

Housing, Community & Environment SPC

Minutes of Meeting 1st February, 2017

In the Chair: Cllr John Fleming

Present: Cllr Ger Carthy, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Anthony Kelly, Cllr Lisa McDonald, Cllr John O'Rourke, Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, Cllr Joe Sullivan, Liz Burns Arts Officer, John Carley DOS, Caroline Creane SSO, Martina Donoghue AO, Annette Dupuy PPN, Gerry Forde Senior Engineer, Ger Mackey AO, Hugh Maguire AO, Padraig O'Gorman SEO, Sean Meyler Exec Engineer, Sinead O'Gorman Senior Exec Librarian.

Apologies: Paul L'Estrange CFO, Cllr Mary Farrell, Ciaran Scallan SIPTU rep. and Cllr Oliver Walsh

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting especially the new staff and thanked Liz Hore and Siobhan Lynn for their help over the past few years.

Minutes and Matters Arising

On the proposal of Cllr Joe Sullivan and seconded by Cllr Anthony Kelly the minutes of the SPC meeting held on 8th November, 2016 were approved by the members.

A discussion took place about the allocation of €11 million for 70 units of new build houses. The SEO informed the meeting that following recent meetings with the DHPCLG it is expected that substantial progress will be made in progressing the projects through the various stages in Q1 of 2017. It was noted that a detailed report on County Wexford Social Housing Supply Programme 2017-2019 will be presented to the next meeting of the SPC.

A query arose regarding derelict houses and whether these can be acquired through the CPO process. This is a planning function and the SEO agreed to liaise with planning and to draw up a list of derelict houses in Co Wexford.

Correspondence

Two items of correspondence has been received:-

- a) Letter from the PPN informing the SPC meeting that Ms Frances Ryan, Community & Voluntary representative has resigned.
- b) Letter from Safe Home Ireland detailing their services and asking if they could be invited to address the SPC to explain their function. It was agreed to invite them to the next SPC meeting.

Amenity & Arts Grants

The SEO outlined the Amenity & Arts Grants Scheme 2017 and informed the meeting that some amendments have been made to the guidelines. A discussion took place regarding the changes and the DOS informed the meeting that guidelines were put in place to assist

the members but it is still at their discretion as to where they allocate their €5,000 per member.

It was noted that no area is excluded including sports clubs but it isn't intended that this grant scheme be used for large scale projects. The amended Amenity and Arts grants scheme was approved on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr David Hynes.

Community Report

Mr Ger Mackey, AO outlined the work of the Community Section. The Wexford Age Friendly Strategy has gone to print and will be launched officially in February, 2017. The Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) programme has funding approved of €100,000. A playground strategy is currently being developed.

At the Pride of Place awards on 26th November, 2016 two Wexford groups were among the prize winners Wexford Marine Watch were awarded a special award while the Hope Cancer Support Centre were runner up in the Communities Social Enterprise Initiatives category.

Expressions of Interest have been sought from groups for LEADER funding specifically from the Artisan Food and Community Development sectors. It was noted that any funding granted from LEADER funds has strict guidelines attached by Pobal.

Burial Grounds

Martina Donoghue, AO outlined the Burial Ground Maintenance and Development Strategy. It was noted that WCC would encourage local community groups to develop, manage and maintain their local burial grounds. A grant for maintenance is to be increased to €400.

A discussion took place about the costs of burial plots varying significantly in different parishes throughout the county. A grant of €25,000 is available towards the cost of new burial grounds with certain criteria being met, one of which is that the cost of the plot must be the same as WCC burial grounds which is €1,000 per plot. It was noted that there is differing costs at separate burial grounds within the same parish. The issue regarding who has responsibility for grave digging was also discussed, it may be necessary to do a risk assessment on grave digging and this should be the responsibility for the undertakers.

Wexford County Council bye-laws for the Management of all Open Burial Grounds within the jurisdiction of Wexford Council was discussed, it was agreed to add in 'Wexford County Council reserves the right to deal with special or unique cases as they arise'. The bye-laws were approved on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr Joe Sullivan.

Arts Report

Ms Liz Burns, County Arts Officer gave a presentation to the meeting about the work of the Arts.

Music Generation programme

This aim of this programme is to provide access for young people to music education. It promotes a model of music education that is socially inclusive, community focus, multi genre and of high quality.

A discussion took place about if this programme could enhance the work of structures already in place for example there is 3 bands in Wexford town and also Wexford Sinfonia orchestra. Mr John Carley, DOS informed the meeting that in Carlow the DEIS schools never had music education but this programme opened up music to them, it is aimed at young people who have no access to music.

Creative Ireland Programme

This programme was launched by Heather Humpries in December, 2016. It was noted that Eileen Morrissey, County Librarian is the Cultural Co-ordinator for Wexford. The proposed actions for 2017 are:-

- A national plan to enable every child in Ireland to access tuition in music, drama, art and coding
- A culture and creativity plan in every county
- A culture team, Director-led, configured to local needs in every county
- Cruinniú na Cásca programme – an annual programme of arts activities and cultural reflection over Easter Monday

Public Art

The Public Art policy was circulated to the meeting. A public art working group is currently being set up and is tasked with updating the current policy and putting in an application for funding. A strategic plan for the county is being drawn up for Art will go to each Municipal District area to coordinate the views of members.

Library Report

Ms Sinead O’Gorman, Senior Executive Librarian outlined Wexford Libraries Digital Local Collection which is available online. The collection includes historical postcards of places in County Wexford and a selection of 19th and 20th century historical texts and records. The digital collection will be formally launched in the near future.

A discussion took place about the use of public libraries for events, it was noted that it was necessary to have a policy in place so that each of the 5 libraries were consistent in allowing the use of its premises. A draft policy was circulated and was approved on the proposal of Cllr Joe Sullivan and seconded by Cllr Ger Carthy.

Environment Report

Mr Hugh Maguire, AO outlined the litter management services to the meeting, the draft Litter Management Plan 2017-2019 was discussed at the SPC and Council meetings in November 2016 and has gone for public consultation in January 2017.

Mr Sean Meyler, Executive Engineer gave a presentation to the meeting regarding the four civic amenity sites at Holmestown, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey which are free to enter. WCC are paying €60 a tonne for plastics, it is proposed to charge €2 in a slot machine barrier to address the deficit in the budget to commence in April 2017. There will be no charge for recyclables or food waste. Prior to implementing a charge an extensive customer awareness exercise will be carried out.

A lengthy discussion took place with some members fearing that a charge could lead to an increase in illegal dumping. It was noted that Environment revenue stream is reducing all the time and it was a modest charge for a good service. An unauthorised waste collection

facility is operating in Gorey and Planning Dept is bringing an injunction to cease operations. It was noted that other agencies are involved also.

Housing Report

Mr Padraig O'Gorman, SEO outlined the housing report. The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) was operational in WCC since 1st December, 2016. This is a new form of social housing support. It was noted that HAP recipients will be removed from the housing list but may opt to be on a transfer list.

A discussion took place about the capital build programme a total of 252 units will be delivered over a 3 year period, it is anticipated that 65-70 of these will be constructed in 2017. A discussion took place about a number of vacant houses whereby an elderly owner was in a nursing home and if these houses could be acquired / leased for social housing.

Refugee Resettlement

Mr Padraig O'Gorman, SEO informed the meeting that 20 refugee families allocated to County Wexford will arrive in Ireland in late February and will complete a 12 week induction programme at the designated Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford and are expected to arrive in Wexford in late May 2017. There is strict guidelines on interaction and how to deal with them confidentially to protect the refugees and their family members who may not be in Ireland.

Wexford County Council is currently in the process of contracting a designated refugee support worker who will be employed on an initial one year contract to support the refugees when they arrive and assist them to integrate into the Irish community.

Tenant Handbooks

A brief discussion took place about the draft Tenant Maintenance Handbook and Tenants Handbook, once adopted these will be circulated to all WCC tenants. They will also be translated into Arabic for the refugee's. The draft policies were approved on the proposal of Cllr Joe Sullivan and seconded by Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, these will now be presented to the next Council meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 
Chairman

Dated: 05/04/17

Housing, Community & Environment SPC

Minutes of Meeting 5th April, 2017

In the Chair: Cllr. John Flemming.

Present: Cllr. Ger Carthy, Cllr. Mary Farrell, Ms Kathleen Fitzpatrick Social Inclusion, Cllr John Fleming, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Anthony Kelly, Cllr Lisa McDonald, Cllr John O'Rourke, Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, Cllr Joe Sullivan, John Carley, DOS, Padraig O'Gorman, SEO, Liz Burns Arts Officer, Ger Mackey AO, Hugh Maguire AO, Eileen Morrissey County Librarian, Larry Forristal County Vet, Brendan Cooney Senior Exec Scientist, Harriet Redmond SO.

Apologies Cllr. Oliver Walsh, Ciaran Scallan, Gerry Forde Senior Engineer, Carmel King Social Worker, Paul L'Estrange CFO.

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. Joe Sullivan and seconded by Cllr John O'Rourke the minutes of the SPC meeting held on the 1st February 2017 were approved by the members.

Safe Homes Ireland

It was agreed at the February meeting to invite Safe Homes Ireland to the next SPC meeting. A presentation was given by Ms Karen McHugh, Chief Executive who outlined the vision of Safe Home Ireland and qualifying criteria for housing. The presentation outlined the challenges / barriers for returnees not only in the area of housing but also in other areas such as employment, visa documentation, driving and Brexit. The presentation touched on reasons why some people ultimately chose not to return home. A run-down of figures outlining how many new information requests, referrals to Local Authorities, housing applications, home/outreach visits were provided by Safe Home Ireland in 2016.

Information leaflets, business cards and the Safe Homes Ireland March 2017 newsletter were distributed by Karen McHugh. Concern was expressed if people returning get priority over people who are currently on the housing waiting list. Ms McHugh stated that generally it is people over 60 years of age who avail of their services. There are currently seven applicants in Wexford.

Refugee Resettlement Programme

The SEO informed the meeting that a dedicated Refugee Resettlement worker is starting on the 18th April 2017 and that the Council is currently evaluating tenders for an intercultural interpreter. He stated that there are currently eighty refugees in the Clonee Reception Centre in Dungarvan, Waterford and twenty families will be coming to Wexford over the next few months.

The meeting was informed that it was difficult to source three to four bedroom units in Gorey. Staff training will be provided on Monday 10th April 2017 for those involved in the project and an intercultural awareness briefing will also be held for the elected members. It is envisaged that the second tranche of refugees will be received before the end of next year and along with the eighty received now another seventy will be arriving in September.

It was stated that there is separate dedicated funding for this project and that a cluster of houses is required and that the Council are closing out some of the sales this month. It was noted that the Department of Social Protection offer a grant to kit out the houses. It was stated that the Refugees were all vetted by the Department of Justice Resettlement Unit to an Interpol standard. They travelled out to the country to where the refugees were before they entered Ireland.

Local Authority Housing Estates Awards Scheme 2017

The award scheme recognises and rewards the work of community/residents in the upkeep of Local Authority built estates. The closing date is 31st May 2017 and it was stated that applications received will be adjudicated on over the summer months and that a residents day will be organised for October. It is hoped that this will be up and running in the next couple of weeks and that information will be circulated by the Area Housing Officers.

Social Housing Supply Programme 2017-2019

The SEO presented the WCC Social Housing Supply Programme 2017-2019 which shows the number of units being delivered by WCC over the next three years. This was approved by the members.

It was noted that Part V or Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) may deliver more units. He informed the meeting that there is a four stage process to any construction scheme that must be dealt with by the department. It was noted that the Council are waiting on outstanding claims. It was reiterated that it is hard to source houses in Gorey for the threshold that is approved. A discussion took place about the length of time it took to complete a house acquisition and the length of time to receive the grant from the Department.

The Housing SEO will be attending the Municipal District Meetings in April and members can discuss this programme at a municipal level. The Chair thanked the Housing Department for preparing the 3-year programme report.

Playground Strategy & Community Buildings Grants Scheme

The Administrative Officer from the Community Department gave a presentation on the draft Playground Strategy for 2017 – 2022 which has been prepared to facilitate the strategic development of playgrounds in County Wexford. He outlined the three categories of playground i.e. Destination, Community and Neighbourhood. Destination playgrounds were generally seen as adding economic value to an area and that they were hoping to introduce an element of risk into the playground. The development of natural play areas (playscapes) will be encouraged particularly where consideration is given to the inclusion of natural play features such as planting trees, water, grass and landscape.

The report provided maps outlining WCC operated and non-WCC playgrounds and identified potential sites and sites under consideration. While insurance is not a major issue the issue of inspection is a bigger concern. Our inspectors are trained using ROSPA's Play Safety which provides advice and information on playground management. The strategy was approved by the members.

The draft Community Funding Scheme through the provision of financial grants will support the work of local community and voluntary groups, organisations and residents committees. All applications will be considered. The maximum grant payable for eligible projects is €25,000. It

was stated that this €25,000 is per district and not per project i.e. looking for projects that make an impact on the community and did not get through the Leader Project criteria and are on LCDC list. The scheme was approved by the members.

The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government Communities Facilities Scheme 2017 was briefly discussed. LCDC in conjunction with Municipal Districts under the remit of Local Authorities will be responsible for allocating funding. The Department will make an advance payment of €64,500 to each local authority. The maximum amount to be approved for any one project is €1,000. The LCDC will advertise the scheme.

Environment Report

The Environment AO outlined the draft Litter Management Plan 2017 – 2019 which went through a period of public consultation. The submissions received on foot of the public consultation and recommendations made were circulated to the SPC. It is hoped to bring the draft Litter Plan before the Council meeting in May.

The Senior Executive Scientist for Wexford County Council delivered a report on the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The Directive runs in 6 year cycles, and the 2nd cycle runs from 2016 -2021. The key measures aimed at moving towards meeting the environmental objectives of the WFD were outlined. Some pressure areas were outlined such as agriculture and urban waste water. How Local Authorities will implement this framework was discussed and there are 12 Community Water Officers located in centres throughout Ireland. Wexford County Council took on an Agricultural Scientist Dr. Mairead Shore in August 2016 and is developing strategies of public engagement. Concern was raised during the busy summer peak season regarding beaches losing their blue flags and no swim notifications being issued. It was stated that Council must put up these notices as not to do so means they could be prosecuted by the EPA. It was agreed that it was a seasonally hard to manage problems particularly with population increase and that discharge license will be looked at.

County Wexford Veterinary Service

Mr Larry Forristal, County Vet gave a presentation on the work of the County Veterinary Service. A query arose as to whether the veterinary service took into account "puppy farms". The Environment Department stated that registered dog breeders are inspected by veterinary inspectors and that it can be difficult to pursue unlicensed dog breeders and that underground dog breeders can be difficult to track. Wexford collects the most stray dogs in Ireland.

The issue of bird flu in Curracloe was mentioned and the County Vet stated that all poultry stock is housed and that poultry farming is not huge in Wexford. There were nine cases of wild bird flu reported in Ireland. The Director of Services stated that it was very reassuring that there public controls in place.

Review of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013 – 2019

The work of the Housing SPC comes within the remit of the Housing Strategy. The issue of Broadband was brought up in light of recent statement made by Communications Minister Denis Naughten. It was stated that Deirdre Kearns Senior Executive Planner for Wexford County Council would be invited to the next meeting of the Housing SPC in June to coordinate forward planning. The Planning Authority has prepared an "issue paper" which highlights the strategic planning issues that will be addressed in the new County Development Plan. Details of when the Issue papers will be on public display were circulated.

Homeless Services

The SEO requested that this matter be deferred to the June meeting of the SPC.

Library & Arts report

A report was presented on the Arts Plan and Culture Plan. An arts consultant has been contracted by the Council and it is envisaged that the first draft of the Arts Plan will be finalised in mid June 2017. This will be presented to the September meeting of the SPC and to Council in October 2017 with a view to launching in November/ December 2017. An update on Music Generation which is Ireland's National Music Education Programme, was also provided. It is a very competitive process with a lot of counties submitting applications. The steering group met on the 27th March 2017. An online questionnaire was sent out to primary and post primary schools in Wexford which will identify needs / gaps in music provision and an analysis of findings should be conducted in May. It was suggested that the programme may link in with Opera House but that the Municipal District strengths will be looked at such as instrument banks and performance space.

Creative Ireland Programme

The Council Librarian gave a presentation on the Creative Ireland Programme, a major new culture and creativity initiative of the government. Central government funding is available for creative Ireland projects. It is not specifically an arts programme but was broader and included arts, heritage and creative activities such as coding. Some of the five strategies of the programme involve enabling creativity in every community another aspect involves an audit of film locations throughout the county. The programme will also help to build a good website premises branding Ireland from a cultural point of view. Wexford County Council will hold an open meeting and discussion about Creative Ireland on Thursday 6th April 2017.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Housing Community & Environment SPC will be held on Wednesday, 7th June 2017.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 
Chairman

Dated: 7/6/2017

Housing, Community & Environment SPC

Minutes of Meeting 7th June, 2017

In the Chair: Cllr John Fleming.

Present: Mr James Brennan, Cllr Ger Carthy, Cllr Mary Farrell, Cllr John Fleming, Cllr Anthony Kelly, Cllr Lisa McDonald, Ms Marie Therese Power, Cllr John O'Rourke, Mr Ciaran Scallan, Cllr Joe Sullivan, Mr Pdraig O'Gorman, SEO, Ms Liz Burns Arts Officer, Ms Caroline Creane SSO, Ms Martina Donoghue AO, Mr Ger Mackey AO, Mr Gerry Forde SE, Mr Paul L'Estrange CFO, Mr Hugh Maguire AO, Ms Jacqui Eydt SSO, Ms Pauline Doyle, Exec Planner and Ms Deirdre Kearns, Senior Exec Planner

Apologies Ms Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, Ms Ann Walsh, Cllr Oliver Walsh, and Mr John Carley DOS

The Chairperson introduced Ms Marie Therese Power, Environment Rep from the PPN to the meeting and all present introduced themselves.

Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr Joe Sullivan the minutes of the SPC meeting held on the 5th April, 2017 were approved by the members.

Matters Arising

A minute silence was observed for the late Myles Quigley former staff member of the Housing Maintenance Section.

County Wexford Housing Strategy 2019-2025

Forward Planning Section gave a presentation to the meeting on the Review of the County Development Plan 2013-2019 and the preparation of a new plan for the County 2019-2025. They outlined the contents of a County Development plan and that it must include a Housing Strategy *"to ensure that the proper planning and sustainable development of the county provides for housing the existing and future population of the area"*. The meeting was informed that the plan is at stage 1 pre-draft following the public consultation stage, 41 written submissions were received and the Chief Executive report will be submitted to the next County Council meeting for adoption as the making of a development plan is a reserved function of the elected members.

A discussion took place around the contents of the Housing Strategy and the need for social houses and the reliance on the private rental sector. It was noted that the rental data is not a requirement for the Housing Strategy but WCC are including it.

Burial Ground Strategy & Bye Laws

The Housing AO outlined the Bye-Laws of WCC for the management of all open burial grounds within the jurisdiction of Wexford County Council and the Burial Ground Maintenance and Development Strategy which relate to WCC operate burial grounds only. She outlined the changes made as discussed at the February meeting of the SPC.

A number of issues were discussed at the meeting including county council workers digging graves, the risks involved in grave digging, the risk of collapse, monuments / headstones subsidence and all areas of possible risk. It may be necessary to do a risk assessment on grave digging and this should be the responsibility for the undertakers.

The strategy was approved on the recommendation of Cllr Lisa McDonald and seconded by Cllr Ger Carthy subject to an amendment to No 5 in Section 5 Recommendations (page 12) as follows:-

5. *In relation to the digging of graves in Crosstown, a review of current work practices be carried out the staff will be consulted with regard to the review.*

Co Wexford Refugee Resettlement Programme

The meeting was informed that 6 families have arrived in Wexford and the Refugee Resettlement worker is working closely with them to help them integrate into Irish society. A low key approach is being adopted, it is expected that 11 families will arrive in June / July and will mainly be based in the Enniscorthy area. Over 4,000 refugees will arrive in Ireland and 150 will be located in County Wexford.

Local Authority Housing Estates Awards Scheme 2017

The SEO outlined the applications received for this scheme which recognises and rewards the work of community/residents in the upkeep of Local Authority built estates. The closing date is 31st May 2017 but the meeting agreed to extend the deadline and accept applications up to the end of June.

WCC Rent Review 2017

The meeting was informed that it is proposed to carry out a rent review on an annual basis. A full rent review will commence in July 2017 with the effective date for the new rent being 1st January, 2018. The rent review form has been redesigned to a more user friendly model and this was circulated for discussion and agreement. Included on the form is the sentence "You must be included on the rent account for at least 12 months to be considered for succession of tenancy". The members approved the revised form and requested that the above sentence would be printed in bold to highlight same.

It was noted that in 2016 the countywide Differential Rent Scheme resulted in higher rents in some cases, it was agreed at the time that any rent increase over €10 was phased in with 50% being applied in 2016 and the other 50% being applied in July 2017. A discussion took place about the quality of the houses being vacated when a transfer was granted, and the costs involved in order to be re-tenanted, the SEO informed the meeting that there is a change in policy whereby the house is inspected prior to the transfer being authorised. Also the keys should be handed back to the TLO or AHO in each Municipal District.

Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2014-2018

The SEO outlined the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018. He informed the meeting of the ongoing issue regarding traveller families trespassing on County Council lands in the Wexford area and the need to find them suitable accommodation. These families wish to stay near Wexford town but there is no availability for traveller specific accommodation in this area. As this is not in the current programme the members agreed that consultation with

members in the Municipal District area would commence to find a suitable site to build traveller specific houses.

Housing Report

The SEO outlined the construction projects that are currently progressing. He informed the meeting that a housing needs assessment is currently being carried out and in order to remain eligible for social housing applicants must return the information requested by the 9th June. It was noted that only 3 tenders were returned for the provision of Bed & Breakfast emergency accommodation and none were in the Enniscorthy area. A discussion took place about the Buy & Renew and the Repair & Leasing Schemes and that WCC are actively looking at potential properties. In relation to HAP each Council have 8 months to inspect the properties this has put pressure on the technical staff due to the extra workload and a request has been submitted for extra staff. Once a person signs up to HAP they are moved from the housing list and placed on the HAP Transfer List.

Community Report

The Community Section AO outlined the work currently undertaken by them. It was noted that €8,000 has been awarded for the Science Week Call 2017 which was applied for in conjunction with Co Wexford Libraries.

The Community Section wish to promote a Healthy Wexford by joining the Healthy Cities and Counties network, this aims to promote lifelong health and wellbeing, a means where local issues can influence nation policy and provide a voice for Ireland in the WHO network of European National Healthy Cities, this was approved by Cllr Mary Farrell and seconded by Cllr Joe Sullivan.

Ferns Diocesan Youth Service (FDYS) in partnership with Wexford County Council will be submitting a funding proposal to the Dept of Justice for the development of a countywide Traveller Community Development Project this was approved by Cllr Joe Sullivan and seconded by Cllr Mary Farrell.

Environment Report

The Senior Executive Engineer informed the meeting that comprehensive noise surveys are being carried out on selected wind farms throughout the County. The final report will go to the members by the end of June, 2017. It was noted that the introduction of a €2 entry fee to the civic amenity sites will commence on 13th June next. He outlined the beaches with excellent water quality status and which beaches received the blue flag and green coast awards.

The meeting was informed that Kilmore Quay will be added to the list where beach wheelchairs will be available for 2017. This will be in addition to Morriscastle, Curracloe, Rosslare, Carne and Duncannon. A contractor has been appointed to keep the boardwalks on Morriscastle and Curracloe beaches clear.

Environment AO outlined the draft Litter Management Plan 2017 – 2019 which went through a period of public consultation. Recommendations on foot of submission were included in the plan and it is being put to the full council next week for adoption as the new Litter Management Plan for the council. A discussion took place about an unauthorised waste site in the north of the county and also about odour complaints from a sludge plant in Adamstown.

Creative Ireland Programme

The County Arts Officer outlined the Creative Ireland Programme projects in Wexford for 2017. The Creative Ireland team in Co Wexford (*The Culture Team*) will be co-ordinated by Ms Eileen Morrissey, Co Librarian who is one of 31 national co-ordinators who work as a national team to deliver the Creative Ireland Programme.

Fire & Emergency Operations Plan

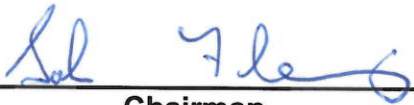
The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the Fire & Emergency Operations Plan (Section 26) to the meeting. He outlined the scope of the plan, the organisational structure of the fire service, the appliances, equipment and PPE used the training necessary and the operational procedure. The meeting praised the CFO on a comprehensive report it was approved by Mr Ciaran Scallan and seconded by Cllr Lisa McDonald.

A discussion took place about the work of the Fire Service, it was noted that there is low compliance rate with petrol stations under the dangerous substances acts, this area will be checked soon. A fire hydrant survey will be done on a phased basis throughout the County.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Housing Community & Environment SPC will be held on Wednesday, 6th September, 2017.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 
Chairman

Dated: 22/09/17

Housing, Community & Environment SPC

Minutes of Meeting 22nd September, 2017

In the Chair: Cllr John Fleming

Present: Cllr Ger Carthy, Cllr Mary Farrell, Ms Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Cllr John Fleming, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Anthony Kelly, Ms Marie Therese Power, Cllr John O'Rourke, Cllr Fionntán O'Súilleabháin, Cllr Joe Sullivan, Ms Ann Walsh, Cllr Oliver Walsh, Mr John Carley, DoS, Mr Padraig O'Gorman, SEO, Ms Liz Burns, Arts Officer, Ms Martina Donoghue AO, Ms Fran Ronan, LSP Co-Ordinator, Mr Gerry Forde SE, Mr Brendan Cooney, SES, Mr Paul L'Estrange CFO, Mr Billy Dobbs, FO, Mr Hugh Maguire AO, Ms Jacqui Eydt SSO, Ms Eileen Morrissey, County Librarian, Ms Fiona Loughlin, 3CEA

Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr Anthony Kelly and seconded by Cllr Mary Farrell the minutes of the SPC meeting held on the 7th June, 2017 were approved by the members.

Matters Arising

The Senior Executive Engineer, Environment advised the meeting that the €2.00 entrance fee on civic amenity sites was working well and that the proceeds would be used to fund 'a presence on the ground' to deter illegal dumping. Cllr Mary Farrell requested that emergency access to the beach at Morriscastle be examined. She also expressed concern about the distance of Kilmuckridge from a fire station. While she appreciated Fire Services' awareness and prevention initiatives, she queried if there were any plans for a sub-station in Kilmuckridge. The Director undertook to discuss this with the Chief Fire Officer (CFO).

Housing Standards for Rented Houses

The Housing Standards for Rented Houses was circulated and presented by the Housing Senior Executive Officer (SEO). It was noted that HAP properties must be inspected within 8 months of the sign up date.

Housing Report

The Housing SEO advised that Residents Day will be held on 31st October, 2017 and outlined the events planned. The winners of the Local Authority Estates Award Scheme 2017 will also be announced on the day.

Cllr Anthony Kelly raised an issue in relation to homelessness and the need for more emergency accommodation. The SEO advised that Wexford County Council uses some of its own housing stock for emergency accommodation, in addition to three properties that had gone through the tendering process. The Council is actively engaging with a property owner in Enniscorthy for the lease of two units for emergency accommodation. WCC is also supportive of Approved Housing Bodies who make applications for funding to provide emergency accommodation under the CAS scheme.

The Director and SEO undertook to discuss the feasibility of making staff available to assist housing applicants with the completion of HAP applications. Cllr. Joe Sullivan raised a query in relation to the number of offers of social housing, and the number of offers not proceeded with because the applicant had not passed Garda Clearance. A discussion then took place on whether it was reasonable to exclude housing applicants from consideration for social housing for a period of five years from the date of last conviction. The Director reminded the meeting of the Council's responsibility to the other tenants.

The SEO advised the meeting that a second nZEB conference was being held in Wexford on 15th and 16th November, 2017. He also advised that the Refugee Resettlement Programme was progressing well with Phase 1 almost complete. Phase 2 will involve the resettlement of a further 15 families; 10 in New Ross, 2 in Enniscorthy and 3 in Wexford.

Cllr. Anthony Kelly raised a query in relation to the timescale for the new heating system proposed for John's Gate Street Flats.

Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme

The Housing SEO presented a document outlining changes proposed to exclusions under the Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme. On the proposal of Cllr. Mary Farrell seconded by Cllr Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin the changes proposed to the exclusions under the Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme were approved, subject to the following amendment to exclusion No 8:-

8. *Bungalows in town areas (with the exception of bungalows provided for applicants with a special needs requirement for a bungalow).*

Burial Grounds

The Director presented the Wexford County Council Burial Ground Maintenance and Development Strategy and the Bye-Laws of Wexford County Council for The Management of All Open Burial Grounds within The Jurisdiction of Wexford County Council to the meeting. Both documents have been presented to the Committee previously but the Bye-Laws had been amended at the request of the Area Committees. On the proposal of Cllr. John Fleming, seconded by Cllr. Oliver Walsh both documents were approved.

Community Section Report

The Senior Staff Officer, Community presented the Community Report to the meeting. Cllr Ger Carthy queried why the members hadn't been consulted on the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme 2017. The SEO advised that submissions had been requested at extremely short notice and that only 'shovel ready' projects were eligible. He advised that the members in all areas would be consulted when submissions for 2018 were being considered.

A list of projects that had been submitted to the Department of Community and Rural Affairs under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme was circulated. These were still awaiting a decision on funding.

Sports Active Wexford Strategic Plan 2017 - 2021

The Local Sports Partnership (LSP) Co-ordinator gave a presentation on the Sports Active Wexford Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021, the second strategic plan. Sports Active Wexford is

funded by a grant from Sports Ireland and its aim is to increase participations in physical activities in Co. Wexford. The strategic plan links in to the National Health Plan and informs sports policy.

The committee complimented the Co-ordinator on the comprehensive plan and noted the positive effects of physical activity on mental health as well as physical health. The Director advised the Committee that it was Council policy that all pitches supported by Wexford County Council be used for all sports.

Energy Policy

The Senior Executive Engineer presented the Wexford County Council Energy Policy. Under the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, the public sector is obliged to improve its energy efficiency by 33% by 2020.

It is envisaged that most of the efficiencies will be achieved through effective energy management and the use of energy efficient products and services; upgrade of public lighting, retrofit of Council housing stock and installation of solar PV systems. On the proposal of Cllr Mary Farrell seconded by Cllr Joe Sullivan the Wexford County Council Energy Policy was approved.

Wind Farm Noise Study

Mr Eugene McKeown, RPS gave a presentation on wind farm noise in County Wexford. The study by RPS had been commissioned by Wexford County Council in response to complaints received. RPS had been selected to carry out the study following a detailed and exhaustive tendering process.

Mr McKeown outlined the methodology used to carry out the study and the findings of which verified that wind farm sites in County Wexford were substantially compliant. The Director reminded the meeting that wind farms had been granted planning permission, under conditions that can't be changed. He further advised that there was huge value to the information which had been gathered and confirmed that this information could be made available to the complainants.

Environment Report

The Senior Executive Engineer presented the Environment Report. A query was raised in relation to an unauthorised waste facility at Killowen, Gorey but the Environment AO advised that this was a Planning Enforcement case. The Director advised that this matter was being taken seriously by Wexford County Council, but would ultimately be decided on by the courts.

Cllr Joe Sullivan raised the issue about the length of time it took to receive replies to queries raised through the Councillor Contact system. The Director apologised for the delay and undertook to have queries responded to in a more timely manner.

Arts Plan 2018 - 2022

The Arts Officer gave a presentation on the Arts Plan 2018 – 2022 – Advancing the Arts. The plan had been prepared following extensive consultation with interested parties. The purpose of

the Plan is to advance County Wexford through arts and creativity and she outlined the actions planned to achieve this.

On the proposal of Cllr David Hynes seconded by Cllr Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin the Arts Plan 2018 – 2022 was approved. The Committee also complimented the Arts Officer on securing significant funding for Music Generation.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Housing Community & Environment SPC will be held on Wednesday, 1st November, 2017.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____


Chairman

Dated: _____

01/11/17

Housing, Community & Environment SPC

Minutes of Meeting 1st November, 2017

In the Chair: Cllr John Fleming

Present: Cllr Ger Carthy, Cllr Mary Farrell, Ms Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Cllr Anthony Kelly, Cllr John O'Rourke, Cllr Joe Sullivan, Ms Ann Walsh, Mr John Carley DOS, Mr Padraig O'Gorman SEO, Ms Caroline Creane SSO, Mr Gerry Forde SE, Ms Helen Meehan, SSO, Ms Hazel Percival, Senior Executive Librarian and Mr Ger Mackey AO

Apologies: Mr James Brennan, Ms Marie Therese Power and Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin

Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr Mary Farrell the minutes of the SPC meeting held on the 22nd September, 2017 were approved by the members.

Community Report

The Community AO outlined the work of the Community Section. The meeting was informed that an additional member of staff will be recruited to manage the Celtic Trails project under the Ireland Wales Programme 2014-2020 Co-operation Programme. Under the Town and Village Renewal 2017 Wexford will benefit from almost €1.16 million in funding for a wide variety of community-led projects. LEADER funding in the amount of €1.2 million has been approved for a number of projects throughout County Wexford. The AO asked members to encourage community groups to contact Community Staff or the Town Managers if they are interested in applying for funding.

A discussion took place about the upcoming WexSci – Science Week 2017 which is a week-long science festival in Co Wexford to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). This will be held from 12th to 19th November with events taking place in the 5 libraries and also in the Street, Co Hall. The WexSci brochure was circulated to the members. The meeting was informed that a number of community projects have been granted funding under the Healthy Ireland Programme.

Housing Inspection Policy

This item has been deferred to the next meeting.

Grants

The Housing SSO outlined the three grants schemes and criteria for obtaining same in particular the following requirements:-

1. Applicants must be resident in the property for at least 5 years.
2. Consultants Report is required for HGD Applications
3. Grant funding up to the max for each grant scheme is available in a 5 year period

The following changes were approved on the proposal of Cllr John O'Rourke and seconded by Cllr Mary Farrell:-

1. Applicants must be resident in the property for at least 2 years. This reduces the minimum occupancy from 5 years.
2. A GP report is required for HGD Applications. This removes the requirement of a consultant's report in line with National Guidelines.
3. Grant funding up to the max for each grant scheme is available in a 5 year period. Only in exceptional circumstances will a second grant be approved.

A discussion took place about the requirement to obtain an Occupational Therapist (OT) report, the Director agreed to review this procedure. WCC have a panel of OT's which is currently being updated and is at procurement stage.

Housing Report

The Housing SEO outlined the Residents Day and Estate Awards Scheme 2017 which were held on 31st October, 2017 in The Street, County Hall. The event was held to recognise the voluntary work that LA Resident Association members carry out in maintaining and improving the LA estates in which they live. The Fire department addressed the crowd on fire safety in the home, Mr John Lonergan, former Prison Governor spoke on working in the community and work, life and community balance and Kilgannon Garden Centre gave a demonstration on potting plants. The Estate Awards competition winners were announced with the winner of the Countywide Best Estate 2017 going to Woodview Drive, Adamstown.

The meeting was informed that the final family Phase 1 of the Refugee Resettlement Programme transferred to their house in Enniscorthy on 31st October 2017 together with the first two families from Phase 2 moved into homes in Wexford town. The remaining eleven families from Phase 2 will transfer to New Ross following the appointment of the Resettlement Support Worker for Phase 2. The interviews for this position will be held on 3rd November 2017.

A short discussion took place about the upcoming nZEB conference which will be held on 15th and 16th November, 2017 and the Director informed the meeting that all SPC members are welcome to attend and that WCC will pay the booking fee.

Environment Report

The Senior Executive Engineer presented the Environment Report. He informed the meeting that a full assessment of harbour infrastructure and the coastline is still ongoing following Storm Ophelia. It was noted that no major damage was caused to our harbour and piers infrastructure throughout the county. However, beach levels have dropped considerably by the effects of the storm.

The meeting was informed that the mattress amnesty which took place on Saturday, 14th October in Holmestown as part of the Government's anti-dumping initiative was very successful in collecting a total of 535 mattresses. It is envisaged that this will be done again possibly every 6 months. A discussion took place about the cost of recycling the mattresses, the Senior Executive Engineer agreed to do a report on the cost of same and where they are recycled.

Library Report

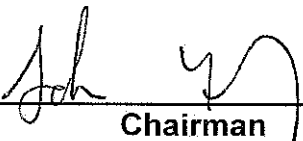
The Senior Executive Librarian outlined the work of the Library Service and how they currently support literacy and learning through the Right to Read Campaign, Digital Literacy, Healthy Ireland Initiative and the WexSci Science Week Festival. The Wexford Right to Read Action Plan 2017 was submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development in July. In Wexford library a state of the art new Tech Zone with 3D printer has been made available for general public use. This printer makes 3D printing, design and robotics instruction available to the public. The Children's Book Festival 2017 brochure was circulated to the members.

Schedule of Meetings 2018

In 2017 the Housing Community & Environment SPC meetings were held on the first Wednesday of every second month excluding August at 2.15pm in the Ground floor meeting room, Block A. The following schedule of meetings was agreed for 2018:-

- 7th February
- 4th April
- 6th June
- 5th September
- 7th November

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: 
Chairman

Dated: 06/02/18