

COMHAIRLE CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

Meeting of the Metropolitan District held by Zoom on 15th February, 2021 @ 5.00pm

Present:

Cllr. Davy Daniels, Mayor	Cllr. Jody Power
Cllr. Breda Brennan	Cllr. Eddie Mulligan
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Joe Conway	Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Eamonn Quinlan
Cllr. Susan Gallagher	Cllr. Frank Quinlan
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Seamus Ryan
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. Adam Wyse

Apologies: None

Officials in attendance: Mr. F. Galvin, District Manager Metropolitan Area
Mr. I. Grimes, DOS Housing
Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator
Mr. L. McGree, Senior Planner
Mr. C. O'Neill, SEE Roads
Ms. B. Stosic, A/SEE, Roads
Ms. R. Ryall, Conservation Officer
Ms. A. O'Shea, Corporate Department

Vote of Sympathies/Congratulations:

Votes of sympathy were expressed to the families of the late Breda McCarthy, Des Manahan, Jim Sheehan, John Kiely, Thomas Barron, Colm Byrne, Pat Hearne, William O'Callaghan, Freddie Robinson, Paul Collins, Davy Coughlan, Nora Ahearne and Roger Reynolds. A minutes silence was observed for the deceased.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes from the Metropolitan District Meeting held on 18th January, 2021 were proposed by Cllr. Roche seconded by Cllr. O'Sullivan and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Power enquired about the recent grant announcement for re-imagining outdoor spaces and asked if the Council would consider including the old train station in Tramore in a grant application and if it could be considered for use by artists.

Cllr. Roche looked for update on the Waterford Crystal Site stating that there was speculation that it was going to be used as head quarters for the Technology University. The Mayor said it could be dealt with under AOB. Cllr. Mulligan asked for the Retail Strategy to be circulated to members and asked for update on the Metropolitan Area Transport Study.

Cllr. Fitzgerald asked for clarification of berthing costs on the City Marina.

Cllr. Barry asked could the plans for the Cultural Quarter be circulated to all.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that they had received notification of the €250K grant and will consider best approach but noted that it was limited to a single project. He stated that a Grant application had been made for the Tramore Train Station for the restoration of the windows and doors. He will ask Economic Development to circulate the Retail Strategy and Cultural Quarter plans. He confirmed that the berthing costs in the minutes were correct.

It was proposed by Cllr. Roche and seconded by Cllr.Fitzgerald to suspend Standing Orders to deal with Item No. 4.

4. Waterford City Walls & Towers – Access and Interpretation Report – Presentation by Rose Ryall Conservation Officer

R. Ryall presented an access and interpretation Report on the City Walls & Towers. All Councillors thanked Rose for her very informative presentation and raised issues in relation to lack of funding, lighting, entrance to old Norman City at Manor Street, Beach Towers, educational aspects, access for tourists and timeline for works. They said the city walls are unique and form part of Waterford's legacy and should be restored and lit up with access to all as a matter of priority but noted that funding is a key issue.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that funding opportunities to implement the Southgate Report recommendations will be pursued.

3. Reports

Cllr. Ryan looked for update on the Bike Rental Scheme, asked for a report on the status of vacant houses, and did the Housing Transfer Policy take into account anti social behaviour. He asked if we could prioritise Ballybricken to create a park on the Green. He asked for the illegal dumping in Elm Terrace to be cleared and could we advertise the fines for illegal dumping to act as a deterrent.

Cllr. Griffin asked could extra resources be used to clean/repair footpaths near Tycor Business Park as the Brothers of Charity have premises there and bring their service providers out walking in the area. He asked what number of Priority 1 applicants have been allocated houses in the past year stating that it costs a lot to get medical documentation to support their applications.

Cllr. Murphy asked how much will be saved from the €25K budget as the St. Patrick's Day Parade will not be going ahead this year, has the Council availed of the €10K SEAI grant for electrical vehicle charge points, he asked that we write to the contractor building the houses in Slievekeale as the builders are parking in Willow Terrace causing traffic congestion and could we do something as a Council to commemorate the life of Des Manahan who did so much for the Arts in Waterford.

Cllr. Kelly looked for an update on the pedestrian crossings at Barrack Street and Quarry Road, he thanked the Roads Department for the works in Hillview and surrounding areas and asked when the houses in the Presentation site and Mount William would go up on Choice Based Letting and how long before they will be allocated.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that progress on the Bike Rental Scheme has been delayed due to COVID restrictions but hopes to have it in place late 2021, he noted that there were long term plans for urban regeneration in Ballybricken but in the interim would seek to have the Green tidied and made more presentable. He will ask the Enforcement team to check out the illegal dumping at Elm Terrace and will

ask the Engineer to have a look at the footpaths near Tycor Business Park. He stated that an EV Charging Point strategy for Waterford is currently under consideration and will form the basis for applications to the for SEAI.

I. Grimes, DoS stated that 1-2% or 50-100 units are vacant across the whole county, the Housing Transfer Policy considers transfers for serious anti social behaviour and Priority 1 applicants are given priority and significant investment is made to adapt houses to their medical needs. He said a committee is working on alternative plans for St. Patrick's Day. He will contact the developer again re. parking at the Presentation site and noted that parking spaces had been allocated to the contractor, the allocation of houses following advertising on Choice Based Letting is 3-4 weeks allowing for ASB checks with Gardai and signing of Tenancy Agreements. He will bring the commemoration of Des Manahan to the next Housing & Culture SPC for discussion.

Cllr. Quinlan asked when the tender for the works on the North Quays commences could the Council host it on the website to give an opportunity for local contractor's to bid and try to support jobs in the South East, he also asked if the Council would consider appointing an approved housing body to manage our halting sites facilities which would improve the management of these sites.

Cllr. Mulligan welcomed the announcement of €80K funding for the Carlisle Bridge, he asked if the Bike Scheme could extend out to Ballinakill Shopping Centre where there is room for a Docking Station and he highlighted the unkempt state of the Millenium Plaza stating that a plan needs to be put into action. He also looked for update on the City Archives building.

Cllr. Fitzgerald expressed concern with the lack of footpaths and pedestrian crossings in the Horse Quarter, Convent Hill and Coxtown areas of Dunmore East and also in Cheekpoint and Crooke. He also stated there is a lack of Social Housing in these areas and this needs to be addressed. He asked when works on the North Quays commence what is the plan for trawlers who normally shelter from the extreme weather on the North Wharf.

Cllr. O'Sullivan welcomed the replacement of the bridges in Newtown Woods and is looking for more information on this. She also highlighted the issue of bags of dog foul been thrown on footpaths particularly in the Ferrybank and Church Road, Tramore areas. She is asking for recreational outdoor gym bars to be erected near Splashworld and would welcome if extra funding was available due to the cancellation of the St. Patrick's Day parade could the money be used to light up the old city walls in green and make the lights a permanent fixture.

F. Galvin, DoS stated that tenders for the works on the North Quays would appear on eTenders and that any company can register and see full list. He advised that it was intended to undertake repair and painting work at Carlisle Bridge as soon as restrictions are lifted and he stated that the Bike Rental Scheme will go out as far as UHW for the current phase but may consider further extensions at a later date. He will talk to Economic Development about plans for the Millenium Plaza. An application has been made under the Active Travel Programme for footpath upgrades in Dunmore East, Cheekpoint and Crooke and he will update the Council when there is news on these. He agreed to check with Economic Development on what berthing may be available for fishing craft following construction works on the North Quays. Work will start on the replacement bridge in Newtown Woods in the Spring and with respect to dog fouling, he stated a media campaign to highlight the issue will commence in the Spring. He will look at putting adult play equipment in the area of Tramore park.

I. Grimes, DoS said he would be happy to meet with approved housing bodies to discuss management of the traveller sites. He is aware of the lack of Social Housing in the Passage East/Cheekpoint areas but there is an issue with availability of land and he will pass on suggestion of lighting city walls for St. Patrick's day to the Mayor's committee.

Cllr. Conway asked if the concrete seating at the men's slip in Tramore could be included in the coastal repair plan, he stated that the Summerhill Junction is full of potholes and there is a lot of pooling on the footpaths on the Ring Road and could the area engineer assess both issues. He referred to the recent IBAL Report and issues of wheelie bins on footpaths being an issue and asked if we could consult with other LA's as to best practice. He also stated that the disabled parking spaces on the Prom and Strand Road need repainting.

Cllr. Hearne raised the issue of the illegal development in the halting site in Carrickphierish stating that the issue needs to be dealt with and not develop like the Crescent in St. John's Park. He also raised the issue of dampness in HAP houses saying that an LCT check needs to be done on every HAP house to protect the tenants.

Cllr. Brennan raised issues concerning the repainting of yellow lines in Lower Grange, repair of the speed ramp in Cherrymount by COVID test centre, footpath by Book Centre needs checking as it is a slip hazard and anti dog fouling stencils need to be painted on footpaths in Cannon Street/Barrack Street/Manor Street & Bunkers Hill. She asked if there was an application made to Department for Woodstown Viking Site and was delighted to see Waterford Council celebrating World Wetlands Day on their website.

Cllr. Gallagher said there is an issue with scrambler bikes in the Gracedieu/Bawndaw area and Gardai have been notified, The principal of the GaelScoil in Gracedieu has raised concerns re anti social behaviour in the area and said that the public lights are not working, there was also an issue with the lights at Tramore Pier and the toilets there have not been opened for a number of years. She also noted that a farmer in the Knockeen area had concerns about hedge cutting stating that the hedges are weakened and may cause animals to get loose and cause a traffic safety issue.

B. Stosic, A/SEE said the lighting at Gaelscoil is being looked at and that new lighting is due to be installed at Tramore Pier shortly.

C. O'Neill, SEE stated that due to the inclement weather it hasn't been possible to do works on road marking but all issues are noted and as soon as weather improves works will commence on repainting and stencilling. He will speak to the area engineer re. repairs at the men's slip and the pot holes at Summerhill Junction are on list of repair works. He will have a look at pooling on the Ring Road which may be as a result of outfall and will check footpath outside Book Centre once restrictions have lifted.

F. Galvin, DoS stated there are Bye Laws for the presentation of bins and premises can be approached to discuss non compliance and penalties issued. Regarding the scrambler bikes if it is on private lands the Council have no legal right to stop it and regarding hedge at Knockeen he will get the area engineer to check. He will ask Economic Development to revert with update on the City Archives building.

L. McGree, SP said he will speak to Heritage officer re. application for Woodstown Viking site.

I. Grimes, DoS said he is looking at the issues in the Crescent and advised the meeting that a Part8 extension to the Halting site will be on the March Metropolitan Agenda and issues can be discussed. He stated that inspection of HAP properties had been cancelled due to COVID restrictions but will resume as soon as restrictions are lifted.

Cllr. Wyse was happy to hear that 400 units have been completed under the Housing Capital Programme with another 150 in the process of completion and he asked if there was any way to get a list of completion dates so Councillors could advise their constituents. He also raised the issue and cost of paint disposal stating that this service should be free of charge in order for the proper disposal of paint without harming the environment.

Cllr. Barry stated that Kilbarry/Kilcohan/St. John's Park is set for large development which has capacity to bring a lot more people to live and work in the area and he asks if the Council could set up a committee of residents associations/schools/Councillors/WIT to ensure that development is sustainable and done in a timely fashion taking into account public transport, cycle lanes etc. He also asked was the pedestrian crossing in Barrack Street to come back to the February meeting and stated that signs at the Madigan's junction are not clear as to which motorist has the right of way and need to be made clearer.

Cllr. F. Quinlan said following on from announcement of Public Space Scheme to facilitate open spaces for arts and cultural festivals he suggests that the millennium plaza would be the perfect place to hold these events. The roof needs to be cleaned and suggested perhaps covering with a big top canopy which would create a festival atmosphere together with planting and repainting the wall. He is aware that due to inclement weather no painting is been done but asked that the 25 disabled parking bays in the City are given priority once the weather improves. He also said that due to the closure of the RSC because of level 5 restrictions that good athletes have to travel to Cork to train as their tracks are open and he suggests that

a swipe card be issued to these athletes to access the track at the RSC to train stating that these athletes train on their own.

Cllr.Power stated that the Castle Grange Estate has serious issues with dog fouling on the green and said it's an ongoing issue throughout Waterford and could the Council look at taking the DNA of dogs when they are applying for licence. Illegal dumping is happening regularly on the back road between Tramore and Ballygunner and could the Council put up notices advising people that there are outlets open 7 days a week that take bags of refuse at a minimal cost. He also asked could the Council publicise that the Register for the Rights of Way is now open and people need to make submissions before November 2021. Cllr. Roche supports request to clean up the Millenium Plaza and asked what is the update on the cleaning of the canopy. She stated that it is not acceptable that Kingfisher will not open access gates to the Nature Park and asks for further dialogue with them as cars are parking in an unsafe way at entrance, she also said an arrangement could be made with the owners of the nearby supermarket to park there. She has concerns with the cycle lanes on the Dunmore Road stating that they need to be separated from the road as families with small children are using the lanes and there is no protection for them.

F. Galvin, DoS said there is a significant cost for the Council to dispose of paint in a safe manner and this is reflected in the charge to the public. He agreed to bring Barrack Street pedestrian crossing proposal back to the next Council meeting. He will have a look at the signage at the junction of Manor Street/Railway Square re right of way. Specialized equipment is required to clean the canopy at the Plaza and he is working on getting prices. He said getting DNA tests for all the dogs in the county is an enormous and costly task and could not be undertaken by the Council. There are plenty of illegal dumping signs across the county but people who dispose of the rubbish illegally do not want to pay for it's disposal. He will talk to the Trails Officer about publishing the Right of Way Register and deadlines. He has engaged with Kingsfisher re opening of access gates but they have serious concerns re vandalism but will keep engaging with them to come up with a solution. He noted that there was NTA funding available in the current year with respect to the provision of active measures on the Dunmore Road.

I. Grimes, DoS said that people should not be travelling outside their 5K unless for essential travel and that the RSC is open for elite athletes once they have written accreditation from a National Body.

Cllr. Daniels raised the issue of condition of cul-de-sac in Knockboy and asked for it to be cleaned up.

It was proposed by Cllr. Wyse and seconded by Cllr. O'Sullivan to suspend Stand Orders by 15 minutes to deal with Motions and AOB.

5. Motions

Motion in the name of Cllrs. Jody Power and Susan Gallagher

“That Waterford City & County Council investigate, as a matter of urgency, the occurrence of a persistent Algae Bloom in Belle Lake over the last 2 years, threatening the many species of fauna and flora found therein and home to the rare Caddis Fly, found in only 2 locations in Ireland. In this era of significant Biodiversity loss, a Waterford City & County Management Plan for the lake, in co-operation with all Belle Lake stakeholders, would be optimal”

Reg. No. 53 (dated 1st February, 2021)

Motion no. 53 was welcomed by Councillors stating that an EPA report is required.. The proposal by Cllr.Power was seconded by Cllr. Gallagher and agreed by all.

6. AOB

Cllr. Roche wants to know if the Waterford Crystal Site is zoned for educational purposes and has the department of Education approached the owners. She said there is idle speculation that both Kilkenny and Carlow are looking for the HQ of TUSE in their region and we need to get an answer as it is too important to leave hanging.

Cllr. Ryan said the matter was too important to deal with under AOB and asked that a Special Meeting take place to discuss as the matter needs to be dealt with now before the new Governing Body is appointed.

Cllr. Daniels said we are at a critical point and there are a lot of uncertainties around the issue. He said he would hold a Special meeting to discuss this very important issue and we all need to work together to resolve it. All Councillors were in support of holding a Special meeting.

Cllr. Brennan said that International Women's Week is coming up in early March and wished all ladies young and old a happy International Women's Week.

H. Dunphy, MA advised the meeting that she is in consultation with WIT to come to talk to full Plenary Council regarding the university situation and will inform council of date of meeting.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____