

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT HELD AT 2.30PM ON MONDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2022 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, BLOCK A, WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, CARRICKLAWN, WEXFORD.

Presiding: - His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan

Councillors: - J. Hegarty, G. Lawlor, M. Bell, D. Hynes, L. Kelly, T. Forde.

In Attendance:

Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services
Ms. Angela Laffan, District Manager
Mr. Sean Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Gerry Forde, Senior Engineer, Environment
Mr. George Colfer, Executive Engineer, Environment
Mr. Enda Brennan, Executive Engineer, Environment
Capt. Phil Murphy, Senior Marine Officer
Mr. Hugh Maguire, Administrative Officer
Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer, Housing
Ms. Siobhan Kehoe, Staff Officer
Ms. Caroline Crowe, Assistant Staff Officer

At the outset, on the proposal of his Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, a minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect to Council employee Billy Kinsella, R.I.P.

VOTES OF SYMPATHY

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

- Mr. Conall McGuinness, Barntown, RIP
- Mr. Brian Dunne, Killurin, RIP
- Mr. Matt Kelly, Tomcoole, Barntown, RIP
- Mr. John Coughlan, Crossabeg, RIP
- Mrs. Breda Murphy, Ramsgrange, mother of Deputy Verona Murphy, RIP
- Mr. Justin Butler, Radharc na Fhiaigh, Wexford Town, RIP
- Mr. Nicholas Keane, Ballyvaloo, Blackwater,

CONGRATULATIONS

Votes of congratulations were extended to the following:

- Oulart The Ballagh Senior Camogie team on reaching the final of the AIB All-Ireland Club Camogie Championship.

- All clubs and groups who were successful in their grant applications under the recently announced Sports Capital Programme.
- Darragh Egan, on his debut match win, as the new Wexford Senior Hurling Team Manager.
- Tadhg Furlong on his recent performance in the Six Nations Rugby Tournament
- The McGuinness family on the recent generous donation to the, It's Good to Talk, charity.
- Mr. Patrick Prendergast on his appointment as chair of the South East Technological University.

On the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor, it was agreed that a civic reception be afforded to Wexford Tidy Towns Committee and its dedicated Volunteers for achieving a Gold Medal Award in the recent SuperValu National Tidy Towns competition. Details to be agreed with the Protocol Committee.

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 17th January, 2022, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed and signed on the proposal of Cllr. J. Hegarty, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

MINUTES - MATTERS ARISING

Cllr. J. Hegarty asked that the typographical error regarding his name in the Adoption of the Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, be corrected.

In reply to a query from Cllr. J. Hegarty regarding the issue of the dangerous wall at Cromwellsfort, Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, apologised that he did not have a full report for the meeting but could confirm that part of the wall had been demolished and made safe, the stability of the remaining wall is being assessed. Mr. Larkin advised that discussions between the Council and the property owners are expected to be resolved in the coming weeks.

SECTION 183 NOTICE – 24 LOWER GEORGES STREET.

On the recommendation of Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, the attached report regarding the transfer of 'Air Title' to an annex at the rear of 24 Lower George's Street, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Hegarty, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell.

TAKING IN CHARGE – WILLOW VIEW, CASTLEBRIDGE

The attached report and recommendation regarding the Taking in Charge of Willow View, Castlebridge, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was unanimously adopted on the proposal of Cllr. J. Hegarty, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde.

UPDATE ON SALE OF DUN MUIRE – FR. BILLY SWAN, PARISH ADMINISTRATOR & MR. PAT WHELAN.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, welcomed Fr. Billy Swan and Mr. Pat Whelan, to the meeting to update Members on the closure and agreed sale of the Dun Mhuire property to Wexford County Council to facilitate the regeneration of South Main Street. Fr. Swan, referring to an article published in the local press, clarified that there are no plans for a new 'Parish Hall'.

Mr. Whelan summarised the history of the Dun Mhuire, from its inception in 1960 to its closure in 2018. Fr. Billy Swan acknowledged that the Dun Mhuire had been central to community and cultural life of the town and its closure was regrettable. Fr. Swan stated that serious financial losses had been incurred by the Parish Committee over the 10 years prior to closure and the building also required significant repairs. Fr. Swan advised that the Parish did not have the financial resources to complete the required repairs or to fund ongoing running costs.

Fr. Swan confirmed once the sale has been finalised, the proceeds of sale will be used to buy or lease a facility for the church and wider community with the emphasis on the pastoral care.

Questions raised by Members were addressed by Fr. Swan and Mr. Whelan, and following lengthy discussion, Members welcomed the proposal for a new parish facility.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan thanked Fr. Swan and Mr. Whelan, on behalf of the Members, for their attendance at the meeting.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT ROMAN LANE/NORTH MAIN STREET – SUPT. JIM DOYLE

Supt. J. Doyle gave a brief outline of recent reports of anti-social behaviour at Roman Lane and the measures that have been implemented by AGS to address the issue. Supt. Doyle informed Members that resources are being allocated with regular patrols being undertaken in the area which will be monitored for a further 4 to 6 weeks.

Supt. Doyle indicated that there were a number of prosecutions pending following these patrols but added that the number of public order offences reported in the last

6 months was quite low. Supt. Doyle reiterated the need for the public to report all incidents to An Garda Siochana.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Supt. Doyle.

- Antisocial behaviour in other laneways and in general around the town.
- An alleged assault on a Member of An Garda Siochana
- Installation of CCTV and lighting in the laneways to deter antisocial behaviour.

Following a query for Cllr. M. Bell regarding the status of the towns Purple Flag accreditation, Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager confirmed the accreditation was still in place but that she would follow up on the matter.

In response to a query raised by Cllr. T. Forde on the maintenance of the urban laneways, including alleyways within LA housing estates, Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, confirmed that this maintenance has to fall within the remit of the Borough, but that funding and resources are limited for such work. Mr. Larkin informed Members, that the Governments focus on the 'Town Centre First' initiative might provide a mechanism for grant aid and asked Members to prioritise the laneways for attention and upgrade works as funding becomes available.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor seconded by Cllr. T. Forde, Members agreed that a visit to New Ross be arranged, to meet officials and view the excellent work carried out on the historic laneways in the town.

At the request of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, Mr. S. Kavanagh, District Engineer, was requested to compile an inventory of the historic laneways, including those of concern in housing estates, for information and presentation to Members at the March Meeting.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan thanked Supt. Doyle, on behalf of Members, for his attendance.

ENVIRONMENT SECTION PRESENTATIONS

CURRACLOE (3) BEACHES, BEACH MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022

Mr. G. Forde, Senior Engineer gave a brief presentation to Members on the beach management plan for summer 2022, including traffic management, public transport arrangements and the provision of public conveniences.

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Mr. Forde.

- Need for consultation with businesses and all relevant stakeholders in Curraclloe village on the proposals.
- Requirement for a safe pedestrian walkway from beaches to Curraclloe Village
- Formalising the one way system from Ballinesker to Curraclloe
- Communication with Councillors, An Garda Siochana and Local Businesses.
- Update on progression of works on car park in the village.
- Number of car parking spaces available at peak times.
- Amplification System for the beaches
- Suggested introduction of nominal charges on the public transport.
- Public Convenience facilities at Culleton's Gap
- Suggested Park & Ride location in Wexford town to serve the public transport system.

Mr. E. Brennan, Executive Engineer, gave a brief update to Members on the provision of a public convenience on Wexford Quay front. Mr. Brennan informed Members that the sewerage connection should be approved by Irish Water in the coming weeks, and it is hoped that the facility would be in situ next month.

His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan thanked Mr. Forde for his comprehensive presentation. Owing to the number of items remaining for discussion on the Agenda, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, Members unanimously agreed to defer the remaining presentations to the March meeting.

Suspension of Standing Orders.

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

Cllr. D. Hynes gave his apologies and departed the meeting.

SPECIAL SPEED LIMIT REVIEW – PRE DRAFT CONSULTATION

The Special Speed Limit Bye Laws – Pre-Draft Consultation report, a copy of which had previously been circulated by the Road Safety Officer, was noted.

Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager reminded Members that the deadline for making submissions was today, Monday 21st February.

Ms. Laffan informed Members that following a review of the submissions, decision on amendments and/or recommendations will be presented by the Road Safety Officer for consideration at the March meeting.

REVIEW OF OUTDOOR TRADING LICENCE SCHEME

The 2021 Framework for Outdoor Trading within Wexford Borough District, a copy of which had previously been circulated, was noted.

Ms. A. Laffan, District Manager advised Members that the current licences are due to expire on the 31st March and tenders seeking expressions of interest for the coming year 2022 / 2023 will be advertised in the coming weeks. Ms. Laffan afforded Members an opportunity to consider the Framework adopted in 2021 and to suggest any variations to the current scheme in advance of the public advertisement.

Following discussion to which all Members contributed, it was unanimously agreed to remove the clause whereby priority was given to applications from commercial rate payers within Wexford Borough District, a clause which had been inserted in 2021 to afford an opportunity to local businesses closed during Covid restrictions.

REPORTS

HOUSING

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

The following matters raised by Members were addressed by Ms. Helen Meehan, Senior Staff Officer.

- Update on the allocation of social houses at Airhill, Belvedere Road.
- Timeframe for the closure of the alleyway at Talbot Green as agreed by Members in November, 2021.
- Update on servicing of wood pellet burners in Local Authority housing units.
- Confirmation that housing scheme at The Ballagh is on target for completion Q1, 2022.
- Retro fitting programme for L.A. houses to reduce energy & maintenance costs.

In response to a request by Cllr. T. Forde to include the allocations of houses at Airhill, Belvedere Road, on the Agenda for the County Council meeting, Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, undertook to consult with Ms. C. Godkin, Director of Housing, and provide an update to Members at the March meeting.

Following a discussion on water quality issues at Whiterock Hill, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde, it was agreed to

request that all future Local Authority housing developments in areas served by hard water be fitted with water softeners at construction stage.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

- Reports of illegal burning at Whiterock Hill.

Suspension of Standing Orders.

It being 5.30 p.m., on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, Members agreed unanimously to further suspend Standing Orders until 6.00 p.m. to allow for the remaining business on the agenda to be concluded.

PLANNING

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. T. Larkin, Director of Services.

- Delays to the review of the draft County Development Plan.
- Suspension of Pre-planning meetings.
- Need to engage with the Department to seek an increase in the limits set down for LA house purchases which prevented WCC from making competitive bids at the recent public auction of vacant housing units at John Street / Johns Gate Street.
- Request to serve statutory notices to include Brady's Pub, The Faythe, on the Derelict Sites Register.

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. S. Kavanagh, Senior Executive Engineer.

- Expected completion date for the Transport Strategy for the town.
- Public consultation update on the proposed Active Travel measures at Beechlawn / Clonard Avenue.
- Commencement date for the Skate Boarding facility at Min Ryan Park.
- Consultation with businesses in the town centre regarding Outdoor Dining.
- Replacement of the Estate name stone at Whiterock View
- Removal of bollards and installation of additional speed limit signs at Mulgannon Hill.
- Update on energising the pedestrian crossings at Castlebridge, Ferndale and Whitemill Road.
- Replacement of Adult School Wardens at Wexford CBS and St. John of God, The Faythe
- Clarification from Irish Water on backup power supply for Edenvale Intake and Newtown Road Water Treatment Plant to avoid disruption to supplies during severe weather events.

In relation to the replacement of Adult School Wardens at Wexford CBS and St. John of God, The Faythe, Cllr. J. Hegarty asked that these positions be filled before the Council makes any change in policy around the provision of Adult School Wardens. Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, agreed to follow up with the Roads Department to bring clarity to the situation and revert to the March meeting.

Cllr. T. Forde thanked Mr. Kavanagh and the Borough staff for the installation of the Rainbow Walk crossing within Redmond Park and the erection of the Cuain Aingeal directional sign at Ferrybank.

The report of RPS Consultants in relation to the proposed Cycle Scheme at Newtown Road was circulated for the information of Members.

LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES & ARTS REPORTS

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

FIRE SERVICES REPORT

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:

The time being 6.00 p.m., His Worship the Mayor proposed no further extension of Standing Orders and brought the meeting to a close. It was agreed that the remaining items on the agenda be deferred to the March meeting.

Date for March Ordinary Meeting

Prior to closing the meeting, on the proposal of His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, it was unanimously agreed to reschedule the March meeting to 2.30pm, Wednesday, 23rd March 2022.

Limit on Agenda Items:

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Laffan, Members unanimously agreed to limit the number of presentations at all future meetings to one.

MOTIONS

Due to the conclusion of the meeting, the following motions were deferred to the March meeting

CONSIDER MOTION SUBMITTED BY CLLR. L. KELLY

“The Members of Wexford District request the provision of a public transport hub in Wexford Town. This should be a component of the Wexford Town Development Plan and should incorporate provision for School, Tourism and Public Transport Buses”.

CONSIDER MOTION SUBMITTED BY CLLR. GEORGE LAWLOR

“Wexford Borough District moves that all health care assistant workers, be they employed by the H.S.E. or private operators, be exempt from parking charges while in course of their duties attending clients homes”.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

SIGNED THIS DAY 23rd MARCH 2022

MAYOR OF WEXFORD