

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD  
AT 2.30P.M. ON MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2022 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.**

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

**In Attendance:**

Mr. Sean Meyler, A/Director of Services  
Ms. Angela Laffan, District Manager  
Ms. Eilis Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer  
Ms. Annette O'Neill, Head of Finance  
Ms. Claire Goodwin, Cycling and Walking Officer  
Mr. Alan O'Shea, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads  
Ms. Fionnuala Callery, A/Senior Engineer, Water Services  
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer, Environment  
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing  
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, Staff Officer.

**VOTES OF SYMPATHY**

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

- Ms. Catherine O'Regan, Garran Beithe, Coolcotts, Wexford RIP
- Mrs. Angela McGuire, St. Aidan's Crescent, Wexford RIP

**CONGRATULATIONS**

A vote of congratulations was extended to the following:

- Glynn Barntown U17 Premier Team on winning the County Minor Hurling Final.

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING**

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed on the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes.

**SCHEDULE OF CHARGES IN MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS / DRAFT BUDGETARY  
PLAN FOR 2023**

The Draft Budgetary Plan 2023 and proposed Schedule of Charges, copies of which had previously been circulated, were presented by Ms. Annette O'Neill, Head of Finance.

During discussion, Ms. O'Neill advised Members that the Draft Budgetary Plan, prepared against a backdrop of financial uncertainty and the Council's ability to retain services, must be adopted at today's meeting with or without amendment in accordance with the statutory process.

Members were advised that the 2023 Draft Plan provides for a General Municipal Allocation (GMA) at the same level as 2022 ie. a total County allocation of €1,798,000 including a proposed allocation of €400,000 for Wexford Borough District.

In response to a query from Cllr. J. Hegarty, Ms. O'Neill confirmed that due to the recent agreed increase in Local Property Tax, a total additional allocation of €250,000 (€50,000 per District) will be available in 2023 for specific projects, on adoption of the final budget. Cllr. Hegarty suggested that discussions will need to take place to agree how best to use this allocation.

Additional matters raised by Members including budgets for school meals scheme, town twinning and fees for outdoor furniture were addressed by Ms. O'Neill and, following discussion, the Draft Budgetary Plan and Schedule of Charges, as presented was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Hegarty seconded by Cllr. G. Laffan.

### **SECTION 183 NOTICE - DISPOSAL OF LAND AT BISHOPSWATER**

The attached report regarding the proposed disposal of land at Bishopswater to Ms. Sheila Byrne, 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. D. Hynes.

### **LEASE OF LAND AT COOLCOTTS WEXFORD TO FAB COOLCOTTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT CLG**

The attached report regarding the proposed leasing of land at Coolcotts to FAB Coolcotts Community Development Project CLG, 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. D. Hynes.

### **PRESENTATION ON E-BIKE SHARING SCHEME**

Ms. Claire Goodwin, Cycling & Walking Officer, and Mr. Alan O'Shea, Senior Executive Engineer, presented an overview to Members on the proposed E-Bike Sharing Scheme to be piloted in Wexford Town.

Ms. Goodwin outlined that between 50 and 60 electric bikes will be available for public use at strategic locations around the town from Spring 2023. The e-bikes will work on a geo fenced system, using GPS technology to lock to a particular location. Ms. Goodwin further advised that the e-bikes can only be unlocked using a specific app which requires user sign up. While there was no fee to unlock the e-bike, as with other urban bike schemes, the fees will be based on a mileage rate.

Ms. Goodwin explained that the one of the benefits of the app system is that demand can be monitored, and locations adjusted to cater for any changing demands.

Ms. Goodwin informed Members that the scheme had enjoyed success with a previous pilot in Sligo town, which is smaller in population to Wexford town and it is proposed to launch the pilot scheme in Wexford as part of Bike Week 2023.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Ms. Goodwin and Mr. O'Shea:

- The number of proposed locations for the ebikes
- Infrastructure requirements and cost.
- Sign up fees and fees per km/mile
- Cap for Usage
- Clarification on insurance included in fees.
- Concern re antisocial behaviour at lock locations.
- Proposed target market for the e-bikes.
- Age restriction on access to e-bikes.
- Speed restrictions in general and in specific zones.
- Exclusion of e-scooters from the scheme.

The scheme was positively received by all Members.

Her Worship the Mayor, Cllr. M. Bell, thanked Ms. Goodwin and Mr. O'Shea for their presentation and wished them every success with the pilot scheme.

## **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.

- Budget requirements for Housing Maintenance in 2023
- Contact and supports offered to homeless persons in tents at Ferrybank.
- Clarity on out-of-hours protocol for responding to homeless cases.
- Consideration to contacting Church bodies to assist with homelessness.

- Review of income limits for social housing applicants.
- Budget for retrofitting windows and doors.
- Number of single houses being bought.

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor, Members unanimously agreed that the Minister for Housing be requested to review the current income limits for social housing applicants.

Following a query from Cllr. T. Forde regarding a presentation to Members on the Housing for All Plan and delivery of targets for Wexford Borough District, Ms. H. Meehan confirmed that a report will be presented to Members at the November meeting.

## **PLANNING**

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

Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager, agreed to refer the following matters raised by Members, to the Planning Section

- Section 254 licence issued for temporary infrastructure on privately owned land.
- Monitoring of Noise levels and process for noise complaints

## **DISTRICT ENGINEER**

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. Eilis Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer.

- Repairs to road surface at residential car parking area at Kennedy Park, opposite Wexford Albion pitch.
- Improvement to sightlines at the entrance to Cluain Dara estate.
- Completion of new pedestrian / school crossing at Whitemill Industrial Estate.
- Public lighting from Seamus Kelly roundabout towards Carcur.
- Overgrown verges at the Handball Alley at Coolree
- Deferral of road improvement works at The Faythe to 2023 and need for advance consultation with residents in the area when design plans are available prior to the commencement of any works.
- Ongoing issue of Ponding at Liam Mellows Park
- Improvements to the junction of Distillery Road / Mulgannon.
- Line marking on R730
- 'Winter Ready' preparations for the District.
- Reinstatement of line markings at "courtesy crossings"

- Clean up of Horse River
- Road reinstatement following completion of GNI pipelaying works at Davitt Road North and South
- Funding for footpaths at Castlebridge under the Active Travel Scheme.
- Update on the closure of the alleyway at Talbot Green.
- Energisation of new public lights at Hillcrest, Mulgannon
- Pedestrian crossing at Curracloe National School
- Installation of further bus shelters along the public transport network
- Requirement for speed surveys on Clonard Road
- Concerns about the recent resurfacing works at the Menapia Avenue junction.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

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

### **ENVIRONMENT 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. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer.

- Installation of a playground facility in Curracloe.
- Removal of the new accessibility mats at Rosslare Strand which had been installed as a pilot in Summer 2022.
- Opening times of Ballinesker Public Toilets.

In response to Cllr. D. Hynes, Mr. S. Meyler, A/Director of Services, informed Members that the new skateboard facility at Min Ryan Park will be opened by the end of October. Mr. Meyler asked Members to advise the public to refrain from entering and using the skate park until construction is complete.

### **LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES & ARTS REPORT**

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

Cllr T. Forde complimented the Borough on the murals completed under 'The Walls of Wexford' street art project and suggested that Members be furnished with the detail and story behind each mural. He also proposed that consideration be given to developing a walking tour and educational aspect with the local schools.

Cllr. G. Lawlor confirmed that a promotional leaflet will be developed together with an educational programme for schools and QR codes will be available on each mural, once the project is completed.

## **FIRE SERVICES REPORT**

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

Cllr. G. Lawlor raised concerns that members of the public are increasingly reluctant to call the fire brigade to incidents not pertaining to them for fear of receiving a bill from the Council as a result of initiating the call out.

Following discussion, Her Worship the Mayor, Cllr. M. Bell, agreed to seek clarification on current Council policy regarding this matter from the Chief Fire Officer.

## **PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES' CASES – DISTRICT REPORT**

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

### **Suspension of Standing Orders**

It being 4.30p.m., on the proposal of Her Worship the Mayor, Cllr. M. Bell, Members unanimously agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow for the remaining business on the agenda to be concluded.

## **CHRISTMAS FESTIVE PROGRAMME 2022**

Following a query at the September meeting, Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager, assured Members that the Christmas Festivities will proceed this year, as planned. In response to concerns raised at national level about the energy use associated with Christmas lights in urban towns, Ms. Laffan clarified that the lighting installations throughout the town have been upgraded to low energy LEDs in recent years but confirmed that the number of hours that they are lighting will be reduced.

Ms. Laffan further advised that a provisional date of November 26 has been set for the traditional ceremony for the turning on of the Christmas lights and the Christmas Parade through the town.

In response to query from Her Worship the Mayor, Cllr M. Bell, regarding the possibility of the Ice Rink returning, Ms. Laffan stated that it will be subject to the promoter securing the necessary insurances at a reasonable cost.

## **UPDATE ON THOMAS MOORE DEVELOPMENT (IN COMMITTEE)**

On the proposal of Her Worship the Mayor, it was agreed that the meeting would go into Committee so that Members could be updated on the temporary outdoor dining area at the Thomas Moore Tavern, Cornmarket.

Having obtained legal advice from the Council's legal advisors, Mr. S. Meyler, A/Director of Services, provided an update to Members on the advice received in relation to the Section 254 licence issued to the owners of the Thomas Moore Tavern, inspections carried out and reports compiled. He also addressed the road safety concerns previously expressed by Members in relation to the road junction.

During discussion, and notwithstanding the legal advice obtained, Members strongly expressed their unanimous disapproval of the situation which led to the granting of the temporary 3 year licence by the Council which is considered to detract from this historic area of town and the recent significant public investment on the extension of the Wexford Arts Centre building.

Questions raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Meyler, A/Director of Services, Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager and Ms. E. Furlong, Senior Executive Engineer.

Following a lengthy debate, it was agreed that Mr. Meyler, A/Director of Services, in consultation with Her Worship the Mayor, would issue a public press statement on the matter immediately following the meeting.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING**

**SIGNED THIS DAY 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

**MAYOR OF WEXFORD**