

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD
AT 2.30P.M. ON WEDNESDAY 20TH APRIL, 2022 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
BLOCK A , WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.**

Presiding: - His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan.
Councillors: - G. Lawlor, J. Hegarty, M. Bell.

Apologies from Cllr. L. Kelly, Cllr T. Forde, and Cllr. D. Hynes for their inability to attend the meeting, were noted.

In Attendance:

Ms. Amanda Byrne, A/Director of Services
Ms. Angela Laffan, District Manager
Mr. Sean Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Michael Drea, Senior Executive Officer, Housing
Mr. Tom Banville, Senior Executive Officer, Planning
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer, Environment
Ms. Oonagh Messette, Project Coordinator, Celtic Routes
Ms. Siobhán Kehoe, 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. Aidan Moffet, Sligo, RIP
- Mr. Michael Snee, Sligo, RIP
- Ms. Kate Moran, Co. Galway Camogie Player, RIP
- Mr. Dennis Foran, Ard Carman, Wexford, Retired Member of An Garda Siochana, RIP
- Mr. Michael Sills, President of the London Wexford Association, RIP
- Ms. Theresa Furlong, Gulbar Road, Maudlintown, RIP
- Red Óg Murphy, former Australian Rules & Sligo intercounty footballer, RIP

Online Camera

As a mark of respect to all attendees at the meeting, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor, those attending online, via Microsoft Teams, were requested to have their cameras turned on at all times. Deputy V. Murphy T.D. apologised to the Mayor that her camera did not appear to be working on this occasion.

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd March 2022, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed, and signed on the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor.

MINUTES – MATTERS ARISING

In reply to a query from Cllr. J. Hegarty as to when the Minutes of Borough meetings become available to the public, Ms. S. Kehoe, Staff Officer, clarified that agendas and adopted minutes are available on the Council website but acknowledged that the website was not currently up to date. Ms. Kehoe assured Cllr. Hegarty up to date agendas and adopted minutes would be available via the website in the coming week.

DERELICT SITES REPORT UPDATE

Mr. T. Banville, Senior Executive Officer, Planning summarised for Members the Derelict Sites Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. Mr. Banville confirmed that 3 files had been closed and that No. 10 Peter Street had recently been acquired by Compulsory Purchase Order.

During discussion, the following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Banville.

- Booklet or leaflet to be devised to outline a step by step guide to the Derelict Sites legislation and the derelict sites process.
- The number of properties returned to productive use.
- Rodent infestation at a derelict property in Mansfield Drive.
- Comparison between number of sites on 2020 register and 2022.
- Identification of properties for C.P.O.
- Incentive Scheme to bring properties back into use.

Mr. Banville acknowledged that the properties listed on the register are the more difficult cases and it does not reflect situations where owners have actively engaged with the Council, to avoid their properties being placed on the register.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, thanked Mr. Banville on behalf of Members, for his comprehensive update.

CELTIC ROUTES SPRING 2022 PRESENTATION

Ms. Oonagh Messette, Project Coordinator gave a detailed presentation to Members on activity under the Celtic Routes Project to date. Ms. Messette confirmed that funding of approx. €2 million had been secured for Phase 2 of the project up to August 2023.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Ms. Messette.

- Market potential of Shore Angling.
- Impact of Brexit on further Interreg Funding for the project.
- Exploration of alternative avenues of funding.
- Addition of future routes.
- Notification of Google bounces to Visit Wexford.
- Impact of Pooka Chase Comics
- Closure of the Failte Ireland Tourist Office on Wexford Quay front.

Cllr. M. Bell updated Members on recent correspondence sent to Failte Ireland from Visit Wexford, expressing dissatisfaction that the tourist office would only be opened for a limited period from June to September. Cllr. Bell confirmed that no response had been received from Failte Ireland to date.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr G. Laffan, on behalf of Members, asked Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager to write to Failte Ireland requesting that the Tourist Office be opened on a permanent basis.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan thanked Ms. Messette for her detailed and informative overview of the Celtic Routes Project.

VACANT HOUSING UNITS AT AIRHILL, BELVEDERE ROAD - UPDATE

Mr. M. Drea, Senior Executive Officer, Housing, gave a brief update to Members on the position regarding the vacant social housing units at Airhill, Belvedere Road. Mr. Drea clarified for Members that the units are under offer to prospective tenants and that no formal refusal had been received. Mr. Drea stated that a complex mediation process is underway which he anticipates will be concluded within weeks. Mr. Drea undertook to provide a further update to Members at the May meeting.

OUTDOOR DINING & HOSPITALITY 2022

The report and results of the recent public consultation with the business sector in relation to the emergency measures implemented by the Council in 2021, a copy of

which had previously been circulated, were presented to Members by Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager.

Ms. Laffan asked that Members take these results into consideration when deciding the policy for the licensing of outdoor hospitality for the coming months, focusing in particular on road closures, the removal of on street car parking and increased licensing capacity in certain areas.

Ms. Laffan informed Members that any agreed road closures for the coming season will be subject to the formal road closure procedure under Section 75 of the Roads Act 1993.

Following a lengthy discussion, Members agreed that no additional on-street car parking spaces would be removed from South Main Street with the exception of Crust Pizza and at Bugler Doyle's, similar to last year.

In relation to the closure of Henrietta Street to facilitate outdoor dining, following discussion, Members unanimously agreed to close the street to traffic from 7.00p.m. on Saturday evenings, all day Sunday and on Bank Holidays for the summer period. On the recommendation of the District Manager, Members further agreed to the closure of Mallin Street and Charlotte Street as in previous years.

Ms. Laffan assured Members that there will be stricter enforcement of the Section 254 licence conditions, going forward, to ensure that adequate pedestrian access is maintained at all times.

Cllr. J. Hegarty referred to the commitment given as part of the agreement to pedestrianisation of Monck Street whereby an automated bollards system, or similar, was to be installed at Lower Georges Street to facilitate access into North Main Street for deliveries. Mr. S. Kavanagh stated that site investigation works had confirmed that the depth required to install such a system could not be achieved due to the volume of underground services. Mr. Kavanagh advised Members that other possible solutions are being investigated in conjunction with the Special Projects Office and he agreed to revert to Members on the matter.

Cllr. Hegarty asked that the issue of the automated bollard system be listed as an item on the Agenda for discussion at the May meeting.

Cllr. Hegarty also highlighted the current arrangement whereby certain businesses appeared to have keys to open the bollards for access for delivery services. Cllr. Hegarty pointed out that this arrangement was not working as the bollards are left open indefinitely, allowing vehicular traffic to enter the pedestrian zone at various times during the day and night and expressed serious concern that the bollards being left in a hazardous manner on the adjacent footpath without being secured.

Following discussion, Members unanimously agreed that the bollards would be opened and locked only by Borough staff, in line with all other pedestrian zones, and keys for the bollards would not be made available to the public.

REPORTS

HOUSING

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

The following matters raised by Members were address by Mr. Michael Drea.

- Retrofit Scheme for replacement of Windows and Doors.

Mr. Drea acknowledged that the current scheme will not be adequate to complete all required retrofitting on housing stock and that an additional stand alone scheme is being devised within the Housing Department. Mr. Drea advised that details of the scheme will be circulated to Members in due course.

PLANNING

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

DISTRICT ENGINEER

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

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Sean Kavanagh.

- Ongoing Water Supply issues at Airfield Road, Castlebridge.
- Update on the augmentation of the ESB supply on the quay front.
- Surface water drainage issues at Pinewood following the recent roadworks in the area.
- Date for installation of the power supply at Carraigfoyle.
- Flooding at Growtown, Taghmon
- Timeframe for the installation traffic calming in Screen.
- Repairs to stonework on the Crooked Bridge.
- Repairs to manhole outside the Farmers Kitchen, Drinagh.
- Traffic calming and installation of pedestrian crossing in Castlebridge.
- Results of recent traffic survey at Coolcotts Lane.
- Issuing of parking fines for vehicles parking on footpaths.

- Road sweeping required on Whitemill Road.
- Update on the energising of a number of pedestrian crossings.
- Repairs to large pothole at Maldron Roundabout.
- Clarification whether provision has been made for adequate access and turning of vehicles into sites on Whitemill Industrial Estate with recent narrowing of the road carriageway.

Cllr. G. Lawlor raised the issue of the non-attendance of a representative from the Water Services Department at Borough meetings and requested that a representative be asked to attend the monthly meetings.

Suspension of Standing Orders

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

Cllr. G. Lawlor gave his apologies and departed the meeting.

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. Hugh Maguire.

- Completion date for upgrade works at Ballinesker Public Toilets.
- Extended opening hours of the toilets at Ballinesker.
- Date for the 2022 Mattress Amnesty.
- Recruitment of the Beach Warden for Curracloe.

FIRE SERVICES

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

LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES & ARTS

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

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE CASES

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING DIRECTOR OF SERVICES

On behalf of the Members, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, congratulated Ms. Amanda Byrne on her appointment as Acting Director of Services and welcomed her to the Borough District.

Ms. Byrne thanked the Mayor and Members for their kind remarks.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 18TH MAY 2022

MAYOR OF WEXFORD