

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD AT 2.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2021 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, BLOCK A, WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.

Presiding:- His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan
Councillors: J. Hegarty, M. Bell, D. Hynes, T. Forde.

Apologies from Cllr. G. Lawlor and Cllr. L. Kelly for their inability to attend the meeting were noted.

In Attendance:

Mr. Tony Larkin, Director of Services
Ms. Angela Laffan, District Manager
Mr. Shay Howell, Senior Executive Architect, Housing
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer, Environment
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, Staff Officer.
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies from Mr. Sean Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer, for his inability to attend the meeting were noted.

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 15th November, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed and signed on the proposal of Cllr. J. Hegarty seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

MINUTES – MATTERS ARISING

Cllr. T. Forde raised the matter of School Transport / Bus Parking at Talbot Green and the opinion expressed by the District Engineer at the meeting held on the 18th November 2021 to the effect that all alternative options have been explored. Cllr. Forde stated that Members had put forward solutions and are being dismissed expressing concern that the record in the Minutes indicate that the matter “is now closed”.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan agreed that he too did not consider the matter closed and confirmed that he has had preliminary discussions with some residents in Talbot Green since the November meeting. In the absence of a number of Councillors at today’s meeting, it was agreed on the recommendation of the Mayor to discuss the matter further at the January meeting.

During discussion on the current status of the dangerous wall at Cromwellsfort, Cllr. J. Hegarty proposed that the Council would consider developing the Walled Garden at Cromwellsfort as a public amenity/community facility for residents of the area.

Cllr. M. Bell referenced the wonderful public amenities available at The Rocks with access immediately adjacent to Cromwellsfort and suggested that an alternative use for the garden area be explored.

Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, highlighting the wall/public safety as the immediate priority, acknowledged that the Walled Garden could be a welcome amenity and confirmed that the Council will explore the possibility of bringing the garden into the public domain.

PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION PRESENTATION – BRIDE STREET

Mr. Shay Howell, Senior Executive Architect, gave a brief presentation to Members on the proposed redevelopment of a site at Bride Street comprising the demolition of 2 existing derelict dwellings and the construction of 3 no. social housing units comprising 2 no. 2-bed apartments and 1 no. 1-bed apartment. Mr. Howell advised that funding for the development will be sought in a 4-stage approval process from the Department of Housing, Community and Local Government, who have already confirmed Stage 1 approval for the scheme. Mr. Howell also confirmed that the Council's Heritage Officer has been consulted, as it appears a portion of the Old Town Wall traverses the site. Preliminary discussions have also taken place with the ESB, to relocate the pylon on the edge of the site.

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

- Projected costings for the development - €720,000
- Process for funding approval.
- Consultation with WCC Heritage Officer.
- Immediate removal of unsightly overgrowth from the roof of the houses pending redevelopment.

The Scheme was broadly welcomed by Members and unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. T. Forde seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes.

PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION PRESENTATION – GROGAN'S ROAD

Mr. Shay Howell, Senior Executive Architect, presented plans to Members for a proposed infill development on a Council owned site at Grogan's Road comprising the construction of 3 social housing units - 2 no. 2-bed apartments and 1 no.1-bed

apartment. Mr. Howell informed Members that, following consultation and at the request of the DHCLG, the plans are currently been revised to incorporate an additional 1 no. 1-bed apartment so as to maximise the development potential of the site. Mr. Howell confirmed that Stage 1 approval has been received from the DHCLG for the development.

In response to a query from Cllr. D. Hynes regarding the possibility of further legal objections with regard to the development of this site as happened previously, Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Service, confirmed he is aware of a previous legal action but the Council are satisfied there are no rights. Any objections to the proposal would be dealt with as part of the normal planning procedure.

Following further discussion, the project was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell seconded by Cllr. T. Forde.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan thanked Mr. Howell, on behalf of Members, for his detailed presentations.

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

On the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, a unanimous vote of sympathy was extended to the family of the following:

- Mrs. Mari Elizabeth Hickey, Townamalouge, Courtnacuddy, Enniscorthy RIP

CONGRATULATIONS

Votes of congratulations were extended to the following: -

- The Kinsella Family, Marshalstown on winning Ireland's Fittest Family
- Kaylem Harnett who captained the U15 Football Team at the recent Federations Cup Tournament.
- All local businesses and traders in Wexford town for maintaining services for the duration of the Covid restrictions.

MINUTES OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 30TH SEPTEMBER.

The minutes of the Wexford Borough Heritage Committee meeting held on 30th September 2021, copies of which had previously been circulated, were noted.

Cllr. D. Hynes extended his congratulations to Members of the Committee in providing a new focus to the preservation of the exceptional heritage of the town.

Cllr. M. Bell stated that the appointment of the Heritage Officer was most welcome and looked forward to the progression of projects by the Committee in 2022.

REPORTS

HOUSING

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

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

- Clarification on the policy regarding transfer requests including mutual transfers.
- Allocation of new social housing units at Airhill, Belvedere Road.
- Follow up procedure to applicants who have not responded to WCC in relation to the recent Assessment of Housing Need.
- Completion date for The Ballagh housing scheme.
- Servicing of wood pellet boilers in local authority dwellings
- Homeless Severe Weather Protocol
- Lack of responses by housing staff to phone calls/emails from Councillors

In response to a query from Cllr. J. Hegarty re approval of Council loans for house purchases, Ms. Meehan confirmed that loans come under the remit of the Finance Section to whom all queries should be addressed.

PLANNING

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

Apologies from Mr. T. Banville, Senior Executive Officer, on his inability to attend the meeting were noted.

Cllr. J. Hegarty extended best wishes to Mr. Liam Bowe, Executive Planner, who has resigned to take up a new position with An Bord Pleanala and also Mr. Niall Sheehan, Assistant Planner in his new position.

Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, advised Members that Mr. Bowe's position will be filled permanently but an Acting Executive Planner would be appointed in the coming days pending this appointment.

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. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer.

- Clean up of the Horse River
- Regular clean-up and removal of debris from the new walkway at Ferrybank following storms/high tides
- Need for a strategy and awareness campaign for dealing with Japanese Knotweed both in public areas and in LA housing estates.
- Update on the provision of a public convenience on the quay front.
- Illegal dumping after the Christmas period
- Provision of biodegradable mitts.
- Relocation of dog bin on Peter Street.
- Installation of a litter bin at seating area at Wygram.
- Increase in Covid related litter.

Cllr. M. Bell extended congratulations to Mr. L. Poole, Executive Engineer and the team at Holmestown Recycling Facility for their assistance with the recent “Bikes for Africa Scheme”, a collaborative initiative with the Irish Army, The Rotary Club and Shelton Abbey, during which a total of 152 bicycles were donated.

COMMUNITY

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

LIBRARY, ARTS & ARCHIVES REPORT

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

FIRE SERVICE REPORT

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

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE CASES – DISTRICT REPORT

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

MOTIONS

Provision of a Public Transport Hub

In the absence of the proposer, Cllr. L. Kelly, Members unanimously agreed to defer consideration of the following motion to the January meeting.

“The Members of Wexford District request the provision of a public transport hub in Wexford Town. This should be a component of the Wexford Town Development Plan and should incorporate provision for School, Tourism and Public Transport Buses”

New Parish Hall

The following motion proposed by Cllr. T. Forde seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes, and following discussion was unanimously adopted.

“In the interest of the public and the arts and community groups that used and supported the Dun Mhuire for many years, this Council will write to the Parish Authorities and invite them to our District Meeting with a view to discussing their stated future plans for a new parish hall”

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 17TH JANUARY 2022

MAYOR OF WEXFORD

