**Minutes for Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Meeting for Planning**

**Held on MS Teams/Zoom on 10th March, 2022**

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| **Present (Councillor and PPN members)** | * **Cllr. Thomas Phelan (Chair)**
* **Cllr. Tom Cronin**
* **Cllr. James Tobin**
* **John Galloway**
 | * **Cllr Liam Brazil**
* **Cllr. Davy Daniels**
* **Cllr. Seanie Power**
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| **Present (WCCC Officials)** | * **Liam McGree**
* **Hugh O’Brien**
* **David Quinn**
* **Aisling O’Sullivan**
 | * **Kieran Kehoe**
* **Marcus Linehan**
* **Rosemary Ryall**
* **Bernadette Guest**
* **Claire Murphy**
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| **Apologies** | * **Mary O’Halloran**
* **Donal Lehane**
 | * **Niall Harrington**
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| **Item No.** | **Decisions Taken** | **Responsibility/Action/When?** |
| 1.M1.Approval of Minutes | * Minutes of Meeting 29th November, 2021 were proposed by Cllr James Tobin seconded by Cllr Davy Daniels and agreed.
 | Adopted minutes to be published on website. |
| 2.Matters arising and updates | * None
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| 3. Topic - Overview of Material Alterations to the Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 | * David Quinn, A/Executive Planner presented overview of how submissions/observations could be made online through consult.waterford portal.
* Cllr. T Phelan (Chair) thanked David for the presentations. He invited questions from members.
* Cllr. Seanie Power asked What the main alterations that were made?
* Cllr. Davy Daniels asked has there been any discussions with the OPR or his office since the the Draft went on public display and with regards to an individual or group wanting to make a submission on the material alterations, what is the procedure and will further changes come before the members at workshops and the timeframes for this?
* Cllr. James Tobin asked, Has this gone to the OPR and have they commented on it and in relation to our wind strategy have they made any comment?
* Hugh O’Brien, Senior Executive Planner, made a presentation on the Waterford City & County Draft Development Plan, Material Alterations, highlighting some of the key material alterations that are posposed to change around our policy objectives including, trying to support economic collaboration partnerships across the city and county and broader region, trying to look at new strategic employment locations, looking at retail impact assessments, looking at transport planning and our mode shift ambitions around getting people away from private transport to more active modes. The presentation discussed the context and content of the proposed amendments.
* In response to questions from Cllr. James Tobin & Cllr. Davy Daniels, Hugh O’Brien advised that we haven't had any response back from the OPR, and do not expect anything in the next week or two as a lot of local authorities are at material alteration stage, we don't expect we'll have anything in the immidiate term but we will be receiving a response from them. We will be in a position to outline any of those responses in workshops with the pleanary council next month in April and in May.
* Cllr. Seanie Power raised question regarding the changes to landuse zoning and infill sites and lack of locations to dispose of stone & clay in relation to developments being built around the city?
* Cllr. Thomas Phelan enquired as to what can or can't people make submissions on and if there are submissions that are deemed out of scope what will be the response going back to that person?

In terms of what people can comment on, Can it be equally in the negative with this change or can they also bolster support to a change or something being maintained?* Cllr Thomas Phelan also acknowledged our new Director of Service Kieran Kehoe and welcomed him to the SPC. Cllr Phelan on behalf of the committee thanked our outgoing DOS Michael Quinn for his service to the Planning SPC and the Planning Dept.
* Director of Service Kieran Kehoe spoke to the committee and introduced himself to the members and complimented the members and staff on the Development Plan process so far and looks forward to working with all going forward.
* Hugh O’Brien referred to Cllr. Seanie Powers question regarding the land use zoning changes are on foot of the many submissions that were received and that found their way through the chief executive report that was furnished to the members back in November of last year and on top of that the many discussions that we've had with the members in the workshops and we've reflected all those changes in the material alterations and then the final discussion that was had with members at the special pleanary meeting on the 11th of February. With regard to infill sites, it is something that Environment deal with in terms of their certification.
* In response to Cllr Davy Daniels question, where submissions received is relevant to the actual material alteration, the chief executives give a response and recommendation in relation to those. In some instances we may get submissions that do not speak to the material alterations directly so it is unlikely that that there will be a response and recommendation from the chief executive in relation to that. There will be submissions that would be supportive or looking to amend material alteration slightly so those will be included in the report that would be brought to the full pleanary council. The public consultation process will be running until the 1st of April, we have until the 28th of April to compile the chief executive report. There will be six weeks to workshop those material changes.
* David Quinn responded to Cllr. Phelans questions regarding mapping, In previous portals there was a satellite or aerial view but when it relates to crops and fields that could be mistaken for land use zoning so we went with the terrain view so there's no ambiguity in terms of what is zoned and what isn’t zoned.
 | * Presentation to be circulated to all members by email.
* To be noted in minutes.
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| 4. Topic - Preparation of new Development Contributions Scheme |  * Marcus Linehan made presentation on the New Development Contribution Scheme. Outlining the legislation and the process behind it. The view being to adopt the new Development Contribution Scheme in early to mid autumn. Marcus welcomed any proposals or thoughts the committee had in relation to the New Development Contribution Scheme.
* Cllr. Liam Brazil thanked Marcus for his presentation and enquired if we can look at the fee’s in relation to residential developments where the charge for a house up to 200sqm in size is €5000 but a house 201sqm is €9000. Also, if the house had an A2 rating, could some of the money be returned. In relation to the Nitrate Directive for farming, as farmers are required to build more storage for cattle etc that something should be in place to alleviate this under the new scheme.
* Cllr. James Tobin also acknowledged the presentation, believes that all extensions should be exempt of development charges. In rural communities, one off houses may have to sink a well and have own septic tank there should be some differential between those and people who are building where these facilities are available.
* Cllr. Seanie Power reiterated the questions made by Cllrs.Brazil and Tobin and queried the square footage for agricultural buildings and the contribution charges that apply.
* Cllr Davy Daniels relayed his surprise at the charges for Waterford City & County Council compared to other Local Authorities.
* Cllr Tom Cronin, thank Marcus for the presentation. The Nitrate Directives will have to be allowed in the New Development Scheme. Cllr. Cronin highligted problems trying to get young people involved in farming. In the Dept of Agriculture guidelines a young farmer has 5 years once they have taken over a farm, to fall under that heading, is there a possibility of exempting those that fall within those guidelines from Development Contributions and that this could be an incentive for people to get involved in farming?
* Cllr. Thomas Phelan queried, Does legislation permit income from Development Contributions to be kept within the district that they are paid?
* Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services firstly answered Cllr. Phelans query by advising that it can not be applied per district, that is the role of the supplementary scheme. Kieran thanked Marcus for the presentation and acknowledged that this is the early stages of this process and look forward to working with the members going forward. With regard to Cllr. Brazil’s question regarding the difference in charges per sq metre, advised that we could look at a graduated approach once it goes above 200sq m. With regards to the query around the A2 rating, every new house built has to achieve a minimum rating of A2, exempting a house based on it’s energy rating we are not applying a Development Contribution which we legally have to apply. With reference to Cllr. Tobin’s question regarding rural houses, in a city or urban area they must also pay charges to Irish Water for water and wastewater services on top of Development Contribution charges. In relation to Cllr Cronins query, there are exemptions for agricultural buildings based on their size. Levies are only applied to development that need planning consent. Where a farmer is building large scale commercial structures they are effectively running large scale commercial operations which links to a business rather than a small rural farmer who have the huge demands of complying with the Nitrate Directive.
* Marcus Linehan echoed Kieran Kehoe’s views advising the key jump is over the 200 sq metres and this can be look at as we are aligned with ajoining authorities up to that point. In terms of extensions, we do allow exemption under the first 40 sq metres, but after that our contributions are high, reducing the cost maybe an option here. In terms of the farming and the Nitrate Directive, this is already built into the scheme and we will try to retain what is already set up. Going forward a pre-draft document is the next step.
 | * Presentation to be circulated to all members by email.
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| 5. Topic - Interpretation Plan for Waterford’s Medieval City Walls | * Rose Ryall gave presentation on the Interpretation Plan for Waterford’s Medieval City Walls and discussed the interpretive goals and concepts included in the plan.
* Cllr. Thomas Phelan thanked Rose for the update and invited questions from members, adding that the plan looks promising and included that the walls are a great resourse and suggested the involment of schools in terms of tours.
* Cllr. Seanie Power agreed and acknowledged the walls as a great tourist attraction and potential to highlight the medieval aspect of Waterford City.
 | * Presentation to be circulated to all members by email.
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| 6. Topic - Planning Policy and SPC program for 2022 | * Hugh O’Brien, Senior Executive Planner discussed the program for 2022 and the implementation of the plan. Including, Tentative dates for the next SPC’s, discuss the CE report on the Material Alterations, Strategy on LAP’s and Development Contribution Scheme.
* It was decided that this topic would be discussed at the next SPC to allow more time for dialogue.
 | This will be Item No.1 on next SPC Meeting. |
| 7. AOB | * Cllr James Tobin requested a list of Planning Staff and their roles be circulated following the changes that have taken place.
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| Date/time next meeting | The proposed date for the next meeting is 21st April, 2022 at 10am–members were asked to send in any agenda items they wished to raise in advance.The intended location is…. | **ALL** *Agenda Inclusion Deadline is -7 days from meeting* |