

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT
HELD AT 2.30PM ON MONDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2024 IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, COUNTY HALL, WEXFORD**

Presiding: - His Worship the Mayor, Cllr John Hegarty

Councillors: L. Kelly, G. Lawlor, G. Laffan, M. Bell, D. Hynes, T. Forde

In Attendance:

Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Director of Services
Mr. Anthony Bailey, District Manager,
Ms. Eilís Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. George Colfer, Executive Engineer, Environment
Mr. Ian Plunkett, Executive Technician, Environment
Ms. Mary O'Neill, Assistant Scientist, Environment
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing Section
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, Staff Officer
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies from Mr. Graeme Hunt, Executive Planner for his inability to attend the meeting were noted.

At the outset of the meeting, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. John Hegarty congratulated Mr. Taaffe, on behalf of Members, on his upcoming appointment as Interim Chief Executive.

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

On the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, a unanimous vote of sympathy was extended to the families of the following:

- Mrs. Joan Doyle, Distillery Road, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Michael Hennessy, Barntown, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Edward Barker, Sunrise, Carcur, Wexford RIP

MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 15th January, 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated were confirmed, and signed on the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor.

MINUTES OF PROTOCOL MEETING

The minutes of the Protocol Meeting held on Monday 15th January, 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell, seconded by Cllr. G. Laffan subject to the minutes being amended to reflect that St. Patricks Fife and Drum Band were to be afforded a civic reception.

NIP FOR SEPTIC TANKS AND UPDATE ON NEW GRANT SCHEME

Mr. Ian Plunkett, Executive Technician gave a brief presentation to Members on the National Inspection Programme for Septic tanks, together with details on the new grant scheme available from 1st January 2024.

Mr. Plunkett outlined for Members the methodology used to determine the number of annual inspections to be carried per catchment area.

Mr. Plunkett further advised that as of the 1st January, 2024 there are 3 types of grants available to assist property owners to bring their treatment systems up to the required standard. Members were also informed that the grant aid has increased to a maximum of €12,000, up from €5,000, and the requirement for the septic tank to be registered has also been removed.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. I. Plunkett and Ms. M.O'Neill.

- Clarification on areas selected for inspections.
- Availability of EPA data on different type of contamination to water sources.

The new grant scheme was broadly welcomed by Members. His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, on behalf of Members, thanked Mr. Plunkett and Ms. O'Neill for their detailed presentation.

SECTION 183 – DISPOSAL OF 84 ARD ALAINN CASTLEBRIDGE

The attached report regarding the proposed disposal of 84 Ard Alainn, Castlebridge, a copy of which had previously been circulated was presented by the District Manager, and unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

UPDATE ON FLEADH 24

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services gave a brief update presentation to Members on Fleadh 2024. Mr. Taaffe confirmed that work ongoing in the background on all the required elements. The statutory event licence is being prepared by Safety Solutions and will be submitted to the Planning Section at the end of March. He anticipates that the official launch night for the Fleadh will be held, late March, early April. Ms. Taaffe provided a list of key event locations to Members but did advise that the location of the main competition area is to be finalised in the coming weeks.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Taaffe.

- Consultation with Irish Rail on additional trains.
- Litter management on the quayfront.
- Accommodation
- Sites for camper vans.
- Timeframe for second public meeting
- Casual Trading Licences and policing of trading outside the designated areas.
- Inclusion of Wexford Food Family

- Licencing arrangements around alcohol consumption in public areas.

In response to query from Cllr. L. Kelly on the proposed modular performance space at Crescent Quay, Mr. Taaffe advised that regrettably the venue would not be proceeding due to the high construction tender prices. Mr. Taaffe stated that the site would be used by TG4 for the duration of the Fleadh, and alternative options for its use as a public space afterwards would be looked at.

DRAFT CASUAL TRADING BYE-LAWS 2024 – FLEADH CHEOIL

The attached Draft Bye-Laws regulating casual trading in the district for the duration of Fleadh Cheoil na Éireann, 2024 were presented by Mr. Anthony Bailey, District Manager.

Following clarification to the Members on a number of queries, on the recommendation of Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell, Members unanimously agreed that the Draft Casual Trading Bye-Laws, 2024 proceed to public consultation.

DRAFT STREET PERFORMANCE BYE-LAWS 2024

The attached Draft Bye-Laws regulating street performance in the district were presented by Mr. A. Bailey, District Manager.

A lengthy debate ensued whereby Members raised concerns about the duration of performances, distance from premises, seizing of equipment and enforcement of the bye-laws. Mr. Bailey agreed to take the Members concerns on board and amend the draft bye-laws accordingly.

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services stressed that a reasonable approach would be taken regarding street performances but that the bye-laws ensure that the Borough has the power to deal with an issue should it arise.

FESTIVALS, CONCERTS & EVENT PROGRAMME 2024

The attached report, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was presented by the District Manager, Mr. Anthony Bailey. Mr. Bailey outlined the detail of the 2024 Programme stating that the overall budget is similar to 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell, seconded by Cllr. G. Laffan, the 2024 programme was adopted.

UPDATE ON OUTDOOR DINING 2024

Mr. Anthony Bailey, District Manager recommended to Members that the scaled back road closures continue for 2024, including the limited closure of Henrietta Street at weekends and the closure of Mallin Street from 11am to 6pm daily Monday to Saturday.

Following discussions, Members agreed to the road closures as recommended by the District Manager.

Mr. Bailey further recommended that the Outdoor Trading Licences for the units on the quayfront, Min Ryan Park and Carraigfoyle be extended to the year-end.

Following a debate on the matter, Members agreed to extend the licences to the year-end, at which point the licences will be tendered. At the suggestion of Mr. E. Taaffe, Director Services, Members unanimously agreed that a 2- year licence will be awarded from 2025 onwards, with the option of an extension for a further year. Mr. A. Bailey undertook to engage with the current licensees to ensure that they endeavour to maximise opening hours.

In response to a query from Cllr. T. Forde on the licence expiry date for the structure in Cornmarket, Mr. A. Baily, District Manager confirmed that the licence expires June 2024.

REPORTS

HOUSING

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was discussed.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Ms. H. Meehan, Senior Staff Officer.

- High number of maintenance call outs
- Proposed estates for the Windows and Doors Retro Fitting Scheme in 2024
- Review of Choice Based Letting Scheme to include extending application deadline to 2 weeks and the inclusion of paper-based application.
- Acknowledgement of submission of documents to support housing applications.
- Request for repairs to security light at Skeffington Street.
- Clean up at the back of Talbot Green
- Wait times for first inspections under grants for Older Persons.

In response to a query from Cllr. T. Forde on the proposed gates at Talbot Green, Mr. A. Bailey, District Manager clarified that a Section 73 under the Roads Act will be required to extinguish the public right of way, but that in the interim quotations had been sought for the gates and he undertook to follow up on the matter with the Housing Section and revert to Members.

PLANNING

The attached report a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted.

ENVIRONMENT

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was discussed.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. George Colfer, Executive Engineer.

- Additional signage regarding Beach Bye-laws, in particular in relation to horses on the beach.
- Pedestrian access area at Raven Forest requires resurfacing and tidy up.
- Additional monitoring of potential fire risks due to camping in forest and dunes at Curracloe in the summer months.
- Update on proposed playground at Curracloe.

Suspension of Standing Orders.

It being 4.50p.m, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, it was unanimously agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow for the remaining business on the agenda to be concluded.

DISTRICT ENGINEER

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was discussed.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Ms. Eilís Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer.

- Condition of footpaths and roadway in Bayview Drive.
- Resurfacing of parking area at Kennedy Park, opposite Wexford Albion's Pitch.
- Resurfacing required at Mary's Lane.
- Ongoing issues with the pedestrian crossing lights at Castlebridge.
- Line markings across the district, including pedestrian crossing at Redmond Square
- Update on potential tenants for Westgate Heritage Centre.
- Progress on repairs to wall at Kerlogue.
- Removal of unsightly old telephone kiosks.
- Flood barrier restricting access to the John Barry Memorial, Crescent Quay.
- Completion date for the canopy on Monck Street.
- Update on energisation of the automated bollard at the junction of Lower George's Street and Main Street.
- Repairs to the fence at Ferrycarrig Bridge

- Unravelling of roadside at junction at Ardcandrisk.
- Update on the line markings on the R730.
- Works required on railings at Crossabeg.
- Clarification on trialling bus pick up and drop off at Grogan's Road
- Update on the design for the Distillery Road junction.
- Implementation of traffic calming measures on Whiterock Hill.
- Update on design of pedestrian crossing at Browne's Pub.
- Repairs to public lighting
- Unravelling of road verges at Hayestown, Coolcots and Glenville Road
- Schedule of bus shelter installations.
- Update on pedestrian crossing to the Cuain Aingeal, Ferrybank.
- Timeline for crossing at Cluain Dara
- Speed limit zoning in housing estates.
- Completion date for works at Fisher's Row
- Recent issue with buses at Corish Park
- Repairs to surface on Roches Road.
- Clarification of responsibility for blocked drains on private land causing flooding on the public road.
- Resurfacing works required at the entrance to St. Ibar's Cemetery, Crosstown.

In response to a query from Cllr. M. Bell regarding the use of the Mechanics Institute now that works were almost complete, Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Director of Services clarified that extensive works on the interior would be required to make the building usable. Mr. Taaffe confirmed that there were a number of potential uses being explored but that he would revert to Members regarding these proposals in the coming weeks.

COMMUNITY

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was noted.

LIBRARIES, ARCHIVE AND ARTS

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was noted.

FIRE SERVICES

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was noted.

MEMBERS SUPPORT SYSTEM

The attached report, copies of which had previously been circulated was noted.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 20TH MARCH 2024

MAYOR OF WEXFORD.