

**COMHAIRLE CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14th MARCH 2024 IN COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CITY HALL, WATERFORD.**

Present

Cllr. Joe Conway (Mayor)	Cllr. Cristiona Kiely
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Conor McGuinness
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Joanne Bailey	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Lola O’Sullivan	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. Thomas Phelan
Cllr. Jody Power	Cllr. Seamus O’Donnell
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. John O’Leary
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Donal Barry
Cllr. Stephanie Keating	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. Seamus Ryan	Cllr. Joe Kelly
Cllr. Adam Wyse,	Cllr. Mairead Tobin
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Frank Quinlan
Cllr. Declan Doocey	Cllr. David Daniels
Cllr. Mary Roche	

Apologies: Cllr. Ger Barron.

Officials in Attendance

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive
 Mr. I. Grimes, Director of Services, Housing
 Mr. S. Dobbs, A/SE, Economic Development
 Mr. F. Galvin, Director of Services, Roads, Water & Environment
 Mr. D. Murphy, Head of Finance
 Mr. P. Johnson, A/Director of Services, Corporate Services, IS, HR, Culture and Planning
 Ms. H. Dunphy, Meeting Administrator
 Ms. A. Flynn, Corporate

1. Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of Plenary Meeting held on 8th February 2024 proposed by Cllr. Cronin and seconded by Cllr. Keating and agreed by all.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. McGuinness asked if there was any further correspondence received from the Minister for Transport in relation to the N25.

H. Dunphy, MA, will follow up on correspondence.

Cllr. Ryan asked that the Palestinian Ambassador to Ireland be invited to address the Council. This was supported by Cllr. McGuinness and Cllr. Kelly.

Cllr. Pratt asked if a letter had issued to Minister Eamonn Ryan regarding Active Travel funding and if so had a response been received. F.Galvin, DoS confirmed that it had with no response to date.

Cllr. Kelly asked if a letter had been sent to University Hospital Waterford regarding the provision of a multi-storey carpark. H. Dunphy, MA confirmed it had.

Cllr. Kiely asked for an update on the recording of Council Meetings with H. Dunphy, MA to revert back.

3. Land Disposals

P. Johnson A/DoS outlined details of the disposals of land for approval.

Reference No. 1515 Lease of land at Ballinroad, Dungarvan to the Trustees of Ballinroad Football Club, proposed by Cllr. Phelan, seconded by Cllr. Cronin and agreed by all.

Reference No. 1516 Disposal of land at North Quays to C.I.E, proposed by Cllr. Kelly and seconded by Cllr. O’Leary and agreed by all.

Following Item 3 on the Agenda the Mayor called for a suspension of standing orders to allow for an address by Waterford IFA Dairy Chairperson, Laura Forbes.

Proposed by Cllr. S. Power and seconded by Cllr. Nugent and agreed by all.

Ms. Forbes highlighted the important role that farmers play in the local economy. She said 5,800 people are employed in agriculture in Waterford contributing €1.6 billion to the local economy. The family farm is the backbone of rural communities and the viability of the family farm has to be protected. Issues faced by farmers raised by Ms. Forbes include environmental legislation, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the ever-increasing administrative burden being placed on farmers which has had a major impact on farm family incomes, additional EU regulations, over complicated schemes which have been poorly implemented and the Nitrates Derogation Scheme. In conclusion she said these are some of the issues which have led to the anger and frustration being felt by Irish farmers and the IFA’s Enough is Enough campaign has allowed farmers to voice this anger and frustration.

Following the address the Mayor called for a further suspension of standing orders to allow Cllr. S. Power raise his motion under Item 9 on the Agenda.

Proposed by Cllr. Kelly and seconded by Cllr. Brazil and agreed by all.

1. Motion in the name of Cllr. Seanie Power

“That this council support farmers in their campaign Enough is Enough and that this council write to agriculture minister Charlie McConalouge and environment minister Eamon Ryan of the council’s decision.

Farming in Ireland has changed radically over the last decade and Waterford farmers have endeavoured to face and embrace many changes in order to have modern, productive and enterprises fit for purpose while also protecting the environment.

It is a considerable challenge for farmers to produce food while contending with high costs and EU and state-imposed production limits and reductions. Farming in Ireland is under pressure and is being choked by over regulations and complicated schemes.”

Reg. No. PM/2024/240 (dated, 1st March, 2024)

In proposing the motion Cllr. S. Power called on the Council to support the IFA's Enough is Enough campaign and write to the Minister for Agriculture, the Minister for the Environment and the Taoiseach regarding the issues.

Cllr. Brazil seconded the motion saying coming from a farming background he sees the pressure on farmers and called on Waterford TDs to stand up for farmers and raise the issues with Government ministers.

Cllrs. Phelan, Cronin, McGuinness, Kelly, Hearne, Nugent, O'Leary, Kiely, O'Donnell, Pratt, O'Sullivan, Doocey, Geoghegan, J. Power, Roche, Ryan, Tobin and E. Quinlan spoke in support of the motion.

Proposed by Cllr. S. Power, seconded by Cllr. Brazil and agreed by all.

Cllr. S. Power thanked all parties for their support and wished the IFA and the farmers the very best in their campaign.

4. Monthly Management Report

Cllr. Kelly congratulated Tramore Library on the My Open Library initiative which means the library can be accessed from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week and welcomed the rates grant which will see businesses with a rate bill of less than €10,000.00 receive a grant of 50% of their rate bill.

Cllr. Barry enquired if there were any proposals for the provision of female only homeless accommodation and asked for a breakdown of the number of single persons in emergency accommodation into male and female. He asked if a shuttle bus serving Dungarvan and Waterford City to Mount Congreve could be looked at. He asked for an update on the new schools for the Kilbarry/Ballybeg area and also for a copy of the Tourism Plan for Waterford. Cllr. J. Power congratulated all those involved in the recent Tricolour Celebrations and asked about the 90-day state accommodation limit for new Ukrainian arrivals.

I. Grimes, DoS said he will revert with the gender breakdown of single persons in Emergency Accommodation and said the facilities in relation to homeless accommodation are constantly being reviewed. No provision has been made in relation to the 90-day state accommodation limit for new Ukrainian arrivals and National Guidance is awaited.

M. Walsh, CE said the Tourism Plan is a Fáilte Ireland plan and will seek their permission to circulate. In reply to Cllr. Barry regarding a shuttle bus service to Mount Congreve he said there is no solution at present saying the cost of a shuttle would be disproportionate. Discussions with the Department of Education are ongoing in relation to the new schools in the Kilbarry area.

Cllr. Murphy asked about routine repairs to public lighting and if it was prudent to renew the contract with current provider.

Cllr. McGuinness asked that a letter issue to An Post and the Minister for Communications regarding the imminent closure of the post office in the West Waterford Gaeltachta. He asked if the underfunding of roads was the same across all districts.

Cllr. Hearne asked if Waterford Airport and 24/7 Cardiac Care could be dealt with either by a delegation of members to the relevant Government Departments or by an invitation to the relevant Ministers to address the members in the Council Chamber.

F. Galvin, DoS said there is an obligation on the Public Lighting Contractor to repair standard faults within 10 working days, more complex issues are dealt with individually with no specific timeframe. In the context of the new LED retrofit there will be new maintenance requirements and a new contract. He said the spend on roads does not differ across the three districts.

Cllr. McGuinness asked if the members could be provided with the total number of letters sent to Minister Ryan in relation to a range of issues raised by various members.

Cllr. Ryan also raised the issue of public lighting agreeing with Cllr. Murphy and called for a survey of all public lighting to identify all the locations where there are issues. He asked for an update on the Council's application for mobile library funding and enquired if the €50,000 set aside each year for four years in the Capital Programme for the provision of library services is still there.

Cllr. Wyse asked if the staff contact list could be updated. He asked if there were any further age friendly housing developments similar to St. Joseph's, Manor Hill for the city and county and enquired about Waterford hosting the Tall Ships in the future.

Cllr. Fitzgerald asked is there a procedure for derelict sites brought back into use but falling into dereliction again and enquired if extra funding was available from the Government to deal with the serious disrepair of roads as a result of the heavy rainfall.

F. Galvin, DoS said there is a significant database for public lighting. Currently the majority of the 16,500 public lights have bulbs with a life span of just four years. The LED retrofit will dramatically improve the reliability of the public lights. He said future investment will be required to address the ageing network of underground cables. He said additional funding for roads had been received but currently there is no extra funding available.

I. Grimes, DoS said Approved Housing Bodies are looking at schemes specifically for older people and our Housing Delivery Action Plan provides for units that are suitable for older people.

P. Johnson, A/DoS said in relation to the application for funding for mobile libraries that a response from the Department is being sought and he will revert with an update. The staff contact list will be updated. In relation to derelict sites the focus is to bring them back into use.

M. Walsh, CE said at the moment no consideration is being given to hosting the Tall Ships.

P. Johnson, A/DoS confirmed the funding for library services is in the Capital Programme.

Cllr. Bailey asked for a presentation from Housing Maintenance on budgets available, how the money is going to be spent and the additional funding for replacement windows and doors. She enquired about the possibility of building one or two bedroomed houses to accommodate those who may wish to right size but for whom apartment living does not suit.

Cllr. Phelan said he agreed with Cllrs. Murphy and Ryan in relation to public lighting. The absence of data makes it difficult to determine if the contractor is fulfilling his obligations under the Service Level Agreement. He mentioned problems with logging faults on Deadsure and said there appears to be no improvement even though the backlog should have been dealt with at this stage. He enquired if new Ukrainian arrivals would be entitled to housing supports in light of the 90-day state accommodation limit.

Cllr. Roche said she too supported the other Councillors in relation to public lighting and roads. She asked for an analysis of the housing list, the total number on the list and the length of time

applicants are on the list. She asked if the council could write to Irish Water in relation to an issue around a public sewer. She enquired about the schedule for the LEO Evaluation Committee Meetings expressing concern that we do not fall behind in relation to local enterprise noting that there has been no Measure 1 support approved in 2024 to date.

I. Grimes, DoS said the Maintenance Team are looking at the additional funding for replacement windows and doors across city and county and will be targeting the poorest performing units. A workshop can be provided but firstly will circulate the information. He said there are two Approved Housing Bodies looking at rightsizing schemes which may better suit people whose preference would be a one or two bedroomed house. New Ukrainian arrivals would not be eligible for social housing, a summary of the Housing List will be circulated.

F. Galvin, DoS said any issue with Deadsure will be rectified. Deadsure has been asked to provide additional fields which will provide better information to the public. There is significant data available and if there are specific questions, the information we can supply can be looked at. He said the issue raised by Cllr. Roche rests with Irish Water.

M. Walsh, CE, said the flow of projects for financial support for approval by LEO Evaluation Committee varies up and down. Our performance is good in terms of startups and otherwise. Annual figures are the better indicator. Cllr. Roche asked for further details for the next Meeting which the CE agreed to provide.

Cllr. E. Quinlan asked that the Housing Department liaise with BAM in relation to works scheduled to happen simultaneously in Ferrybank to ensure local businesses are not affected. He asked that people housed in council accommodation who receive a custodial sentence for assault of a neighbour be rehoused when they are released from prison so they are not in close proximity to their victim.

Cllr. O'Sullivan asked about resources in the Planning Enforcement Section noting that there is room for improvement in this area.

Cllr. Nugent spoke to lend his support to the other Councillors in relation to public lighting and roads.

I. Grimes, DoS said in relation to works in Ferrybank he would discuss with the Housing Contractor. In relation to persons leaving prison there is a category of prisoner subject to post release who have a specific team in place to supervise accommodation. There is also a local team which meet weekly which includes the Gardai who look at persons leaving prison and every effort is made to avoid housing these individuals close to their victims. We work closely with the Gardai in relation to individuals returning to the family home.

P. Johnson, A/DoS said there is a significant workload in relation to planning enforcement. All staff sanctioned by the Department are in place or are due to take up duty. There is a proposal to significantly tackle this workload.

Cllr. O'Leary mentioned the Connecting Communities Roadshows which provide communities with the opportunity to engage with community services and asked if the Executive would consider similar road shows to inform communities of the various Council Services.

M. Walsh, CE said Cllr. O'Leary's suggestion would be considered.

Cllr. Kiely asked about the public lighting contract, the timeframe for the public lighting retrofit and whom that contract will be with. She asked about our byelaws and the enforcement of same. She asked for an update on the planning permission for the North Quays and asked if Waterford's' casinos are operating within the planning permission they would have received.

She enquired about a water quality workshop previously requested and asked if anything could be done to encourage the residential use of property over shops.

Mr. S. Dobbs, A/SE said the planning application for the North Quays is scheduled for April with M. Walsh, CE saying environmental reports are being prepared and it is expected in April. F. Galvin, DoS said the public lighting contract is up later this year. The public lighting retrofit should be completed by Summer 2025 and will be a new contract. Traffic and Parking Byelaws are enforced on a daily basis with the Environmental Team enforcing the Litter Byelaws on an ongoing basis. Responsibility for the enforcement of some of our byelaws is shared with the Gardaí. He said a work shop on water quality can be arranged and asked Cllr. Kiely to revert with what she would like covered.

P. Johnson, A/DoS said there has been no audit of planning permissions granted for Casinos. He said he would circulate recent research in relation to over the shop living and said we have been relatively successful in this regard through our Housing Department.

Cllr. Doocey asked if the process around the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant to refurbish vacant and derelict homes be simplified.

P. Johnson, A/DoS said the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is administered by the Vacant Homes Officer and some grants are awarded subject to planning permission and so must go through the planning process where there may be conditions etc attached to the grant of permission. In cases of local need there are other factors to be considered.

Cllr. Cronin commented on a case where an planning application sought for a septic tank for an existing property was treated as local need.

P. Johnson, A/DoS said he was not aware of this particular case and would revert to Cllr. Cronin.

5. Material Contravention Development Plan – for approval

P. Johnson, A/DoS introduced the proposed material contravention of the Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022 to 2028 and recommended that the Plan be contravened, by resolution, to allow the granting of planning permission to the HSE at the former Glanbia Site, Maypark Lane for the construction of a Surgical Hub.

Material Contravention Development Plan proposed by Cllr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr. McGuinness and agreed by all.

6. Draft Housing Allocation Scheme for Social Housing Supports – for approval

I. Grimes, DoS said the Draft Housing Allocation Scheme had two changes, the application of a Gaeltacht Residential Qualification to the order of priority and the Financial Contribution Scheme/Private Rightsizing.

In proposing the scheme Cllr. E. Quinlan said despite some concerns around some of the sections in the scheme there has been considerable debate at the Housing SPC meetings and the adoption of the scheme today to include the two changes as outlined by I. Grimes, DoS does not prevent future changes to the scheme.

Cllrs. Barry, McGuinness, Phelan, Ryan, Murphy, Kelly, F. Quinlan and Bailey all contributed to a discussion in relation to the scheme. Concerns raised by Cllrs. Barry, Phelan, F. Quinlan and Bailey included the sections on Financial Contribution Scheme/Private Rightsizing, Persons Leaving Prison and Assessment of Bedroom Requirement. Cllr. Phelan proposed that a vote on the adoption of the scheme be postponed pending legal advice in relation to National Policy dictating sections of the Allocation Scheme, the adoption of which is a reserved function. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Ryan. Cllr. Murphy said he would be supporting the adoption of the Allocation Scheme but asked for clarification in relation to national policy on the Assessment of Bedroom Requirement. On clarification from the Executive Cllr. Phelan withdrew his proposal to postpone adoption of the scheme.

Proposed by Cllr. E. Quinlan and seconded by Cllr. Cronin and agreed by a majority show of hands.

7. Supporting Waterford Communities Fund 2024 – for approval

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Hearne and agreed by all.

8. Correspondence

Proposed by Cllr. Quinlan and seconded by Cllr. Kelly and agreed by all.

9. Notice of Motions

2. Motion in the name of Cllr. Joe Conway, Cllr. Donal Barry, Cllr. Joe Kelly, Cllr. Declan Clune and Cllr. David Daniels.

“ That Waterford City and County Council calls on the Government, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, to commit forthwith to the total identified funding in the SETU strategic development plan funding of 350million (70m X 5 years) in order to deliver the promised transformational investment at SETU Waterford, as promised repeatedly by Government - and that such funding is guaranteed by the Government before the end of this Dáil's term”. **Reg. No. PM/2024/241** (dated, 28th February 2024)

In proposing the motion Cllr. Kelly said the motion is about the future of our young people who leave to study courses that are not available in SETU and this has a financial impact on the local economy. He said many students do not return home which in turn affects the vitality of our communities saying we need to help them in every way possible to stay in our City and in our Region.

Cllr. Barry seconded the motion saying the SETU Strategic Development Plan can not be delivered without proper funding from the Government and highlighted the knock-on effect of such investment in terms of creating jobs and inward investment. He said the creation of a large scale high performing university in the South East is crucial to our local and regional economic development.

Mayor called for a ten-minute extension to Standing Orders.

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr. Kelly and agreed by all.

Cllrs. Daniels, Phelan, Kiely, J. Power, Roche, Keating, Geoghegan, Hearne, Doocey, Nugent and Fitzgearld contributed to a discussion on SETU. The Mayor said the motion is calling on the Government to deliver their promised investment in SETU and passing the motion will help the University. Following the discussion the Members voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

Proposed by Cllr. Kelly and seconded by Cllr. Barry and agreed by all.

10. AOB

Cllr. Doocey asked that people check the Register of Electors to ensure their details are correct and up to date.

Cllr. O'Donnell said that up to 25 pubs closed in West Waterford since the Pandemic. He queried the Government's proposal to allow pubs to open until 6:00am and expressed concern in relation to anti-social behaviour.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Waterford City & County Council

Dated: _____



Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City & County Council

Resolution of the Elected Members
Waterford City and County Council, Plenary Council
14th March 2024
Ref: 2024/08

Recommendation by Chief Executive that the Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 be contravened, by resolution, to allow Waterford City & County Council to grant permission for planning reference 23/60576, subject to conditions, to the Health Service Executive (South East) at the former Glanbia Site, Maypark Lane, Waterford. The planning permission is for the construction of a part two and part three-storey surgical hub building with 2nd floor plant enclosure and roof level PV panels, 2 no. generator buildings, a diesel tank, a VIE (Vacuum Insulated Evaporator) compound, an ESB Substation, a totem sign, 1 no. pumping station and all associated car parking, signage, landscaping and site development works at the former Glanbia site, Maypark lane, Waterford. Permission is also sought to construct a temporary car park that will provide for 311 no. car parking spaces for a period of 5 years. The site will be accessed via the existing access and new vehicle access from Maypark Lane. Notice of proposal was given in accordance with Section 34(6) of the Planning & Development Act.

CERTIFIED RESOLUTION OF THE Plenary Council of Waterford City & County Council that the Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 be contravened to allow Waterford City & County Council to grant permission planning reference 23/60576, subject to conditions, to the Health Service Executive (South East) at the former Glanbia Site, Maypark Lane, Waterford, proposed by Cllr. Fitzgerald seconded by Cllr. McGuinness and agreed unanimously.

Signed:

Councillor Joe Conway
Plenary Mayor

Witnessed:

Honor Dunphy
Meetings Administrator