**Waterford City & County Council**

**Minutes of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC**

**Wednesday 28th October 2020**

**Via MS Teams**

**In attendance:** Cllr Lola O’Sullivan (Chair), Cllr Mary Roche, Cllr Conor D McGuinness, Gerty Murphy, David Walsh, Garrett Wyse, Cllr Pat Nugent, Cllr Eddie Mulligan, Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, Jen Harris

**Staff:** Michael Quinn, Lisa Grant, Finn Brophy

**Apologies:** Cllr Declan Clune

**Minutes & Matters arising – 22nd July 2020**

A copy of the Draft Digital Strategy discussed at the meeting of the 22nd July is to be circulated.

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Mary Roche and seconded by Cllr Pat Nugent.

**Review of Casual Trading Byelaws**

Finn Brophy took members through recommendations on the Casual Trading Byelaws, a copy of which were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Finn advised that the procedure for adopting new byelaws is:

* Draft agreed by Economic Development & Enterprise SPC,
* Review by Management Team,
* Commence public consultation process which will include notification of all statutory bodies
* Report will be prepared based on the feedback from the public consultation
* This report will be presented to the Plenary for adoption of the new Casual Trading Byelaws
* There is a 30 day period during which the adopted bye laws can be challenged in High Court and after that they are deemed enacted if there is no High Court challenge
* The expected timeline is for the new bye laws to be in place by February 2021

Finn informed the SPC of a new proposal that would give the Elected Members the authority to re-designate a vacant casual trading licence at local electoral area level following a recommendation of the Chief Executive.

Cllr O’Sullivan asked that the Council ensure transparency in the application process including the advertising of pitches when they become available. She also recommended that in relation to all locations, that the Council ensure that there are no road safety or parking issues created by the pitch location.

Finn advised that these byelaws did not cover those that sell strawberries, new potatoes and associated products on the road side as these are exempted from the casual trading act. This exemption does not cover those selling fuel and this will be enforced.

There were a number of comments and suggestions on the draft proposals and Finn is to revert with an updated draft of the recommendations.

* Current fees – the excess paid for trading outside core trading days seems high compared to base fee
* Hours are prescriptive and while the legislation requires that hours be specified, the stated hours should allow flexibility. 8:00-20:00 was suggested.
* Newtown car park – there is an issue with land ownership which is unlikely to be resolved in line with the adoption of the new casual trading bye laws. Finn suggested an alternative site could be proposed in proximity to the area.
* Priest’s Road – this growing market needs to be managed and Finn suggested that the car park could be closed from 8:00-13:00 on Saturdays to facilitate the market. Finn undertook to review the market operation of the Priest’s Road market in Tramore given the increasing numbers trading.
* Annestown – it was felt that the scouts’ kiosk fulfilled the needs of the area
* It was recommended that no pitches be allowed at Boatstrand and Killmurrin as it was felt that the new businesses established in Bonmahon could serve the populations from these areas
* Mahon Falls – there is an issue with litter and parking and concerns that the land owner might restrict access if the area is not maintained.
* Helvick – it was suggested that Solas na Mara and the take away offering from the Spar could be meeting the need. If a location is to be included the area opposite Murray’s pub was suggested.
* Youghal Bridge – some concerns were expressed around road safety in the area of JJs and Finn is to ask Roads to consider if any measures should be taken.
* Ballymacarbry – Finn is to review if there is an alternative site
* Clashmore – a suggestion of a site adjacent to the playground/ Raheen Walk was made
* South Quays – Cllr Mulligan proposed casual trading between Rice Bridge and Clock Tower and a second between Clock Tower and WVW Plaza. Cllr Mulligan raised the need for a discussion on whether there should be casual trading licences or S254 options protecting the rate paying F&B providers on the Quays with option to extend onto the South Quays/ WVW Plaza. Michael Quinn advised that future construction work to facilitate the Greenway extension would preclude any casual trading between Rice Bridge and the Clock Tower but that consideration could be given to casual trading between the Clock Tower and the Plaza. There may be land ownership and right of way issues that would need to be discussed with the Port or private car park operators.
* Arts market perhaps centred on WCQ and/ or Lismore. Finn advised that if there is a proposal this would be easier to progress. Cllr Mulligan advised that input should be sought from the WCQ Steering Committee.
* In relation to the market in John Roberts Square, Finn advised that a full review will be undertaken of the market with a view to enhance the attractiveness of the market as a destination and increasing the sense of ownership by the current traders. Relocating the current market to Arundel Square was proposed by Cllr Mulligan but Finn noted that the S254 issued for the area for outdoor seating had impacted on the area available for casual trading and that a permanent location here would impact on festivals in this area.

**Proposals re Economic Incentive Schemes**

Lisa took members through new proposals to attract investment in the city and town centres and a copy of the proposal was circulated in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Roche asked that consideration be given to preventing landlords from benefitting from the scheme and not passing on the benefits to their tenants and Cllr Mulligan asked that consideration be given to protecting and not undermining businesses that have survived the recession and Covid challenges by not permitting directly competing businesses avail of the Grant within a ***certain radius*** of an existing same business type, on a street.

Michael asked that the Chambers consider the proposals internally and revert with any comments.

**Update on Economic Capital Projects**

Michael Quinn gave a presentation on the current status of a number of economic capital projects (copy of presentation circulated with the minutes).

Michael Street will be progressing to Part 8 and once updated proposals are available these will be circulated with the Elected Members and will be publically available once the Part 8 process commences.

Vikings: An Epic Voyage – an announcement on funding is expected in November. In response to a query, Michael advised that Failte Ireland are building a critical mass of Viking themed attractions which includes the new Viking attraction in Wexford in the National Heritage Park.

Waterford Greenway – the issue of provision of public toilets was raised and Michael advised that the intention was that the commercial operators on the Greenway would provide access to their facilities as part of the Greenway Charter, as there would be a significant cost to the local authority to provide and maintain facilities on the route. Temporary facilities had been provided at Durrow and a longer term solution for the area is being considered.

Tramore public realm works – Garrett queried if the plans included proposals for the junction at the bottom of Gallwey’s Hill. Michael advised that they are not part of the current work programme but that this will be raised with Roads.

**Covid 19 Economic Recovery Plan: Update and input from SPC**

Lisa updated members on progress on delivering the Covid 19 Economic Recovery Plan and invited input from the members on additional actions.

Garrett advised that the PPN could be used as a consultative forum for the Economic Recovery Plan. Michael Quinn noted that the identification of actions to support the community were being progressed as a separate work stream.

**AOB**

Cllr Roche queried the status of the Retail Strategy which is still being finalised by the consultants. A copy of the strategy will be circulated once received from the consultants.

Waterford Council will be engaging with the car parking operators to try put in place a collective car parking offer for the Christmas period once we exit Level 5.

Michael clarified that Central Government will pay 100% of commercial rates that were waived by Central Government as part of the national recovery plan.

Note: Cllr O’Sullivan advised that it may be necessary to convene an additional meeting before the year end to further discuss the recommendations on casual trading before commencing the public consultation phase.

**Calendar of meetings for 2021**

**All meetings to start at 9:45 and to be held on MS Teams**

* 4th February
* 31st March
* 26th May
* 28th July
* 29th September
* 24th November

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Pat Nugent and seconded by Cllr Mary Roche.

Date: 2nd December 2020.