**WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL**

**STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**PLANNING**

**Meeting Held on 15th July 2020**

**Venue:** Meeting held virtually

**Present:** Cllr. Thomas Phelan(Chair)

Cllr. James Tobin

 Cllr. Liam Brazil

 Cllr. Davy Daniels

Cllr. Seanie Power

 Sean Carey

 John Galloway

 Niall Harrington

**Officials in Attendance** Michael Quinn, Director of Service

Liam McGree, Senior Planner

Hugh O’ Brien, Senior Executive Planner

Séamus Doran, Administrative Officer

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) opened the meeting. Cllr. Phelan advised that he has been appointed Chair of the SPC following the election of the previous Chair (Cllr. J. Cummins) to Seanad Éireann and that Cllr. F. Quinlan has been appointed as a member of the SPC in place of the outgoing Chair.

A discussion took place about postponing the meeting and re-scheduling it as an in-person meeting. It was agreed to proceed with the virtual meeting.

**Item 1 – Minutes of meeting of 25th February 2020**

The minutes were then proposed by Cllr. J. Tobin and seconded by Cllr. D. Daniels,adopted and agreed.

**Item 2 - Matters arising**

Liam McGree, Senior Planner, said there was no corporate policy against putting SPC minutes onto the Waterford City & County Council website. The members agreed that minutes should be placed on the website. Liam McGree agreed to progress this matter.

Hugh O’Brien, Senior Executive Planner, said that he was unable to make a presentation to the plenary council on the National Marine Planning Framework due to the covid19 restrictions and that the proposed public consultation did not take place for the same reason. However a submission was made on behalf of Waterford City & County Council

**Item 3 – Unitary Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2028**

Hugh O’Brien, Senior Executive Planner,made a presentation about the timeframes for the development of the Waterford City & County Development Plan. Notices have been placed in this week’s newspapers to advise of the commencement of the 8 week public consultation period next Monday.

He also presented a video which outlined the functionality of the new website portal. This portal will be a means to allow groups and individuals to make submissions during the public consultation phase as well as hosting a range of documents relating to the Development Plan including the Strategic Issues Paper, in both English and Irish, a Frequently Asked Questions Document, public notices and short video clips about the plan.

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) thanked Hugh for his update. He asked that all of the Local Authority’s publicity channels, including social media, would be utilised to publicise the public consultation phase. He then invited questions from the members.

Cllr. L. Brazil asked the role of the SPC in the development of the City & County Development Plan. Hugh O’Brien and Liam McGree responded saying that the SPC will inform the thinking of the plenary council for the entirety of the development of the plan. They foresee this being the main body of work of the SPC for the next 2 years and expect that the SPC will be meeting at every phase of the Development Plan.

Niall Harrington enquired if Local Area Plans (LAPs) will be drafted with the Development Plan. Hugh O’Brien advised that a number of LAPs may be needed in the metropolitan area. We will be obliged to produce LAPs for Dungarvan and Tramore and will likely also do them for every centre of population above 1500 people. He advised that the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government foresee the content of Local Area Plans changing significantly to focus more on local objectives and leaving larger issues to be addressed in the City & County Development Plan.

A discussion took place regarding zoning in the context of the Development Plan. Cllr. J. Tobin requested an analysis of land zoned in the previous Development Plan which had not subsequently been developed. Hugh O’Brien stated that he would be able to quantify how much land was zoned in the last plan and how much of this was not subsequently developed. He will revert to the SPC with this information. He also stated that the National Planning Framework has advised that land should not be zoned in the Development Plan if it cannot be serviced in the lifetime of the plan. Solutions such as developer lead infrastructure may offer possibilities to local areas which Irish Water does not currently have in their capital programme. Liam McGree advised that Stage 1 of the Development Plan would consider zoning in its broad context whereas,based on current legislation, submissions on the zoning of specific lands could only be considered in Phases 2 & 3, once a draft of the Development Plan has been completed. He stated that the process of the Development Plan would be undermined and we would be operating contrary to legislation if specific zoning was examined too early in the timeframe. All submissions about zoning should be made in writing to ensure they are publicly acknowledged and any groups or individuals who make submissions in Stage 1 will be written to in a later stage to ask them to re-submit their proposal.

A further discussion took place on the role of councillors as decision makers or lobbyists during the development of the Development Plan. It was advised that councillors are decision makers not lobbyists and that anyone lobbying a councillor should register their contact in the Register of Lobbying maintained by the Standards in Public Office Commission. It was agreed that a discussion on lobbying would be an item on the agenda of the next SPC meeting.

**Item 4 – Any Other Business**

It was agreed that future meetings would be held in person, rather than virtually, if government advice allowed it at the time.

**This concluded the business of the meeting**

**Next meeting to held on Wednesday 2nd September 2020 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Dungarvan**.