

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

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14th FEBRUARY 2019 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CITY HALL, THE MALL, WATERFORD**

PRESENT

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Cllr. Declan Doocey, Mayor | Cllr. Jason Murphy |
| Cllr. Liam Brazil | Cllr. Ray Murphy |
| Cllr. Breda Brennan | Cllr. Pat Nugent |
| 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. Eamon Quinlan |
| Cllr Jim Griffin | Cllr. Seán Reinhardt |
| Cllr. Blaise Hannigan | Cllr. Matt Shanahan |
| Cllr. John Hearne | Cllr. James Tobin |
| Cllr Joe Kelly | Cllr. Siobhan Whelan |
| Cllr. Eddie Mulligan | Cllr. Adam Wyse |

APOLOGIES

Cllr. J. Cummins, Cllr. S. O'Donnell.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive Officer
 Mr. M. Quinn, Director of Services, Economic Development & Planning
 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. O'Kane, A/Head of Finance
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator
 Ms. A. Maher, A/ Senior Staff Officer

Mayor welcomed Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services, Corporate Services, Culture, HR & IS and wished him well in his new position with Waterford City & County Council.

Mayor also welcomed Anita Maher, Corporate Department who replaces Stephanie Walsh who retired recently.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

Plenary Meeting held on 10th January, 2019 proposed by Cllr. Daniels seconded by Cllr. C. O'Neill

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Brennan pointed out she was omitted from the attendance at the last meeting.
H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator confirmed that this will be amended accordingly.

Cllr. Tobin requested that the legal opinion issued to the Chief Executive is circulated to members.

Cllr. Daniels requested that the Chief Executive make full representation to Minister Shane Ross in relation to the funding application for Waterford Airport.

Cllr. Pratt supported Cllr. Tobin and highlighted the need for a decision on the water supply in Tallow and Youghal.

Cllr. Mulligan asked for an update on when WIT will attend council meeting to discuss the Technological University. He requested an update on his request for the hosting of a business breakfast meeting and information on how to address the issue of the use of loudspeakers in the City Centre.

Cllr. Conway stated that at the November meeting a resolution of sympathy was agreed in relation to the shooting at the Synagogue in Pittsburgh. The Irish Jewish community have not yet received this and he is disappointed in the delay.

Cllr. O'Neill asked for clarification on the Michael St. Centre development and assurance that it will be developed alongside the North Quays and timeframe for works. He is concerned about the governments support for the project.

Cllr. Griffin asked if meetings can be broadcasted live or commented on by councillors on social media during the meeting.

Cllr. Kelly queried if it is proposed to bring commercial rates across the county in line with each other. Agreed with Cllr. C. O'Neill in connection with the North Quays and concern about the development.

Cllr. J. Murphy queried what is required in order to qualify for social housing as it seems that two people on minimum wage don't qualify, can it be clarified if FIS (Family Income Supplement) is taken into account.

Cllr. P. Fitzgerald enquired in connection with the North Quay development if an additional CPO is needed and if so who is responsible and how will it be funded?

CE reaffirmed that the developer for the North Quays is contracted to develop Michael Street in tandem with the North Quays. The Council is progressing the project with the Department and will resolve any issues that arise and is confident on its delivery. He informed the members that the planning application is due to be lodged in May and this will include an environmental study. With regard to the Airport a decision is due in the coming weeks and any boundary rectification that is required will be done by the developer. He will share the legal opinion received regarding the wind turbines and commented that the grounds of the advice are clear and satisfied that if a variation was to progress it would fail so entering such a process isn't prudent at a time when a strategic view is being taken in relation to the new Development Plan.

Cllr. Tobin enquired if the planning application could be rejected or postponed until new Ministerial guidelines issue and Development Plan is in place.

Cllr. Daniels outlined his concern that due to the amalgamation we are still operating under two Development Plans.

CE acknowledges the complexities of operating under two Development Plans but it was the decision of the Minister as a result of the amalgamation and has to be worked within.

I Grimes, DoS confirmed there are variances with the current rent schemes and in 2 of the 3 schemes FIS is taken into account. Currently looking at merging all the schemes but no National Guidance has been given. In connection with Income Thresholds he wrote to the Department and this is currently being reviewed.

Cllr. J. Murphy asked if FIS is taken into account in the City.

I Grimes, DoS confirmed that it is taken into account in the City & will confirm full details.

M. Quinn, DoS will follow up on the proposal for a breakfast meeting

H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator confirmed that WIT is scheduled to present to council at the March meeting. As per standing orders the use of mobile phones are not permitted during the meeting.

Cllr. O'Sullivan acknowledged the distribution of the re-useable cups to the members.

Cllr. Mulligan highlighted his preference that the cups were produced locally.

3. Planning

(a) Planning lists as circulated were noted.

4. Land Disposal

Proposed by Cllr. Kelly and seconded by Cllr. Fitzgerald.

5. Monthly Management Report

Cllr. J. Murphy raised his concern that no applications for adaptation grants were approved in January and there seems to be a delay in having works completed in both private stock and LA housing stock. He asked for details on the funding received and the process that is followed.

Cllr. Hearne outlined that of the 59 HAP properties inspected only 6 were fully compliant and what are the details of the non-compliance. Private landlords need to be providing properties that are of a suitable standard. He also asked that provision is made for the parking of bicycles in City Hall.

Cllr. Hannigan asked for clarification on what occurs to a tenant when they receive HAP accommodation, are they removed from the housing list which is an inaccurate reflection of the housing list figures.

I Grimes, DoS outlined that €1.8m is allocated for the Housing Adaptations Grants scheme, which does not include administration costs for the scheme. There are between 200- 350 yearly applications received and the housing section is having difficulties in meeting the demand. In relation to HAP he stated that the vast volume of non compliance relates to issues regarding smoke alarms and fire blankets. He plans to increase the volume of re-inspections of properties so that the standards are maintained. He outlined that it is national policy that people on HAP are not included in the official housing list figures.

Cllr. R. Murphy asked for update on report in connection with the Portlaw Tannery. He outlined that 12% of applicants for the Supporting Waterford Communities grants are not eligible due to not submitting their receipts. He requested that any excess funding is re-directed to Tidy Towns Groups of which there are 19 in the City and County. These groups carry out great work in their communities and have to pay high insurance, he asked councillors to consider this when approving the allocation of the grant funding.

Cllr. Quinlan raised an issue that under the current ECCE childcare scheme operators are rate exempt unless they take in one child that doesn't qualify, this is causing a lot of problems and hardship and stated that the issue needs to be addressed. Enquired if the option of a downsizing list for the housing list could be considered so that people could move to a smaller housing unit and release units for families. He asked if the windows and doors scheme can be extended to individual houses in older urban areas. Enquired if a plan for the development of land banks for social houses can be delivered so as to speed up the delivery of houses.

Cllr. O'Neill supported Cllr. J. Murphy with regard to the adaptation grants and the delay in particular with LA stock being addressed. Councillors receive numerous representations for this area and would like to see it improved.

Cllr. Whelan asked if there is any progress in identifying emergency homeless accommodation in the West of the county. Does the council have plans to purchase houses under the Buy and Renew Scheme.

I Grimes, DoS confirmed that if groups do not return receipts under the Supporting Waterford Communities grant scheme they will not be eligible to re-apply. The Housing, Community, Culture, Sport & Recreation SPC can look at the scheme criteria to see if there is a feasible alternative approach. There is no downsizing list but are currently looking at a number of schemes specifically for elderly tenants to offer this option to them. The windows & doors initiative was from Department funding under a Sustainable Energy Initiative, this can be reviewed again. He highlighted that the level of funding received for the adaptation grants is not adequate to meet demands; council is oversubscribed for all the Grants Schemes. He confirmed that a proposal has been made to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government relation to the provision of emergency homeless accommodation in the county areas and he will revert when a response has been received. In relation to purchasing of houses we have acquired some properties over the past few years but they are usually for medical cases where the specific type of accommodation is not readily available in our stock.

B.O'Kane, A/HoF will revert with details in relation to the childcare rates exemption.

Cllr. O'Leary supported the provision of emergency accommodation outside the City. He outlined his concern in having a downsizing list and relocating people outside of their communities.

Cllr. Reinhardt stated that the timing of the maintenance audit during the winter period was unfair and there is a long delay in dealing with heating issues in houses which is unsatisfactory with the current weather. He asked for an update on the provision of playground equipment for children with disabilities.

Cllr. Brennan enquired as to the type of weedkiller being used and that staff are using appropriate protective clothing. Asked for an update on the retro fitting of LED lights and if the cold weather initiative is it still in place.

I Grimes, DoS stated he is currently looking at provision of homeless services for other area as well as city. He assured council that there is no question of forcing people to move, it is always on a voluntary basis. He outlined that in relation to the delay in maintenance queries there has been a large number of calls for heating and boiler repairs recently. Some cases involved a full replacement of the boilers which takes time, most issues resolved now. With regard to the audit this was a legal requirement that all contractors employed by us complied under H&S and had to be completed.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that a final report is being compiled in connection with Portlaw Tannery. Playgrounds are being reviewed for equipment that is inclusive and have appropriate access. Confirmed that standard approved weed killer is used and all staff wear required PPE gear.

I Grimes, DoS stated that the cold weather initiative is still open.

Cllr. Kelly asked if there is a commencement date for the outdoor recreation grants that recently received funding. In relation to the Waterford Greenway are there sufficient emergency access points in the event of accidents. In connection with the Tenant Purchase Scheme what are the reasons for the high refusal rates.

Cllr. Nugent enquired as to the boundary provisions for the land in Springmount. He asked for an update on the funding and the short term and long plans for Mount Congreve.

Cllr. Conway highlighted that there are numbers of complaints in relation to the waste collectors and standards for replacement of the bins at households after the bins have been emptied. He complimented I. Grimes and housing team for the progress in relation to the CPO of properties and bringing them into the housing stock.

M. Quinn, DoS stated there are no specific dates in relation to the upgrade of the walks. He confirmed that there a number of access points on the Greenway for ambulances to gain access. He will review the site at Springmount .

I Grimes DoS stated that all local authorities are governed by National Regulations. He outlined that the high refusal rate is due to applicants not meeting the required criteria. He will pass on compliments to Property Management and Housing in connection with their work on the CPO's.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that the local authority can take up specific issues with the bin collection providers as required in relation to the provision of the service.

Cllr. Mulligan asked when the new City & County Development Plan will commence and for a report on targets set for new builds. Outlined that 68% of housing stock inspections are non complaint in HAP, what are the details for our own stock. Noted that the overdraft has reduced, has the council received additional funding.

Cllr. Shanahan enquired if the council supports groups who are coming together in relation to identifying waste management and green issues.

Cllr. Fitzgerald enquired if tenants can get a copy of the inspection report carried out on their property and how do housing maintenance prioritise the work to be carried out.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that the council welcomes input from the community and investigates all queries.

I Grimes, DoS acknowledged that the council exceeded the number of new units added to the housing stock in 2018. With regard to inspections he will revert with details as requested and review communications with tenants in relation to inspection information.

M. Quinn DoS outlined that the Planning SPC has started looking at requirements of the new Development Plan and will revert with timeline and dates when confirmed.

Cllr. O’Ryan enquired if the roads section could make grit available in certain locations around the county and make it part of the winter ready programmes.

Cllr. Pratt asked for clarification on the access to the HAP scheme but want to remain on the housing list. Enquired is there funding available for insulation and heating upgrades in both social and private housing. Requested an update on the funding for Waterford airport.

F. Galvin DoS stated that the winter ready programme is to ensure that access is maintained on national and regional roads. Grit is made available in locations and resources are deployed where there is prolonged period of bad weather.

CE expects a decision to issue shortly in relation to the Airport and will update council when received.

I Grimes, DoS stated that the HAP scheme has rules whereby when a household receives HAP accommodation their housing needs are met and therefore are not included in the housing figures for the Department. The council have been successful in getting funding under the Sustainable Energy Ireland initiative for council stock; private households need to apply directly. The council continues to apply for available funding.

Cllr. O’Neill proposed an amendment to standing orders to take item 7 before item 6 on the agenda, seconded by Cllr. Daniels and agreed by all.

7. Nomination to Waterford & Wexford Education and Training Board

Cllr. O’Neill proposed and Cllr. Daniels seconded the nomination of Cllr. Matt Shanahan in place of former Cllr. Roche and the WWETB and all other committee positions held.

6. Annual Service Plan

Proposed by Cllr. E Quinlan and seconded by Cllr. Conway

8. Correspondence

Proposed by Cllr. Tobin, seconded by Cllr. O’Neill and agreed by all.

9. Notice of Motions

1. Motion in the name of Cllr. James Tobin

“In view of the stricter driving laws and the morning after checkpoints, Waterford City and County Council calls on the government to make breathalyzer kit available free to all pharmacies and said pharmacies reimbursed for stocking same.”

Cllr. Tobin proposed the motion outlining that the availability of breathalyzers kits would assist drivers in ensuring they are safe to drive the next day. Cllr. O’Ryan supported the motion.

Cllr. Shanahan proposed an amendment to the motion outlining that the pharmacies should waive the dispensing fee resulting in the unit being sold at cost. Cllr. J. Murphy supported the amendment and Cllr. Tobin agreed to the amendment. A show of hands was called for.

For 16

Against 1

Abstained 5

Motion Carried

2. Motion in the name of Cllr. Siobhan Whelan

“I propose that the full Council of Waterford City and County Council sits at Coláiste na Rinne for our next Plenary meeting. To mark the centenary of the first Dáil, and to acknowledge Cathal Brugha Waterford’s first TD who had a strong connection with An Rinn”

Cllr. Nugent proposed that the executive investigate the associated costs and this was seconded by Cllr. Mulligan. Cllr. Mulligan suggested a cultural involvement at a council meeting to commemorate the occasion. Cllr. J. Murphy suggested that the Cathal Brugha bust in the Theatre Royal is relocated to Dungarvan. It was agreed that the Executive would investigate the costs associated with having a meeting held outside of the Council Chamber and bring back to the next meeting.

3. Motion in the name of Cllr. Declan Clune

"That Waterford City & County Council contact's both the HSE and Minister for Health Simon Harris T.D. to express our grave concern regarding the spiralling costs associated with the new National Children's Hospital and the potential impact on the provision of health services in our region, specifically on the delivery of 24/7 Cardiac Care.

Motion in the name of Cllr. Clune fell as he was not present at the meeting.

10. AOB

Cllr. Brennan requested that a letter is issued to the Department with regard to the reduction of funding for the Irish Deaf Society. Can the council work on the inclusion of interpreter's at large council events such as St. Patricks Day to ensure the inclusion of the deaf community.

Cllr. Shanahan supported Cllr. Mulligan in the use of local companies in the provision of such items as the re-usable cups. Also informed the meeting that UHW intend to extend an invitation to all councillors for a tour of hospital and Cat Lab and to discuss proposal, he will confirm when a date has been agreed.

Cllr. Conway outlined details in relation to generation of jobs through LEO and asked if progress is being made.

M. Quinn, DoS will need to revert with full details on LEO.

H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator confirmed that an interpreter will be at the Freedom Ceremony and will be considered for future events.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____