

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

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13th SEPTEMBER, 2018 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CITY HALL, WATERFORD**

PRESENT

Cllr. Declan Doocey, Mayor	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Ray Murphy
Cllr. Breda Brennan	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. John O'Leary
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Seamus O'Donnell
Cllr. Joe Conway	Cllr. Cha O'Neill
Cllr. John Cummins	Cllr. Michael J O'Ryan
Cllr. Davy Daniels	Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Blaise Hannigan	Cllr. Seán Reinhardt
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. James Tobin
Cllr. Eddie Mulligan	Cllr. Siobhan Whelan
	Cllr. Adam Wyse

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive
 Mr. I. Grimes, Director of Services, Housing, Community & Emergency Services
 Mr. F Reidy, A/Director of Services, Corporate, Culture, HR & IS
 Mr. B. O'Kane, A/Head of Finance
 Mr. G. Hynes, Senior Engineer, Roads
 Mr. J. O'Mahony, Senior Planner,
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator
 Ms. S. Walsh, Senior Staff Officer

1. Confirmation of Minutes

- (a) Plenary Meeting held on 12th July, 2018 proposed by Cllr. Brennan, seconded by Cllr. Quinlan.
- (b) Minutes of Special Meeting held on 31st July, 2018, proposed by Cllr. Brazil, seconded by Cllr. R. Murphy.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Tobin said that regarding the issue of the motion relating to the planning variation for the wind turbines they have engaged with a Solicitor and Senior Counsel, they expect a reply for the October meeting. Cllr. Roche asked for an update regarding Minister John Paul Phelan addressing the Council. Cllr. Clune requested an update on the signing of contracts for the North Quays. Cllr. Mulligan said it is imperative to meet the steering committee representatives for the Technology University of the South East as a submission by them is due in by 30th September. Cllr. Brennan asked for an update regarding a motion she put in on use of the house and land on Manor Hill for social housing. Cllr. Daniels asked if there was a response from Minister Harris regarding the 24/7 cardiac care and an update on land acquisition for the Airport. Cllr. O'Neill asked for an update on the meeting requested with the Dáil Deputies. Cllr. O'Sullivan enquired if a response was received from the Minister regarding the motion sent in for Educate Together School in Tramore, and can the Council contact the Sisters of Charity, the Christian Brothers Tramore and Bishop Cullinan to bring them together to come to some agreement.

Chief Executive said the intention is to sign contracts regarding the North Quays in another week, he said in terms of Waterford Airport he is awaiting government decision regarding bringing private sector funding on board but there is continuing engagement with the landowners and the planning application is ready to be lodged.

Mayor said he met with Minister Harris who said there is a report being put together and he is of the understanding that it will be in Waterford's favour.

I Grimes, DOS said regarding the site at Manor Hill a proposal regarding that site was put to the Department a number of years ago which they did not approve at that time but the Council is looking at this site again and hope to get a proposal into the Department in the next couple of weeks for a mixture of affordable and social housing.

Cllr. Brennan asked a supplementary question, if the size of the site will be the same as the existing site.

I Grimes, DOS replied that it will be the same location.

F. Reidy, A/DOS said the invitation to Minister Phelan was acknowledged but no date confirmed yet and in relation to the Dáil Deputies the Council will be writing to them now as the Dáil has re-convened.

H. Dunphy, AO is in contact with the steering committee for the Technology University of the South East regarding setting up a meeting.

3. Planning

- (a) Planning lists as circulated were noted.
- (b) Proposed Variation No. 4 of the Development Plan – Camping Site Policy- proposed by Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan, seconded Cllr. Quinlan and agreed.
- (c) Section 85 Agreement with Wexford and Kilkenny for the Waterford to Mount Elliot Greenway (130 inside Waterford City Boundary) proposed by Cllr. Cummins, seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and agreed.

4. Land Disposals

Proposed by Cllr. Nugent, seconded by Cllr. Kelly and agreed.

5. Monthly Management Report

Cllr. O'Leary asked if Transport Infrastructure Ireland could be contacted to review the road markings on the N25 with regard to putting in right turning lanes.

Cllr. Brazil agreed with Cllr. O'Leary regarding the N25 and he outlined his concern with the current lack of service in Kilmacthomas and what can be done to get it operational, particularly in light of recent crash on N25.

Cllr. Cummins said he is taking Cllr. O'Sullivan's allocated time as per Standing Orders and he requested an update on the LIHAF scheme in relation to when the road at Kilbarry will commence and is the negotiation in relation to the Gracedieu scheme completed. He asked when is construction commencing on the Browne's Lane section road and explain why there is a delay in the schedule in the Roadwork's Programme. In relation to purchasing Part 5 houses can this be frontloaded and the houses purchased at the start of a scheme. Regarding the CPO of houses he welcomes that the Council is being proactive and that 44 vacant properties are currently under CPO, he asked how soon the property would be ready for letting.

Cllr. Mulligan asked why the number of Fire Certificate applications and the Commencement Notices are down on last year and is it a concern. Regarding the waiting list for emergency accommodation where are these people sleeping and what is the turnaround for vacant Council stock.

G. Hynes, SE said that under the Transport Infrastructure Ireland standards, a right turn lane on the N25 would only be provided if a significant number of vehicles (greater than 300) use the minor road; this is based on safety and statistics. In relation to the Roadworks Programme it is nearly 90% complete and we are currently on schedule with the programme.

I Grimes, DOS said the incident at Kilmacthomas was responded to by the Portlaw/Dungarvan Brigades and the issues regarding staffing in the fire service in Kilmacthomas have been referred to the Workplace Relations Committee so he could not add further comment. He outlined the LIHAF agreement is in place regarding Gracedieu and contracts were exchanged over the summer. Regarding the CPO of houses he cannot say definitively how long a process will take because of objections, hearings, etc. He is not aware of any pattern regarding Certificates/Notices but will discuss this with Chief Fire Officer. In relation to emergency accommodation, from our information, people generally sleep with family and friends.

J. O'Mahony, SP said regarding the Kilbarry LIHAF a formal agreement has been reached with the landowner and mapping has been arranged, when land is in Council ownership work can commence.

Chief Executive said the CPO was confirmed recently regarding Browne's Lane recently so work should commence shortly and follow statutory timeframes.

Cllr. Quinlan said he is concerned how the Council is tackling the housing crisis. Current practice is activating landbanks for developers to build and then funding associated infrastructure and services when there are a lot of vacant residential properties in the City and County with services in place. Would it not be more cost effective to get the funding to redevelop these properties instead.

Cllr. O'Neill asked if the Action Plan for Ballybeg and the development of associated facilities can be revisited. He asked if the LIHAF housing at Gracedieu is for social housing.

Cllr. Fitzgerald requested a report regarding the Council Dog pound and also asked if information leaflet on knotweed can be given to the public to inform them of what it looks like and how to deal with it.

Cllr. Brennan asked for an update on the wheelchair shelter at the Regional Sports Centre and can a report on waiting lists for the housing adaption grants be included in the monthly management report and divided into Priority 1 and Priority 2, she enquired if other local authorities return 'unused' funds for housing adaptation grants to the Department and can these funds be used for other local authority waiting lists and she also requested a list of Council owned land banks.

Chief Executive said regardless of the way that social housing is provided in terms of costs the Council always claims money in arrears from the Department, CPOs in terms of workload and uncertainty for

every individual CPO is not the solution to the housing crisis. He said this Council is the foremost local authority in utilising CPOs, with 50 CPOs currently ongoing but the process is very expensive.

I Grimes, DOS said the LIHAF in Gracedieu is a combination of private and council owned land. He said regarding the wheelchair shelter, the tender had issued, but he will follow up on the current status. He said he will look at how the Housing adaptation waiting lists in the monthly report is presented but it is complicated and he said there would not be a redistribution of any unspent allocations from other local authorities.

Cllr. Brennan asked a supplementary question saying she was informed that some local authorities have returned their allocation grant so could we write to Minister and ask if it could be issued to this Council.

G Hynes, SE said the Council will be carrying out an awareness campaign on Knotweed in the next couple of weeks. He will discuss with environment regarding report on the dog pound.

F. Reidy, A/ DOS said that land banks are being documented at present and he will give a progress report for the next meeting.

Cllr. Hearne proposed that the Council do away with posters for the next local election. He also requested an anti-social behaviour workshop and he thanked the Council on behalf of Waterford Disability Network for the facilities provided.

Cllr. R. Murphy asked when is approval expected for the 10 applications under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2018 and the 11 applications under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure 2018. He said a new Rural Regeneration Fund was announced and asked how many projects are envisaged for this scheme and the timescale for completion of these projects.

Cllr. J. Murphy asked if the turnaround times for housing refurbishment have improved as a result of the new system and new contractor. He asked how many successful applications are there under the new Mortgage scheme, as the 10% deposit is not achievable for people on low income and what grounds was the refusal rate on Tenant Purchase applications.

Cllr. Hannigan said that with the HAP scheme there is an ongoing problem with landlords increasing the rent, why has this Council the lowest HAP rent levels in the South East.

Cllr. Griffin asked if the Council could have a housing summit in the next quarter with a panel of Builders, Architects, Bankers and have a brainstorming session. He also supports Cllr. Hearne's proposal regarding posters for the local elections.

I Grimes, DOS said an anti-social behaviour workshop was to take place before this meeting but had to be postponed. He will be organising workshops for each of the Districts in due course. He said he is satisfied that the new contractor on single party framework is working well and deadlines and turnaround times are being met. Cllr. O'Neill asked a supplementary if facts and figures could be provided going forward.

I Grimes, DOS said the turnaround time for vacancies is published on an annual basis in the NOAC report. He said that the 10% deposit is a requirement of the Rebuilding Ireland mortgage scheme which is a national one and local authorities have no discretion and can only be changed by the Minister. He has no specifics to hand regarding the Tenant Purchase refusals but generally it is applicants not meeting the criteria or applying in respect of properties that are excluded. He said the Council has discretion to increase HAP and it can be reviewed on a case by case basis so the HAP office should be contacted, but the Council has no discretion regarding HAP rent levels. He noted comments in relation to a Housing Summit and will discuss with Planning.

J. O'Mahony, SP will revert to Cllr. R Murphy on his question regarding Town & Village applications.

Cllr. Kelly asked if the Council can build any number of houses on our land banks, get the money upfront from the Minister or can we build and then get the money back.

Cllr. Pratt asked if a feasibility study can it be carried out in relation to the extension of the Greenway as his motion was agreed by the Council. Outlined that he is hopeful that the applications regarding the Town & Village Scheme 2018 and the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure 2018 will be successful.

Cllr. Reinhardt supports Cllr. Hannigan regarding the HAP issue but outlined that HAP staff will not discuss the discretion that the Council has, can a letter be provided to present to HAP staff that discretion is there and it can be used. Is there a percentage increase that the landlord is allowed to increase the rent by. He outlined his concern about the continuous illegal dumping in estates and asked what methods can be used to investigate these crimes, what proof does the Council need and can video, fingerprinting or DNA evidence be used.

Cllr. Wyse raised issues regarding solar energy and said there are new initiatives out there, for example putting solar panels along the Greenway and can the Council look at these as there are serious benefits and savings to be had.

Cllr. Tobin wanted to compliment and thank the fire service from Tallow/Lismore/Cappoquin as he had cause to use them and he asked if the Council received a letter from Minister Eoghan Murphy, T.D.

G. Hynes, SE said prosecution in relation to waste disposal relies on evidence in the waste. In relation to illegal dumping the Council uses CCTV and hidden cameras which are periodically moved. With regard to renewable energy where there is a reasonable payback the decision needs to be made when reviewing the capital costs, the energy saving and your return period. Cllr. Wyse asked can the Council look initiatives of other Councils and look at the costs and savings.

G. Hynes, SE confirmed that this will be looked at.

Cllr. Reinhardt asked if fingerprinting and DNA can be used.

G Hynes, SE said DNA can be used but it is cost prohibitive.

I Grimes, DOS outlined that the structure of the housing building funding system is that the Council deliver and pay for building and recoup from the Department and paid out of reserves. He said there is no need to provide a letter as discretion is written into the HAP scheme but it is on a case by case basis and cannot be applied across the board. He confirmed that no letter received from Minister Eoghan Murphy T.D.

J O'Mahony, SP said regarding the Rural Regeneration Fund, the bids are being prepared at the moment and every county in Ireland is making a bid, it will be determined on fulfilment of criteria and impact.

Chief Executive said he does not want to do a feasibility study on extension of the Greenway at present, there is a test case ongoing with Kerry County Council and this will ultimately inform any feasibility study. Cllr Pratt asked can we find out what the issues are he would like to see what the problems are.

The Mayor agreed that the final eight Councillors questions, as follows, would be sent to the Directors for reply directly to the members.

Cllr. Whelan asked if emergency accommodation services can be provided in the west of the County. Cllr MJ O'Ryan said there are certain GSS areas where they do not have the L signs on the roads and will they come in time. Cllr. Clune asked if there were two applications of €100k each for funding for Ardmore Cliff Walk with the Town & Village Scheme 2018 and with the Outdoor Recreation Scheme also he said per the South East Economic Monitoring Report said the IDA business showed the trend is going down in Waterford and can the Council engage a business development officer to approach the top 50 businesses to promote the area. He asked if the Council is going to apply for funding from the €53m Greenway fund, applications are due in by November and what is the initial recreation of the Chief Executive to the new Land Development Agency being set up.

Cllr. Conway said that shop fronts are being addressed by the Planning SPC and can the floors above the shops be looked at also, he asked about the unbudgeted costs for Storm Emma and if the costs have been recouped and also regarding Abattoirs are they inspected by our Veterinary Inspectors and how many successful prosecutions using CCTV in litter convictions since June 2014. Cllr. Geoghegan said IPB is going to give a significant dividend return to local authorities and can it be ring fenced for footpaths/roads. Cllr. Nugent asked who decides on the projects chosen for the Town & Village Scheme. Cllr. Daniels asked if there is any indication from Irish Water regarding water charges for commercial businesses and can the Chief Executive of Irish Water be invited in, also how the East Waterford Water scheme is performing. Cllr. Power requested an update on the new Kilmacthomas Fire station.

6. Approval of appointment to Waterford LCDC – Cllr. Eddie Mulligan

Appointment of Cllr. Eddie Mulligan to Waterford LCDC
Proposed by Cllr. Tobin, seconded by Cllr. Quinlan and agreed.

7. Freedom of the City and County

On the recommendation of the Procedures Committee and the Corporate Policy Group it was agreed.

That in recognition of the unique contribution of Professor Louise Richardson and Ambassador Dan Mulhall in their respective fields, they be admitted Honoris Causa, to the Freedom of the City and County of Waterford.

8. Correspondence

The Training and Conferences and Receptions included in correspondence as circulated were proposed by Cllr. Tobin, seconded by Cllr. Cronin and agree.

9. Notices of Motions

1. Motion in the name of Cllr. Sean Reinhardt

“Waterford City and County Council agrees to review the current housing policy in order to facilitate adults and single parents living in their parent’s home who wish to apply for social housing”

Proposed by Cllr Reinhardt, seconded by Cllr Whelan and agreed by all.

Cllr Cummins asked the Director of Housing to explain the rationale for the current policy. I. Grimes, DOS outlined the policy and said that the motion should be referred to the Housing SPC for discussion.

2. Motion in the name of Cllr. Sean Reinhardt

“Waterford City and County Council calls on the Minister for Housing to review the income limits for people applying for social housing”

Proposed by Cllr. Reinhardt, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed

Cllr. Cummins proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

*“Waterford City and County Council calls on the Minister for Housing to review the income limits for people applying for social housing” **and review the HAP limits given the recent Daft report that showed a 20% increase in housing rents in Waterford.***

3. Motion in the names of Cllrs Eddie Mulligan, Jason Murphy and Jim Griffin

“That this Council writes to the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, Mr. Shane Ross, TD requesting the Waterford Marine Search & Rescue, the locally based community rescue organisation be included in the Irish Coast Guard’s formal voluntary response network in the City”.

Proposed by Cllr. Mulligan, seconded by Cllr. J Murphy and agreed by all.

Cllr. Mulligan requested that a copy of motion to be sent to Minister Halligan.

The Mayor welcomed members of the Waterford Marine Search and Rescue team to the chamber.

10. AOB

Cllr. Conway, Cúpla bliain ó shoin d'ainmnigh Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge ionadaí le suí ar Bhord Údarás na Gaeltachta agus níl aon tuairisc faighte ag an gComhairle ón duine sin a ainmníodh ó shoin. Dhein an CPG cinneadh le déanaí go dtabharfadh an ionadaí sin tuairisc do Chomhairle Ceantair Dhún Garbhán/Lios Mór ach is dóigh liom gur cheart an tuairisc sin a thabhairt don gComhairle ina iomlán mar gurb í an Chomhairle seo a dhein an cinneadh. Tá sé sin thar a bheith tábhachtach mar gur contae Gaeltachta sinn.

Chief Executive said that there is an issue as he is on the board and there is an issue with confidentiality but he will enquire and provide a formal response.

Cllr. Reinhardt requested FOB access to City Hall during lunch hour for Councillors.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____