

WATERFORD CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE
PLANNING**

Meeting Held on 29th October 2020

Venue: Meeting held virtually

Present: Cllr. Thomas Phelan(Chair)
Cllr. James Tobin
Cllr. Liam Brazil
Cllr. Davy Daniels
Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Sean Carey
John Galloway
Niall Harrington
Donal Lehane
Mary O'Halloran

Officials in Attendance Michael Quinn, Director of Service
Liam McGree, Senior Planner
Hugh O' Brien, Senior Executive Planner
David Quinn, A/Executive Planner
Séamus Doran, Administrative Officer
Deirdre Purcell, Asst. Staff Officer

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) opened the meeting.

Item 1 – Minutes of meeting of 15th July 2020

The minutes were then proposed by Cllr. J. Tobin and seconded by Cllr. L. Brazil, adopted and agreed.

Item 2 – Unitary Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2028

- a) Chief Executive Report on pre-draft public consultation process;
- b) Availability of zoned land currently available, follow up from discussion at previous SPC;
- c) Consultation Strategy

Hugh O'Brien, Senior Executive Planner, made a presentation about the Pre Draft Development Plan Chief Executive Report which will be presented to Elected Members by 9th November 2020 for their consideration. He advised that any direction by Members must be strategic in nature, consistent with the draft core strategy, and shall take account of the statutory obligations of any local authority.

The public consultation process ran from 20th July to 14th September 2020 and a total of 285 written submissions were received. The process went quite well considering Covid restrictions, 3 webinars were hosted with 170 registered attendees, and social media accounts reached 23,600 users.

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) thanked Hugh for his update. He invited questions from members.

Cllr. J. Tobin asked Hugh if there has been collaboration with other Local Authority's in the area as it is his opinion that some local authorities are doing their own thing and enquired who was watching and collaborating.

Hugh responded saying that it is a significant issue and there is no simple answer to it. It driven by regional policy in RSES, we have had very tentative discussions with our colleagues in Kilkenny County Council but nothing formal yet.

Liam McGree added that The Regional Assembly Office and The Office of the Planning Regulator are watching all local authorities. There is a degree of monitoring and co-ordination at Regional Level.

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) thanked them both and queried if the CEO report goes to Plenary or SPC first and what is the next step. Hugh replied that in terms of the actual document itself and legislation it has to go before the Plenary Council. The principal issue that may arise from this is what the SPC may wish to look at and discuss.

Niall Harrington enquired if Kilkenny County Council made a submission to our Development Plan and are the Council engaging with them in relation to the plan.

Hugh responded that we are in dialogue with Kilkenny.

Michael Quinn (DOS) stated that we are looking for some guidance and input into how the process of the Development Plan would run and any particular views that members may have.

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) enquired as to what is the usual routine in Development Plan Process.

Hugh replied that unfortunately in current circumstances the normal does not apply. After a brief discussion it was decided to hold the next SPC meeting at the end of November (date to be confirmed) online.

Michael Quinn (DOS) informed members that legislation has been signed into law to allow the holding of online council meetings.

David Quinn, A/Executive Planner, made a presentation on the key zoning assessment criteria and the availability of zoned land currently available in Waterford. He advised that Planning Authorities will be required to apply a standardised, tiered approach to differentiate between zoned land that is serviced and zoned land that is serviceable within the life of the plan. When considering zoning land for development purposes that cannot be serviced within the life of the plan, such lands should not be zoned for development. He produced a table relating solely to residential land use, showing settlement type and percentages of areas zoned new residential, committed with planning permission and uncommitted.

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) invited any questions.

Cllr. J. Tobin requested that a copy of the table be sent to all Councillors as it will form part of a major discussion that will need to take place and enquired if David could come back at next meeting when Councillors would have had time to study the table.

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) agreed that anything presented at meeting should be copied to all members.

Cllr. E. Quinlan raised concern about issue of rezoning in certain areas and problems that may arise with dealing with Irish Water.

Cllr. D. Daniels thanked David and agreed with request for copy of documentation to members.

Hugh responded to Cllr. E. Quinlan's query and said it is a hugely complex and significant issue for Council. The plan we make has to be smart based on policy objectives, where bottlenecks may occur, ensure that we as a Council address it or engage with Irish Water to overcome bottlenecks.

Liam McGree added that it is critical to deliver housing on the ground and a key is Active Land Management, it is all about delivering, we need to look at policy and focus on what works best and not zone too much land.

It was acknowledged that there is a challenge for all councillors to adopt a new plan. It was agreed that the presentations from today's meeting would be circulated to the members.

Item 3 – Any Other Business

Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair) asked if there were any other business. None arose.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Next meeting to be held late November 2020 – date TBC

