

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

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023 IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY  
HALL, WATERFORD.**

<b>Present</b>	
Cllr. John O’Leary (Mayor)	Cllr. Cristiona Kiely
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. Joanne Bailey	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Lola O’Sullivan
Cllr. Joe Conway	Cllr. Thomas Phelan
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. Jody Power
Cllr. Conor McGuinness	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Declan Doocey	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Frank Quinlan
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Seamus Ryan
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Mairead Tobin
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. Adam Wyse
Cllr. Stephanie Keating	Cllr. Ger Barron
Cllr. David Daniels	

Apologies: Cllr. Seamus O’Donnell

**Officials in Attendance**

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive  
 Mr. K. Kehoe, Director of Services, Corporate Services, Culture and Planning  
 Mr. I. Grimes, Director of Services, Housing  
 Mr. M. Quinn, Director of Services, Economic Development  
 Mr. F. Galvin, Director of Services, Roads, Water and Environment  
 Mr. B. Pollard, Head of Finance  
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meeting Administrator  
 Ms. A. Flynn, Corporate

The Mayor reflected on an historic week for Waterford in relation to the breaking of the ground on the North Quays, it was the start of Waterford’s renaissance and would transform the city for the benefit of everyone. He acknowledged the superb effort and determination of Mr. M. Walsh, CE in relation to the development along with his team. He spoke of the opening of Mount Congreve House and gardens and the celebration of the raising of the national flag by Thomas Francis Meagher 175 years ago which was attended by seven ambassadors from around the world.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes**

Plenary Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Quinlan and agreed by all.

Special Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 Proposed by Cllr. Murphy and seconded by Cllr. Phelan and agreed by all.

## **2. Matters Arising**

Cllr. Roche asked for an update on the list of Council properties she requested at last meeting.  
Cllr. Kelly asked for clarification in relation to Modular Housing and what the process might be.

K. Kehoe, DoS, said that the list is currently being worked on and he hopes to make it available shortly.  
I. Grimes, DoS, said that all capital projects must go through procurement procedures and said if a modular housing proposal came through as part of procurement it would be looked at. He said there are national pilots in relation to modular housing which will be looked at to see how they are being developed and he also said the Housing Agency will be providing guidance to local authorities.

Mayor proposed a suspension of standing orders to take Item 6 on the Agenda before Items 3 and 4, seconded by Cllr. Quinlan and agreed by all.

## **6. Filling of casual vacancies on Waterford City & County Council following death of the late Cllr. Davy Daniels, in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001**

H. Dunphy, Meeting Administrator as per Section 19 (3) (b) and Section 19 (5) of the Local Government Act, 2001 confirmed that the written consent of David Daniels for co-option to Waterford City & County Council to take the seat of the late Cllr. Davy Daniels was received.

Cllr. Roche proposed the co-option of David Daniels to the seat of his late father Cllr. Davy Daniels. She said it was a bittersweet day for his family and his extended family and welcomed the great support present for David. She said the late Cllr. Davy Daniels was colossal in Waterford and in political circles, he championed projects such as the Airport, the North Quays, the People's Park and 24/7 cardiac care. She said he achieved a great deal and was always forthcoming in calling people to account. She said he was proud and knowledgeable and said the members were immensely proud to work with him and he is greatly missed. It would have given him so much pleasure and joy to see his son being co-opted to the Council, she hopes that he will grow to love it and enjoy the experience. She offered the support of the members, wished him the very best of luck and said she was honoured to propose David Daniels to be co-opted to the seat of his late father Davy.

Cllr. Ryan seconded the co-option; he said the untimely death of Cllr. Davy Daniels was a shock to everyone; he has no doubt that David will continue in the same vein as Davy and will continue the campaigning of his late father.

The Mayor asked Cllr. Daniels to take his seat in the Council Chamber and extended his welcome and congratulations and invited him to address the Chamber.

Cllr. Daniels thanked his proposer and seconder and all the members for their support. He thanked everyone for the support shown on the day of his Dad's funeral and said the kindness and support shown to the family from the people of Waterford and beyond has been so humbling and would like to take this opportunity to express their sincere gratitude. It was an emotional day but a huge honour for him to fill his Dad's seat, he has so many special memories of him being in the Chamber wearing his robes with pride. Davy Daniels was truly passionate about Waterford, proud of its people and worked hard to represent them. Like his Dad he said he has a great team behind him and was honoured to represent the Constituency of Waterford City East. The success and development of Waterford City and County will be his main priority and he looked forward to working alongside his fellow Councillors and Council Officials.

Cllr. Daniels was welcomed and congratulated by the other councillors. Mayor proposed a suspension of standing orders to take a five-minute break, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

### **3. Land Disposals**

None.

### **4. Monthly Management Report**

Cllr. McGuinness asked if there was any update or response from Transportation Infrastructure Ireland as regards to the proposal for a cross party delegation to meet TII to discuss issues pertaining to the N25. He enquired about Homeless Services and the capacity to deal with the influx of homelessness and actionable notices to Quit, considering the Government's decision not to maintain the eviction ban.

Cllr. Conway asked in relation to the much lower than average rainfall in February if there is a possibility of drought problems later and how any impact on water quality is being monitored. He asked for engagement with Councillors to raise awareness.

Cllr. Keating asked if there were any further plans to increase accommodation capacity under the Cold Weather Initiative saying the hostel in Waterford has reached capacity which is a concern during the cold weather initiative.

F. Galvin, DoS, noted that have engaged with TII and looking for suitable dates, no date confirmed as yet. Cllr. McGuinness also suggested that any delegation to meet TII would also meet the Minister for Transport on the same day to which F. Galvin, DoS said that there had been no contact with the Minister for Transport but that a request for him to meet the delegation on the same day will be made. He noted that the Council are conscious of issue of drought in the context of climate change and the responsibility lies with Irish Water. To provide for high-quality water supply in times of drought will be an action in the Climate Action Plan as drought may have a significant and serious impact to water supply and quality.

I. Grimes, DoS outlined that the Council was in the process of reviewing its emergency accommodation for families, irrespective of the recent government decision. In relation to the Cold Weather Initiative, they have instructed the men and women's hostels that no one is to be left out on the street. McGwire House had taken in a number of people who previously would not have engaged with Homeless Services. In addition, the Gardaí actively look for anyone out in the weather and as a last resource they take people into the garda station as well. He said the capacity issue is being examined and is satisfied that the Cold Weather Initiative is providing adequate accommodation.

Cllr. E. Quinlan enquired if there are plans for green space or park as part of the North Quay designs and if the pedestrian bridge will open to enable boats to travel up and down the river. He enquired if the Council are engaging with SETU in relation to their campus survey. He asked if it was correct that there were approximately 11,000 homeless people in the 26 counties and 10,000 homeless families in the 6 counties and asked if there had ever been an eviction ban in the North of Ireland.

Cllr. Murphy asked if the details on the VAT tax refund entitlement in relation to the recipients of the adaptation grants could be sent when issuing claim forms to applicants. He noted that there seems to be long delays in processing payments to contractors in relation to adaptation grants. He said there are 544 housing units in the pipeline and asked for a more detailed breakdown in the monthly management report including where they are located, either by electoral area or by estate so that Councillors are better informed when asked by constituents what is coming on stream.

Cllr. Ryan noted that there had been 454 callers to the Homeless Service since the start of the year which will increase with the lifting of the eviction ban and asked if the Housing office is able to deal with an increased workload. He enquired if the Council will be able to allocate extra housing over the coming months. On behalf of the Brothers of Charity he enquired if a storage facility for their ability dependent bikes could be provided on the Greenway.

M. Quinn, DoS informed the members that within the North Quays Development there is extensive public space and there will be private green space for the residents of the apartments. He confirmed that the bridge is an opening bridge as we are retaining our navigational rights.

I. Grimes, DoS noted that inclusion of details regarding tax refunds can be included when returning documents to grant recipients and commented that any delay in payments to Contractors may have resulted from recent staff changes. The Housing Delivery Action Plan provides information on the location of housing giving an indication of the towns and villages we are going to develop; he will circulate a copy to the members. There are currently adequate staff in Housing and Homeless Services, currently reviewing unit capacity within Homeless Services noting that have a very strong capital programme.

F. Galvin, DoS suggested that the Brothers of Charity contact the Active Travel team in relation to the storage of disabled access bicycles on the Greenway.

Cllr. Phelan requested details on the staffing of the Active Travel team. He noted applications are increasing while allocations appear to be decreasing resulting in a longer waiting time for new applicants. Asked for average waiting times for one, two and three bed houses be included in the Monthly Management Report.

Cllr. J. Power congratulated Council and the Executive on positive news for the city in last two weeks. He spoke about the very successful Thomas Francis Meagher celebrations which attracted both national and international interest and asked if the Council would look at improving the family grave of TFM in Faithlegg. In relation to the Community Recognition Fund of €1.4 million enquired if both Ukrainian refugees and other community projects can apply for the funding. He asked if John Foley's film of the Civil War General Liam Lynch's last days in Waterford recently showed in Dungarvan could be shown in the city. He asked for some reassurance that people who are sleeping on the streets choose are being supported. Cllr. Barry asked if there has been talks with the Port of Waterford in relation to the possible loss of business at Belview if freight is brought back on track. He enquired if there is an alternative plan as regards the proposed Waterford/Rosslare Greenway, noting that this link would connect us more with the European and English tourism market. He asked if the Council has any events planned for European Maritime Day.

I. Grimes, DoS commented that applications do vary over a 12-month period and allocations depend on project delivery timelines noting that there has been an increase in the number of applications in the past two months as the income eligibility threshold for social housing has increased. Waterford City & County Council have been allocated €1.4 million to support projects that will benefit the communities that have supported Ukrainian and other refugees and around 60 submissions have been received. In relation to rough sleepers he said the Council's homeless outreach workers, the Gardai and Homeless Services work tirelessly to address it and based on the information from the Council's outreach workers and the gardai there are no rough sleepers in Waterford, hostels have been instructed to take in anybody who presents to them.

M. Quinn, DoS noted that Wexford County Council are the lead authority on the Waterford/Rosslare Greenway and are awaiting the outcome of the rail study and reviewing impact. He is not aware of any plans to commemorate European Maritime Day, any proposal for a more significant investment in this would have to be dealt with as part of the budget process and festivals allocation.

K. Kehoe, DoS will try to get the film as requested shown in the City in the next few months.

F. Galvin, DoS noted that active travel updates are provided at district meetings, there are currently 6 positions filled in the Active Travel team with remaining positions to be filled in the coming months.

I. Grimes, DoS noted that there are significant variations in waiting lists across different districts and would be more appropriate to give more localised detail at District Meetings, where possible.

K. Kehoe, DoS noted that upkeep of TFM graveyard would be looked into.

Cllr. Kelly requested if any assurances can be given regarding recovery of any potential overspend that may arise from the North Quays project.

Cllr. Hearne noted that the news is dominated by the eviction ban, the effects of which are a concern, he requested additional details on upcoming trips by the councillors to ensure all were informed.

Cllr. Griffin thanked and congratulated everyone involved in Mount Congreve suggesting additional directional signage before the summer. He enquired if the council have received funding for the purchase of properties under tenant-in-situ scheme from the Department.

M. Quinn, DoS noted that we work with the funding agencies in relation to overspends and unforeseen circumstances that may arise and where justified additional funding may be provided. He commented that signage can be reviewed in line with the promotion of Mount Congreve and access to the location.

F. Galvin, DoS commented that the Council would be happy to engage with the Bothers of Charity.

K. Kehoe, DoS noted that a detailed summary was circulated to the members providing information on the focus of the suggested trips.

I. Grimes, DoS noted that have received no indication of funding allocations for the purchase of properties and understand that more details are due to issue to local authorities.

Cllr. Kiely enquired about what oversight we have on the materials we use in our housing projects specifically referring to St. Joseph's heating system. Enquired as to what we can do for people who choose to sleep rough, if the bike bunkers would be rolled out now that the trial by the active travel team is complete. Noted that it is the policy of Waterford City & County Council to have only standardised crossings requesting that the city take the lead in the provision of a number of rainbow crossings.

Cllr. Barron welcomed the continuing programme of outdoor recreation and in particular the work being done on the viaduct in Kilmacthomas which is over 150 years old. He requested a programme of signage for the Greenway for safety measures and for directing people to cultural landmarks and villages along the way. He also suggested the employment of wardens even for the summer months and welcomed the feasibility study on the Dungarvan/Mallow Greenway.

Cllr. Roche said at the recent presentation on the South East Economic Monitor the data in relation to income tax suggested low wages in the region and the data in relation to VAT suggested low consumer spending in the region. She said this is a strategic issue that needs to be addressed. She asked if it would be appropriate to write to the IDA and Enterprise Ireland requesting a meeting to discuss the issue and how it could be addressed. She noted that there is no signage on the N25 coming from Dublin until you come to Kilmeaden. The parking area at Carraiganore is not sign posted and Bilberry is not sign posted on these routes and needs to be addressed as a starting point for the Greenway. She enquired if the Council offers any assistance to vulnerable and elderly people who are trying to access our services. She congratulated and recognised the huge effort of all those who assisted at the fire in Wexford Hospital including the staff and management at Waterford Regional Hospital.

I. Grimes, DoS noted that there were significant challenges for the developer in ensuring adequate heat for St. Josephs and the capital team had regular on-site meetings. He noted that those who choose to sleep rough cannot be compelled to take emergency accommodation and stated that there are two welfare officers who will assist people who are vulnerable and assist with completion of application forms. He commented that the Civil Defence were also on site supporting the Wexford Emergency Services. The council has its own emergency plan which is kept under review on an on-going basis by the Fire Services.

F. Galvin, DoS noted that the results of the pilot on the bike bunkers are due to be assessed in the first instance before rolling out. In relation to the rainbow crossings, he said there are very precise statutory requirements for how you line and what colour you line pedestrian crossings and to do otherwise could potentially leave us with a liability issue in terms of a driver not recognising this. He noted that additional signage on the Greenway has been erected over the last 12 months and will keep under review, he noted that there is a plan to have students patrol the Greenway over the summer months, there is no budget available to employ full time wardens nor would the council have the authority to police the Greenway. He will follow up on proposed changes to the signage on the N25.

M. Quinn, DoS said that the income and expenditure levels mentioned are certainly well below what we would aspire to. There have been improvements in terms of income levels but obviously we're chasing a much higher national average. A lot of that is influenced by the scale of Dublin and the salaries that are available in Dublin, but it is something that we should be looking to address. A component of that is going to be producing the graduates through the South East Technological University to fill positions into the future and to be dealt with by IDA and Enterprise Ireland in terms of creating the opportunities for those graduates and he will organise a workshop as requested.

Cllr. Bailey requested a letter is issued to the Minister to urgently address the lack of dentistry for medical card patients saying a lot of the dentists in Waterford and Dungarvan will no longer take medical card patients. Noted concerns about the eviction ban enquiring as to how the Council are going to tackle it, asked if the Council are in a position to buy property and will there be an allocated person in the housing department to look at each request. She asked if an emergency meeting could be called to discuss the current housing crisis, the scale of it and what can be done.

Cllr. Fitzgerald said we have a homelessness problem and the apartments on the North Quays are welcome in tackling it. He commented that there are many skilled workers on this project and asked where they are going to be accommodated as there is very little accommodation available.

Cllr. Pratt welcomed the feasibility study on the Dungarvan/Mallow Greenway and enquired when the applicants for the Community Recognition Fund would learn if they were successful or not.

Cllr. Nugent enquired if there is any update on the development of the site of the Ard Rí Hotel and if the council was in a position to purchase the old Waterford Glass Complex.

I. Grimes, DoS said in terms of staffing in respect of prospective purchases he said he is satisfied there are enough staff to manage that process. In relation to an emergency meeting on housing he said that is a matter for the members. In relation to the Community Recognition Fund there were expressions of potential projects that need to be assessed and he said those areas where there is the highest concentration of Ukrainian Refugees will be prioritised.

M. Quinn, DoS noted in relation to accommodation for workers on the North Quays it is not an immediate problem as all workers will not be starting on site at same time, accommodation for workers is the responsibility of the, noting it will put added pressure on housing in Waterford. There is no update on the old Ard Rí site, the councils view in relation to the Waterford Crystal site is that it is an opportunity site for the University and welcome that this is proceeding with the Department and will conclude successfully.

## **5. Presentation by Winterval**

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Trevor Darmody, co-director of Winterval to the chamber who gave a presentation on Winterval 2022. He provided an overview of the visitors that the festival attracted to Waterford, new locations for attractions and the benefit of the changes along with details on the attractions and their success. He outlined that PR coverage of the festival which was far reaching and provided great coverage to the festival and Waterford.

Cllr. Kelly, Cllr. Kiely, Cllr. Griffin, Cllr. Murphy, Cllr. Wyse, Cllr. Bailey, Cllr. Roche, Cllr. F. Quinlan & Cllr. Phelan spoke to thank Trevor for his presentation and congratulated him on the success of Winterval 2022.

## **7. Committee Vacancies**

### **(i) Planning Strategic Policy Committee.**

Proposed by Cllr. Roche and seconded by Cllr. Wyse that Cllr. Daniels becomes a member of the Planning SPC and agreed by all.

### **(ii) Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Ltd.**

Cllr. O'Sullivan proposed Cllr. Geoghegan, seconded by Cllr. Murphy.  
Cllr. Phelan proposed Cllr. Barron, seconded by Cllr. McGuinness.

The meetings administrator conducted a roll call vote with the following votes being cast.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Cllr. Geoghegan</b>	<b>Cllr. Barron</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Not Present</b>
Joeanne Bailey (SF)		✓		
Ger Barron (Lab)		✓		
Donal Barry (Ind)		✓		
Liam Brazil (FG)	✓			
Declan Clune (Ind)				✓
Joe Conway (Ind)	✓			
Tom Cronin (FF)	✓			
Conor McGuinness (SF)		✓		
David Daniels (Ind)		✓		
Declan Doocey (FG)	✓			
Pat Fitzgerald (SF)		✓		
Damien Geoghegan (FG)	✓			
Jim Griffin (SF)		✓		
John Hearne (SF)				✓
Stephanie Keating (FF)	✓			
Joe Kelly (Ind)	✓			
Cristiona Kiely (GP)	✓			
Mairead Tobin (FF)	✓			
Jason Murphy (FF)	✓			
Pat Nugent (FG)				✓
Seamus O'Donnell (Ind)				✓
John O'Leary (FF)	✓			
Lola O'Sullivan (FG)	✓			
Thomas Phelan (Lab)		✓		
Jody Power (GP)		✓		
Seanie Power (FG)				✓
John Pratt (Lab)		✓		
Eamon Quinlan (FF)				✓
Frank Quinlan (FG)	✓			
Seamus Ryan (Lab)		✓		
Mary Roche (SD)		✓		
Adam Gary Wyse (FF)	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

**Cllr. Geoghegan** elected with 14 votes to 12 cast for Cllr. Barron with six Councillors not present.

**(iii) Community Safety Committee.**

Proposed by Cllr. O’Sullivan and seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan that Cllr. Kiely would join the Community Safety Committee and agreed by all.

**8. Correspondence**

Proposed by Cllr. Conway seconded by Cllr. J. Power and agreed by all.

Cllr. Conway asked that he retrospectively be added to the approved list of attendees to the AILG Training Module 1 “A Briefing on the Electoral Reform Act” held 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

**9. Notice of Motions**

None

**10. AOB**

Cllr. McGuinness outlined in relation to Cllr. Quinlan’s figures for homelessness in the North said that the methodology used to count homelessness in the North is broader than in the South and if the same methodology was used here the homeless figures would be six or seven times greater.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor of Waterford City & County Council

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