

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD AT 2.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2023 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.

Presiding: - His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty

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

In Attendance:

Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Director of Services
Mr. Anthony Bailey, District Manager
Mr. Michael McCormack, Town Regeneration Officer
Mr. Tom Banville, Senior Executive Officer, Planning
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer, Environment
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing
Ms. Sonia Hunt, Executive Planner
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, Staff Officer
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer
Ms. Fiona Bennett, Assistant Staff Officer
Mr. Aidan Rochford, Executive Engineer, Special Projects.
Mr. P. Berry, President of Comhaltas Craobh Loch Garman
Ms. B. Walsh, Vice Chairperson Fleadh Executive

Apologies from Ms. Eilís Furlong, District Engineer for her inability to attend the meeting were noted.

At the outset, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty welcomed the attendance of the Members of the Fleadh Executive Committee, Mr. E. Taaffe, Chairperson, Ms. B. Walsh, Vice Chairperson and Mr. P. Berry, President of Comhaltas Craobh Loch Garman, to address Members.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty on behalf of Members, congratulated Mr. E. Taaffe on his appointment as Director of Services for Special Projects, Capital Development and Wexford Borough District.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 17th July, 2023, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed, and signed on the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

UPDATE FROM FLEADH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON FLEADH CHEOIL NA HÉIREANN 2024

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services and Chairperson of the Fleadh Executive introduced the Committee Members, Mr. P. Berry & Ms. B. Walsh to Members.

Mr. Taaffe was pleased also to introduce the 2 permanent staff from the Council assigned to work on the Fleadh, Ms. F. Bennett, Secretary to the Committee and Mr. A. Rochford, Executive Engineer for event management.

Mr. Taaffe advised Members that hosting Fleadh 2024 will require a significant body of work, with input from all relevant stakeholders required to ensure the event runs smoothly. He stressed that it provides an opportunity to showcase the town at its best with the potential for a huge economic and cultural boost to the town.

Mr. Taaffe further advised that it is planned to give a more detailed presentation at the October meeting of Wexford County Council.

Mr. P. Berry, President of Comhaltas Craobh Loch Garman outlined the scale of work involved in hosting the Fleadh and took the opportunity on behalf of Comhaltas Craobh Loch Garman, to thank Members for their support in securing the event for 2024.

Ms. B. Walsh, Vice Chairperson revealed that the aim is to make the event the "Walking Fleadh" with the majority of venues in a central location which will require several areas of pedestrianisation within the town. Ms. Walsh also conceded that there was a massive body of work ahead and highlighted two immediate requirements, to Members, accommodation, and volunteers.

Cllr. M. Bell who is coordinating the accommodation committee urged everyone that has any available accommodation to contact her as soon as possible.

Mr. Taaffe urged everyone to get involved and volunteer, as volunteers will play a vital role in running the event. He stated that it is a wonderful opportunity to get involved in this unique event.

Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Taaffe addressed the following concerns raised by Members.

- Consultation with An Garda Síochána and other statutory bodies.
- Event Management and Traffic Management.
- Legacy projects arising from the event.
- Inclusion for all.
- Accommodation options and guidelines for providers
- Performance space at Crescent Quay
- Impact on existing Borough Staff
- Volunteering for the Fleadh
- Marketing campaign, in particular to attract overseas visitors.

Cllr. G. Lawlor stressed that hosting an event of this magnitude will inevitably cause disruptions to the daily routine of people living and working in the town but that it will provide a huge economic and cultural boost for Wexford and will be worth it.

At the request of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, Mr. E. Taaffe confirmed that an update will be provided to Members, at each monthly meeting going forward.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, on behalf of Members, thanked the Fleadh Committee for their attendance and wished them every success with the task ahead.

SECTION 183-LANDS AT MAUDLINTOWN WEXFORD TO WOMEN'S REFUGE

The attached report regarding the proposed transfer of land at Maudlinton Wexford, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was presented by the District Manager, and unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell seconded by Cllr. G. Laffan.

SECTION 183 – LANDS AT CASTLEBRIDGE COMMUNITY GARDENS

The attached report regarding the proposed transfer of lands at Castlebridge Community Gardens, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was presented by the District Manager, and unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor.

URDF CALL 3 €6.5 MILLION FUNDING ALLOCATION UPDATE

Mr. T. Banville, Senior Executive Officer and Mr. M. McCormack, Town Regeneration Officer, provided an update to Members on the URDF Call 3 funding scheme.

Mr. Banville clarified that €6.5million has been allocated to Wexford County Council to acquire and sell derelict and long-term vacant properties to bring them back into productive use.

Mr. Banville further advised that of the 217 properties submitted to the Department of Housing, 169 were approved, with 8 properties identified within Wexford Town centre.

Mr. Banville explained that Members support would be sought when Section 183 are presented in due course for approval to dispose of the properties.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Banville and Mr. McCormack.

- Clarification on definition of town centre
- Eligibility of mixed-use properties
- Allocation of funding across the county.
- Methodology for valuations
- Risks associated with increased costs and properties not selling.
- Timeframe for budget spend.
- Policy on properties already demolished.
- Clarification on C.P.O. procedure.
- Recovery of levies charged on properties.
- Residential properties being made available to housing applicants.
- Prioritisation of properties on Main Street.

In response to a query from His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty on the potential that properties may not come back into use, once sold, Mr. Banville stated the addition of a condition to the sale to ensure that the property is used, is currently

being discussed nationally. Mr. Banville did add this scheme was successfully piloted in Limerick City Council.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, on behalf of Members, thanked Mr. Banville and Mr. McCormack for their update.

REPORTS

HOUSING

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

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

- Condition of social housing impacting the sale of an adjoining privately owned property.
- Update on the Choice Based Letting Scheme and lack of properties in Wexford Town.
- Commencement date for the replacement of windows and doors in Ferndale Park and Church View housing estates.
- Progress report on the works on the site of 2 houses demolished in Bride Street.
- Clarification on assistance to homeless cases during period of industrial dispute
- Alternative accommodation for tenants affected by fire at Lower Georges Street.
- Review of Croí Cónaithe Scheme deadlines as timeframe to complete works not attainable.

PLANNING

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

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Ms. S. Hunt, Executive Planner.

- Clarification regarding the completion of footpath works prior to commencement of housing developments.
- Update on preplanning meetings
- Progress report on the Wexford Town Development Plan.
- Clarification on submission process for planning applications and recording of documentation.

DISTRICT ENGINEER

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

Mr. A. Baily, District Manager undertook to bring the following matters raised by Members to the attention of Ms. E. Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer, who was not in attendance.

- Upgrade plans to power supply on the quay for all users.
- Safety concerns regarding the entrance to Westlands Estate.
- Update on the repairs to the barrier at Ferrycarrig bridge.
- Results of traffic survey on John's Road
- Repairs to the digital sign at Ferrybank
- Overhanging hedgerow on footpath at Larkin's Cross
- Letters to landowners regarding overgrown hedgerows on Glenville Road.
- Removal of buddleia from premises along the Main Street.
- Condition of road surface at Larkins Cross
- Repairs to manhole cover at hospital junction on Newtown Road.
- Repairs to concrete fencing at Crossabeg.
- Update on Wexford Town Transport Plan
- Commencement date for low-cost safety works at Cluain Dara.
- Date for the energisation of lights at Whitemill.
- Introduction of one-way system at St. Aidan's Crescent.
- Requirement for traffic survey on Mary Street.
- Update on the ponding at Liam Mellows Park.
- Installation of lighting and pedestrian crossing at Cuain Aingeal Garden
- Clean up of Air Base Memorial Garden at Ferrybank and consideration to alternative planting scheme.
- Review of curtesy crossings at roundabout at Browne's Pub, Bishopswater.
- Update on proposed footpaths in Castlebridge
- Update on the retractable bollard at the junction of Lower Georges Street and Main Street.
- Safety concerns regarding the demolition works at the Dun Mhuire Site.
- Review of junction layout at Ferrycarrig onto N11.
- Progress report on proposed boathouse at Carraigfoyle.
- Update on proposed water activity centre at Curraclloe
- Completion date for the installation of the canopy on Monck Street.
- Update on the Wexford Walls Mural project.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

ENVIRONMENT

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

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. H. Maguire, Administrative Officer.

- Replacement of plastic ropes on Ferrybank walkway
- Accessible toilet and baby changing facilities on the quayfront.
- Update on playground at Curracloe
- Accessible picnic benches at Curracloe.

Mr. Maguire was pleased to inform Members that the mattress amnesty was progressing well, with the final outturn number expected to be submitted between 1200 to 1500.

Suspension of Standing Orders

It being 5p.m, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, Members unanimously agreed to suspend standing orders to allow for the remaining business on the agenda to be concluded.

Cllr. M. Bell gave her apologies and exited the meeting.

LIBRARIES, ARTS & ARCHIVES

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

FIRE SERVICES

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

MEMBERS SUPPORT SYSTEM

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

MOTION

Lands at The Knock

The following motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde and Cllr. D. Hynes.

“We ask that this Council actively explore and pursue options, with all the relevant parties, to positively utilise the land at The Knock in Wexford town and to tidy and maintain the area owned by the Council until a positive use for the land is achieved”.

Following a discussion on the matter and on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, Members unanimously agreed to defer the matter pending an update report from Ms. Eilís Furlong, District Engineer.

TALBOT GREEN (IN COMMITTEE)

On the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, it was agreed that the meeting would go into Committee so that Members could discuss the ongoing issues of antisocial behaviour at Talbot Green

Following a discussion on the matter, Members requested the District Manager, Mr. A. Bailey to arrange a meeting with all relevant stakeholders as soon as possible.

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:

- Mr. Tom Cantwell, Glenville Road, Wexford former member of An Garda Síochána, RIP
- Mr. John Doyle, Ballindinas, Barntown, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Michael (Mick) Corish, Whiterock View, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Francis (Franko) McManus, Talbot St & Bishopswater RIP
- Mrs. Maire Rose Beale, Spafield Avenue, Wexford RIP
- Mr. David O'Hara, John Street Flats, Wexford RIP

CONGRATULATIONS

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Sophie Lawlor on winning bronze in the 54kg category at the EUBC Schoolboys & Schoolgirls European Boxing Championship.
- Aileen Kelly from the Senior Glynn Barntown Rounders Club for her All-Star Award.
- St. Patricks Fife and Drum Band on the occasion of their 100-year anniversary.
- Kaylem Harnett on being named player of the match at the recent U17 International match against Belgium.
- Jesse Dempsey on his 1st cap with the U19 Premier Division Team
- Alex Dodd & Eoin Reynolds on being called out to play with the U19 Ireland Squad.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 16TH OCTOBER 2023

MAYOR OF WEXFORD