

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT  
HELD AT 2.30P.M. ON MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024 IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.**

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

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

**In Attendance:**

Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Director of Services  
Mr. Anthony Bailey, District Manager  
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer, Environment  
Mr. Seamus Begley, Management Accountant  
Mr. Donal Gordon, County Rates Officer.  
Ms. Caroline Creane, A/Administrative Officer, Community  
Ms. Tara Farrell, A/Senior Staff Officer, Community  
Ms. Ronan Griffin, Assistant Staff Officer, Community  
Mr. Liam Mannix, KPMG  
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer Housing  
Ms. Sonia Hunt, Executive Planner  
Mr. Oisín Boland, Executive Planner  
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, Staff Officer,  
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer.

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

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, welcomed Ms. Stephanie Warner, Integration Coordinator, who was attending as an observer in the public gallery.

On the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, Members unanimously agreed to the suspension of standing orders to allow for the presentation on the LECP and Two-Year Implementation Plan to proceed first on the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF THE LECP AND THE TWO YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Mr. L. Mannix, KPMG gave a presentation to Members on the LECP and Implementation plan. Mr. Mannix summarised the process for drafting the plan which included extensive consultation both with key stakeholders and the public. Mr. Mannix outlined the resulting actions contained in the plan and advised that the majority of actions would be led by the Council.

The LECP and Two-Year Implementation Plan were unanimously adopted by Members on the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell, seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, thanked Mr. Mannix for his presentation and for the extensive work carried out by all involved in the preparation of the plans.

## **REGISTER OF ELECTORS.**

Cllr. G. Lawlor advised Members on an issue around requirements to register to vote on the [checktheregister.ie](http://checktheregister.ie) website which had been brought to his attention before the meeting. Cllr. Lawlor informed Members that it appeared that all voters, existing or new are now required to submit their PPSN, Date of Birth and Eircode to register to vote.

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services advised Members he was unaware of these new requirements but would seek clarification from the Franchise Section firstly and Department, if necessary, and revert to Members.

Following a discussion and Members concerns, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, Members unanimously agreed to bring a motion to the February Council meeting asking for these requirements to be removed, as it would impact the upcoming elections. Mr. A. Bailey, District Manager undertook to draft the motion and to circulate to Members for approval.

## **COMPLETION OF TERM OF OFFICE – MR. T. ENRIGHT CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty led Members in tributes to Mr. T. Enright following the recent announcement that he was to complete his term of office after 10 years as Chief Executive on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2024. His Worship the Mayor Cllr. Hegarty and Members thanked Mr. Enright for his valued contribution to County Wexford, together with his advice and support to Members at all times. All Members associated with the tributes and wished Mr. Enright well in his future endeavours.

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2023, copies of which had previously been circulated were confirmed, and signed on the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

## **COMMENCEMENT OF RATES LEGISLATION.**

Mr. D. Gordan, County Rates Officer gave a brief presentation to Members on the changes for local authorities, owners and occupiers of rateable properties on the commencement of the Rates and Other Matters Act, 2019. Mr. Gordan detailed the changes for Members, which include the removal of moieties, late payment interest, penalties for delay on information errors and revised 30- day payment period for demands.

Mr. Gordon further advised that a press release on these changes will issue on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January, and the changes are to be included on the reverse of the rate demands due to be issued at the end of the month.

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

- Issue of demands for properties under review by Tailte Éireann.

- Inclusion of payment plan options to the fore on press release.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, thanked Mr. Gordan on behalf of Members for his detailed presentation.

## **REPORTS**

### **HOUSING**

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

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

- Timeframe for the allocation of houses in the Whiterock Hill Scheme
- Update on works on community houses in Wolfe Tones.
- Allocation of vacant properties across the district
- Update on Tenant in Situ Scheme
- Clarification on grant aid for modernising heating systems.
- Inadequacy of housing grants for the Elderly
- Review of Choice Based Letting application period.
- Standards for emergency accommodation being offered under licence.
- Determination of priorities for works under the Energy Retro Fit Scheme.

In response to a query raised by Cllr. L. Kelly on the provision of emergency accommodation in the district, Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services agreed to discuss the matter with Ms. Carolyne Godkin, Director of Services for Housing.

Ms. Meehan advised Members that changes to the qualifying criteria for the Tenant Purchase Scheme will be effective from the 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2024. Changes include an income limit of €11,000, qualification of certain social welfare payments previously excluded, and in a joint tenancy situation only one tenant is required to be in receipt of social housing for 10 years. Ms. Meehan stated that all tenants previously refused, had been notified of the changes in writing, but she did request that Members to contact her with the any names of any tenants that may now qualify for the scheme.

### **DISTRICT ENGINEER**

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

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services addressed the some of the following matters raised by Members and undertook to refer any that required further clarification to Ms. E. Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer to respond to Members.

- Update on the removal of hoarding on the Mechanics Institute
- Plans for the Westgate Heritage Centre and Computer Centre.
- Timeline for the completion of the Transport Plan

- Completion of the Inner Relief Road.
- Upgrade of phone boxes at Redmond Square, St. Peter's Square and in The Faythe.
- Progression of plans for Covid Garden at Ferrybank.
- Future development of the garden behind the Adoration Convent.
- Repair to the railing at Ferrycarrig.
- Linemarking around the District, including curtesy crossings.
- Removal of buddleia from buildings in town centre
- Access to Killeens Lane for new housing development and impact on existing residents.
- Review of traffic at Kennedy Park and Corish Park together with required resurfacing works.
- Ramps on Abbey Street causing issues for cyclists and electric scooter users.
- Speed Survey on Coolcotts Lane.
- Access to loading bays on South Main Street
- Requirement for additional public lighting close to Crosstown Cemetery.
- Proposed temporary road closure of Henrietta Street and Mallin Street.
- Proposed redevelopment of the old landfill site at Carcur.

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services advised Members that it is proposed remove the proliferation of sandwich boards and advertising boards around the town centre over the next few months.

## **COMMUNITY**

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

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Mr. H. Maguire was pleased to inform Members that the Deposit Return Scheme is due to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2024, whereby the levy on plastic drinks bottles and cans can be redeemed at most large retailers. Redeemable bottles and cans will have a specific identifying logo. Mr. Maguire added that this was a positive contribution to improve Ireland's plastic recycling rates.

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

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

- Illegal dumping at a laneway in Belvedere Grove
- Progress on coastal protection works at Seaview, Kilmore.
- Update on playground at Curracloe.
- Clearing of attenuation pond, Min Ryan Park.
- Removal of advertising poster from post boxes and ESB boxes.
- Reinforcement works required at Ballast Bank.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the accessible toilet and baby changing facilities on the quay front, during which Members expressed their frustrations that

the matter had not progressed. Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services confirmed that the transfer of the Tourist Office to Wexford County Council ownership is imminent but that extensive work would be needed to use it as a welfare facility.

Mr. Taaffe also advised that a project is underway to examine the provision of permanent service connections along the quay. Mr. Taaffe acknowledged Members frustrations and agreed to liaise with the Environment Section and District Staff to prioritise the matter.

In response to concern raised by Cllr. L. Kelly on the need for reinforcement works to be carried out on the Ballast Bank, Mr. Taaffe undertook to request the Harbour Master to assess what, if any works are required.

### **UPDATE ON FLEADH 2024**

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services provided an update on preparation works for Fleadh 2024. Mr. Taaffe confirmed that securing venues for competitions is ongoing, with a large capacity venue required for the closing night still to be identified.

Mr. Taaffe was pleased to inform Members that Safety Solutions Group has been appointed as the Event Coordinators, adding they have a wealth of experience with an event of this size, Meetings with the statutory agencies and Safety Solutions will be organised in the coming week.

Mr. Taaffe confirmed that tenders for the PR Brand Co., the Park and Ride and Waste segregation are due to be awarded shortly.

Mr. Taaffe stated that advance draft plans will be made available to Member, prior to the submission of the statutory planning application for the event licence in March.

Cllr. M. Bell informed Members that the option to register for interest in and providing accommodation is to go live on the website on Friday.

Mr. Taaffe paid tribute to the GAA & Rugby Clubs in Pairc Charman for facilitating the official campsite for the Fleadh. Booking for the campsite is now available.

### **LIBRARIES, ARCHIVE & ARTS**

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.

## **VOTES OF SYMPATHY**

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

- Ms. Jean Cooney, "Sonas" Lambstown, Killurin, Co. Wexford. RIP
- Mrs. Jean Ruddock, Wexford Town RIP
- Mrs. Mary Berry, Rowesmount, Drinagh, Co. Wexford RIP
- Mr. Patrick Cummings, Crosstown, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Kevin Hayes, Mulgannon, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Kieran Fielding, Clonard Little, Wexford RIP
- Mr. Mike Sanders, Georgia Atlanta, USA RIP

## **CIVIC AWARD CEREMONY**

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty informed Members that a Civic Award Ceremony will take place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 to acknowledge International Sporting Achievements and any additional nominations are to be forwarded to him as soon as possible.

## **THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING**

**SIGNED THIS DAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024**

**MAYOR OF WEXFORD**