

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD AT 2:30 P.M ON MONDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2021 REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS.

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

In Attendance:

Ms. Liz Hore, A/Director of Services
Ms. Angela Laffan, District Manager
Mr. Sean Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Gerry Forde, Senior Engineer, Environment Section
Mr. Sean Meyler, Executive Engineer, Special Projects
Mr. James Lavin, Senior Executive Planner
Mr. Liam Bowe, Executive Planner
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, Staff Officer
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer.

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

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

- Mr. Willie Carley, Lambstown, Killurin RIP
- Mrs Maura Mulhall, Ferrybank Lodge, Crosstown RIP
- Mr. Seamus Carroll, Taghmon RIP
- Mr. Jack Higginbotham, Killeens, founding member of Wexford RNLI, RIP
- Mrs. Bernadette Hartigan, Mulgannon RIP
- Mrs. Mary Thompson, Ardcavan RIP
- Mrs. Madge Sweeney, Newtown Road RIP
- Mr. Paul Murphy, Richmond Close RIP

CONGRATULATIONS

Votes of congratulations were extended to the following:

- Ms. Liz Burns, Arts Officer and all involved in the organisation of Culture Night 2021, with particular mention of the organisers of the Culture Shock event at the bandstand in St. Peters Square.
- Mr. Tom Mooney, Co-ordinator of Wexford Poetry Town with support from the Arts Office, on securing funding for Wexford Town to be selected as one of 20 poetry towns under this new initiative from Poetry Ireland and also for his organisation of the Jazz Festival at Johnstown Castle.

- Wexfordman, Mr. Declan Lowney, for his Emmy nomination in the category of Outstanding Director for a Comedy Series, for the American Sports Comedy/Drama, “Ted Lasso”, at the recent awards ceremony.
- Wexford Lions Club for their generous donation of a defibrillator unit for Wexford Quayfront.
- Wexford Volunteer Centre on the recent official opening of their offices at Common Quay Street.
- Lantern Events for their recent successful music events at Wexford Quayfront and Min Ryan Park.
- Wexford Ladies Football and Camogie Teams in their recent championship campaigns.

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 19th July, 2021, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed and signed on the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly subject to the amendments requested below.

Matters Arising

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, requested that the incorrect reference to the Mayor Cllr. G. Lawlor in ‘Matters Arising’ paragraph, be amended accordingly.

Cllr. D. Hynes voiced his concern that the debate in relation to the recent changes at the junction of Talbot Green/Green Street, Devereux Villas which drew unanimous opposition from the Members, was not adequately recorded in the minutes and asked that the Minutes be amended to reflect this discussion.

Cllr. Hynes and all Members expressed their overall dissatisfaction with the lack of prior consultation and adequate notification in relation to the above and other planned roadworks in the town, which have given rise to a significant number of complaints from residents, the general public and road users. Cllr. Hegarty stressed that the lack of consultation is impeding the ability of Members to carry out their functions as elected representatives.

Mr. S. Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer, acknowledged that communication to the Members needed to be improved but did state, that he had received positive feedback on the improvement works from the public. Mr. Kavanagh also advised that the 2021 Roads Programme of Work is essentially complete and gave an assurance that any further disruptions for the remainder of the year, would be minimal.

Ms. L. Hore, A/Director of Services acknowledged the Members frustration and advised that a meeting would be organised between Members and Executive to address the communication issue and to work to restore the working relationship with the elected Members.

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on the 28th June, 2021, copies of which had previously been circulated were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

Matters Arising

In reply to a request from Cllr. L. Kelly that the minutes of the Annual Meeting be amended to reflect the fact that some and not all of the Elected Members congratulated him as outgoing Mayor, the District Manager advised that such level of detail was not necessary in the Minutes.

MINUTES OF PROTOCOL MEETING

Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager, requested that the Minutes of the Protocol Meeting, held on Friday 17th September, after the monthly meeting pack had been circulated to Members, be included on the Agenda for consideration.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell, the Minutes of the Protocol Meeting held on Friday, 17th September, 2021, a copy of which had been circulated to Members, were adopted.

Matters Arising

With regard to the membership of the Borough Heritage Committee, Cllr. T. Forde asked that, in the interest of transparency, the reasons behind each Members vote, be recorded in the minutes.

Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager advised Members that Minutes are a record of decisions taken at a meeting and, as such, the Minutes as circulated accurately reflected the meeting proceedings and did not require amendment.

PROPOSED PLANS FOR CAR PARK AT OYSTER LANE

Mr. Sean Meyler, Executive Engineer, Special Projects gave a brief presentation to the Members on the proposed plans for the development of car parking facilities at Oyster Lane on the former Tesco site. Mr. Meyler stated that the design and plans were not yet finalised and were therefore not for circulation to the public. The proposed car park will include 120 parking spaces, including disabled persons parking, universal accessible bays, and other ancillary spaces for minibuses etc.

Mr. Meyler advised that the Part 8 planning process will be advertised in the coming weeks, following which Consultants will be appointed before year end to prepare detailed design and tender documents with work to commence on site circa September, 2022.

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

- Buildings to be demolished.
- Confirmation that the car park is a temporary arrangement pending the future development of the site.
- Access to the Main Street.
- Inclusion of facilities for Active Travel i.e. bicycle racks.
- Benefits for the South Main Street Area of the town.
- Future development of the site.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, thanked Mr. Meyler, on behalf of the Members, for his informative presentation.

PART 8 - PROPOSED OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE PAVILION ON WEXFORD QUAY FRONT.

The attached report was presented to the Members by Mr. James Lavin, Senior Executive Planner. Mr. Lavin advised the Members that the precise location of the pavilion on the quayfront has moved from that shown on the original proposal, due to environmental concerns because of its proximity to the SAC.

Ms. L. Hore, A/Director of Services informed the Members, that should an agreement not be reached on the relocation of the pavilion, an E.I.S would be required, which had the potential to delay the development. Ms. Hore also reminded Members that if the deadline for completion is not met, as set out the funding criteria, the significant grant aid secured for the project may not be forthcoming.

Ms. L. Hore, A/Director of Services, undertook to facilitate a briefing and site visit to reassure Members on the relocation of the pavilion.

Following discussion, during which Members expressed concerns that this new location might impact existing uses on the quayfront, it was unanimously agreed to defer a decision on this project to the October meeting following the meeting on site.

PART 8 – PROPOSED WEATHERPROOFING AND OUTDOOR DINING SYSTEM AT MONCK STREET

The attached report and recommendations regarding the proposed Weatherproofing and Outdoor Dining System at Monck Street, copies of which had previously been circulated, was presented by Mr. James Lavin, Senior Executive Planner, and unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. J. Hegarty.

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. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff officer.

- Commencement date for the Choice Based Letting Scheme.
- Demolition of derelict houses in Bride Street and redevelopment of the site.
- Traveller Accommodation Programme and provision of accommodation for the traveller families occupying a temporary site at Carcur.
- Allocation of new turnkey housing units at Belvedere Road.
- Update on Emergency Accommodation in the Wexford Town Area.
- Circulation of the Affordable Housing Survey Report.
- Clarification on housing maintenance budgets and standard of houses let to new tenants.

At the request of the Mayor, Ms. H. Meehan undertook to respond promptly to the Members queries within the next week.

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 Mr. L. Bowe, Executive Planner.

- 4 vacant properties in Cluain Dara housing estate designated for creche facilities at planning stage.
- Update on taking in charge of Rectory Hall, Castlebridge.
- Wexford Town Development Plan

Suspension of Standing Orders

It being 4.30 p.m., on the proposal of Cllr. Lawlor seconded by Cllr. M. Bell, it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow for the remaining business on the agenda to be concluded.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, then extended his apologies to Members and departed the meeting. It was unanimously agreed by Members, that the Deputy Mayor, Cllr. J. Hegarty, would assume the chair to conclude the business of the meeting.

DISTRICT ENGINEERS REPORT

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. S. Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer.

- Improved signage for Min Ryan Park at Killeens.
- Resurfacing requirements at Harbour View.
- Illegal dumping and Japanese Knotweed at Harbour View.
- Overgrown and littered areas at The Knock, Bishopswater.
- Extension of gullies as part of School Street improvement works.
- Assessment of Disabled Car Parking Spaces locations.
- Access Road to service the proposed new Community College in Clonard.
- Installation of additional Bus Shelters at key locations around the town.
- Public Lighting at Pineridge Estate.
- Ponding at Liam Mellows.
- Clearing of gullies as part of the Winter Ready Programme.
- Installation of a litter bin at Wygram Place.
- Clarification on the deferral of footpath upgrade works in Castlebridge.
- Tree maintenance on St. John's Road
- Update on the School Transport System at Talbot Green.

Mr. Sean Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer, agreed to arrange a meeting to review the School Transport System and an invitation to attend the meeting is to be extended to all the Members.

Following receipt of correspondence earlier in the day from a business owner on Henrietta Street, the District Manager, Ms. A. Laffan, recommended to the Members to look favourably on the request to extend the closure of Henrietta Street, to facilitate outdoor dining until to the 22nd October 2021 (the date on which the Government is expected to lift remaining Covid restrictions). Ms. Laffan advised that the request is also asking the Council to facilitate a closure at weekends only thereafter.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. L Kelly, it was unanimously agreed to extend the existing arrangements to 22nd October, and to defer consideration of any further closures to the October meeting.

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. G. Forde, Senior Engineer.

- Electric Car Charging point requirements.
- Maintenance of the US Naval Memorial Garden, Ferrybank
- Update on the provision of public toilet facilities in the town to be discussed at the October Meeting.
- Review of Summer Plan for Beaches in November.
- Addition of Ardcavan Beach in Summer Plan for 2022.

Cllr. J. Hegarty complimented and thanked Mr. M. Carthy, Beach Warden, for his work over the summer period and praised this excellent customer care. Cllr. Hegarty also suggested that the impact of having a warden employed at the beaches for the period be included as part of the review.

COMMUNITY

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

Cllr. M. Bell extended congratulations to those involved in the Interreg Project, in particular to collaborative work between Celtic Routes and Fáilte Ireland on the recent digital media campaign.

Cllr. M. Bell also extended congratulations to The Wexford Dementia Working Group for the information leaflet they developed, that outlines the services and supports available in the county for those living with dementia and their carers/family members.

LIBRARIES, ARTS & ARCHIVES

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

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes, it was unanimously agreed to request the Chief Executive to consult with all relevant bodies, in particular local groups, regarding the requirements and design of the Arts & Cultural Amenity of Phase 1 of Trinity Wharf Development.

FIRE SERVICES REPORT

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

MEMBERS SUPPORT SYSTEM REPORT

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

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 18TH OCTOBER, 2021

MAYOR OF WEXFORD