

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD AT 2.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY 22nd JUNE, 2022 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.

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

In Attendance:

Mr. Brian Galvin, A/Director of Services
Ms. Angela Laffan, District Manager
Mr. Sean Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Sean Meyler, A/Senior Engineer, Special Projects
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer.
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer, Environment
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing

VOTES OF SYMPATHY:

On the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. Garry Laffan, a unanimous vote of sympathy was extended to the family of Sean Carr, Killurin R.I.P. The vote of sympathy was taken in silence, all standing.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN – MONCK STREET / COMMERCIAL QUAY

At the outset of the meeting, His Worship the Mayor proposed suspension of Standing Orders to facilitate presentation of a report on proposed traffic management measures at the junction of Monck Street and Commercial Quay.

Mr. Sean Meyler, A./Senior Engineer, Special Projects, briefed Members and outlined details of the proposed traffic management measures to be introduced for a period of 3 weeks with effect from Monday, 27th June at the junction of Monck Street and Commercial Quay to facilitate the completion of works under the Monck Street Resurfacing and Public Realm project.

Mr. Meyler informed Members that the works will be carried out in 3 phases along the section of roadway from the old Dublin Providers property back to O’Rahilly Place. To minimise impact on traffic flow, works will commence at 6.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m. daily at which time the traffic management arrangements will be removed before rush hour traffic on Wexford Quays.

Comments and Questions raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Meyler and Mr. Brian Galvin.

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 18th May, 2022, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed on the proposal of Cllr. Maura Bell seconded by Cllr. Tom Forde.

MINUTES MATTERS ARISING

In response to Cllr. J. Hegarty, the District Engineer advised that delivery of the bollard system identified as a possible solution for the junction of Lower George Street / Selskar Street is expected within days and will first be trialled off site at Whitemill Depot to determine if this is a workable solution for this location.

In response to Cllr. Maura Bell, the District Manager confirmed that works to the reception area in the Westgate Heritage Centre are substantially complete and the building will be available as a starting point for the Lions Club Walking Tours in the coming week.

GENERAL MUNICIPAL ALLOCATION 2022 – FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The attached report outlining the festivals and events programme for 2022, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was presented by the District Manager and unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Maura Bell seconded by Cllr. George Lawlor.

Cllr. T. Forde proposed that the annual Frederick Douglass Festival be added to the festival programme for future funding. The District Manager advised that the 2022 GMA allocation is fully allocated to those longstanding festivals outlined in the report, including the Christmas Winterland programme and festive lighting, but suggested that the festival organisers submit a detailed application which will be considered within available budgets.

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.

- Lack of Council housing policy and supports for women subjected to domestic violence.
- General lack of social housing supports for people on the verge of homelessness – HAP not the solution.
- Long term vacant property at Talbot Green and refurbishment works necessary to return the property to housing stock.
- Condition of properties being allocated to tenants has improved but gardens and first grass cut should also be carried out.
- Need to consider family circumstances and access to services in new turnkey developments or other Council properties so that families are best placed having regard to transport requirements, school placements etc.
- Support to persons on the housing list but on the verge of homelessness e.g. where an individual may be in emergency accommodation at the Women's Refuge which is due to come to an end.

- Facilitating supervised access to families being allocated a new build property to enable them to plan in advance while awaiting the keys to the property.
- Update on Wexford County Council's Retrofitting Programme for 2022.
- Lack of Emergency Accommodation in Wexford Town and need to advertise a public call to accommodation providers.
- Update on demolition of 2 derelict houses on Bride Street to facilitate redevelopment of the site. Ms. Meehan advised that tenders have been received for demolition which is scheduled for the month of July.

PLANNING

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

Cllr. J. Hegarty highlighted concerns at the rate of planning refusals which is concerningly high particularly in relation to industrial applications. Following discussion, it was agreed that the District Manager would write to the Senior Planner to outline the concerns of Members.

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. Sean Kavanagh.

- Complaints re dogs not on a lead in public places e.g. at new Ferrybank walkway
- New Loading Bays and hours of operation
- Illegal dumping, anti social behaviour and overgrowth at the top of the Knock
- Update on upgrading power supply on Wexford Quayfront
- Update on proposed Quay Pavilion – expected tender costs versus grant allocation etc.
- Need for a deep clean of the paved surfacing on Main Street
- Installation of electronic speed warning sign on Clonard Road
- Parking on Main Road for events at Wexford Racecourse which encroaches onto the cycle lanes
- Outdoor dining at Henrietta Street
- 4 way cross at Clonard/Glenville Road
- Energising pedestrian crossing at Ferndale, Coolcotts
- Update on Beechlawn Active Travel Scheme
- Need to identify a solution for traffic at the junction of Distillery Road and Mulgannon Road
- Gully cleaning on Davitt Road North, Davitt Road South and Talbot Green
- Upgrading of town laneways and need for installation of CCTV etc.
- Pedestrian crossing in Castlebridge village
- Need for traffic calming on approach to Castlebridge village
- Taking in charge Rectory Hall and Ardcolm Drive, Castlebridge
- Light Segregation Scheme – Newtown Road, Drinagh Road, Ardavan Road

- Urgent need to repaint road markings throughout the town
- Funding for Crooked Bridge
- Speed calming ramps at Screen
- Sow River bend – overhanging trees
- Laneway to Ardcairisk Graveyard
- ESB supply at Carraigfoyle for outdoor trading unit

Councillor David Hynes offered apologies and departed the meeting.

COMMUNITY

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

- Date for Mattress Amnesty and request to include sofas in 2022.
- Update on accessible toilet at Ballineskar
- Complaints re dogs not on a lead in public places e.g. at new Ferrybank walkway – Mr. McGuire to arrange for more regular patrols by dog wardens and to consider the erection of appropriate signage.

Proposed new Public Convenience on Wexford Quayfront

The attached drawing indicating the proposed location for a PC on Wexford Quayfront was circulated to Members for discussion.

Mr. Maguire advised that the unit indicated in the report would be considered to be a temporary solution for the Summer season and which could be easily removed. A more permanent solution would require planning permission and would be subject to a more detailed design, cost and available resources.

During discussion, Members referred back to a previous discussion with the Senior Engineer, Environment, who was to revert to Members with a detailed design and location before the matter was progressed to planning.

Cllr. G. Lawlor expressed concerns with the proposed location indicated on the report, which would have a negative impact by sterilising a large area of the quayfront which is currently used for numerous events and festivals throughout the year.

Noting the comments of Members, Mr. Brian Galvin, A/Director of Services, advised that the installation of a PC will be subject to getting a sewer connection in onto the quayfront. He agreed to obtain a photo montage from the Senior Engineer, Environment, for distribution to Members for consideration.

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.

Suspension of Standing Orders

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

MOTIONS

Exemption of Parking Charges for Employees of Wexford's Fire Service

The following motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde

"I ask that this Council adapt our parking bye laws to facilitate the exemption of employees of Wexford's Fire Service from parking charges in the Wexford District"

Mr. Brian Galvin, A/Director of Service, referred to similar motion proposed by Cllr. Forde at the March meeting which had been referred to the Chief Executive and the Director of Services with responsibility for Fire Services for consideration as the subject related to a change in employee conditions for one section of staff in the organisation.

Mr. Galvin referred to his emails circulated to Cllr. Forde and the Members since the March meeting outlining the response of Management on the matter.

Mr. Galvin also informed Members that legal advice had been obtained from the Council's Law Agents which confirmed that the motion is not appropriate to the Traffic & Parking Bye Laws and is not covered by Section 199 of the Local Government Act because it is primarily a matter of remuneration and contract between employer and employee. As such, any amendment of the Bye Laws would be ultra vires the relevant statutory powers of the elected Members.

Following discussion, and having regard to the advice of Mr. Galvin and the Council's Law Agents, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor no vote was taken by Members on the basis that the motion cannot be implemented.

Provision of Coffee Dock at Westgate Heritage Centre

The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Leonard Kelly, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde.

“We propose that a tender is issued for a coffee dock (self-contained horsebox type etc.) at the Westgate Heritage Building. This will help to build footfall in the area, and help to reduce potential anti-social elements in the area. The dock can be supported by allowing them to hold tables and chairs in the building, for use outdoors. This should be a first step in developing a coffee shop/coffee dock indoors”.

The District Manager acknowledged the sentiments of the motion but suggested that the provision of such a service is premature until such time as funding is secured to upgrade the building for future use and open to the public. Ms. Laffan advised that, while the building is to be made available to the Wexford Lions Club in connection with the daily Selskar/Westgate Walking Tours, numbers will be limited and confined to one walking tour each afternoon. She added that a more permanent coffee dock within the building will be subject to planning permission.

Cllr. M. Bell suggested that the provision of a horsebox in Westgate Yard would not be in keeping with the objectives of the Heritage Committee for this historic site and regular clean ups in the area have demonstrated that there has been a reduction in anti-social behaviour in the area.

During discussion, His Worship the Mayor suggested that the matter be referred to the Heritage Committee for consideration in the context of the overall plans for the centre.

A vote was taken on the matter which resulted as follows:

In Favour: Cllr. L. Kelly, Cllr. T. Forde, Cllr. J. Hegarty (3)

Against: Cllr. G. Laffan, Cllr. G. Lawlor, Cllr. M. Bell (3)

There being an equality of votes, His Worship the Mayor exercised his casting vote and voted against the proposal. The motion was therefore defeated.

Provision of Tour Bus Parking

The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Leonard Kelly, seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor and unanimously adopted.

“We propose that the Council engage with private car park providers to create a dedicated Tour Bus Parking Zone. Alternative, can we dedicate an area within the town current street parking for this purpose”.

During discussion, the District Engineer confirmed there is an opportunity to provide bus set down areas at Trinity Street and on Redmond Road immediately and agreed to progress this arrangement for the coming tourist season.

Mr. Brian Galvin, A/Director of Service, advised that coach parking will also be considered in the context of the Transport Strategy but agreed that both locations at Trinity Street and Redmond Road offer a reasonable solution in the short term.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 18TH JULY 2022

MAYOR OF WEXFORD.