

## Housing, Community & Environment SPC Minutes of Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2018

**In the Chair:** Cllr John Fleming

**Present:** Cllr Ger Carthy, Cllr Mary Farrell, Cllr Tom Forde, Cllr Fionntán O'Suilleabháin, Cllr Joe Sullivan, Cllr David Hynes, Cllr Oliver Walsh, Cllr Lisa McDonald, Mr John Carley, DOS, Ms Caroline Creane SSO, Mr Gerry Forde SE, Mr Ger Mackey A/SEO, Mr Niall McCabe AO, Ms Michele Bridges-Carley SSO, and Ms Eileen Morrissey, County Librarian.

**Apologies:** Mr Padraig, O'Gorman, SEO and Cllr John O'Rourke

### Minutes & Matters Arising

The members expressed sympathies to Chairman Keith Doyle on the recent passing of his mother Eileen and to Cllr Oliver Walsh and the Bishop family on their recent bereavement.

The minutes of the SPC meeting dated 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2018 were approved on the proposal of Cllr Oliver Walsh and seconded by Cllr Joe Sullivan. A short discussion took place about the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 and the Director informed the meeting that a department circular has been received and that a review will commence in Wexford in due course in line with same.

### Housing Report

The Housing AO presented the Housing Report which was circulated to the members he outlined the Refugee Resettlement Programme and informed the meeting that a Wexford based family met Pope Francis at a function in Dublin Castle recently. The meeting was informed that Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Damien English TD will officially open 8 houses in Cherry Orchard, Enniscorthy on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.

The Housing SSO outlined the Report on Vacant Homes Pilot Project. The meeting was informed that the 4 study areas for the pilot project were Ferns, Kilcomb, Fethard and part of Enniscorthy town. It was noted that there was significant variance between the number of vacant homes as stated by the CSO and the Eircode data from GeoDirectory. A total of 81 homes were surveyed as part of the pilot project and only 28 were deemed 'possibility for future use' which require a more in-depth analysis. A discussion took place about the Vacant Homes app and its future use for capturing data.

### Library Report

The County Librarian presented a PowerPoint presentation on Wexford Library service and how the strategy Our Public Libraries 2022 – Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities will be implemented in Wexford. The priorities will be to invest in library infrastructure and increase space in Enniscorthy and New Ross libraries. The meeting was informed that there are plans to increase library opening hours and to remove fines which are seen to discourage disadvantaged families from joining the library. A grant of €250,000 has been received from the Dept to upgrade IT and implement self-service.

It was noted that Gorey library will become a pilot under the My Open Library initiative within the next couple of months. This initiative will see the opening hours increase from 47 hours to 98 hours per week. The County Librarian urged all members present to promote the use and services of the library when dealing with the public.

## Arts Report

The County Librarian presented the Arts Department's report to the SPC. It was noted that a lot of work has begun on promoting the Music Generation Programme. Ms Katherine Atkinson, Development Officer has commenced the first phase of a singing programme involving 14 primary schools throughout the county. A team of 11 musicians have been hired a tutors and a full time office administrator has also been recruited.

A discussion took place about public art, in particular the 'Per Cent for Art' commissions on the public road network and how the scheme works.

## Community Report

The Community A/SEO outlined the work of the Community Department in particular the Three Counties Blueway, Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2018, Pride of Place, Cultural Companions, Celtic Routes, Outdoor Recreation Grants, Science Week 2018 and Wexford PPN. A short discussion took place about how the town and village renewal applications were decided, the meeting was informed that the Municipal District Managers had the final say. It was noted that the members present felt that the Municipal District elected members should have the final say.

The meeting was informed of the work of the Wexford Sports Active section namely Safeguarding Courses (child protection), Wexford Parkrun, Slaneyside Super Stars summer camp, Communities Integration Fund 2018, Doras Community Picnic, Belvedere Youth Services visit, Pride of Place Bunclody and Healthy Woodlands. The annual Fun in the Sun summer camps attracted 724 participants at 8 locations across the county. Wexford town has been selected as the 2018 Pfizer Healthy Town and the CEO of Pfizer attended the launch last night. The Director agreed to forward on details of the Healthy Town events to all the SPC members.

## Environment Report

The Environment Senior Engineer informed the meeting that the Waste Presentation Bye-Laws are currently at public consultation stage and WCC will consider any submissions made in writing up to 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2018. It is envisaged that the Bye-Laws will go to the November Council meeting. The Senior Engineer will visit all four Municipal District meetings to brief the members on the Waste Presentation Bye-Laws in the coming weeks. He outlined the Waste Priorities for 2019.

A short discussion took place about the Wind Farm Noise Monitoring Programme and the meeting was informed that the draft report will be available in Q1 2019. The meeting was informed that the Greenway from Wexford to Curracloe is with An Bord Pleanála for decision.

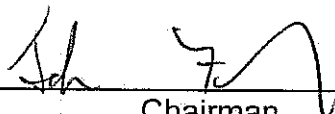
The Beach Bye-Laws were adopted in 2005 which covers 26 beaches throughout the County and it was noted that they need updating. Due to the good weather over the summer there were a lot of issues with unauthorised camping, illegal dumping and access to the beaches by emergency services. A discussion took place about the issues that the Fire Brigade had trying

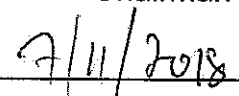
to gain access to Morriscastle and Curracloe beaches in particular. It was noted that there were no litter pickers on Carne Beach this summer but this was an oversight as they had recently achieved the blue flag. The water quality on beaches was briefly discussed.

Any other Business

- **Phone Queries** – The meeting was informed that telephone queries are being answered by staff by saying they are 'too busy'. The Director agreed to look into this.
- **Housing Assistance Payment (HAP):** A discussion took place about HAP and in particular the limits for Wexford and Gorey, it was noted that they are not high enough based on the rents charged. It has been listed for a question for the Minister's visit next week.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Dated:  \_\_\_\_\_

