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

**Held in the Conference Room, Dungarvan on the 13th of July, 2022.**

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| **Present (Councillor and PPN members)** | * **Cllr Thomas Phelan (Chair)**
* **Cllr Davy Daniels**
* **Donal Lehane**
 | * **Cllr Liam Brazil**
* **Cllr Seanie Power**
* **John Heffernan**
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| **Present (WCCC Officials)** | * **Kieran Kehoe**
* **Hugh O’Brien**
* **Melanie Cunningham**
 | * **Liam McGree**
* **Aisling O’Sullivan**
* **Claire Murphy**
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| **Apologies** | * **Cllr Tom Cronin**
* **Cllr Eamon Quinlan**
* **Mary O’Halloran**
* **Sean Carey**
 | * **Cllr Frank Quinlan**
* **John Galloway**
* **Niall Harrington**
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| **Item No.** | **Decisions Taken** | **Responsibility/Action/When?** |
| 1.M1.Approval of Minutes | * Minutes of Meeting (10th March, 2022) were proposed by Cllr Brazil seconded by Cllr Daniels and agreed.
 | Adopted minutes to be published on website.  |
| 2.Matters arising and updates | * Cllr Thomas Phelan began the meeting by extending his sympathies on the passing of Councillor James Tobin,  Deputy Mayor of Waterford City & County Council and member of the SPC for Planning, stating it had been an honor to serve with Cllr Tobin and that he will be badly missed.
* All acknowleged and concurred with Cllr Phelan’s words.
* Kieran Kehoe, Director of Services introduced himself to the committee as this was the first in person meeting since he commenced as Director of Services over the Planning Section.
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| 3. Topic – Development Plan Update | * Hugh O’Brien, Senior Executive Planner made a presentation focusing on updating the committee on the Development Plan.
* In relation to the newly adopted Development Plan, copies of the plan will be available at customer service desks shortly.
* Overall comments received from the OPR (The Office of the Planning Regulator) on the new Development Plan were good and they were satisfied with outcome.
* Going forward the next steps will involve the implementation and monitoring which is to include RSES based projects and others, for example Housing for All.
* Cllr Phelan thanked Hugh for his presentation and commended the commitment and hard work of the Planning Department in creating the New Development Plan and the input from the PPN.
* Cllr Phelan enquired as to the role the SPC will have in the implementation?
* Hugh O’Brien highlighted some of the projects with statutory basis such as the Development Contribution Scheme and the Local Area Plans.
* Cllr Brazil remarked on the hard work that was put into the Development Plan. That it was good for Waterford and Rural Waterford. Cllr Brazil further remarked on the need to keep local business’s and clubs functioning and open.
* Donal Lehane acknowledged the inclusion in “Brown Fields” and said that it was great to see. Also spoke about the “Vacant Sites” and the need to tax these properties/sites. Donal also recognized that villages was not mentioned and wanted to acknowledge that the ethos should be about local communities in this part of the world.
* Cllr Power agreed with these remarks recognizing need to keep young people in villages
* Cllr Daniels also congratulated all concerned with the new Development Plan and acknowledged the quality of staff in Planning Section and Waterford City & County Council.
* Kieran Kehoe highlighted the agreeable comments from the OPR and congratulated the Councillors for being so engaging in preparing the new Development Plan.
 | Presentation to be circulated to all members by email. |
| 4. Topic - Work Planning for the SPC & Planning Section | * Hugh O’Brien advised that the Draft Development Contribution Scheme now needs to be prepared. There will be a period of public consultation and a Chief Executive Report to council prior to resolution to make the Scheme.
* Cllr Brazil noted that the current charges are outrageous and that WCCC fee’s are much higher compared to other Local Authorities, Adding that he would hope to see exemptions in place and a review of the charges.
* Hugh O’Brien also advised the committee regarding the new housing policy objective which will impact the Planning Sections. A new Housing plan for Ireland proposes a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes as a way to increase housing supply. A map will be prepared by the Planning Section for Revenue who will seek the payment.
* For the purpose of the tax, only land that is deemed serviceable will be included in the map.
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| 5. Topic – Taking in Charge & Management of Holiday Home Schemes | * Liam McGree advised the committee that our Taking in Charge policy does not include Holiday homes and that the use of the unit as a main place of residence is un-authorised. Holiday Homes being used a main residence is problematic for the Planning Authority as the demand for housing is so great that there is often no alternative available and we are potentially putting a family on the streets if we enforce this. The desire is to keep as many holiday homes as holiday lets rather than primary residences.
* Cllr Phelan enquired would the Planning Section consider a change of use application if the original area zoned for tourism?
* Liam McGree recommended that in those cases the applicants would get in contact with the Planning Authority if they find themselves in difficult circumstances to discuss the best way forward.
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| 7. AOB | * None
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| Date/time next meeting | * The proposed date for the next meeting is October 10th at 11pm–members were asked to send in any agenda items they wished to raise in advance.The intended location is to be determined.
 | **ALL** *Agenda Inclusion Deadline is -7 days from meeting* |