item 4, this was seconded by Cllr. Nugent.

1. Audit Committee Report

An outline of the work of the Audit Committee was given by chairperson of the Audit Committee, Padraic Doherty. Outlined the role the committee plays in the governance of the council and reviewing risks for the organisation both reputational and financially. The focus of 2018 was regular review of the risk register of individual directorates. Proposing to convene 5 meetings a year in order to rotate through each of the directorates. Acknowledged and thanked work of John Murphy, Bryan O'Kane and Hilda Fitzgerald and all other committee members.

4. Land Disposals

Cllr. O'Neill requested information on Reference No. 1357 (former Composting Facility) and concerns that had been previously raised by the local community.

F. Galvin, DoS outlined the history on the site, stated that site is being sold to Rathdrinagh Land Ltd. This will facilitate an expansion to the adjoining site, it will have to go through the planning process and this will allow for public submissions.

Cllr. Daniels outlined that €650,000 is being received for this site, he asked if the funds could be diverted to work outside of capital projects to deal with continuous issues with roads and footpaths.

M. Walsh, CE stated that money received from site disposal goes into the capital programme with a projected spend of €8m-€10m over the next number of years. The main source of funding for the council is from development contributions and additional funding is required to enable continued investment in the capital programme so this money received is not for use as part of the revenue budget.

Land Disposals proposed by Cllr. Brazil and seconded by Cllr. Nugent

5. Review of Waterford City & County Council 2014 – 2019

M. Walsh, CE outlined and gave a recap on the previous 5 years of the work of the Council. Noted the work on the amalgamation and restructuring of the new council to enable consistency across the organisation in two locations. On the whole there have been significant achievements in the overall amalgamation of the City and County and the extent of change that was brought about is not to be underestimated. The key changes and benefits from the amalgamation are estimated at a saving of €2m, significant increases in workload in areas such as housing and economic development with significant changes. Reductions of about 30 staff with further reductions going forward and procurement have also assisted in making savings for the organisation. Noted that no authority in history of Local Government

gave back €3m in return and reduction of commercial rates, this was achieved in 2014 and only increase by 1.8% since that time. This was achieved by aligning the rates across the city and county.

Greenway project has joined the county and has been a flagship project for the county. As part of the Corporate Plan there was a focus on making Waterford an attractive place to live and work. At the time of the amalgamation there was a particular emphasis on putting resources into economic development. This single point of contact has been provided for people who want to invest in Waterford and the Local Enterprise Offices are working successfully with positive outcomes.

Worth reflecting that there has been a phenomenal change in Waterford in last 5 years, quality of employment has changed with improvements in the live register. Capital investment and developments in the pipeline for the future. The council have invested heavily in Urban Renewal and this will spread to the town and villages across the county. The North Quays will be a particular transformative investment for Waterford with a planning application pending in the coming weeks with commitment from the developers. The council have supported a very active suite of festivals across the city and county which reflect the culture and heritage of Waterford and provide amenity and attraction to visitors, providing a sense of community for people.

Developing brand Waterford is the key to future development. Going forward there will continue to be investment in the Viking Triangle, development of the cultural quarter and Mount Congreve in order to develop longer duration stays for visitors. There will be an emphasis on rural development and there are streams of funding being opened up to support this development. There has been significant progress made in housing, housing adaptation grant enabling significant changes to people's lives, introduction of Choice Base Letting, 1,202 new Local Authority tenancies and successful implementation of the Repair and Lease Scheme.

There have been improvements with the new customer service desks in both Waterford and Dungarvan with an increase in the extent of contact with customers. M. Walsh, CE thanked the work and support of the councillors over the last five years and acknowledged the significant change that has happened over their term.

Cllr. Tobin outlined that all the rural and urban councillors need to support everything that happens across the county as a whole and highlighted the need to develop the heart and centres of small towns and villages across the county.

Cllr. Kelly outlined that more money is needed from central government to continue to develop the City and county. New council will need to look at different avenues for funding and the development of land banks in terms of housing. Wants to see the completion of the Greenway into the city.

Cllr. J. Murphy acknowledged that Waterford is on the cusp of positive change. Requested an invitation is extended to Gerry O'Dwyer to a workshop with the council in relation to the position of health in the region.

Cllr. Pratt commended work of the council and asked for a focus on investment for West Waterford and its rural villages.

Cllr. Brennan thanked housing for the improvements in the turnaround time for houses and hoped that further improvements can be made. Would like to see a more progressive stance in relation to tackling fly tipping and dumping to tackle the increasing problem.

Cllr. O'Ryan complimented the achievements of the last five years. Outlined his concern with the realignment of the Local Electoral areas and the loss of a seat for the Comeragh District.

Cllr. O'Leary commended the council in operating under constrained budgets and delivering services, he supported the need for additional funding. He hopes to see additional housing provided and a network of roads to compliment the access to the region.

Cllr. Mulligan outlined that one of the key enablers for the region is the provision of the Technological University of the South East, this is the area that is still deficit and need to look at what supports need to be in place to progress it.

Cllr. Hearne thanked all staff and colleagues for work over the term. A change will come if the directly elected mayor is passed.

Cllr. Geoghegan thanked CE for report and asked for presentation to be circulated to all councillors. The decisions of the council members has had a positive effect on the county. Most important work of the new council will be that of the new development plan. Challenge with housing are the provision of units

that are properly designed and managed and noted that there is still a resistance for social housing in the community.

Cllr. Shanahan stated that the priorities of tourism and airport need to be developed. He highlighted the need to question the laceration of WRH and supports the need to have Gerry O'Dwyer present to council. He noted the need to tackle the large number of vacant privately owned properties and work on the development of the university.

Cllr. O'Neill complimented work of the merged authority, highlighted the benefits of the city and county working together.

Cllr. Clune thanked the Executive for their support and acknowledged the work of Cllr. O'Ryan in his time on the council and wished him well for the future.

CE stated work is progressing in relation to development of the Technological University for the South East, the key issue for the future is to ensure that the University is properly resourced and fulfils its role as a University.

A suspension of SO proposed by Cllr. Tobin and seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan to acknowledge and pay tribute to the O'Ryan family for their contribution to the council for the last 100 years. The Mayor proposed that the next three items of business were dealt with and then the suspension of standing orders would take effect.

6. Monthly Management Report

Members agreed that report is taken as read.

7. Waterford LCDC Annual Report 2019

Proposed by Cllr. Hannigan and seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan

9. Parks and Open Spaces Bye Laws – Commencement of Process

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Mulligan

Cllr. Brennan doesn't agree with people not being able to sing in public.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that the change it to deal with the amplified sound and preaching.

10. Draft Scheme of Priority for Affordable Housing

I Grimes, DoS outlined the legal requirement for the local authority to approve and adopt the scheme by the 18th June. Key element is that the local authority have been asked to specify a maximum distance that a person can live away from an affordable scheme that may be developed in the future.

Cllr. Fitzgerald outlined that the income thresholds are causing problems and affecting eligibility.

Cllr. Kelly outlined his concerns as to how the proposal will operate and asked if the restrictions apply within the council boundary.

I Grimes, DoS stated that no decision is required in relation to income limits as these will be set out in the regulations to be developed by the Minister and points as noted by Cllr. Fitzgerald will be outlined in the regulations. This set of regulations will come before council in due course. The format of the scheme of priorities is largely set down in regulations that have already been made by the Minister, legally its not possible to restrict eligibility on county boundary basis and this is why each local authority is been given the opportunity to set its own distance limit, the rationale for the proposed 80km covers point to point from any point in the county. He stated that is open to any local authority to amend the scheme in the future if it is found not to work as intended.

Cllr. Griffin asked if occupants in Part V houses are permitted to purchase the houses under this scheme.

I Grimes, DoS stated that occupants of Part V houses are not eligible to purchase house under this scheme.

Cllr. Geoghegan supported Cllr. Griffin and requested it is reviewed.

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Griffin

Suspension of Standing Orders took effect to acknowledge Cllr M.J O’Ryan

Cllr. Tobin outlined that it will be first time in over 100 years that there will not be an O’Ryan on the council and it is a sad day. He noted that being a councillor is no longer a part time job as councils across the country are losing good people because they have to put their livelihood ahead of being a councillor. He is honoured to have served with two generations of O’Ryan and thanked Cllr. M.J.O’Ryan for his contribution.

Cllr. O’Leary stated that it is a sad day for the Fianna Fáil party, the Comeragh district and the full council. He has always been diligent in this work, caring for his community and ambitious for the city and county. He always had the mantra of ‘Comeragh first’.

Cllr. Pratt congratulate Cllr. O’Ryan in his time as a councillor and he always fought strongly for the Comeragh district.

Cllr, Fitzgerald on behalf of Sinn Féin party thanked Cllr. O’Ryan for his contribution to the council, wishing him well with his career noting his integrity in all he did.

Cllr. O’Neill supported comments from other councillors, acknowledged work for his district and wished the best for all future endeavours.

Cllr. Cronin stated that Cllr. O’Ryan always worked hard for the people of Ballymacarbery and the overall Comeragh area and wished him all the best for the future.

Cllr. Geoghegan congratulated Cllr. O’Ryan on his record of service, stating he is one of the hardest working councillors and always putting forward the case for his constituents. Will be a loss to the council, the party and the constituents.

Cllr Griffin stated the transformation to Ballymacarbery as a result of the work of Cllr. O’Ryan with his community is to be commended.

Cllr. O’Donnell wished Cllr. O’Ryan well and thanked him for his contributions.

Cllr. Shanahan thanked Cllr. O’Ryan acknowledging that he always puts people before politics.

Cllr. O’Sullivan noted Cllr O’Ryan interest in the county as a whole and his contribution will be missed.

Cllr. Murphy noted Cllr. O’Ryan’s quality of integrity and always wanted to give 100% to everything. He will continue to be successful in his career.

Cllr. Mulligan stated that Cllr. O’Ryan is a man of sound advice and supportive of all issues for the full city and county and he will continue to influence people going forward.

Cllr. Kelly outlined that Cllr. O’Ryan had great attention to detail, preparation for meetings and was an excellent debater.

CE supported all comments as portrayed by the councillors. He outlined that election to council is service to the community and Cllr. M.J. O’Ryan will be a loss in the context of the council.

Mayor outlined thanks to Cllr. O’Ryan stating it is not only the last meeting of the current council it is the last meeting for Cllr. O’Ryan to be part of this council. He always found Cllr. O’Ryan to have a common sense approach and the best of company in all occasions.

Cllr. O’Ryan responded to the council, outlining his family has acted as a conduit for the people of Ballymacarbery and it was a great community to represent. He is proud and privileged to have served the Comeragh area and to continue the legacy of Micháel and Ciarán O’Ryan and thanked his family for all their support. Thanked all the staff of the council for their support and noted that councillors need support going forward to carry out their job to the best of their ability. Admire all going forward for consideration for election and wish all councillors the best of the luck in the upcoming election. He notes that councillors represent people as best you can in an honest and transparent way.

11. Correspondence

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

12. Notice of Motions

1. Motion in the name of Cllr. Breda Brennan

“That Waterford City and County Council calls on Oireachtas members in Waterford and across the State to support the speedy passage of the ‘No Consent, No Sale Bill’ through the Houses of the Oireachtas, to protect home owners from having their mortgages sold on to Vulture Funds without their consent”

Reg. No. 125 (dated 17th April, 2019)

Motion proposed by Cllr. Brennan and seconded by Cllr. Griffin and agreed by all

2. Motion in the name of Cllr. John Hearne

“That Waterford City & County Council calls on the Minister of Health Simon Harris T.D. to consider his position and immediately address the situation in relation to the mortuary and refrigeration facilities in University Hospital Waterford which have been deemed unfit as far back as 2004. The issues highlighted in the recent letter sent by 4 consultant pathologists needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. ”

Reg. No. 126 (dated 25th April, 2019)

Motion proposed by Cllr. Hearne, seconded by Cllr. Whelan and agreed by all

3. Emergency Motion in the names of Cllrs. Siobhan Whelan, Breda Brennan, Pat Fitzgerald, Jim Griffin, Declan Clune, John Hearn, Sean Reinhardt & Blaise Hannigan

“That this Council supports the Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors of the Community Employment Scheme in their endeavours to gain pension rights as recommended by the Labour Court”

Reg. No. 127 (dated 3rd May, 2019)

Motion proposed by Cllr. Whelan, seconded by Cllr. Hannigan and agreed by all

13. AOB

Mayor thanked all councillors for their support during this term.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____