

ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

HELD AT WICKLOW COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW TOWN

ON MONDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 2:00 P.M.

Gwen Malone Stenography
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1 THE MEETING COMMENCED ON MONDAY, 3RD DAY OF
2 SEPTEMBER, 2018 AS FOLLOWS:

3
4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Members, could I have your attention
5 please? Members, could I have your attention please? 13:06
6 Just before we start the meeting I want the Members to
7 be aware that there's recording equipment and a
8 photographer in the room. If anyone has any problem
9 with that, I know it has to be agreed by the Members
10 here in the Chamber to have this. Is there any 13:07
11 disagreement on this?

12 MS. GALLAGHER: There is a photographer from the Irish
13 Independent who would like to take some photographs of
14 the proceedings if that's okay? Then this device here
15 is from a colleague of Senator Freeman who would like 13:07
16 to take a video while she's speaking if that's okay?
17 All right, okay.

18
19 AGENDA ITEM 13

20 13:07
21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just with the permission of the Members
22 here as well, to move up items 13 and 15 on the agenda
23 here that we discuss first and number 13 would be to
24 fill the casual vacancy created by the resignation of
25 Cllr. Michael O'Connor and if we can agree on that? 13:07

26 CLLR. WINTERS: Yeah.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Do we have a proposer and a seconder?

28 CLLR. LAWLESS: I'll propose.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by Irene Winters. Is that

1 agreed?

2 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor, you're very welcome to join
4 us now at this stage.

5 MS. GALLAGHER: Sorry, Chairman, just to say that we 13:08
6 have a letter from Sinn Féin, dated 13th August, which
7 says that "I can confirm that Dermot O'Brien is a
8 current Sinn Féin member and has been selected by Sinn
9 Féin to replace Michael O'Connor on Wicklow County
10 Council." And we also have a letter from 13:08
11 Dermot O'Brien confirming that he accepts the
12 nomination to fill the vacant Sinn Féin sit on Wicklow
13 County Council.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just on behalf of all the Councillors
15 here, Dermot, could we welcome you to the Chamber. We 13:08
16 look forward to working with you. You're well-known in
17 the Bray area anyway, you're a very good community
18 worker and I look forward to working with you in the
19 coming months, okay. Thank you very much.

20 MR. CURRAN: Can I just say, on behalf of myself and 13:09
21 the staff of Wicklow County Council, I would like to
22 welcome you also. Our door will always be open, as it
23 is to the other Members.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. That's agreed then.
25 We move on to 15. 13:09
26

27 AGENDA ITEM 15

28

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: As you well know, we've a presidential

1 election coming up on 26th October and there have been
2 a number of people that have contacted me in regard to
3 wanting to address the Council. A number of
4 invitations went out. Some people weren't able to make
5 it today because they are addressing other Councils and 13:09
6 we have, I believe, five people here today and
7 particularly I wanted to do it at one o'clock so as not
8 to restrict the time but also that the people, rather
9 than wait for a meeting to go through and have them at
10 the end of the meeting and have them waiting all day 13:09
11 that we have them at one o'clock. I would ask the
12 people here that come to address us to be fairly brief,
13 10, 15 minutes maximum to allow for a
14 question-and-answer session at the end. Then we can
15 decide then whether we as a Council want to nominate 13:10
16 one person, want to nominate another person or other
17 people and then we have to go down through the process
18 of having a meeting or a Special Meeting in which we
19 can accommodate that.

20
21 Any member can nominate a particular individual. You
22 can have a contest between those individuals but we can
23 only nominate one person in regard to go for the
24 presidential election. So I think Lorraine set out,
25 quite clearly there, in regard to the process so that's 13:10
26 going to be adopted and we have to decide how we go
27 about in that regard to that.

28
29 The first person we have up today is Senator Joan

1 Freeman. Could I welcome Joan to the Chamber and ask
2 you to address the Members. Thank you very much, Joan.
3 Thank you for coming as well. Thank you.

4 SENATOR FREEMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

5 13:11

6 PRESENTATION FROM SENATOR JOAN FREEMAN

7
8 SENATOR FREEMAN: Councillors, ladies and gentlemen,
9 good afternoon. Thank you for inviting me here today.
10 You have absolutely no idea how exciting this bit is. 13:11

11 And I'm sure it's exciting for you as well watching the
12 progress and watching all the new candidates that are
13 coming on board at the moment. I know there's going to
14 be difficult days but I'm still so honoured that I can
15 be part of this process. 13:11

16
17 So I'm just going to tell you a little bit about me.
18 I'm a Senator. I was nominated by the Taoiseach two
19 years ago. I'm the Chairperson of the very first Joint
20 Oireachtas Committee on mental health. I'm also the 13:11
21 founder of Pieta House. I'm sure most of you -- I saw
22 a Pieta House poster outside before I came in and you
23 will all, I am sure, are aware of Pieta House and the
24 work it does.

25 13:12

26 The organisation has seen over 40,000 people - children
27 as young as five years of age to people in their
28 eighties. It is a wonderful organisation that has been
29 embraced by most of this country.

1 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC GALLERY: Sorry, Joan, you're not
2 on the mic. We can't hear you down here.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: There's a problem up here with the
4 communication in regard to mics. We're working on that
5 at the moment to try and get that working. 13:12

6 SENATOR FREEMAN: I'll shout. Can you all hear me?

7 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah.

8 SENATOR FREEMAN: I just mentioned Pieta House. 40,000
9 men, women and children have been helped. It has
10 become now not only a national organisation but an 13:12
11 international one as well.

12

13 So before that I was a psychologist and I worked with
14 helping people with mental health issues and social
15 issues. 13:13

16

17 I'm married to Pat. I'm married 35 years. We have
18 four children. I refuse point blank to say their ages
19 because when you start telling your kids' ages you know
20 how old you are! And I have four gorgeous little 13:13
21 granddaughters as well.

22

23 Just to really finalise about me. I have spent my life
24 and my livelihood on campaigning for mental health. It
25 is something I so passionately believe in and I suppose 13:13
26 a most powerful expression of that is the Darkness into
27 Light walk. I know that you've all, at some stage,
28 participated in it. When you think about it, it's a
29 walk that starts at four o'clock in the morning in the

1 pitch black and then as the dawn is breaking we cross
2 over the finish line. This is the tenth anniversary
3 this year and the very first year when I started the
4 walk, 400 people turned up in the Phoenix Park and then
5 this year 200,000 people walked across our country. I 13:14
6 mean that is something to be so proud of. So proud of.

7
8 Just about the role of the President. I know that the
9 role is limited. I know that there are little or no
10 executive powers, but what I do know is that the 13:14
11 President has the power to persuade and to create
12 change. If we look at the past presidents and we look
13 at their platform, our present president is arts and
14 culture; Mary Robinson the voice for the dispossessed
15 and a home for the diaspora; and of course Mary 13:14
16 McAleese built bridges. But I'm going to ask you here
17 in Wicklow to go one step further because while those
18 platforms are important, we need to go and to accept
19 something that's being ignored in our country and that
20 is the mental health of our society. And if you think 13:15
21 about mental health I'm sure most of you are thinking
22 people who are vulnerable. Do you know what, if I
23 asked you to think about physical health you'd be
24 thinking of someone running around really health but
25 it's the same with mental health. Mental health means 13:15
26 the absence of those. Mental health affects every
27 single one of us. It affects relationships. It
28 affects children. It affects older people. It affects
29 the workplace. Let me give you a couple of examples,

1 personal examples.

2
3 So I said I have four granddaughters. One of them
4 started school, the eldest girl, she's four-and-a-half,
5 she started school last week. She's in a class of 30 13:15
6 children. Seven of those children will have mental
7 health issues as they're growing up. So what is there
8 for them? There's no early intervention. Down the
9 southeast all services have been stripped.

10 13:16
11 well, let me tell you another personal story. My
12 husband, Pat, he's a postmaster and he's one of the
13 post offices that will be closing down. But he's not
14 concerned about the closing down of the post office
15 from a personal point of view, he's thinking of the 13:16
16 person who stands in front of him every single week and
17 probably he is the only person they've spoken to in a
18 week. Pat actually, in his post office got a long,
19 long couch for people to sit down, which doesn't say
20 much about his waiting, that he has people waiting, but 13:16
21 he got them because most of them are older people.
22 This is something else I really, really want to bring
23 to the attention of our country. We need to think
24 about our older citizens.

25 13:17
26 Do you know, for example, that from this year onwards
27 there'll be 20,000 additional people over the age of 65
28 for the next 20 years? Globally in the next few years
29 there'll be more people over 65 than under five. So

1 just what does that -- what affect is that going to
2 have on us and our country? It means an increase in
3 hospital beds and healthcare.

4
5 There's an organisation, I'm sure you've all heard of 13:17
6 it called, ALONE. They've already had 40% of an
7 increase on need by our older people. And not only
8 that, to me the worst statistic of all is that there
9 were 50,000 older people last year who didn't receive a
10 visit from friends or family. So when I talk about 13:18
11 mental health I'm talking about a life lived with
12 dignity; a community that is strong and supportive.

13
14 If we talk about the economy. I want to talk about how
15 we can increase productivity and decrease sick days 13:18
16 because 33% of sick days are down to the fact that the
17 person is suffering from anxiety or depression.

18
19 So when I talk about the mental health I'm talking
20 about really making this country so fit for the future. 13:18
21 I'm also talking about being the experts globally. We
22 can show the rest of the world how we are fearless.
23 That we are not afraid of saying the word "mental
24 health". We're not afraid. We're not afraid to
25 embrace it and we will lead the world on how to do 13:19
26 this.

27
28 If you think about how I started Pieta House. I used a
29 three-prong approach. I became the leader about

1 suicide and mental health. The second part was having
2 these organisations, these charities around the
3 country, I would follow suit. I would be the champion
4 of the organisations around the country who are already
5 dealing with mental health, who are already dealing 13:19
6 with our older community. But I will also mobilise our
7 communities. I mean how many thousands walked in
8 Wicklow, got up at three o'clock in the morning? I've
9 done it before, I can do it again. I will put us on a
10 platform that will show we are a caring community. 13:19
11 That we are compassionate about our loved ones and
12 about our neighbours.

13
14 You know, on the way down here -- by the way Wicklow is
15 so beautiful and so beautiful in this gorgeous 13:20
16 sunshine, but I stopped in the post office here in
17 Wicklow Town in SuperValu and I saw three women there
18 who were serving around the counter, and I presume this
19 post office isn't going to close down. What about
20 other parts of Wicklow, what affect is that going to 13:20
21 have on the people?

22
23 So I'm here today to appeal to you to you. You know,
24 we've seen, as I said, a lot of activity lately with
25 'dragons', etcetera. The chances are, Councillors, 13:20
26 that these dragons are going to get nominated. We
27 believe that Sean Gallagher is probably already
28 nominated. So I'm appealing to you, not to support me
29 in the presidential election. I'm not asking you to do

1 that. I'm asking you to get me on the ballot paper.
2 Let's give Ireland a very broad choice. Instead of
3 just business and entrepreneurs, let's give mental
4 health. Let's give other topics that you will hear
5 today. So I'm appealing to you, please, please allow 13:21
6 me to be on the ballot paper. Thank you.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Joan. I'm going to ask
8 Kevin Sharkey to come on then and then we'll have a
9 question-and-answer session between the two people up
10 here. Gavin Duffy has indicated that he will be here 13:21
11 but he's delayed and it could be closer to two o'clock.
12 So I'm just going ahead with this and the questions and
13 answers on the two people that we have here and then
14 when Gavin Duffy comes in I'll allow him to address the
15 meeting and give him equal time in regard to the 13:22
16 questions and answers as well before we make any
17 decisions about this. Okay. Kevin.

18
19 PRESENTATION BY MR. KEVIN SHARKEY
20 13:22

21 MR. SHARKEY: I'll sit down, if I may. Ladies and
22 gentlemen, Councillors, hello, very nice to meet you
23 all and very nice to be here in Wicklow today.

24
25 This apparently is eight-minute democracy or ten 13:22
26 minutes, is that what I have?

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Ten minutes.

28 MR. SHARKEY: Ten minutes. I'll make the most of it.
29 I sometimes get confused for Mike Tyson,

1 understandable; occasionally Paul McGrath; and every
2 now and then someone shouts "Fergal" at me, I'm
3 assuming that's because of the surname Sharkey! But
4 I'm going to try and tell you, in the time I've got,
5 about me, Kevin Sharkey.

13:23

6
7 I'm an artist, as some of you may know and that
8 involves having vision, which involves looking at a
9 blank canvass and creating something of beauty that
10 other people can enjoy. And this contest in a way is
11 very similar. I speak Spanish. I speak a little bit
12 of Irish and I like to create things.

13:23

13
14 One of the things that's defined my adult life and my
15 childhood here in Ireland is racism. People talk about
16 racism sometimes from the point of view they don't know
17 what they're talking about because they've never
18 experienced it and I've spent a lifetime dealing with
19 it, trying to understand it and trying to come to terms
20 with what it actually is.

13:23

21
22 Now when you meet a racist who's an out and out racist
23 you know what you're dealing with and to be honest with
24 you, sometimes that's more refreshing because I spent a
25 lifetime of people saying: "No, no, no, I'm not a
26 racist. No, no, I'm not a racist." And I started to
27 wonder, well if we're all not racist what is it and
28 where does it come from?
29

13:23

1 For me the real racism is the casual racism. You know,
2 we have a TV station here in Ireland, several, and when
3 you look at them and the media, do you see the fact
4 that 10% of our population is now non-Irish? No. And
5 that unfortunately reflects badly on us because if the 13:24
6 people coming here from other countries don't feel part
7 of what we have and what they are, they feel excluded
8 and create their own cultures and pretty soon they
9 create what is known as 'ghettos' because they don't
10 feel part of what we have. So I think we have a real 13:24
11 responsibility and certainly I feel like, as a black
12 man, you know, we have traveller racism, we have
13 discrimination and they're very subtle things and very
14 different things. Recently the Rose of Tralee, a
15 beautiful girl who was born and brought up here in 13:24
16 Ireland was brutally abused late at night out on the
17 town. And her thing she said, which stuck in my mind,
18 she said: "They said that I'm not really Irish." How
19 do you define that? My Irishness comes from gratitude
20 for the life I've had in Ireland; for the 13:25
21 relationships; for the support that I've had here in
22 Ireland. I think sometimes, you know, people misquote
23 me. We've all seen that the main parties appear to
24 come out of the trap and tell you all what to vote for,
25 who to vote for, what to say and what to do. That 13:25
26 might be okay with some of you but I'm here today with
27 the belief that we are still living in a democracy and
28 this is worth talking to you from the heart, because I
29 don't believe that people can be told what or where

1 their conscience should lie. I think it is down to
2 people to make those individual choices.

3
4 I was recently misquoted as saying Ireland should
5 remain predominantly white. That wasn't what I said. 13:25

6 what I said was Ireland is predominantly white. Africa
7 is predominantly black. I believe any country that
8 wants to hold on to its to culture and have it
9 respected and to retain its customs needs to understand
10 the basis of what it is. Ireland is a predominantly 13:25

11 white country. Is that to the exclusion of anybody?
12 No. We welcome people from all over the world. Our
13 céad míle fáilte is famous even, I believe, to some
14 extent when Mr. Trump arrives. It will have to be

15 because we forget sometimes that our relationship with 13:26
16 America is far more important than the hurt feelings of

17 a number of politicians in the Dáil. We have a huge
18 financial relationship with America. We have people
19 over there, we have undocumented workers and on the one
20 hand we want Donald Trump, as the President of America, 13:26

21 which he is like him or loathe him, and we say
22 Mr. Trump you're an idiot and then on the other hand we
23 want him to look after our undocumented workers. I
24 think at some stage we have to wake up and smell the
25 coffee and realise that this man is the President. 13:26

26 Just to continue on. Public service. I have
27 campaigned for years against the abuse in institutions.
28 I appeared on The Late Late Show at a time when nobody
29 else in the country would go on - no man or woman - and

1 talk about the abuse that I had suffered. I was lucky
2 but the people, the kids around me weren't so lucky and
3 I campaigned for years to bring this issue to life.
4 I'm very proud of the fact that the programme called
5 States of Fear was made as a direct result of my 13:27
6 appearance on The Late Late Show with Gay Byrne to talk
7 about this and it was a hard thing to do but it was
8 necessary for my fellow Irish men and women because
9 that is something which still has to be dealt with.
10 And no amount of apologies by the Catholic Church are 13:27
11 going to suffice. We now need the Catholic Church to
12 take action and to stop offering apologies because we
13 need the church here in Ireland. Unfortunately 87
14 priests died last year and three were ordained. You
15 don't need me to tell you the game is up. We are going 13:27
16 to have to do something radical if we're going to keep
17 the church here in Ireland.

18
19 Now, people who say the presidency has no power, they
20 have no vision, they have no imagination. The 13:28
21 presidency has the most amazing power to open up
22 dialogue on debates that we need to have here in
23 Ireland as adults. We're the grown ups, and we need to
24 start having those uncomfortable conversations, which
25 allow the young people of Ireland feel that they have 13:28
26 some connection to the presidency. Now, no disrespect
27 to Michael D but when I looked at the last race for the
28 presidency, young people just ignored it. It did
29 nothing for them. This is their future and we need to

1 reconnect with them and we need to have them, not just
2 believe in democracy but we need to have them
3 understand that there is a place for them at the table.
4

5 I think here in Ireland especially -- I walked by a pub 13:28
6 last night and everybody was having great craic. The
7 match was over. The place was jumping, everyone
8 singing. But you know what? They were all on drugs.
9 Alcohol is a drug. Until we can have an honest
10 conversation with children around this. We've got a 13:28
11 really bad drug problem here in Ireland and if you
12 continue to tell them: 'No, no, no, you don't do
13 drugs', and we're there with a pint in one hand, a fag
14 in the other. We need to grow up and we need to do
15 something for the young people to help them to 13:29
16 understand that drugs are dangerous and they do destroy
17 lives. But we lose all credibility with them when we
18 sit up on a pedestal and talk down our noses to them.
19 We really need to connect with the young people in this
20 country to explain the real dangers of drugs and how 13:29
21 they do destroy lives.
22

23 By the way, the odds on me becoming president have been
24 slashed from 300/1 to 30/1, I'm not a betting man, but
25 if anyone has a few quid, now might be the time to put 13:29
26 a few bob on me!
27

28 Just an idea, which we have in Ireland in abundance,
29 there was a load of roads that went up in the west of

1 Ireland and nobody paid any attention to them and then
2 somebody one day did something that we do very well
3 here in Ireland, they had an idea. They used their
4 imagination. And we need to harness that. They called
5 these roads the Wild Atlantic Way. That's one of our 13:29
6 biggest tourist draws and the Americans love it. They
7 come here. They want to experience Ireland. I
8 recently said that I thought famine villages would be a
9 great idea for the tourist industry. Of course I was
10 misquoted. Somebody suggested I wanted red-headed 13:30
11 girls with harps on every street in Ireland. But
12 that's the media. That's what they do. We know which
13 horse they're backing. So when they misconstrue us and
14 when they think that we have the tenacity or the neck
15 on us to want to be president of Ireland, how dare we. 13:30
16 What I say to them when they say: "Who do you think
17 you are?" I say to them: "Who do you think I'm not?"
18 I'm an Irish citizen. I'm eligible to run for the
19 presidency and I'm very, very proud to be in a position
20 where I can give something back to Ireland. 13:30

21
22 So I would ask anyone who has already decided who they
23 want to vote for, just to put aside for a moment their
24 cynicism and to stop and think about the future of
25 Ireland and how important it would be, not just for 13:30
26 this County Council but for this country and as a whole
27 to have a black president; an Irish man who was born
28 and raised here in Dublin. My mother is Irish. By
29 culture is Irish. My soul is Irish. I think that as

1 president of Ireland what I would like to do is travel
2 the country and talk to people who have come here from
3 other parts of the world, explain to them about
4 integration, because without integration - and you all
5 know this - we are going to end up like the UK; ghetto 13:31
6 after ghetto after ghetto. When you go somewhere and
7 you don't know where you are. So I think integration
8 is the key. So don't let anyone who tells you the
9 polls say this, the polls say that. I've two words for
10 people who talk about polls, Clinton and Hillary. 13:31
11 Polls are polls. They bear to relation to what Irish
12 people are thinking about and talking about. And you
13 know that because you guys are like me in a sense, you
14 believe in a service. That's what I'm offering.
15 Service to the country to bring us forward and to 13:31
16 reflect the changing Ireland, to reflect the fact that
17 we don't allow the church to tell us what to do
18 anymore. We make those decisions for ourselves. And
19 we need to move into an area in a place where
20 homelessness -- a couple of years I was homeless and 13:31
21 for a very short period of time. What I saw from the
22 inside was a revelation. But I tell you, when I hear
23 people talking about homelessness, who have no idea,
24 and they drive back to Dublin 4 and the gates of their
25 secluded mansion close, and they come out and they talk 13:32
26 about homelessness, it's all hot air. The only thing
27 that's going to sort out the homeless problem in
28 Ireland -- and by the way I saw that Wicklow have been
29 stopped from building more homes. Where's the logic in

1 that? we need affordable housing.

2
3 I'm going to leave this behind. This is just a
4 (inaudible) paper. It's an affordable house, the cost
5 on average is €20-25,000, right. Forget buying houses 13:32
6 as investment. We need somewhere to live. People I
7 met in the homeless arena, they would have moved into a
8 shed if they could have got the money. We need to get
9 off this notion that you need there quarters of a
10 million pounds to get a roof over your head. There is 13:32
11 affordable housing. Other countries have it. The fact
12 that 22 politicians in the Dáil are apparently private
13 landlords tells you all you need to know about finding
14 a solution for that problem. It doesn't matter to
15 them, you know, and people live's are at stake here. 13:32
16

17 what I would say is, you can mock people for their
18 ambitions and for their dreams and for their hopes but
19 don't mock the presidency, it's a very, very important
20 role. And I believe that instead of making fun of our 13:33
21 culture, you know, it has come to a stage where, do you
22 see this badge here? The Irish flag, you get ridiculed
23 for it. 'what's wrong with you? You're backward.'
24 we're embarrassed about our past. we shouldn't be
25 embarrassed about our culture, or our nationality or 13:33
26 our past. I get very fed up when I hear these snidey
27 journalists looking down their nose at people who are
28 proud to be Irish, telling you that that's a separatist
29 thing. No, it's not. Irish is what we are. Ireland

1 is what this is. And I believe that for the future of
2 Ireland we need to be very mindful and always keep it
3 to the fore of our thoughts.

4
5 Just one other thing I would say in terms of an idea. 13:33
6 Did you know that right now the Central Bank in Europe
7 is obliged, if we make in Ireland and the Government
8 would need to do this, that all the old punts, there's
9 two billion old punts in Ireland under beds, right. If
10 the people who have that money were to go on the 13:33
11 internet they would make no money selling it as
12 souvenirs than they would if they took it down to the
13 bank. And many of them won't take it to the bank
14 because it came from, shall we say, unethical sources.
15 If that money was made illegal tender, on the day that 13:34
16 that happens, the Central Bank would be obliged - and
17 they've already confirmed this - to replace that with
18 €3 billion. What hasn't that happened? That's just an
19 idea. I'm just a citizen of Ireland and I'm telling
20 you that we have ideas here in Ireland and we can't 13:34
21 keep leaving it to a couple of people up in the Dáil to
22 come up with solutions to our problems. We need to
23 start an open dialogue and inviting people, everyday
24 people to come in with suggestions and ideas. That's
25 what democracy is supposed to be about. You are all 13:34
26 representatives of the people of Ireland and as a
27 citizen of Ireland I'm very, very proud to be here. I
28 believe in fair play and I do believe that democracy is
29 still alive. So, if you could for a moment just put

1 aside political ramifications of what you're told to do
2 and what to think and say, I will say to you have a
3 think about it. We need to move forward and if we
4 don't we get left behind. I'm all for including
5 people. I'm all for allowing people to understand what 13:34
6 a wonderful country we have here but integration is the
7 key.

8
9 So I'll finish up just by saying that, you know, people
10 say sometimes, maybe because of what I've been through 13:35
11 some people will call me a victim. I'm no victim.
12 Some people will call me a survivor. I am no survivor.
13 What I am and what you're looking at is a winner. Is a
14 man who has experienced life and come back again and
15 again and again and I'm very proud that Ireland has 13:35
16 given me that opportunity and the fair play that we
17 have here in this country has allowed me to do that.

18
19 I would ask you to think outside the box, to elect me
20 as Ireland's first black president and I will be very 13:35
21 proud to serve you. Thank you.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: I will just ask Joan to come up here
23 and join us at the top table. Question-and-answer
24 session please, questions not statements and we'll
25 briefly get answers from the two people up here as 13:35
26 well. It's questions please and keep them, you know,
27 as sharp as you possibly can. Thank you. Anyone out
28 there?

29

1 QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION WITH SENATOR JOAN FREEMAN
2 AND MR. KEVIN SHARKEY

3
4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Anyone out there. Cllr. Oliver
5 O'Brien. 13:36

6 CLLR. OLIVER O'BRIEN: Very interesting to hear both
7 candidates asking for democracy here. I think the big
8 thing that's against them in democracy is getting
9 elected here. Two of them, three people coming up for
10 votes here today. Two of them will walk out with 13:36
11 absolutely nothing and that's because of the process
12 here that says that you need the nomination of four
13 councils. Okay? Why isn't there a situation where if
14 I want to vote to you that that counts and you go round
15 to all the Councils and get the votes, surely that 13:36
16 would be democracy if the votes were respected. I'm
17 saying that the process in the Article of the
18 Constitution is wrong. It states two ways that you may
19 be nominated: "Not less than twenty persons, each of
20 whom is at the time a member of one of the Houses of 13:36
21 the Oireachtas". That means that if 20 senators and
22 TDs put you forward, you're nominated to go forward.
23 Fine. Okay. But it's four Councils.

24
25 Now, why is there a situation that, say, if six 13:37
26 councillors, why if six councillors decide to vote for
27 you here today, why can't that be transferred as you go
28 around to all the Councils in the country? Surely
29 that's a far more democratic way of doing business?

1 Your problem here is that the pack system is going to
2 work, as it works in this house all the time, it will
3 be the two major parties who have picked their
4 candidates. I heard Joan saying there Mr. Gallagher
5 was picked already and we know why that is. If we want 13:37
6 democracy we need to change the Constitution. And I
7 would hope that one of you guys, when you do get
8 elected, that you change those two things together
9 about the nominations.

10
11 The second thing is as well that only three of you 13:37
12 could come here today. Surely there are probably
13 people sitting down here that know of other candidates
14 that they would like to vote for, so these Councils
15 cannot exercise a democratic right to vote for that 13:37
16 person. So that's the situation you're in. It's
17 terrible to see people coming in begging. You
18 shouldn't have to beg. You should be able to get -- if
19 you get three votes (inaudible) and if you get enough
20 which is whatever it is, 20 TDs or whatever, 20 13:37
21 Councillors, if they back you from any place in the
22 country. That's real democracy.

23
24 So what we are doing here is trying to overturn it.
25 That's the first thing I would ask you to do. 13:38
26

27 The second thing I'm probably -- I was going to say I'm
28 disappointed, but Kevin you mentioned the céad míle
29 fáilte and you mentioned the culture several times. We

1 even had it (inaudible) you can't get people to say tá
2 agus níl. And if culture is so important, we're the
3 Council here and surely we should be able to use tá and
4 níl, but it won't happen. There are less than three or
5 four people using it here all the time and we're looked 13:38
6 down. One made a snide remark something about, well if
7 they would be (inaudible) they'd know how to do that.
8 And what you're saying is perfectly, perfectly right
9 and I also think, it's very important and simple. We
10 need the vision there. Vision is the most important 13:38
11 thing as you guys mentioned. Television and the power
12 that you have to deal with that. If that's the first
13 thing you do.

14
15 The second thing I would like to say, the symbol of the 13:38
16 big house is not the symbol for the ordinary people in
17 Ireland and Áras an Uachtaráin is a symbol of a big
18 house, a symbol for above red carpets. I would hope
19 that something would be done about that as well. The
20 red carpets as well, I think everybody should walk on 13:38
21 red carpet. I don't see that we should have a
22 hierarchy in society. And I'm very worried about that.
23 (Inaudible) no such thing as carpet. So that's what
24 I'm looking for the President to behave like that. I
25 know I have my views. That's the serious thing we need 13:39
26 to address. I would also be hoping maybe the Council,
27 when they're (inaudible) that if all the other Councils
28 know, I'd love to do an experiment here. Okay, I know
29 only one candidate can go forward. I know that's the

1 rules, that's in the Article, only one candidate can be
2 put forward from here. That's all we're in a position
3 to do. I understand that. But I would love to do a
4 little thing that when you go out, that if Joan would
5 go out with six votes and you would -- or voted not, if 13:39
6 that was the wishes of those, but at least you'd know
7 that when you go at the end of the thing, okay, by the
8 way did you know that Joan Freeman got 120 all over,
9 voted all over by the Councils but she didn't get the
10 nomination because of the Constitution. I would love 13:39
11 that little experiment to be done as well. If the
12 Council set out in a letter to say, this is the way
13 we're going to operate. I know it would have to change
14 for the next election. Go raibh míle maith agat.
15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Whitmore. Please questions. We 13:39
16 want to get as much information from the two people up
17 here as possible. So please keep to questions.
18 CLLR. WHITMORE: Thank you, Chair. Firstly, I would
19 just like to say thank you very much for you both for
20 coming in today. To stand for president or to seek a 13:40
21 nomination is a big challenge. I have respect for
22 anyone who puts themselves out there to go forward for
23 election.
24
25 I think for me over the past seven years, the previous 13:40
26 presidency, the proudest moments for me as an Irish
27 citizen were during the marriage equality and the
28 repeal the eighth referendum when we as a society
29 really showed that we were a different place I think

1 than, you know, we believed we were and also the global
2 world believed we were. I think that we represented a
3 sizable change in our society. I think as president
4 that our president should be the forward face of that
5 change and the personification essentially of that 13:40
6 change. So my question is, what was your stance in
7 both the marriage equality referendum and the repeal
8 the eighth? And did you play an active role in support
9 of that stance?

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm going to take a group of 13:41
11 Councillors here. Cllr. Fortune.

12 CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Can I just say
13 thanks to both of you for your presentations and the
14 content of your presentations. Very, very relevant to
15 lots of things that are going on around us as we speak. 13:41
16 It's quite difficult I think for any of us to make a
17 judgement, you know, here's somebody speaking maybe for
18 the first time, ten minutes, I know it's a process but
19 it doesn't make it that easy. I think the fact that
20 you have put yourselves forward to run for the 13:41
21 presidency, I think you're entitled to be given that
22 opportunity. So I wish the both of you the very best
23 with your campaigns.

24
25 The question I would have, is: Obviously because of the 13:41
26 way you have to campaign, you have to talk about a lot
27 of things that a lot of them if you were president you
28 wouldn't actually be able to impact or wouldn't be able
29 to do, but I suppose you have to set out your stall.

1 My question would be: If one of you were to be
2 successful in becoming the President, what do you think
3 you could achieve, you know, as the number one
4 representative of our country?
5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr. Gerry Walsh. 13:42
6 CLLR. WALSH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach, and thanks to both
7 Joan and Kevin for their presentations. Just a quick
8 question for Joan. You spoke very eloquently, Joan, on
9 the huge problem that is mental health in our society.
10 You spoke about the closure of post offices and the 13:42
11 affect that's having on our elderly in rural isolation
12 and the affects of that in relation to mental health,
13 etcetera. But my question, you also did say that the
14 role of the President is limited. So my question to
15 you is: Those issues that you did highlight, those very 13:43
16 important issues, how would you go about tackling those
17 in your role as president, I think, as you say, the
18 role being as limited as it is?
19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much for that
20 Cllr. Walsh. Cllr. Kennedy. 13:43
21 CLLR. KENNEDY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, and thank
22 you, Joan and Kevin. Could you tell us about the theme
23 that you would build if you were elected to the office
24 of the president? And what are the principles, the
25 important principles that you would follow? 13:43
26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Now that's the amount of
27 questions. Now we're finished. Joan, if you will
28 address them and then to Kevin, if you will address the
29 particular questions. Could I just say that we've been

1 joined by John Groarke and what I'm going to do is,
2 when Gavin Duffy arrives later on, we'll take those two
3 together but we'll continue on with the meeting until
4 those two arrive, if that's okay? It's difficult when
5 people don't all arrive together but that's how I
6 intend doing it. We'll carry on with the meeting and
7 then when people arrive then we'll fit them in, as far
8 as our agenda goes. Joan.

13:44

9 SENATOR FREEMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Thank you,
10 Cllr. O'Brien, for your comments but straight on to
11 Cllr. Whitmore. You asked me about how did I vote in
12 the equality and the repeal. So the equality I voted
13 yes and the repeal I voted no. Not for any religious
14 reasons, I voted no because it was the one article that
15 was safeguarding, protecting the unborn. That was the
16 only reason. I think I also reflect Ireland. I mean I
17 have three girls, a boy; two of them voted yes; two of
18 them voted no. It's exactly what Ireland's family is
19 like now. And but also, can I just add, whatever, if I
20 become president, my private convictions will have
21 nothing to do with my public duty.

13:44

13:44

13:44

22
23 So Cllr. Fortune, what would I achieve as president?
24 What could I achieve? Well, I'm going back to what I
25 said in my speech. If you think about what I have
26 achieved already, I think my pedigree would tell you
27 that I have created an organisation that is national
28 and international but the most important part, two
29 parts that are most important; one is I changed the

13:45

1 social fabric of this country. I have people talking
2 about suicide. Darkness into Light you see children
3 from two upwards. Can you imagine the conversation
4 they're having with their parents? "Where are we
5 going, mummy and daddy?" Etcetera, etcetera. So I've
6 changed the actual social dialogue. 13:45

7
8 As president I would not only generate the dialogue all
9 over again, I would focus attention, I would highlight
10 issues, the social issues. I would be the conscience 13:46
11 of the Government. I'd open the doors of the Áras and
12 embrace every single social issue that we have. I
13 would use the highest office in the land to carry out,
14 to help and support all our social issues across the
15 country and I will slowly, doggedly and persistently 13:46
16 make changes that we need in Ireland. We've got to
17 realise that this Government and all previous
18 Governments have ignored mental health. Have ignored
19 it. And I'm still not sure why. Is it because we're
20 still embarrassed about mental health? But we must 13:46
21 stop because we are facing a future that none of us
22 have ever faced before, especially with digital and
23 online and all the other issues. You know, the
24 ignoring of mental health in our country is leading
25 into an increase in homelessness, increase in 13:47
26 addiction, increase in waiting lists and if we continue
27 to ignore it we're going to have a tsunami of a crisis.

28
29 Cllr. Walsh, you said how would I go about tackling the

1 issues? So the first thing I would do as president, I
2 would hold a presidential forum where I would invite
3 the very, very brightest and the best from around the
4 world to advise us, there are some amazing research
5 done in other countries. Germany, they have this thing 13:47
6 for their children, this health check for their
7 children up to the age of 12 every year, not just
8 physical health their mental health. You may not
9 realise, but most of children's mental health issues
10 are there before the age of 14. We have a waiting list 13:47
11 of 7,000 children just to be seen by a psychiatrist, by
12 a psychologist. We have 48 beds, mental health beds
13 for 1.2 million children. We're doing something
14 seriously wrong and all the research would tell you
15 that by investing in the youth you are creating a 13:48
16 resilient society. That's the first thing.

17
18 I would be the champion to all the charities that deal
19 with mental health and deal with the older people in
20 our community. I would bring them together. If you 13:48
21 think about Wicklow. What could we bring together to
22 make them connected? To make them want to do more for
23 their county? I would also bring all the business
24 people in. This, to me, it should be a county approach
25 not a national approach and as president I'm going to 13:48
26 every county, every county in Ireland, on a regular
27 basis and see what can we do to make this county work
28 on mental health? That's what I would do also by
29 mobilising our communities. I've done it before with

1 Darkness into Light. I can do it again. And I have
2 worked so very, very hard.

3
4 Cllr. Kennedy, you said what theme? I think, you know,
5 the theme of mental health might be off putting for 13:49
6 some people. Some people might even say I'm a one trip
7 pony. But do you realise how big the trip is? And do
8 you realise that every single one of us will face some
9 mental health issue, only because of reacting to
10 something that's going on in your life. In this room 13:49
11 alone one in four of us will suffer from some serious
12 mental health issue. Where are you going to go?
13 That's what I'm asking you.

14
15 I'm asking you to embrace this. I'm asking you to be 13:49
16 fearless. My dad told me when I was a child I was
17 fearless. I never asked him why did he say that. But
18 I'm asking you to be fearless and I'm asking Wicklow to
19 be fearless in nominating me to go on to that ballot
20 people. I think that's all, Cathaoirleach. 13:50

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Right, okay. Grand. Kevin.

22 MR. SHARKEY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. When I was a
23 kid I remember praying that I didn't want to be gay. I
24 prayed every night that I wouldn't be. I was still
25 coming to terms with the fact that I was black. I was 13:50
26 37 minutes for Irish dancing. Diddley, diddley dee
27 music was the first music I heard, fell in love it.
28 Still to this day it's in my soul, it's what made me
29 who I am. But when I saw a black person for the first

1 time I thought, wow, and I realised uh-oh, I'm going to
2 have to find out about these black people, I'm going to
3 have to find out about reggae. I'm going to have to
4 find out about and Bob Marley and all those black
5 things which were nothing to do with Killybegs or Donegal. 13:51
6 And then slowly I realised, I looked up one
7 day, I remember as a kid I looked up at the sky and
8 went: "Black, Irish and gay, are you serious? Who
9 would do that to you?" And I really thought that was
10 either going to be the making of me or the breaking of 13:51
11 me, but it really did seem like a very cruel trick to
12 play on someone. I thought I'd enough to deal with.
13 But what it's given me is the most incredible insight
14 into those themes, and it's made me who I am today.

15
16 In relation to your -- I'm not sure what the problem is
17 with the red carpet. I was waiting for the question,
18 it didn't come but I do appreciate what you say.

19
20 Yourself, Cllr. Whitmore. Civil partnerships. 13 13:51
21 years ago I went on The Late Late Show with Pat Kenny
22 and the reason I went on was because I had gone to the
23 Irish Government and told them that I was going to take
24 them to the European Court of Justice unless they
25 allowed me form a civil partnership with a very, very 13:51
26 handsome seven foot man from Liverpool called Addie.
27 He was a police sergeant in London. Black father,
28 Irish mother, gorgeous looking man, really salt of the
29 earth, a gentleman. We had a business together, we had

1 a home together, we were in love and we shared our
2 lives together and I felt then, what I feel now, which
3 was you need to be recognised in law when you have a
4 partner. I've seen countless people, gay people
5 throughout my life, who at the moment of crisis, the 13:52
6 deathbed, or the sickbed, were excluded by the family
7 because they couldn't accept that their child was gay
8 and they were pushed aside and had no rights and I felt
9 that was very, very wrong. When I went on The Late
10 Late Show I was shaking and my friend said to me: 'why 13:52
11 would you do that if it makes you so uncomfortable?' I
12 said: 'It's not about me, it's about all the other
13 people who don't have a voice.' And I believe, I'm not
14 somebody who blows my own trumpet, but I'm going to do
15 it now and say that that was the beginning of the 13:52
16 conversation on civil partnerships. And when it
17 snowballed it became, people turned it into gay
18 marriage and I said then as I say now, it was never
19 about gay rights; it was about human rights. As a
20 human being you are entitled to be recognised in law. 13:53
21 That's my position. Of course I voted yes on civil
22 partnerships.

23
24 On repeal. I've five sisters. I've seen what happens
25 when you try and apply one rule, one law to everybody 13:53
26 unfortunately it doesn't work. We outsourced the
27 problem here for years in Ireland. We sent those poor
28 girls on a Ryanair flight over to clinics in the UK, on
29 their own, because we couldn't have an adult

1 conversation and deal with this in a way that we now
2 have. I'm very proud of us as a country that we've
3 stepped up to the plate and we've decided to take our
4 power back. That's why I think the future of Ireland
5 lies in seeing that we are the grown ups and we need to 13:53
6 be more caring in relation to what, because if we don't
7 we're letting children down. So whether it's drugs,
8 whether it's anything we're uncomfortable with, we have
9 to get past that because that's what we're expected to
10 do. 13:54

11
12 cllr. Fortune, you spoke about what could be achieved
13 as president ? well, first of all, I think for Ireland
14 to have a black president would send a message to the
15 rest of the world as to where we've moved on to and 13:54
16 what we've become and how we welcome diversity. And
17 also, the people who are coming from other countries to
18 realise that in Ireland when you respect the culture,
19 when you respect what we have here, anything is
20 possible and, you know, we grew up believing that to be 13:54
21 president you had to be politically affiliated, you had
22 to have a house, you had to be a millionaire. All this
23 nonsense. That's not what the criteria is. The
24 criteria is that an Irish citizen over the age of 35
25 can apply for this job. I'm very proud to be standing 13:54
26 here and it's proof that I'm standing here in front of
27 you that I can do that. As president of Ireland I
28 would look to show the rest of the world how much we've
29 changed and how we've embraced not just diversity, but

1 that you can go through life and experience life and
2 learn from life and help other people in their journey
3 by your own experience.
4

5 Cllr. Kennedy, the theme, my theme is very simple: 13:55
6 Make Ireland fair. I've seen what happens when you ask
7 fair, decent, kind, generous Irish people to go to the
8 back of the queue, to stand back, to wait until
9 somebody else is looked after. People say you say that
10 and suddenly you're against foreigners. Nothing could 13:55
11 be further from the truth. My father was an immigrant.
12 But I've seen what happens when eventually good, kind
13 decent people start to scratch their head and say:
14 'well, why am I at the back of the queue?' I believe
15 that we should -- if any Government has a priority to 13:55
16 anybody, it should have a priority to its own people
17 first and that is not to the exclusion of anybody, but
18 that is to make sure that the people who come here see
19 that we have a fair system that starts with our own, my
20 own mother if she is cooking a pot of stew and goes 13:55
21 next door and feeds the neighbour's kids first they'd
22 lock her up. This is what we have to understand here.
23 We need to look at the UK. We now have Brexit
24 happening, right. The borders are going to close in
25 the UK. And if anybody thinks that's not going to 13:56
26 affect the increase to Ireland then they're being
27 naive. It will. And I think we should be realistic
28 and prepared for that and I'm sad to say that on a
29 political spectrum nobody is allowed to have this

1 conversation because if you do you're a racist. That's
2 bull. It's the not case. Nothing could be further
3 from the truth. It's the opposite. In order to secure
4 a future for our own children and for ourselves, we
5 need to be very mindful of what we have and what we're 13:56
6 leaving behind. This legacy was given to us by our
7 grandparents. They lived in this country on spuds and
8 cabbage when this country had nothing and now look at
9 it us on our mobile phones, in our BMWs and do you
10 think they left that here so that their children and 13:56
11 grandchildren would be left out and omitted and left
12 behind? No. I believe they did that because they knew
13 they were leaving us a very important inheritance and
14 that is the inheritance that I would like to put under
15 the number one banner of inclusion. My theme would be 13:56
16 fairness and inclusion and I include everybody in that,
17 regardless of disabilities, regardless colour,
18 regardless of gender, this is Ireland. They love to
19 separate us. They love to tell us you're Catholic,
20 you're Protestant, he's black, he's white. We are all 13:57
21 Irish and we need to remember that because that's what
22 gives us our identity. I would like to think that in
23 50 years from now, when somebody comes here from
24 America they know where they are, they know where
25 they've been, they're not standing there scratching 13:57
26 their head going where the hell am I?
27 That would be my pitch to you and also to say that this
28 is an opportunity to change the course of history. I
29 don't believe it's a done deal. I don't believe

1 Michael D Higgins (inaudible). I believe he's a human
2 being like all of us and I think we as a nation
3 understand that the old guard is falling and it needs
4 to fall because we need to make way for the new and for
5 the young. Thank you. 13:57

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Joan, and thank you, Kevin.
7 Thank you very much for the presentations. We've two
8 more presentations to come later on and obviously we'll
9 keep in contact with you with regard to whatever
10 decision the Council is going to make in regard to 13:58
11 nomination.

12 MR. SHARKEY: By the way, I'm going to leave a copy,
13 there's one sheet for anybody who would like to see
14 what an affordable house can look like for 25,000. You
15 can put it at the bottom of your garden, you can put it 13:58
16 in your neighbour's garden. Please, if you get a
17 second have a look at that and check them out online.
18 They're 40-foot container homes. Thank you.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Members, we are going to continue with
20 our meeting. 13:59

21
22 VOTES OF SYMPATHY

23
24 CATHAOIRLEACH: I want to propose a vote of sympathy to
25 the Manager here on the death of his mother, Nellie, in 13:59
26 between obviously our last meeting and this meeting.
27 Any other votes of sympathy?

28 CLLR. LAWLESS: Cathaoirleach, could I be included in
29 that vote of sympathy as well for Mr. Curran's mother.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Okay.

2 MS. GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, there are a couple of
3 votes of sympathies on the death of Brendan Flannery,
4 he is a nephew of our colleague, Eileen Brennan. Also,
5 the death of Carmel Byrne, mother of our colleague, 13:59
6 Helen Purcell. Also, Margaret McCloskey, mother-in-law
7 of David Collard. Also, Alan Dentry, father of our
8 colleague, Sue Strevans. And also Eileen Walsh, mother
9 of Margaret Birchall and grandmother of Erica. Thank
10 you. 14:00

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Can we stand please.

12

13 [ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE WAS OBSERVED]

14

15 CLLR. O'NEILL: Cathaoirleach, I just had my light on 14:01
16 before that vote. Are they not working? If I could
17 just apply condolences to David McEvoy. David was a
18 young man who died tragically in Ballyknockan about a
19 month ago. He worked in the quarries there. He was a
20 genius at his game the and he was the one that made up 14:01
21 the 1916 monuments throughout Wicklow two years ago. I
22 don't know what happened to my light there.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: My fault probably. I'm not match fit
24 yet after the break. We'll record that. We'll record
25 that. Okay. Cllr. Lawless. 14:01

26

27 REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS BY
28 CLLR. LAWLESS
29

1 CLLR. LAWLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I had sent
2 correspondence to you. I was looking for a suspension
3 of Standing Orders just to discuss the impact of the
4 new bus connect proposal on the transport service for
5 Wicklow and also just to ensure that Wicklow County 14:02
6 Council as a body will actually make a submission
7 because the deadline is approaching on 28th September.
8 Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just in regard to this, there's various
10 discussions in Bray as well, the Bray Municipal area 14:02
11 and obviously in Greystones as well that the new bus
12 routes are going to affect. Can I suggest to you
13 what's happening in Bray tomorrow night is that you're
14 Cathaoirleach of Greystones, that if your meeting comes
15 before the 24th of this month, that you will include it 14:02
16 on the agenda in regard to discuss it in the
17 metropolitan area which is happening in Bray tomorrow
18 night as well. Rather than, like, I mean, it's
19 Municipal District, the particular problem. Could I
20 have agreement and support for that? 14:02

21 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Because I feel that if we go into a
23 suspension of Standing Orders of this then we'd have to
24 take the Bray situation as well and we've already,
25 like, issued an invitation to a group from Enniskerry 14:03
26 to address the meeting in Bray tomorrow night and I
27 suggest that you go down the same route in regard to
28 that. I think that's the way to handle it. Would that
29 be agreed?

1 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

2 CLLR. LAWLESS: Cathaoirleach, can I just come back in
3 very quickly. I do appreciate that. Can we just be
4 assured that actually Wicklow County Council as a body
5 actually make a submission as well because it is 14:03
6 affecting the whole of north of Wicklow. As you say it
7 is a Municipal District but just --

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: There should be coordination between
9 the district administrators in both Bray and Greystones
10 to coordinate a Wicklow County Council response into 14:03
11 that.

12 CLLR. LAWLESS: Thank you.

13 CLLR. MITCHELL: Chairman, could I just say something
14 on that?

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: No. There's no discussion on this. Do 14:03
16 you know what I mean? We're not going to have a
17 suspension of Standing Orders. You can bring that
18 up --

19 CLLR. MITCHELL: I have had some consultations on this
20 and public meetings on it and made a submission and I 14:04
21 think they're going to come to the Greystones Municipal
22 District, the people who are giving the consultation in
23 Tesco.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. I believe there's a consultation
25 day tomorrow for anyone who wants to go to it as well. 14:04
26

27 AGENDA ITEM 1

28

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just moving on to confirmation of

1 minutes, could I have a proposer and seconder.

2 MS. GALLAGHER: Minutes of 11th June.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Fox and Cllr. Fitzgerald.

4

5 AGENDA ITEM 2

14:04

6

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: The second item, the annual general
8 meeting. Could I have a proposer and seconder for
9 that?

10 MS. GALLAGHER: Proposed by Cllr. Snell.

14:04

11

12 AGENDA ITEM 3

13

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: And thirdly to confirm and sign minutes
15 of the Ordinary Meeting on Monday 2nd July. Could I
16 have a proposer and seconder for that?

14:04

17 MS. GALLAGHER: Cllr. Dunne proposed. Seconded?

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by?

19 MS. GALLAGHER: Cllr. Fox.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

14:05

21

22 AGENDA ITEM 4

23

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: In the fourth, to consider disposal of
25 land in regards to Aughrim, County Wicklow.
26 Cllr. Kennedy?

14:05

27 CLLR. KENNEDY: Yes, Cathaoirleach. I'd like to
28 propose this.

29 MS. GALLAGHER: Seconded by Cllr. Doran. Is that

1 agreed?
2 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.
3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

4
5 AGENDA ITEM 5

14:05

6
7 CATHAOIRLEACH: 5: To consider disposal of enterprise
8 units at Lathaleer, Baltinglass. Proposed by
9 Cllr. Timmins, seconded by?

10 CLLR. LAWLESS: I'll second it.

14:05

11 MS. GALLAGHER: Is that agreed?

12 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

14
15 AGENDA ITEM 6

14:05

16
17 CATHAOIRLEACH: 6, to consider the disposal of lands in
18 the townland of Merrymeeting in Rathnew.

19 CLLR. SNELL: Proposed.

20 MS. GALLAGHER: Proposed by Cllr. Snell; seconded by
21 Cllr. Dunne. Is that agreed?

14:05

22 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

23
24 AGENDA ITEM 7

14:05

25
26 CATHAOIRLEACH: 7: To consider disposal at Dunbur Head
27 in Wicklow Town. Cllr. Dunne, did you want to come in
28 there? Cllr. Dunne.

29 CLLR. DUNNE: I'd like to propose this disposal. It's

1 to save the town of Wicklow Town. It's a great
2 opportunity for tourism in the town. It opens up the
3 area for walking. The county town needs this. They
4 really do. So I'd like to propose this. I'd like to
5 also congratulate the Municipal District of the work 14:06
6 that has been put in has been unbelievable and in
7 fairness, if my fellow Councillors would agree, we were
8 always well informed about what was going on and also
9 that the work that Wicklow Golf Club have put into this
10 as well. This is a good proposal so I'd like to 14:06
11 propose this. Thank you.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is there is a seconder?

13 MS. GALLAGHER: Seconded by Cllr. Cullen. Is that
14 agreed?

15 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed. 14:06

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Kavanagh, do you want to come in
17 there?

18 CLLR. KAVANAGH: Before we agree on anything I have
19 been in discussions with both sides, both the Municipal
20 District and also Friends of The Murrough with regard 14:07
21 to some issues that they have reservations with. I'm
22 happy enough that the Council has come back with some
23 very reasonable solutions to the problems. Now the
24 thing about this transfer going through is that there
25 has to be an undertaking here today by the Council that 14:07
26 whatever issues arise with regard to erosion or with
27 regard to impairment of the walk in any way, that they
28 will deal with it because that's the only way that
29 Friends of The Murrough are going to accept this deal.

1 There's been an awful lot of work done on both sides.
2 I appreciate that. There are issues, I won't go into
3 them, there's a lot of them. Basically, they just want
4 to ensure that the start of the walk, in particular, is
5 reinforced with stone or concrete. They want to ensure 14:08
6 that a boundary fence doesn't destroy the walk and that
7 (inaudible) isn't placed all along the route. I have
8 had a response from the Council to say that it will
9 only be at occasional points with these (inaudible)
10 replace and that this will be an ongoing project that 14:08
11 will be looked at as things arise. While I do think
12 that it will be very important for the Council to
13 secure this walk for the future of tourism in this
14 town, I think there's no point securing this if we're
15 not going to stand by it and make sure that it 14:08
16 continues into the future and that we have an
17 undertaking here today from the Council that it will be
18 dealt with as issues arise.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr. Cullen and then
20 Cllr. Nolan. 14:09

21 CLLR. SHAY CULLEN: Thanks, Chairman. I would like to
22 welcome this disposal on the basis of the reopening of
23 the cliff walk at Bride's Head. I know it has been
24 officially closed down for a long number of years and
25 there has been extensive discussion at Municipal 14:09
26 District level by all Councillors and indeed engineer
27 Paul Byrne and district administrator Joan Sinnott have
28 done tremendous work in procuring and negotiating with
29 the Wicklow Golf Club to come to an agreement on the

1 opening of this fantastic amenity for Wicklow Town. I
2 know both Paul Byrne and Joan have had extensive
3 discussion with the consultants on the trail upgrade
4 and the safety improvements that are required and
5 consultation has also taken place with the Heritage 14:10
6 Officer, archaeologists and ecologists in the planning
7 of the trail. It is the intention that -- well
8 up-to-date we have secured funding through the Outdoor
9 Recreational Programme and it would be in the intention
10 that we would look for further funding to continue to 14:10
11 improve the cliff walk through any sources of funding
12 that we can certainly find. Now I know there has been
13 issues over certain pinch points, we'll call them, of
14 the trail, and I know that both engineer Paul Byrne and
15 Friends of The Murrough and the interested parties like 14:10
16 the golf club have discussed this at length and I think
17 common ground has been achieved on this in that the
18 concerns will be taken into consideration when the
19 fencing is being erected and any issues are certainly
20 being discussed. 14:11

21
22 Look, I would like to welcome this. I think it's a
23 fantastic amenity. It's a fabulous location. It's
24 something that we've had on our agenda now for quite a
25 good few years from the point of view of discussing at 14:11
26 Municipal District level and I think this is a great
27 day for Wicklow. Thank you.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. I will bring in the
29 Manager, Brian Gleeson, and then we're going to take a

1 vote on it.

2 CLLR. BEHAN: Cllr. Snell indicated --

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry I didn't see that. Cllr. Snell,
4 you can be last.

5 CLLR. SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I also, like the 14:11
6 previous speakers, have had a lot of dialogue in
7 regards to this disposal with the Friends of The
8 Murrough and the Municipal District. I spoke to the
9 Law Agent here last week, Corporate Policy discussed it
10 this morning in huge detail. Again, I welcome it. I 14:12
11 say that it's a good news story. It's not just for
12 visitors and tourists but locals alike. It's not
13 something that is exclusively just for people of
14 Wicklow Town, but further afield. I understand the
15 concerns that everyone had on both sides and I think 14:12
16 that, you know, common sense has prevailed. There's
17 been a lot of dialogue on this. There's been a lot of
18 meetings between Friends of The Murrough and officials
19 and I understand the complexities of trying to get
20 consensus on something that could hypothetically happen 14:12
21 down the line. Therefore, I think the deal that is
22 here in front of us to secure the funding that has
23 75,000, to make sure that can be drawn down and start
24 the process. It needs to be sanctioned here today and
25 I certainly will be supporting it. Thanks, 14:12
26 Cathaoirleach.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, Cllr. Walsh, I missed you out
28 there and Cllr. Winters and then we're going for a
29 vote.

1 CLLR. WINTERS: No.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Walsh?

3 CLLR. WALSH: Do you want me to come in there,

4 Cathaoirleach?

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Brian. 14:13

6 MR. GLEESON: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just in relation

7 to the issue raised by Cllr. Kavanagh with regard to

8 the coastal erosion. Wicklow County Council will

9 continue to monitor the entire cliff walk area and any

10 new erosion damage will be assessed on an ongoing 14:13

11 basis. All options will be considered for the repair

12 of any further damage to the cliff walk that may occur

13 at a future date, but in the meantime it is the

14 intention of Wicklow County Council to continue to

15 actively pursue funding for the preferred RPS design 14:13

16 solution to carry out the coastal protection works, for

17 which we commissioned a report on. Thank you.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Winters, you know you don't come

19 in after the official. I will just let you in this

20 once. 14:13

21 CLLR. WINTERS: Sorry. I just want to say that I know

22 this isn't a perfect solution but I think enormous work

23 has been done by the Municipal District, by both

24 officials, and I know Cllr. Cullen did huge work last

25 year when he was Chair of the Municipal District and I 14:14

26 think this is the best solution that we can come at to

27 make sure that people have access, public access and

28 still allow the existing private landowners to have

29 access to their private lands. I welcome this proposal

1 and think that it will ensure that we do have access to
2 the cliff walk. I think it's the best that can be done
3 in the circumstances. We have, and I actually think
4 it's a good deal. If the erosion was to continue in
5 the way that's been outlined, at that stage the land 14:14
6 that's currently being used as a hole for the golf club
7 would then become available for the cliff walk and
8 they'd have the additional land to redevelop their
9 course. So I actually think this is a great compromise
10 and I urge all the members to support it. Thank you. 14:15

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is it agreed?

12 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

13 MS. GALLAGHER: It's agreed by all. Proposed by
14 Cllr. Dunne seconded by Cllr. Nolan.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Agreed by all? 14:15

16 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much.

18

19 AGENDA ITEM 8

20

14:15

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: In regard to 8, could I have a proposer
22 and seconder for that?

23 MS. GALLAGHER: Proposed by Cllr. Shay Cullen and
24 seconded by Cllr. Gail Dunne. Is that agreed?

25 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed. 14:15

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: The two members that want to address
27 the Council have now arrived. I'm going to ask the
28 first one, John Groarke, to address us for the same
29 criteria, John, as the previous speakers, ten to

1 fifteen minutes and then we'd have a
2 question-and-answer session then with yourself and
3 Gavin Duffy afterwards. You're very welcome to the
4 Chamber.

14:15

5
6 PRESENTATION FROM MR. JOHN GROARKE

7
8
9 MR. GROARKE: I want to thank the Chairman and the
10 rest of your fine Council here for having me here
11 today. My reason for running for the presidency is
12 that when I sought help from the Minister for the
13 planning permission for the house that wasn't built
14 properly, he said he had no responsibility. I find it
15 extremely rare that a man that is taking a salary from
16 the sovereign of Ireland - that's the people of Ireland
17 - and still has no responsibility. He wrote to the --
18 he said he was talking to the Land Commission to write
19 to the Minister for Agriculture. He done that. Then
20 he wrote back that it's almost gone. He said we're
21 only just tidying up the paperwork. I have done a
22 little bit of research but it's a long time since the
23 Land Commission ever divided any large concrete states,
24 to my know, in the country and why they're there
25 drawing salaries I don't know.

14:16

14:16

14:17

14:17

26
27 Likewise, with the problem in the Health Service and
28 the smear tests and all the way they went on. The
29 Minister for Health has no responsibility either

1 towards women and towards children.

2
3 Even the way to seek the nomination here for the
4 presidency, I have to go all over the country to seek
5 it and as a citizen of Ireland I have to (inaudible) 14:17
6 just as does Michael D Higgins and he has privileges
7 and in a republic there's no privileges.

8
9 There's one thing that the French Revolution Government
10 done, they abolished royal privilege and royal 14:18
11 protocol. That's about in my eyes a lot of the good
12 they done. The rest of it was 25 years of carnage all
13 over Europe and into Russia and that.

14
15 when I talk about liberty, I liken it to every man is 14:18
16 equal and every woman is equal, and every office of
17 (inaudible) in the 32 counties of Éire, every man and
18 woman will have the right to run for every office in
19 Government and every avenue to each office would be
20 open to him. I would not have to deal with -- I could 14:18
21 go to my county seat and say to the sheriff or deputy,
22 or whoever, I want to be on the ballot paper. In your
23 case your citizens could come here and ask this good
24 Cathaoirleach, whoever would be in charge, I want my
25 name on the ballot paper and it is automatic. 14:19
26

27 About the different things I would be promoting. The
28 office is limited but I would be taking into account
29 every section of society. Three things that I can

1 mention, they're too numerous to mention here to you
2 today, but all section of society have different needs
3 and problems and when you haven't the power to rule
4 Ireland then you can't name your own cabinet and put in
5 the people that would be able to do it. There would be 14:19
6 none of the Galway Tent and the Lowry affairs and all
7 these different things that has taken place down the
8 years and has left the poor people of Ireland paying
9 for it, the Celtic Tiger. Some of these that has done
10 this is still on very, very large pensions. While I 14:19
11 was on farm assistance only a few weeks back I was
12 getting 176 and it just goes to show you what an
13 unequal society it is because I haven't the livestock
14 anymore because I was nearly bankrupt in 2016 they
15 refused to give it to me, only just €75. If I sell the 14:20
16 land or do whatever I do. I will get a few grants if I
17 have some many donkeys. That's the type of thing.

18
19 All I'll say to you is, there's too many things to
20 mention here today but all of you have somebody like 14:20
21 me, a country person, either an uncle or an aunt,
22 brother or sister or grandparent just like me and it
23 would be an uplift to the poor people of the towns and
24 cities and country if a poor person, for the first
25 time, could enter Áras an Uachtaráin. 14:20
26

27 If I could I would like to make a better Republic of
28 Ireland that I would (inaudible) and no other one would
29 either. I'm fearful that meeting the people in the

1 Dáil and people in the Senate they don't care about me.
2 Some of them would (inaudible) these rich people will
3 not give me a lift in one of their cars if I was
4 thumbing down the road. I know that for a fact. And
5 that's what it is to elect a poor person rather than 14:21
6 letting a rich person. If I see someone stuck on the
7 road I give them a lift. That's the way I look at it.
8 The big thing about this is, like I said to you, it's
9 too big to go into here with the few minutes I have but
10 I feel that the President was in for seven years, the 14:21
11 present man in office, and he hasn't left it easier for
12 me to get on the ballot paper. If I was able to get on
13 it I most likely wouldn't be here at all today, believe
14 it or not. I wouldn't have -- but the fact that I
15 haven't the right to have the same privilege as him and 14:22
16 the Ministers have no responsibility at all. In my own
17 area, you were talking about health and that, in my own
18 area there, Friday evening we had a citizen that the
19 supposed likelihood is there was a suicide committed
20 there. So all these issues I will be taking up but 14:22
21 they need to be taken up at a different level in ahead.
22 I think that's all. Thank you.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, John. I'd like to welcome
24 Gavin Duffy. Thank you for coming, Gavin. You can
25 make your presentation. 14:22
26

27 PRESENTATION FROM MR. GAVIN DUFFY

28
29 MR. DUFFY: If it's all right with your permission I'll

1 stand. Cathaoirleach, agus Comhairligh tá an athas orm
2 (inaudible) seo Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin.

3
4 Cathaoirleach, if we're testing the energy and drive
5 of potential candidates today I can tell you this is a 14:23
6 good day to test it. I have already been in Kerry this
7 morning speaking to the Chamber in Tralee and we came
8 direct here by road - including that little delay on
9 the N7 - and swung around the M50 to be here and
10 delighted we were able to make it on time. 14:23

11
12 The question that people would ask is: "Gavin, why are
13 you running for President?" The first thing I want to
14 acknowledge here in your Chamber this afternoon is, all
15 the presidents have served our country very well, 14:24
16 especially President Michael D Higgins and I want to
17 acknowledge that. And proof of that is how well he's
18 seemed to be doing in the first poll we've had of a
19 presidential election. But also, another poll has said
20 that the majority of the electorate want an election 14:24
21 and that's why I'm here today and that's why written
22 into the Constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, is a very
23 special responsibility, dare I say it, an obligation on
24 you as councillors, Article 12.4.2° gives you the right
25 to nominate for a presidential election. It's the only 14:24
26 office in the country where the people directly elect
27 the officeholder. And there's a reason why councillors
28 are given that responsibility, because you're the
29 people who are really on the front line of democracy.

1 You're the people who are in touch with the electorate
2 and you have that article in the Constitution that, as
3 I said, gives you the responsibility to nominate
4 somebody from your Local Authority.

14:25

5
6 I want to talk about the president and what can
7 somebody do when they're president? So I want to talk
8 about two things; hard powers and soft powers. The
9 hard powers are those four reserved powers in the
10 Constitution that the President has responsibility for. 14:25
11 Some of them very onerous like being the person who
12 makes the sole decision about whether or not to grant a
13 dissolution of the Dáil to a Taoiseach who has lost a
14 majority in the house. Only the President can
15 determine that. Now it's very onerous. It's never 14:25
16 been exercised in nine presidencies, but still it is
17 one of the hard powers that the President has.

18
19 what I want to talk about are the soft powers. What
20 else can a president do? The first person I think who 14:26
21 experimented with was presidency was President Erskine
22 Childers. Now, tragically he died shortly after taking
23 office and we never got to see what were his plans for
24 an expanded role of the presidency. But I think in the
25 presidencies of Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese we saw 14:26
26 a caring and compassionate side of the presidency, that
27 it could be taken a little bit further. President
28 Robinson reached out to the people of war-torn Somalia.
29 Yes, it was symbolic, but it was importantly symbolic,

1 she lit a candle in the window of the Áras to remind us
2 all of our emigrants - the Irish abroad.

3 Mary McAleese was a bridge builder, building bridges
4 and on this island north and south and these islands
5 east and west. Both these strong women, both 14:27
6 constitutional lawyers, knew there was more that could
7 be done by a president that's not written down in the
8 Constitution. Both of them played a key role in the
9 Northern Ireland peace process and the achievement of
10 the Good Friday Agreement. None of that was written 14:27
11 down in the Constitution, yet a president can do those
12 type of soft powers and achieve things.

13
14 when I talk about soft powers I see the President's
15 soft power as a combination of advocacy, 14:27
16 representation, encouragement and acknowledgement for
17 the people representing people who feel marginalised,
18 representing people who want to right a wrong or
19 initiate something in their community, or perhaps lead
20 positive change in Ireland. The President should also 14:27
21 underline our wonderful diversity, achievements and
22 aspirations and make people aware of that at home and
23 abroad. Now, as president I intend to be among the
24 people, not talking at them but listening to them,
25 hearing what they have to say and helping to channel 14:28
26 their ideas and concerns through what I call the
27 platform of the presidency. All my life I have helped
28 people to achieve their goals and to express their
29 talents, working with leaders in business and politics

1 as well as with the new Irish who have come from other
2 countries. I've worked with people with disability;
3 I've worked with young people; I've worked with older
4 people. Like me, they all had one thing in common: a
5 dream of making a difference. And I sort of helped 14:28
6 them draw out their road map to achieve their dream and
7 to make it happen. With that expertise, that
8 experience I have, I believe that I'm ideally suited to
9 harness the power, the soft powers of the presidency
10 but to do it strictly within the constitutional and 14:29
11 political framework.

12
13 I will base my election campaign (and if I'm elected my
14 presidency) on a solid foundation of five key pillars.
15 Now, these are important areas of challenge and 14:29
16 opportunity, areas that I've already been working in.
17 It's not something that I've created for a policy
18 platform for a presidency. I've been working on a
19 number of these issues for years. If in office I will
20 use my time and energy to generate focus in dialogue on 14:29
21 these pillars, these themes so as to encourage our
22 people, the people of Ireland, to propose solutions for
23 them.

24
25 The five pillars are, well, first is youth. How do we 14:29
26 respond to the changes that are happening at warped
27 speed in our world of work? I'm talking about robotics
28 and artificial intelligence and how that's going to
29 impact on our future. By the way, if those of you,

1 some of you are parents or grandparents of children in
2 primary school at the moment, IBEC has reported only in
3 July that if you think of people in primary school
4 today, when they're going in to the workforce we'll say
5 in 20 years' time, more than half the jobs they'll take 14:30
6 up have yet to be invented and that's a challenge for
7 any society and something I feel we have to have a
8 national conversation about.

9
10 Something that's been resonating very well when I've 14:30
11 mentioned it in Council Chambers is my intention to
12 create an Ireland international youth corps. This will
13 be aimed at young people aged between 18 and 23 who
14 will do service in their local community for three
15 months but then will volunteer to do service overseas 14:31
16 in the Third world. I think there's a great missionary
17 zeal in the Irish and it's particularly there amongst
18 our youth and I want to capitalise on that.

19
20 Age. How to create a truly caring environment for our 14:31
21 older people. We're all going to be living longer.
22 I'm very proud of the fact that the age-friendly
23 initiative, the first county it started in was County
24 Louth where I was its County Chairman and to see the
25 age-friendly alliance now extending across the country 14:31
26 into a national movement is wonderful to see but I want
27 to see more of that. How do we, as I say, show more
28 concern and care and support for older people, the
29 people whose work and sacrifices us gave us the society

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we have.

Diversity and inclusion. How to build an Ireland that retains its own sense of its distinct culture and identity and heritage, but at the same time is welcoming of people from other backgrounds, offering them inclusivity but also recognising and respecting their right to retain their own culture and heritage.

14:32

I know this is a tall ask. I'd like to have a conversation about respect in Ireland. The way we attack one another. Those of you in this Chamber know, the moment you crossed over from being an ordinary citizen, I can see a reaction, the moment you crossed over that magic line - well, was it a magic line or a tragic line? The moment you crossed over and you said you were going into public office to serve your community, like you were discussing the plans here beforehand that are so important for a local community, you're suddenly now the target for attack. But think about younger people who suffer cyber bullying. Young people who are shamed about their body shape or their sexual orientation. I want to have a conversation about that. And then obviously as president I want to see how can we work better together to sustain inward investment, to encourage enterprise and exports, but also, Cathaoirleach, I want to see it spread better around the country. I think that's very important.

14:32

14:32

14:32

14:33

1 The President is above the cut and thrust of politics,
2 particularly party politics, and cannot effect
3 political change but the President, she or he has the
4 power to motivate and inspire debate and dialogue or to
5 channel intention and discussion to important issues 14:33
6 that are ultimately resolved through politics. I will
7 do that by believing in people, encouraging a can-do
8 attitude, something, as I said, I've been doing and has
9 been the main focus of my life. In the end, obviously,
10 it'll be down to the people themselves to come up with 14:34
11 the solutions and to propose them.

12
13 So they're my five pillars and what I want to say here
14 in Wicklow this afternoon: there will be no more. I'm
15 not going to insult the people's intelligence during 14:34
16 this campaign promising them things the President can
17 do that are simply not allowed within the Constitution.
18 So you have to pick your themes that are not currently
19 political but slightly beyond it, look to a longer
20 timeframe and see can we have a national conversation 14:34
21 around that.

22
23 The appropriate exercise of the President's hard power,
24 because I've been talking about soft power, those four
25 powers reserved to the President under the 14:34
26 Constitution, look, it requires somebody who has a
27 broad experience of every aspect of Irish life, as well
28 as sound judgement, empathy, courage, expertise and
29 what I would say, an ability to weigh the advice of

1 experts. That's what the job requires. I'm saying to
2 you this is second nature to me. I've acquired them
3 and used them often in my long career first off as a
4 journalist, a broadcaster, a communicator, a mentor, a
5 business investor, but also in advising leaders in
6 business and politics, people who faced big decisions.

14:35

7
8 Finally, just a little bit about myself. I'm an avid
9 reader of history and politics. I've studied the
10 presidency very, very closely and obviously necessary,
11 studied the Constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann in
12 detail. In fact because I have studied it in detail,
13 the funny thing is I almost welcome and embrace the
14 constraints that the Constitution places on the
15 President.

14:35

14:35

16
17 I was reared above the family shop in Drogheda in
18 County Louth. I didn't go to third level. Never went
19 to college or university, I went straight into the
20 workplace. Aged 18 I was employing 30 people. I'm
21 very pleased that I enjoyed some success in business
22 life but when it comes down to it, I'm first and
23 foremost a husband of 25 years and a father of four
24 adult children. In fact our youngest, there's no
25 teenagers in our house anymore, just turned 20 the
26 other day. So I am a parent. That's essentially what
27 I come before you as, who's concerned about the future
28 we're creating for our children. That's the priority
29 for me and I do think we do need to address many issues

14:36

14:36

1 in that area.

2
3 My values are hard work, integrity, family, community,
4 resilience, staying focused and a very big fáilte for
5 everyone, regardless of their colour, creed, 14:36
6 orientation or ethnicity.

7
8 So, Comhairligh, I want to offer the people of Ireland
9 an evolving, dynamic, better presidency. I've come
10 here today to put myself and my beliefs before you, to 14:37
11 make myself available presently to answer your
12 questions but there's one thing I'm asking you to do
13 this 3rd September: please, through your nomination,
14 give me the opportunity to put myself before the people
15 to let them decide. Comhairligh, go raibh míle maith 14:37
16 agat go léir.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Councillors, the same process as
18 before. The questions to the point please and we will
19 then have a question-and-answer session among John and
20 Gavin in regard to that. Questions. Cllr. Fox please. 14:37

21
22 QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION WITH MR. JOHN GROARKE AND
23 MR. GAVIN DUFFY

24
25 CLLR. FOX: Thank you, Chairman. First of all, quickly 14:38
26 for you, Chairman, if we decide to nominate someone do
27 we do it at a Special Meeting at a future date?

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: The process is that you can't nominate
29 somebody, you could nominate somebody at this meeting

1 but there would be no voting taken. You have to give
2 three clear days to the Members of that but the
3 nomination has to be proposed and seconded and then we
4 there would be have to three days before a meeting is
5 called. So the process that I hope to adopt is that 14:38
6 after the two gentlemen have completed their
7 presentation today, I will ask Members if they want to
8 go down the process of nominating somebody and then
9 we'll set up the process either by way of a Special
10 Meeting within the next week or two weeks, or we have a 14:38
11 meeting that's going on the 24th, which is probably a
12 little bit late because it's two days before the
13 nomination process ends. So my thoughts on this at the
14 moment, and obviously I'm in your hands, would be that
15 if we decide to go down the route of a nomination of a 14:39
16 particular individual, that I can see a situation that
17 we would have a Special Meeting next Monday and, you
18 know, maybe call that in the evening rather than at two
19 o'clock, if that facilitated Members better if we could
20 do that. That's my thoughts at the moment but I'm in 14:39
21 your hands in regard to what process we take after
22 this.

23 CLLR. FOX: Okay. First of all, can I thank you the
24 two gentlemen, John and Gavin, for coming and making a
25 presentation. I'll resist temptation to say to Gavin: 14:39
26 "I'm out"!

27
28 I would certainly be in favour of nominating a person
29 to put on the ballot paper because I think we are now

1 going to have a presidential election and I think the
2 people out there should be offered choice. Certainly I
3 would be in favour of facilitating somebody to go on
4 the ballot paper.

5
6 Can I just ask the two gentlemen here a very quick
7 question: have you any political affiliations or are
8 you non-political?

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: If you just take a group of questioning
10 and then I will let you and John to come in and then
11 answer them all. There's five or six people showing
12 there in regards to this. Cllr. Ruttle.

13 CLLR. RUTTLE: Thank you, gentlemen, both of you for
14 coming along and speaking to us today. I, like my
15 colleague, Cllr. Fox, would be very appreciative of the
16 fact of what powers we have. We spend a lot of our
17 time in this Chamber saying how much has been eroded
18 and how much has been taken off us, and here is an
19 opportunity for us to do something. I would be very,
20 very determined that this body would seek to nominate
21 an individual to run for president. As I said, enough
22 of our powers have been eroded. We are, as Gavin Duffy
23 said, the grassroots, the front line people. We see
24 things firsthand and if we see an opportunity to
25 nominate a person we should go ahead and we should do
26 that and utilise that power. It's great to see it,
27 because at one time it was always just tied up with
28 certain groups and there was no possibility of getting
29 into the hunt at all.

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Just apropos Gavin's presentation, we know from your presentation of other things about your business background, but I think you probably also have other backgrounds, agriculture, farming, that kind of thing, because this is a diverse county here of both urbanised people and rural people and certainly it's a broad spectrum and I think you have that background as well. Maybe you might outline to us your knowledge and experience of that world of farming that some of us in this Chamber exist in as well. Thank you. 14:42

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Oliver O'Brien.

CLLR. OLIVER O'BRIEN: Go raibh maith agat, John agus Gavin. My question is Article 12.4.2° of the Constitution, as far as I see, looking at it there, it's totally undemocratic and I'm wondering if you were elected to president, would you make some move to have that article in the Constitution changed? I outlined what I saw as undemocratic about it was that, and I see John mentioned it there, the fact that four councils it takes to nominate so one person goes further. Surely in a county if there's 32 people in the Council, okay, everybody should have a vote and it should be of some value, it shouldn't just go by the wayside, and that basically speaking you come in here, Gavin, and you got 20 votes, that goes into your account until you build up your 120, or the requisite votes to all of the whole country. That's the way it should operate. And the same with someone else if they got three, they might go 14:42 14:43

1 to another Council and get ten. As I see it at the
2 moment this is upholding the status quo and that
3 basically speaking what will happen here is, the guy
4 that has the big party backing is the guy who's going
5 to the get that nomination. In other words, it's not a 14:43
6 democratic way. John is trying to get on the thing
7 there but he knows that the system is firmly stacked
8 against you getting a nomination. So what would you
9 actually do to change that article in the Constitution.
10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Right. Okay. Cllr. Bourke. 14:43
11 CLLR. BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like
12 to thank both Gavin and John there for their excellent
13 presentations. I just was wondering, though, have
14 either of you ever considered running for office
15 before, whether local elections or national elections; 14:43
16 and if not why not?
17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Miriam Murphy.
18 CLLR. MURPHY: I would like to acknowledge the two
19 presentations. I would just like to ask Gavin on his
20 mention of disability, in what form did he work with 14:44
21 people with disabilities? How would you encourage it?
22 And also, I think, you know you said about the five
23 pillars, you're kind of labelling, which I don't agree
24 with, because I'm Miriam. Other people might see me as
25 someone in a wheelchair, but I'm Miriam and I'm very 14:44
26 accepted but I think we need to encourage, to stop the
27 labelling because we all are the same. We all have to
28 get up, do the same thing every day, whether you have a
29 disability or not. I certainly would like to know your

1 comment on that.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Gerry O'Neill.

3 CLLR. O'NEILL: Just my question is short and brief but
4 it's something similar to what Cllr. Fox said, were
5 either of you either a member of a political party? 14:44

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Mary Kavanagh.

7 CLLR. KAVANAGH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I just want to
8 congratulate John and Gavin for their presentations.
9 My question was actually to Gavin. As you know the
10 President is very much a role model and influences 14:45
11 society to a great extent, young people especially. As
12 somebody who is a supporter of animal rights and an
13 animal lover and I know that you are very involved in
14 fox hunting, how can you square that circle of the
15 subject which polarises the country? On the one hand 14:45
16 you have supporters and on the other hand you have
17 people who are volunteers who give their lives and
18 dedicate their lives to helping abused animals. I
19 believe that a fox that is hunted is an abused animal.
20 How can you square that circle from the point of view 14:45
21 of as being a role model for people who are so anti
22 that particular sport? That's my question.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Shay Cullen.

24 CLLR. SHAY CULLEN: Thanks, Chairman. Again, just
25 congratulations to John and Gavin and thank you for 14:46
26 your presentations. Just one question to both of you:
27 what would your single most important issue, if
28 successful as president, to be addressed, what would
29 the single most important issue be.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Whitmore and that's the end.
2 CLLR. WHITMORE: Thank you very much. A question for
3 Gavin. It's great to see you talking about
4 volunteering. I think volunteering is a cornerstone of
5 Irish society and I actually think if volunteers in 14:46
6 this country stopped then the country would fall over.
7 I'm just wondering when you talk about the work you've
8 done over the past number of years is this in a private
9 capacity or have you volunteered and actually, I
10 suppose, got engaged with civil society on a campaign 14:46
11 front. And also to both of you, were either of you
12 involved in either the marriage equality or repeal
13 referendums and which stance did you take? Thank you.
14 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's fine. John and Gavin, if you
15 will address them. I will let John in and then I will 14:47
16 let Gavin in.
17 MR. GROARKE: On the political side of things, I've no
18 affiliation to any party. It was through necessity
19 that I got involved in this election. Like I said I
20 could have gone like the President, I wouldn't have 14:47
21 gone at all. It's just the fact that I haven't the
22 right and same privileges as he has. That's why I want
23 to do it to get a feel, even if I mightn't have a
24 chance for nomination. That's why I done it.
25 14:47
26 As regards farming, I took over the family farm and
27 stayed there on it. Looking back on it I suppose it
28 wasn't the wisest to do but I am where I am and this is
29 where it has found me. I know some of my relatives and

1 that have done very well, they have went to America and
2 Canada and New Zealand and some of them have achieved
3 political office in different countries. I was told by
4 one of them the other day that I was fighting a losing
5 battle. She says between the President and the three 14:48
6 people from this good man's show on telly and it is
7 them that they're going to vote for. Gavin, your own
8 county is declaring for Mr. Gallagher or supposed to be
9 so that's why I didn't bother going to your county
10 because there was no point. I couldn't get to Kerry 14:48
11 because it was too far and I have to try to get Cork
12 this evening. That's why I'm showing that this is an
13 insult to the Irish citizen that wants to achieve
14 public office. It doesn't matter how high the office
15 is, every Irish man is equal and every Irish woman is 14:48
16 equal. That's why I feel that it's a bit of an insult
17 that you have to go all over the country to try to get
18 on the ballot paper first. I'm fighting two elections
19 and the President has only to fight one. I haven't
20 much money to fight it and he still the other day 14:49
21 wanted the presidential car to be able to take him
22 around. I think it was the (inaudible), or someone
23 advised him that he could have the car but he would
24 have to pay for the fuel and for the chauffeur. I feel
25 he shouldn't have the car. (Inaudible). That's the 14:49
26 way I feel about that.

27
28 As regards the other questions you were asking me. I'm
29 only a country person. This man has an awful lot of

1 attributes that I haven't got maybe you would say, but
2 if I was to land in Hollywood today they could make me
3 a president or they could make be a Russian. They
4 could make me whatever it be and all they've to do is
5 hand me the script and I'll learn them. That's all 14:50
6 he'll do no matter what he says. They're only going to
7 act, even if -- it will be interesting to see will he
8 change it if he does get to be president? And he has
9 to change one thing to do that, he has to change
10 Ireland. That takes care of all your questions. The 14:50
11 idea is to change Ireland. If you have a child or
12 anyone who wants to become president, they can name
13 their own Cabinet. That I could name Mrs. Eileen
14 Robinson as my attorney general. I could name
15 Dr. Paisley's daughter as my secretary of the 14:50
16 Department of Finance. That's what true liberty is.
17 You can ask all the questions you like, you can say
18 what you like but that office, Erskine Childers, I
19 forget what Taoiseach at the time, I understand he was
20 a Presbyterian and Government are (inaudible). But he 14:51
21 wanted to rule it and the Constitution would not allow
22 it. And that's where the whole thing has gone wrong
23 down the years. Was it in Westmeath I was told I
24 should go to join the Dáil and I said to myself that
25 man hasn't much sense because what can I do in the 14:51
26 Dáil? There's plenty in there taking the sovereign's
27 money and they're not doing a whole lot.
28
29 Enda Kenny's guilty and everything, he threw one thing

1 and another. That's no use. Even the sovereign
2 themselves should be able to look at what's going on in
3 the budget every year and at the moment they haven't
4 the authority to do so. You know that yourselves as
5 councillors. You know more about it as me because I'm 14:51
6 only in this game a few days. So I'll leave it there
7 for now.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Gavin, if you'll address the questions
9 there please. Thank you.

10 MR. DUFFY: John, the one thing I do want to say we 14:52
11 have in common and I want to congratulate you for it, I
12 can assure you it takes great conviction to decide to
13 put yourself forward for this position and I admire you
14 for doing that and genuinely wish you the very best of
15 luck in your pursuit of the nomination. 14:52

16
17 To the questions. First of all, Cllr. Fox, you asked
18 have I any political affiliation? I have no party
19 affiliation. I have never been a member of any
20 particular political party. 14:52

21
22 Cllr. Fox, I don't think that should be worn as a badge
23 of honour, I think somebody who commits to a political
24 process, joins a party or none, and puts themselves
25 before the electorate, as the councillors in this room 14:52
26 have done, you know, that's democracy and I appreciate
27 it. But I can confirm for you, I have no party
28 political affiliation.

29

1 Literally just coming to the podium I learned that I am
2 the first person in the 2018 election to get a
3 nomination. Meath County Council voted today. They
4 held their hearings in late August and they just voted
5 this afternoon at 2:30 and Senator Joan Freeman 14:53
6 received two votes; Sean Gallagher received seven
7 votes. Joan received two votes from two Independents;
8 Sean Gallagher received seven votes from Fianna Fáil;
9 and I received 17 votes and my votes were from Fianna
10 Fáil, Fine Gael - who broke a directive or an 14:53
11 instruction - and the majority of the Independents. I
12 think that indicates I'm sort of very much a cross
13 party.

14
15 Beside you, good afternoon, Cllr. Ruttle. Yes, I think 14:54
16 it would be nice to have a president who has worn
17 wellingtons. I don't think it should be a
18 qualification for the job but, you know, it would be
19 nice. Considering that when we were losing the run of
20 ourselves in the Celtic Tiger in this country, we were 14:54
21 all talking about business and property, when our
22 economy crashed it was the agri sector that was the
23 only sector that kept turning over and we should be
24 very proud of very large agri sector businesses that
25 are exporting so much out of this country. 14:54
26

27 If it's all right I'll go to the very important
28 question from Cllr. Kavanagh about fox hunting and
29 answer that for you, Cllr. Kavanagh. As I said, I

1 received the first nomination today. This contest
2 hasn't even started I've been told, or well if you
3 follow Twitter, apparently I'm a member of the
4 Freemasons. No, I'm not. I did a documentary for an
5 RTÉ producer many years ago where I was the presenter, 14:55
6 but I have to say no, I'm not a member of the
7 Freemasons, and a variety of things that have been said
8 about me.

9
10 I am somebody who is an equestrian, if I was to use 14:55
11 that term. I have an affliction called a love of
12 horses. It's very hard to be, be it a jockey, you name
13 all of our great jockeys, at some stage they've been to
14 a point-to-point or they've been involved because it's
15 called National Hunt, it's connected. If you're in a 14:55
16 pony club you're connected to hunting. What I did do,
17 though, in 2007, was when there was a move to withdraw
18 a licence from the Ward Union Hunt, I stood in and
19 defended the ward Union but again I've read in all the
20 newspapers I'm a member of the Ward. I was never a 14:56
21 member of the Ward Union. But the Ward Union happens
22 to hold and be the curators of the only original Irish
23 red deer herd in the country. I'm talking in Wicklow
24 where you have your deer and in some places you have
25 too many of them, but this was the purebred Irish red 14:56
26 deer and I asked a simple question: if you ban this
27 what are you going to do with the herd? And there was
28 some talk it would be moved to Killarney National Park
29 and then the park rangers said and the veterinarian

1 scientists advised, no, that would weaken the blood
2 lines, etcetera. That was my defence of the ward Union
3 but it's blown up to something else now. I am an
4 equestrian.

5
6 To Cllr. Kavanagh's question, you're absolutely right,
7 it is a divisive topic and I'm very much an animal
8 welfare person. I am an animal person. I've all my
9 life with animals, horses, dogs, cats, children,
10 goldfish, hamsters, you know, you have them all like
11 everybody else. But I appreciate the question because
12 it gives me an opportunity to answer it.

13
14 I think, Cathaoirleach, what has been fascinating about
15 going around the country and this exercise and I know,
16 Cllr. O'Brien, you questioned Article 12.4.2°, what I
17 found fascinating about it, Cllr. O'Brien, is this,
18 that it's questions like yours, I have been able to, in
19 getting all the questions around the country you're
20 able to get a feeling of where people's thoughts are
21 and you hear very insightful thinking like yours there
22 and the difficulties of Article 12.4.2° and how it
23 might be changed? I'm more concerned about
24 Article 12.4.1° because that's the article where 20
25 members of the Oireachtas can nominate somebody. You
26 know in the sixties there was a whole commission and
27 they were going to change that to ten because it's
28 really quite difficult for an Independent to get 20.
29 So the Council route is the only route and I have to

1 say there's a lot of merit in what you say. I can't
2 comment on it further than that but that's what I found
3 interesting about this process. I've been the person
4 who has spoke to most Councils and I find it
5 fascinating to hear feedback like that and I think 14:58
6 there's great merit in what you're saying.

7
8 Cllr. Whitmore, you asked about, you know, things that
9 I've done recently and my own volunteering and so on.
10 One of the difficulties, when you cross from being a 14:58
11 private person and you offer yourself for public office
12 is you have to talk about yourself and your supposed
13 good deeds and, Cllr. Whitmore, I'm really not
14 comfortable talking about that. But, look, I've been
15 very well fortunate in life and the success I've 14:59
16 enjoyed, so, look, my association with the National
17 Council for the Blind goes back decades. My brother
18 Eamon was its chief fundraiser, etcetera, you know that
19 was something that as a family we've been very, very
20 committed to. Nobody in our family is visually 14:59
21 impaired but that has been the main family charity.

22
23 The thing I'm most proud of is in recent years in
24 primary schools around the country we have an
25 entrepreneurial skills workshop called BizWorld. I'm 14:59
26 the national chair of that and 45,000 fifth class
27 children have gone through that. It's no expense to
28 the school and people like me negotiate with corporates
29 and others and get sponsors and throw a few bob, well

1 throw quite a bit behind it to make it work across
2 45,000 pupils and that's growing every year. So, yes,
3 I've volunteered quite a bit and will be when the
4 campaigning starts showing in a disclosure document,
5 not only my assets but what charities I've been
6 associated with. 15:00

7
8 I'm trying to get through all of the questions. I'm
9 just making a note of them here.

10 15:00
11 Cllr. Cullen, the single issue, I don't want it to be
12 the only issue but I'm seeing the reaction I have got
13 from councillors around the country to that youth
14 corps, that's something when I get into office because
15 the Defence Forces tell me that one of their concerns 15:00
16 is about recruitment. We have this fantastic track
17 record with the United Nations, we're the only nation
18 that has been on constant peacekeeping duty since the
19 late seventies. We're a very, very special nation for
20 UN service and I think this youth corps put in within 15:01
21 that, etcetera, is something that could really work.
22 It's an issue that I really want to get up and running
23 and I want it to be a legacy if I was president.

24
25 I think, is there any question I've missed? 15:01

26 Cllr. Murphy, I used the term "disability" and
27 sometimes people ask me, as you know, what's that, et
28 cetera, because, yeah, I just think we're all a little
29 bit different in our own ways. Again, I should have

1 mentioned it perhaps to Cllr. Whitmore but I'm
2 particularly pleased about, it's something my wife set
3 up, but we brought in -- in Boston there's a wonderful
4 charity called Ablevision and it helps people with
5 intellectual challenges to make television programmes. 15:02
6 They never feature in media either in front or behind
7 the camera. We started that Ablevision programme some
8 years back and it's growing at pace and just the
9 enjoyment the participants get out of it. But with my
10 contacts in media, we also get lots of great people who 15:02
11 are great camera persons come down and give a
12 masterclass in sort of camera editing, etcetera, but it
13 has been a great organisation, Ablevision. And to John
14 Delaney who is the main driver behind that we work
15 with. We're very proud of what they've achieved. Is 15:02
16 that okay?

17 CATHA O'RLEACH: That's grand. Thank you very much,
18 John and Gavin.

19 CLLR. WINTERS: Sylvester's question wasn't answered.

20 CLLR. BOURKE: Had you considered running for political 15:03
21 office, local or national? And why not if not?

22 MR. DUFFY: It's a question, Cllr. Bourke, I've been
23 asked in a few of the Chambers and I'd actually
24 consider it an honour that somebody would consider you
25 for that. To answer your question, I wouldn't rule it 15:03
26 out. Up to now, you know, I have been working in
27 business and employing people. I'm 58. I feel I have
28 the energy to do something else but I'd have to be
29 honest with you, my key focus for this period is on the

1 presidency. I believe I am going to, with your
2 assistance hopefully, secure the required four
3 nominations and, you know, I intend to run a good
4 campaign and put myself before the people. If you are
5 holding a meeting next Monday night, Cathaoirleach, I'm 15:04
6 hoping the fact that I have come before you today,
7 stated my case, as have the other candidates, that you
8 would give me and them due consideration. Thank you
9 very much.

10 CLLR. WHITMORE: Just the question about the position 15:04
11 on the referendums and whether either of them
12 campaigned as part of the referendums.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: You asked that question.

14 MR. GROARKE: I haven't campaigned in it but I've seen
15 the stress that was caused and I do know that there was 15:04
16 no need for it. According to research I've done, there
17 is a mechanism there, even within the Catholic Church,
18 to allow if a woman has cervical cancer that the
19 pregnancy can be terminated.

20
21 The only thing I just want to say to finish,
22 Mr. Chairman, is, if Mr. Duffy is successful will he
23 forfeit his salary?

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: With due respect, I don't think that's
25 appropriate at this stage. If a member asked that 15:05
26 that's fine. Can I ask Mr. Duffy to address the
27 particular question that Clr. Whitmore put forward.

28 MR. DUFFY: I didn't campaign on them because I wasn't
29 a public person. Does that answer your question or do

1 you want more detail?

2 CLLR. WHITMORE: If you're happy to say which side of
3 the fence you were on?

4 MR. DUFFY: I think I should if that's all right,
5 Cllr. Whitmore. On the marriage equality referendum I 15:05
6 supported it and I voted to repeal the eighth
7 amendment. I was very proud in 1983 to vote for the
8 amendment and it wasn't an easy decision I came to. I
9 came to it about six months before and I just felt that
10 the well-intentioned 1983 Article 40.3.3° was causing 15:06
11 more difficulties and I was looking at my own daughter
12 who, as I said, has just turned 20. But here's
13 something, and I'm conscious of time here but this has
14 to be said: I think that's the big challenge for a
15 president in all of this that Ireland is changing and 15:06
16 changing dramatically. I think we need to have a
17 conversation about, you know, I don't see my children
18 or grandchildren taking direction from bishops so how
19 do we recalibrate the moral compass? But also I'm a
20 little bit concerned that when we do make advances like 15:06
21 that, that we still bring the one-third with us,
22 Cllr. Whitmore, and respect their views also because it
23 wasn't a decision I arrived at lightly.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Thank you, Gavin, thank
25 you, John, for coming. The process, Lorraine here will 15:06
26 outline the process now that we have to decide on in
27 regard to the next couple of weeks.

28 MS. GALLAGHER: Members, I circulated you the e-mail
29 there on Friday, so just to remind you of the process.

1 In accordance with Section 16 of the Presidential
2 Elections Act 1993, Wicklow County Council may nominate
3 one named person to be a candidate in the presidential
4 election. This requires the passing of a resolution by
5 the elected members of the intention to propose a 15:07
6 person and give not less than three clear days' notice
7 in writing to the members. So if the elected members
8 wish to nominate a named person, the nomination request
9 must include the surname, any other given name, the
10 address, occupation if any, the written consent of the 15:07
11 person proposed to be nominated, a declaration from the
12 person proposed to be nominated that they are eligible
13 for election to the office of the president. For
14 example, if it's a case where we're having a Special
15 Meeting next Monday and you, the elected members, want 15:08
16 to propose one named person, it should be proposed and
17 seconded and submitted to the meetings administrator so
18 the meetings administrator can give all of the Elected
19 Members three clear days' notice. That information
20 should be contained in the proposal. But I can 15:08
21 recirculate the Members with this this evening.
22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is it the wish of the Members that we
23 would nominate a person?
24 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.
25 CATHAOIRLEACH: So that's agreed then. Okay. So the 15:08
26 process then will be for Members to nominate and get a
27 seconder for a particular individual and we will have
28 that meeting. When would the meeting suit?
29 Cllr. Timmins.

1 CLLR. TIMMINS: Chairman, I wanted to ask, if you're
2 having a special meeting could you have it at six
3 o'clock or after it to facilitate those of us who are
4 working?
5 CATHAORLEACH: I said earlier on there my own thoughts 15:08
6 on it that we could have it next Monday at six o'clock.
7 CLLR. RUTTLE: would you make it seven o'clock?
8 CATHAORLEACH: Seven o'clock next Monday and we'll
9 take the decision then. Cllr. Behan, did you want to
10 come in. 15:09
11 CLLR. BEHAN: Two or possible candidates have indicated
12 their interest in seeking our support and they were
13 Sean Gallagher and another gentleman from Dragons' Den.
14 Is it possible, do you think, for us to invite them to
15 address us before we have that decision on Monday? 15:09
16 CATHAORLEACH: I don't think so because I think it
17 would be unfair to other people that are here. I have
18 not had an request from either of those people with
19 regard to addressing the members of this Council.
20 There was a formal request from a journalist but there 15:09
21 was no formal request to me. There was with Gavin
22 Duffy here and with John and I addressed all those in
23 that regard to that. I think it would be grossly
24 unfair at this stage for the night that we're taking a
25 decision to allow two people come in, I feel it would 15:10
26 give them an unfair advantage. Other people decided to
27 go to other Councils seeking a nomination here today.
28 That does not stop anyone from proposing Sean Gallagher
29 or somebody else for the meeting next Monday. If you

1 get a proposer and a seconder to that. That does not
2 that stop that process but it just stops it from
3 addressing the particular meeting. I want to be fair
4 and I tried to be fair here today to everybody to give
5 them the amount of time that was necessary and I think 15:10
6 like we went over time in regard to this but in my
7 opinion it would be grossly unfair to invite two people
8 in the night we're making a decision. It doesn't stop
9 anyone from getting a proposer and seconder to put any
10 individual that has their name out there before the 15:11
11 meeting next Monday at seven o'clock. All right.
12 CLLR. TIMMINS: Chairman, just to be clear, does the
13 proposal have to be made three days in advance of the
14 meeting?
15 CATHAOIRLEACH: It has to be, yeah. Wednesday would be 15:11
16 the last day.
17 CLLR. BEHAN: what time?
18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Close of business on Wednesday.
19 MS. GALLAGHER: No. The Members require three clear
20 days' notice so it would be the similar process as we 15:11
21 operate for our Council agenda. You'd have to have it
22 here by at least midday.
23 CLLR. RUTTLE: Cathaoirleach, is it also not true that
24 we have to have the written consent of the nominated
25 person. 15:11
26 CATHAOIRLEACH: I don't think that will be a problem.
27 CLLR. RUTTLE: No, no, but you have to organise the
28 logistics of it.
29 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's right. We can put it back for a

1 few days later, but I just thought as Monday is a
2 meeting day and I think there is a certain urgency in
3 that regard to handling this as well.
4 CLLR. KAVANAGH: Cathaoirleach, can I just ask, you
5 said that you had received a written request from a 15:12
6 journalist?
7 CATHAOIRLEACH: There was a request from a journalist
8 there, Gemma Doherty. She was invited to this meeting
9 today.
10 MS. GALLAGHER: And Maria Moylan was invited as well. 15:12
11 CATHAOIRLEACH: They were invited to this meeting
12 today. They decided to go somewhere else. So that's
13 it. Okay. Meeting next Monday at seven o'clock okay.
14 CLLR. OLIVER O'BRIEN: Surely that's a process that
15 should be looked in to that where people can't 15:12
16 physically get around.
17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Listen, it's like everything else, we
18 can't have a special Meeting every day just to
19 facilitate anybody. They will make their choices. As I
20 say, it doesn't stop any Councillor from proposing 15:12
21 anyone who hasn't addressed the meeting.
22 CLLR. OLIVER O'BRIEN: That wasn't my point.
23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. We're moving on
24 to Item 9 on the agenda. Rob Mulhall is making a
25 presentation in regard to Item 9. 15:13
26
27 AGENDA ITEM 9
28
29 MR. MULHALL: Good afternoon, my name is Rob Mulhall.

1 I'm an executive engineer for the Arklow Municipal
2 District. I'm here today to seek your backing for the
3 plans we have devised for the Arklow Parade Ground
4 Public Realm.

5
6 For any of you who don't know where the Parade Ground
7 is in Arklow, it's the area between the church on the
8 Main Street and the courthouse. We have a plan done.
9 I'm sure you have it, it's in the back of the report
10 that you received last week.

11
12 So for any of you that do know Arklow, I'm sure you'll
13 agree that over the last ten years, really the Main
14 Street area has been decimated with the closure of
15 businesses, you know, certain buildings have no
16 occupancy and really we feel that this Public Realm
17 Scheme will approve the aesthetics of the Main Street
18 area. We think it will make it a more pleasurable
19 place for people to spend time. With the improved
20 pedestrian access links that we want to create, we
21 think it will improve footfall on the Main Street and
22 we think it will make the Main Street area a more
23 attractive place to set up business.

24
25 I'm not going to keep you too long but the key aspects
26 of the proposal would be to realignment of the footpath
27 on the church side of Main Street; the construction of
28 a raised toucan paving crossing in the roadway linking
29 the courthouse plaza to the parochial gardens;

1 construction of a pedestrian crossing adjacent to the
2 Bank of Ireland; two more pedestrian crossings at the
3 Ormond Cinema and St. Mary's Road; paving and
4 landscaping of the area outside the church grounds;
5 removal of the old wall and railings from the front of 15:16
6 the courthouse building; paving and landscaping of the
7 area outside the courthouse building; and then the
8 erection of a Ronnie Delany bronze statute outside the
9 courthouse grounds.

10
11 I've put together a few pictorials to make it easier to
12 visualise. Here we've got an image of looking down
13 Main Street, on the Parade Ground, the church is on
14 your right-hand side and the courthouse is on your
15 left. We would be proposing to move the footpath out 15:16
16 approximately one metre and the effect that that has
17 we'd be able -- if we do that we'd be able to put a
18 dedicated pull in area for buses which isn't there
19 currently, but it will also act as a natural traffic
20 calming measure through the area. The road is quite 15:16
21 wide as it is in that area. If we realign the footpath
22 by about a metre, just over a metre, we can create a
23 dedicated area for the pull in area for the bus stops
24 and still allow two-way traffic to flow up and down on
25 Main Street. On occasion, if you're in town you'll see 15:17
26 sometimes if buses aren't parked correctly traffic can
27 backup back down Main Street, unable to flow past,
28 heading up Main Street.

1 we'd also propose the installation a covered bus
2 shelter at that stop. Currently there's no cover,
3 there's just a hole in the ground. There's no area for
4 people to take shelter whilst waiting for public
5 transport. The problem that that causes is if it's 15:17
6 raining and people are waiting to get the bus whether
7 it be, you know, students or whatever heading south,
8 normally parents will wait with them in the cars in the
9 area just off to the right there where it can become
10 chaotic at times. They'll wait with the bus user until 15:18
11 the bus comes, they'll wait until they're on and
12 they'll pull off themselves. So putting in a covered
13 bus shelter area will help alleviate that problem.

14
15 I have shown here in yellow where we propose to put in 15:18
16 a pedestrian crossing. Again, there's no pedestrian
17 crossing in that area for 150 metres down what would be
18 Main Street opposite the post office, and upstream of
19 that there's none at all until you get to the Wexford
20 Road. Again, there's quite a lot of activity there, 15:18
21 particularly the court time, people trying to access
22 the bank so we really feel that putting in a pedestrian
23 crossing in that area would help things.

24
25 Again that's just another image showing the bus stop as 15:19
26 it stands. You can see that the bus stop is out
27 towards the middle of the carriageway, making two-way
28 traffic. When a bus is coming in there two-way traffic
29 is very limited. You will see on the slide there. It

1 can be very difficult.

2
3 we're proposing the possible installation and
4 construction of two more pedestrian crossings at Ormond
5 Cinema and St. Mary's Road but, again, they're not set 15:19
6 in stone. We think we may look at that and perhaps
7 reduce the number of -- they are in the proposal but we
8 may have another think about that and perhaps leave one
9 of those out. If they were put in they would aid
10 president access across through the church, people 15:19
11 coming to mass down the Main Street, will be able to
12 get across both junctions and over to the church.

13
14 The Parade Ground area I suppose is the nucleus of the
15 town. It has traditionally and historically been the 15:20
16 nucleus of the town. The old Ormond Castle is on the
17 grounds of the courthouse. But really the centre of
18 the town and the heart of the town isn't really defined
19 we feel and we think that carrying out this Public
20 Realm Scheme will redefine Arklow Town Centre as really 15:20
21 the historical centrepiece of the town. We would be
22 proposing the area you see there in front of the
23 church, currently it is made up of parking spaces, you
24 have got the Fr. Murphy statue in the centre of the
25 picture. We will be proposing to remove all the 15:20
26 parking from there, declutter the whole area. We would
27 still retain some parking for disabled users and maybe
28 age-friendly, a couple of age-friendly spaces for
29 people accessing the church for mass and things like

1 that. But we feel there's ample parking in the
2 currently underutilised Main Street car park about 100
3 metres down the street. But we really want to improve
4 the aesthetics and the overall look of the area outside
5 the church and, as I said, redefine the town centre. 15:21

6
7 Again, this is looking over from the church towards the
8 courthouse and, again, we would be proposing to remove
9 the railings from the front of the courthouse. Again
10 they are not original, they were installed -- I think 15:21
11 it's a mid 19th century building that the courthouse
12 is. I think the railings were installed in the 1950's
13 or 1960's so they're not original. We would be
14 proposing to open up that whole area and create a plaza
15 leading into the courthouse here, a paved plaza. 15:22

16 Again, it could be used as a multi-functional space for
17 both areas really, whether it be outside the church and
18 outside the courthouse could be used as a
19 multi-functional space to hold events like for
20 festivals or to have farmers' markets on one morning of 15:22
21 the week which again would help improve or draw people
22 into the centre of the town, increase footfall for
23 other businesses in the area. So we really feel that
24 it has massive benefit to the town.

25
26 So, again we have proposals in or plans are afoot to
27 create a memorial in honour of the great Irish athlete
28 Ronnie Delany. I'd say within the next few years that
29 statue will be completed and we would be proposing to

1 put it in where the arrows are shown there. Again,
2 this whole area, the tourist offices is at the bus stop
3 so, you know, anyone who comes to the area, who might
4 be strangers to the town, tourists, they get off the
5 bus, they go to the tourist office and they will have 15:23
6 something like that the Ronnie Delany statue which will
7 be the first thing they can see.

8
9 As well as that, the area to the left of the courthouse
10 and behind the arrow, you can't really see it there but 15:23
11 that's the old, what remains of the Ormond Castle, the
12 13th century castle which formed I suppose, again, the
13 nucleus of the original Arklow Town. That's what
14 remains of it. We really want to -- I'd be confident
15 that a high percentage of the population of Arklow Town 15:24
16 don't even know that that castle wall is there and I
17 think that's a real shame. So we would be proposing to
18 strip that back, all vegetation off it, make a feature
19 of it and again have it as a real, I suppose, tourist
20 attraction really. Again, from there we create links 15:24
21 to two other medieval sites that we have in the town
22 centre, St. Mary's Park which, again, is only 150
23 metres down the street and then another 200 metres down
24 the street you've the Abbey Cemetery. So you've got
25 three really nice sites there that we could be doing a 15:24
26 lot more with them and promoting them a lot there. I
27 think this scheme, if we can get approval for it, will
28 help us achieve that. Again, that's just another image
29 from the front of the courthouse where we're going to

1 take down the railings and open it all up and make it
2 more attractive.

3
4 So we received 35 comments from the public bodies and
5 from the public and we'd be proposing that we proceed 15:25
6 with the proposal that you see before you as modified.
7 Again, I have taken on board some of the comments that
8 came in, some of them are very valid. We had proposed
9 originally to remove the railings from around the
10 Fr. Murphy memorial. Again, the thinking behind that 15:25
11 was that it would be more connected with the public.
12 The current railings are shutting them off from people.
13 We didn't know that the railings had historical
14 significance so they will be left in place.

15
16 There were a number of comments about the bike racks
17 and the positioning of the bike racks. Again, that's
18 something that we can easily deal with and we can
19 easily move their location.

20
21 Again, people had comments about the removal of the
22 granite piers in front of the courthouse and would like
23 to see them used somewhere else in the town. That's a
24 very valid comment and something that we're going to
25 take on board and we're going to look for ideas to 15:26
26 incorporate them somewhere else in the Town Centre
27 preferably.

28
29 Again, parking really was the biggest issue but, again,

1 we'd be very confident that there is enough parking in
2 the town a very short distance away. The only concern
3 for parking really would be for the elderly and
4 disabled but we are going to take the comment on board
5 and look about creating more parking in close proximity 15:27
6 to the church for the elderly and the disabled. But,
7 again, we'd be pushing that, you know, able-bodied
8 people, a lot of it comes down to laziness, people want
9 to be able to drive in the doors of the church and we
10 think that there's no reason why they can't park down 15:27
11 the street.

12
13 we had a splash fountain incorporated into the original
14 design here and to be honest we don't think that we
15 have the time for that kind of thing so we're probably 15:27
16 going to leave it out. Apart from that we would be
17 proposed that the proposal goes ahead. So, thank you
18 for your time.

19 CATHA O'RLEACH: Thank you very much, Rob.

20 Cllr. Fitzgerald. 15:27

21 CLLR. FITZGERALD: Firstly, I want to talk the
22 officials for the work done over the last year or two
23 on this project. Arklow has suffered, particularly the
24 Main Street with closures but I think we're on the way
25 back and it's important that we protect some of the 15:28
26 buildings in the area there, like the Fr. Murphy statue
27 due dates back to 1905. Our courthouse is an
28 architecturally austere building and I'm glad that the
29 façade of that is being protected. The Ormond Castle,

1 which dates back to the 13th century, and unfortunately
2 it was destroyed by Cromwell in 1649. I don't remember
3 it but it did happen! I mean the Bank of Ireland in
4 1868, that area is an area that needs to be redesigned
5 and re-enhanced and I have no issue proposing it. I 15:28
6 know there was some observations and concerns from
7 people about parking, myself and Cllr. Murphy and
8 Cllr. Kennedy did discuss that this morning. It's
9 sufficient to say that there are 300 car spaces 150
10 metres from the church. There is parking at the back 15:29
11 of the church as well and an another area at the front
12 of the Council offices and it is a case maybe where
13 people have been parking in the courthouse but that was
14 never designed for parking for the public. When the
15 courthouse was used as the Council offices there was no 15:29
16 parking there. People got to use it. As I say, there
17 was concerns raised by residents, some of them were
18 positive, some of them were negative. We have a huge
19 problem with the bus stop there because when a bus
20 pulls up, and we have 21 bus buses a day pulling in 15:29
21 there, they block the traffic coming up the street so
22 we want to avoid the traffic going back. There are
23 issues in the town and this will sort out some of it.
24
25 The pedestrian crossings, I think Rob alluded to it. 15:29
26 That instead of two one is just needed but that can be
27 looked at. So I have no difficulty proposing that this
28 project goes ahead. Obviously we have to get the
29 funding and the funding will be looked for this month.

1 I think it would brighten up the whole area. As Rob
2 said, the castle walls, I think if you went around the
3 town in Arklow and asked them where the Ormond Castle
4 is, a lot of people wouldn't know because it had been
5 blocked there for years and years. It's only part of, 15:30
6 it's near the old courthouse and there's buildings
7 there as well.

8
9 So, look, it, I have no issue with proposing this, even
10 though I have been hounded by some people about the 15:30
11 parking at the church but my view is the able-bodied
12 people can walk. That's my view. People who need the
13 support should get the support and I know from talking
14 this morning maybe we could tweak that slightly, but,
15 as I say, I'm proposing that this development goes 15:30
16 ahead.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr. Kennedy.

18 CLLR. KENNEDY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I won't go
19 over everything that Cllr. Fitzgerald has already gone
20 over, except to just thank the officials and the 15:31
21 engineers for all the work that went into the plan. As
22 we all know, Arklow was once the employment capital of
23 South Wicklow but that's no longer the case. I think
24 this Public Realm Project will play a huge part in
25 bringing Arklow back to where it needs to be. 15:31
26

27 We as six councillors in the Arklow Municipal District
28 have talked about this at County meetings, at Municipal
29 District meetings for a long time and we're all at one,

1 we're all supporting this and I would ask that the
2 other members of this Chamber to also support it and
3 I'm happy to second Cllr. Fitzgerald's proposal. Thank
4 you.

5 CATHAOLRLEACH: Cllr. Murphy, and then we're going for 15:31
6 a vote.

7 CLLR. MURPHY: I would just like to echo what my other
8 fellow councillors have said. It's, as we know, Arklow
9 has been held back for many years due to that lack of
10 sewerage system. That's going to be another success in 15:31
11 the next few years. Again, I feel that is Arklow's
12 going to be opening up for a lot of tourism. I think
13 this is the start of it. I think it is a positive
14 note.

15 15:32
16 Again, I'd like to echo, as Cllr. Fitzgerald said,
17 many, many thanks to the planners in Arklow Municipal
18 and their insight for doing this because I think it's
19 great that you would bring somebody who is not from the
20 town to highlight what has just been displayed here to 15:32
21 us. The history that we got from Cllr. Fitzgerald this
22 morning was, I won't say his age but I didn't know some
23 of it. So that's what we need to do is to open up our
24 history for Arklow. Thank you very much.

25 CATHAOLRLEACH: Cllr. Behan, then we're going for a 15:32
26 vote.

27 CLLR. BEHAN: Chairman, just briefly. I just want to
28 congratulate both the Members and the staff of the
29 Arklow Municipal District, the District Administrator,

1 the District Engineer and the members and
2 Michael Geaney as well as the Director, because in my
3 experience over the last couple of years the Members in
4 Arklow and the officials in Arklow have worked together
5 in a very positive way to raise the profile of Arklow 15:33
6 as a town, but they're doing it at the same time as
7 engaging with the public and I think they have got a
8 good model in how they're actually doing their
9 business. They're making progress and being nominated
10 rightly for awards. But to me they're offering a very 15:33
11 good example to other parts of the County and I'd just
12 like to put on record my congratulations to all of
13 them.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We're going for a vote.
15 Proposed by Cllr. Fitzgerald; seconded by 15:33
16 Cllr. Kennedy.

17 MS. GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, just before we go for
18 the vote, can I just put forward the proposal for Item
19 13? It was the proposal to fill the casual vacancy
20 created by Michael O'Connor. 15:33

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: It was proposed by Cllr. Lawless and
22 seconded by Cllr. Winters, if my memory serves me
23 right.

24 MS. GALLAGHER: Okay. We're going for a vote.
25 [VOTE TAKEN] That's 22 for and ten not present. 15:34

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. That's fine. Moving on to Item
27 10.

28
29

1 AGENDA ITEM 10

2
3 MS. GALLAGHER: Again, this is a Part 8.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: This is a Part 8. Is there proposer
5 and seconder for this? 15:35

6 CLLR. LAWLESS: I'll propose it, Cathaoirleach.

7 CLLR. WALSH: I'll second it.

8 MS. GALLAGHER: Proposed by Cllr. Lawless.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by Cllr. Walsh. You wanted to
10 come in on that, Cllr. Fortune? You okay? Do you want 15:35
11 to come in on that? Sorry, I thought you were putting
12 up your hand. We're going to have to go for a vote on
13 this.

14 MS. GALLAGHER: This is for alterations to previously
15 approved terrace no. 12. 15:36

16 CLLR. FORTUNE: Can we just get an overview of it?

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sean can do that. Excuse me, sorry,
18 it's my fault. I just understood this had gone through
19 the Greystones Municipal District.

20 CLLR. FORTUNE: Not the final. 15:36

21 CLLR. LAWLESS: Not the revised part. The revised bit
22 hasn't gone through the Municipal District.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Oh, sorry, I thought they had. It's my
24 fault, I thought there had been discussion and
25 agreement on this. 15:36

26 MR. QUIRKE: The proposal initially went to the
27 Greystones Municipal District and has been out for
28 public display. There was a number of submissions and
29 observations, mostly from the residents from that area,

1 the other side of the DART from the amended terrace 12.
2 There was a number of meetings, three or four meetings
3 between the residents and the architects and the
4 matters can now be resolved. An e-mail was issued to
5 Members to confirm that. So basically the changes in 15:37
6 it are there's a reduction in the number of housing
7 units by three. There's changes in the levels to
8 remove (inaudible) retaining structure on the eastern
9 side of the DART line. The parking has changed
10 slightly to increase the number of disabled parking 15:37
11 bays and the park design has changed to incorporate a
12 request from Members of the district council for a dog
13 park. The design has changed slightly on that. So I
14 don't think there's any issue with that for anyone. So
15 I'd recommend that we go ahead with the amended design. 15:37
16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Has it been proposed and seconded?
17 CLLR. WHITMORE: There's been no changes to the
18 playground?
19 MR. QUIRKE: No.
20 MS. GALLAGHER: Proposed by Cllr. Lawless; seconded by 15:37
21 Cllr. Walsh. [VOTE TAKEN] That's 20 for and 12 not
22 present.
23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. We're on to 11 now.
24 Joe Lane.

25 15:39

26 AGENDA ITEM 11

27

28 MR. LANE: This was circulated. This is the 34 housing
29 units in Baltinglass -- sorry, it was discussed at

1 Municipal District.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Any questions?

3 CLLR. KAVANAGH: I can't hear what you're saying.

4 MR. LANE: It has been discussed at the Municipal area.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: And agreed at the Municipal area. 15:39

6 Cllr. Timmins, do you want to come in there?

7 CLLR. TIMMINS: One thing, it's not part of this and I

8 would like to see it considered, I know that you may be

9 restricted in what you can do on it and I brought this

10 up at Municipal level. The fact that this development 15:39

11 is near the town park in Baltinglass and near the river

12 Slaney and I would ask that could it be considered that

13 some kind of walkway be put in place like, you know, we

14 have a fabulous park there and river and the riverwalk

15 has not been developed for various reasons over the 15:40

16 last few years and I would ask that consideration be

17 given towards putting some kind of walk, you know, it

18 wouldn't be of large expense, but some kind of

19 contribution or some kind of facilitation be made to

20 allow a walkway by the river that would link up to this 15:40

21 new development. I clearly welcome the development and

22 I'm delighted that it's happening. It's badly needed

23 and I'm looking forward to it being done as quickly as

24 possible. Thank you.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Lawless. 15:40

26 CLLR. LAWLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just a very

27 quick question --

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you proposing that?

29 CLLR. TIMMINS: By the way I'd like to propose it.

1 Sorry, excuse me, Cllr. Lawless. I'd like to propose
2 it as well.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Go ahead.

4 CLLR. LAWLESS: Just a very quick question. Absolutely
5 delighted to see 34 houses, we welcome it. But I 15:41
6 believe that three of our architects have now gone --

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's a different matter altogether.

8 CLLR. LAWLESS: I know, but it's still got to do with
9 housing and housing construction so I just wanted to
10 know. 15:41

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, we're dealing with a Part 8.

12 CLLR. LAWLESS: I know I'm just asking. I'm just
13 asking. I'm only asking. It's still got to do with
14 housing.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: It is on this issue that we're talking 15:41
16 about, right, Councillor. If you want to talk about
17 this issue fine. If you want to bring up about
18 architects it's another thing.

19 CLLR. LAWLESS: It is 34 units being built which is
20 great. It's building of housing. 15:41

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Blake.

22 CLLR. BLAKE: I would like to second it. I certainly
23 welcome this. I think it is the first serious attempt
24 to construct social housing in West Wicklow. I welcome
25 this proposal regarding the walkway as well. We got a 15:41
26 lot of proposals in the past and people have supported
27 it in terms of additional walkways or extending
28 existing walkways in that particular area. So
29 certainly I do welcome it. I would just ask the

1 Director does he have a timeframe with regards to the
2 start of it and the completion of it?
3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.
4 MR. LANE: It should be next year give or take. This
5 takes out some of the stages but we now have to go 15:42
6 through procurement on this one. There is a framework
7 in place because this done under the draft so it could
8 be 2019 hopefully when they start.
9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We're going for a vote on this.
10 Proposed by Cllr. Edward Timmons and seconded by 15:42
11 Cllr. Blake.
12 [VOTE TAKEN]
13 MS. GALLAGHER: That's 23 for and nine not present.
14 CATHAOIRLEACH: We're on to 12 now.
15
16 15:43
17 AGENDA ITEM 12
18
19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Could I have a proposer and seconder
20 for this? It's a normal type of agreement we have 15:43
21 between Kildare and Wicklow.
22 MS. GALLAGHER: It is to consider entering into a
23 Section 85 Agreement with Kildare County Council for
24 the Leinster Bridges Rehabilitation Contract.
25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by Cllr. Snell; seconded by 15:44
26 Cllr. Timmons. Do we need a vote on this?
27 MS. GALLAGHER: No.
28 CLLR. BEHAN: I wanted to say something on it.
29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, that's fine, Councillor. Go
ahead.

1 CLLR. BEHAN: About two meetings ago we got the good
2 news that we were going to take over control of the
3 national roads programme of improvements at
4 Kilmacanogue/Bray from Kildare and I thought we were
5 finished with all this business of Kildare County Council
6 Council doing our work for us. I was very disappointed
7 to see that now they're going to be doing our bridges
8 for us. I'm just wondering with what's happening
9 there? I thought we were actually going to be taking
10 back control of these issues, as we should always have.
11 So could I just ask for an explanation as to what's
12 happening here? 15:44

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: You remember recently, Councillor, that
14 there was an agreement between Dun Laoghaire and
15 Wicklow County Council in regard to works in the Bray
16 area that Wicklow were the lead authority in that as
17 well so if I can get an explanation. 15:44

18 CLLR. BEHAN: Why change it for bridges? That's fine.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: There has to be agreement between two
20 local authorities. Michael, would you come in on that? 15:45

21 MR. GEANEY: Chairman, this work relates to the N81, to
22 a bridge on the N81. There is rehabilitation works
23 that need to be carried out on 12 bridges in five
24 counties and one of the bridges is in County Wicklow on
25 the N81. Now, the TII original bridge management
26 section are located in Kildare County Council and
27 they've vast experience in dealing with this in
28 administering bridge rehabilitation and improving
29 contracts on national roads and therefore Kildare 15:45

1 County Council are the most experienced authority in
2 terms of getting those resources to undertake these
3 works. Considerable cost savings can be made if all
4 the works are carried out under a single contract.
5 That is, you are getting economies of scale for it. 15:46
6 You also get economies of scale for design,
7 procurement. One tendering process will do for the 12
8 bridges rather than to have contracts done by different
9 local authorities. And also in the operation of health
10 and safety you'd have a single tenderer and you'd also 15:46
11 have a single contractor for the role of project
12 supervisor during the process. This is the way to go
13 really in this particular --

14 CLLR. BEHAN: Right, Chairman, I don't want to delay
15 the meeting but obviously what Michael has read out 15:46
16 there is that the National Roads Authority or the TII
17 regional office is in Kildare County Council so
18 everything is kind of coming from there and we're going
19 to turn into some kind of a sub-committee of Kildare
20 County Council if we're not careful and ensuring that 15:46
21 we retain our independence. I can understand on this
22 basis what's being suggested but I'm just very
23 concerned that we don't start handing out our work to
24 other Councils to do for us. We should be building up
25 our own expertise and doing the work ourselves. Thank 15:47
26 you.

27 CLLR. TIMMINS: Chairman, I don't want to delay things,
28 but I'd just like to expand a little bit on
29 Cllr. Behan's well made point. Often money allocated,

1 say, to the N81 for various bend improvements, for
2 example, over the last few years have been swallowed up
3 by the NRA office in Naas and Wicklow hasn't seen
4 anything at all. So there's a danger that money, if it
5 looks like it's been to Wicklow, is going to the
6 administration staff in Naas.

15:47

7 CATHAOLRLEACH: I think it's a fair point and we want
8 to keep our eye on that. Okay. Is that agreed then?

9 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

10

15:47

11 AGENDA ITEM 14

12
13 CATHAOLRLEACH: 14, I need a need a proposer and
14 seconder for 14 in regard to fill the vacancies on the
15 committees that Michael O'Connor was on. Who you are
16 proposing?

15:47

17 CLLR. LAWLESS: I'm proposing Dermot O'Brien.

18 CATHAOLRLEACH: Right, okay. Do I have a seconder for
19 that?

20 FROM THE FLOOR: Agreed.

15:48

21 CATHAOLRLEACH: All those committees. Right. Okay.
22 16 I'll come back to. I will just let them settle in
23 there. They're just after arriving there. I'm not
24 going to take the Chief Executive's report now at this
25 stage. I'll take 18. A brief note was attached to 18.

15:48

26
27 AGENDA ITEM 18

28
29 CATHAOLRLEACH: We'll have Christine Flood just for a

1 couple of minutes and then we'll go back to 16 there
2 which is the presentation by SSE. Okay.

3 MS. FLOOD: Thanks very much indeed, Cathaoirleach.
4 Members have been circulated with a briefing note on
5 the Urban and Rural Regeneration Scheme. There's very 15:49
6 tight deadlines on this, considering the multiples of
7 millions that apply to it. There's a €2 billion
8 nationwide for urban regeneration and €1 billion for
9 rural regeneration.

10
11 We saw the criteria for the schemes and certainly in 15:49
12 the case of the urban projects there was slightly
13 different criteria. Certainly in the case of the urban
14 projects we must be able to prove that these projects
15 will generate euro for euro investment as a result of 15:50
16 any expenditure.

17
18 Now we have identified roughly about 12 schemes across
19 the various Municipal Districts that we suppose to
20 submit. The rationale for choosing the scheme is to 15:50
21 provide, as far as possible, to cross all of the
22 districts and certainly the rationale for putting these
23 schemes in is that there's schemes that most closely
24 fit the criteria, one of which, for example, the
25 members have adopted a Part 8 on the Public Realm 15:50
26 Parade Ground in Arklow. That would form part of a
27 scheme. There's a minimum cost for the urban schemes,
28 there's €2 million and, again, that must be matched by
29 25% contribution, either from the Local Authority or

1 from an investor. And in the case of the rural
2 schemes, they would encourage partnerships and
3 collaborations, including with the community and the
4 minimum scheme cost would be half a million.

5
6 So there's a range of schemes proposed. I'll circulate
7 these but I would just add a health warning to them at
8 this stage. There's a meeting on Friday with both
9 parent departments; the Department of Housing, Planning
10 and Local Government and the Department of Community
11 and Rural Affairs to brief officials on these schemes
12 and the criteria. So it may well be that we might be
13 less ambitious after a meeting with the Department
14 officials on Friday. But rather than hold things up,
15 Chairman, I'll circulate the list of schemes and we
16 have the names of the officials involved in promoting
17 the schemes.

18
19 There's a very, very tight deadline on these. The
20 rural schemes must be submitted by 27th September and
21 the urban schemes must be submitted by 28th September.
22 So that gives us a very tight deadline considering the
23 detail that's required and the background that's
24 required.

25
26 Now, the Project Ireland 2040, as you know, is an
27 ongoing programme and we would be hopeful that projects
28 that aren't successful this time round will at least
29 get into the pipeline. This is what the Government

1 want. They want to pipeline the projects. That also
2 means that projects that aren't on the list, certainly
3 that meet the criteria can be improved on in the
4 pipeline, there will be further calls as part of
5 project Ireland are 2040. I suppose the emphasis is on 15:53
6 projects that have Part 8 in place or shovel-ready and
7 ready to hit the ground. Those are the ones that have
8 the best price of attracting funding in the first
9 instance. But there's Part B in the case of urban
10 projects and there's Part 2 projects in the case of 15:53
11 rural projects which is specifically aimed at projects
12 that aren't developed but which could be developed. So
13 I will circulate the list and, you know, be happy to
14 keep Members updated about that. Thank you.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr. Matthews, do you want to 15:54
16 come in there?

17 CLLR. MATTHEWS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. The Members of
18 the Planning SPC will remember that we discussed this
19 some time back and we were aware that this funding was
20 coming on stream as part of the National Development 15:54
21 Plan and at that meeting we had stressed that it was
22 really important to identify these projects and be
23 ready for when this funding became available. It is
24 still disappointing to see a 28th September deadline on
25 it, it's very, very tight for such big projects. 15:54
26 Obviously the staff are to be commended if they'd like
27 to identify ten projects that may be suitable to go
28 forward for this in that short time-frame. One of the
29 projects that I hope has made it on to that list, and,

1 Chairman, you'll be well aware of it because you're
2 involved in it yourself, is the Bray Harbour
3 development. So, that's a substantial job but there's
4 also a public realm part to that and it really does
5 tick the box in terms of tourism. So I hope that has 15:55
6 made the list. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.
7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Timmons.
8 CLLR. TIMMINS: Chair, I'd like to welcome this
9 funding.
10 CATHAOIRLEACH: We haven't got it yet. Would you like 15:55
11 to announce something at the moment?
12 CLLR. TIMMINS: I'm hoping I might get a good response
13 here and might verify that. This has come a little bit
14 under the radar and it has come up very suddenly on us,
15 but it was brought to our attention at our local 15:55
16 district meeting in June or July and one of the
17 projects we mentioned and the Director who attends that
18 meeting mentioned as well was the parking layout scheme
19 for Baltinglass. This was agreed here at this full
20 meeting two or three years back and it's, how would you 15:55
21 say, it's a shovel-ready project. The work has been
22 done. The consultants have put a proposal in place.
23 It came before a meeting here and was agreed. So I
24 would very much ask that this project be submitted
25 under this regeneration development fund and that we do 15:56
26 everything in our power to get funding. Here we have a
27 project ready to go. The funding is there. As far as
28 far as I can see it ticks the boxes and I would commend
29 the staff for the work they've done to date in relation

1 to that project, Margaret Hartnett, one of our roads
2 people at the time, and Sean Quirke the Director who
3 oversaw it and I'd urge if at all possible to give your
4 energies to helping this project come to fruition,
5 through the use of this urban regeneration. 15:56

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just from my own part, I know that
7 there's a huge amount of work has gone in by the
8 officials in a very short period of time and continues.
9 There's an awful lot more work to go as well before the
10 submission is made. It is 27th September that is it 15:57
11 has to be made by and obviously there's substantial
12 funding there. You can acquire that as well. We will
13 have are to have the matching funding as well. I'm
14 very hopeful, given the calibre of people that are
15 operating in providing the necessary application in 15:57
16 regard for this and we'll keep the Members informed as
17 it goes along.

18 CLLR. TIMMINS: Chairman, can I just come back there,
19 this was just landed on my desk, the list, which I
20 didn't see before, it just landed on my desk as I was 15:57
21 speaking. It doesn't cover the town parking plan for
22 Baltinglass so I would ask even at this late stage that
23 it would be included.

24 MR. CURRAN: It is probably in there as public realm.
25 You need the public realm for the courthouse project, 15:57
26 the enterprise. You have to prove that you are
27 generating employment so you can't just include one
28 item. It's in there under public realm.

29 CLLR. TIMMINS: Okay, thanks.

1 CATHAoir LEACH: Okay. Thank you very much. Sorry,
2 Cllr. Fitzgerald.

3 CLLR. FITZGERALD: This has just come to my attention.
4 CATHAoir LEACH: Is Arklow left out?
5 CLLR. FITZGERALD: I'm just asking a question about 15:58
6 Arklow.

7 CATHAoir LEACH: Arklow has done very well.
8 CLLR. FITZGERALD: Just a question here. This urban
9 renewal which involves the linkage from the Wexford
10 Road to Roadstone: "This may proceed if we can source 15:58
11 consultants". That's what it says here. Surely it's
12 not going to be a big issue to source consultants.

13 MS. FLOOD: Cathaíreach, believe it or not at this
14 point in time, because every county in the country is
15 putting in urban renewal applications and because of 15:58
16 procurement constraints it's not straightforward. We
17 are (inaudible) we do need to get consultants. We do
18 have some very senior staff assigned to it. We will
19 need some small assistance with consultants.

20 CLLR. FITZGERALD: Because I think anyone from Arklow 15:59
21 and some people at the top table know how urgent that
22 is for Arklow because you can't move in the town at the
23 moment and there is a motion which we won't reach
24 today. If that fails because of no consultants it will
25 be a bad day for Arklow. 15:59

26 MR. CURRAN: As Christine said, I think we'll get the
27 application in because it is important, the link road
28 is important right into Roadstone and then right up the
29 southeast and there's some works that can be done on

1 the southeast as well. In addition to that the traffic
2 side needs to be done.

3 CLLR. FITZGERALD: We need that done as well, yeah.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. That's it. Okay. Thank you
5 very much. The SSE presentation now. 15:59

6
7 AGENDA ITEM 16

8
9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Could I welcome Marion Troy, Head of
10 Corporate Affairs and Murdoch McGee, Offshore Project 15:59
11 Director - has to be Scottish link, with a name like
12 that God love you. But anyway. And also Jason Cooke.
13 Jason is down the back of the room. He is well known
14 to people in the Bray area as well. They are going to
15 make a presentation in regard to the project they have 16:00
16 off the Arklow and Wicklow coast and to take any
17 questions and queries that members have in regard to
18 this. Thank you. You're very welcome Marian and
19 Murdoch.

20 MS. TROY: Thank you very much. Cathaoirleach, 16:00
21 Members, good afternoon. My name is Marian Troy and
22 I'm Head of Corporate Affairs at SSE Ireland and I'm
23 joined by my colleague, Murdoch McGee. On behalf of
24 SSE we're pleased to be here today to have a chance to
25 address the Council on the opportunity presented by 16:01
26 offshore wind energy to help meet Ireland's 2030
27 renewable targets and, in particular, to outline our
28 plans in the coming years to fully develop our Arklow
29 Bank Wind Farm Project off the coast here in County

1 wicklow. It is our hope and intention that our
2 presentation here today will demonstrate the new
3 economic opportunity that Arklow Bank wind Farm
4 represents for County Wicklow to capitalise on the
5 expansion of the offshore wind energy industry. In 16:01
6 doing so we plan to show how Arklow Bank wind Farm,
7 when developed to its full potential, can stimulate new
8 economic value along the east coast here, supporting
9 new maritime infrastructure, creating new and long-term
10 skilled jobs, and helping to the realise the potential 16:02
11 of wicklow's maritime assets.

12
13 we'll move to our next slide in your pack. First let
14 me take a few moments to tell you about SSE. Our track
15 record of delivery and how we contribute to the 16:02
16 economy, jobs and communities here.

17
18 SSE is the largest renewable energy developer and
19 generator in Ireland with over 700 megawatts of onshore
20 wind in operation, including Ireland's largest wind 16:02
21 farm, the 169 megawatt Galway wind Park. That wind
22 park alone powers the equivalent 140,000 homes, or all
23 of the homes in Galway city and county. We're Ireland
24 second largest energy utility and the largest provider
25 of green energy to over 750,000 homes and businesses 16:02
26 through our retail brand SSE Electricity. We're the
27 number one contractor looking after street lights
28 across the island, including here in wicklow.

1 we've been operating in Ireland for ten years and in
2 that time we've invested €2.5 billion in cleaner energy
3 generation and Ireland's lower carbon future. That
4 direct investment has helped to contribute over
5 €5 billion Irish GDP supporting indigenous jobs and 16:03
6 growth (inaudible). We employ 1,000 people directly my
7 and we're the first corporate business in Ireland to
8 become a voluntary living wage employer. We're also
9 the country's single greatest contributor from
10 renewable energy to local communities, providing over 16:03
11 €6.5 million to local groups and organisations from our
12 onshore wind farms. Indeed, earlier this year Business
13 in the Community Ireland ranked SSE in the top five
14 companies providing financial support (inaudible)
15 community organisations. 16:03

16
17 we're here to talk about offshore wind energy. We're a
18 leading developer and operator of offshore wind energy.
19 All told, we are involved in over 8,000 megawatts of
20 offshore wind projects in waters around Britain and 16:04
21 Ireland. We already have 900 megawatts of offshore
22 wind generation in waters around Britain, providing
23 green energy to customers and contributing to the
24 achievement of their plan and action targets. We're
25 currently building over 16 megawatts of new offshore 16:04
26 wind projects, including the Beatrice Project off the
27 north coast of Scotland, which will be the country's
28 largest offshore wind farm when completed. We're
29 developing a further 7,000 megawatts of projects

1 including, much closer to home, Arklow Bank.

2
3 You will all be very familiar with the seven turbines
4 that operate off the Wicklow coast, which are
5 generating green energy every day. This is Arklow Bank 16:04
6 Phase 1. It is a 25 megawatt wind farm, which was
7 co-developed in 2003 by Airtricity (as it then was) GE
8 Energy as a demonstrator project to prove the
9 opportunity that offshore wind energy could represent
10 for Ireland. There was much fanfare 15 years ago when 16:04
11 the first phase of Arklow Bank was launched, but
12 despite the excitement and expectation about what
13 offshore could deliver, Arklow Bank remained the only
14 such development and today it is still the only
15 operational wind farm in Irish waters. 16:05

16
17 Despite having one of the strongest offshore wind
18 resources in the world, Ireland is one of the only
19 countries in northern Europe yet to develop offshore
20 capacity. Fifteen years on from the launch of Arklow 16:05
21 Bank Phase 1, we've yet to fully capitalise, either
22 locally or nationally, on the opportunity presented by
23 offshore wind energy. Many factors have contributed to
24 the lack of progress here, not the least of which have
25 included the higher costs associated with developing 16:05
26 wind farms offshore compared with cheaper costs
27 onshore, as well as the lack of a support mechanism
28 from Government and as no grid connect was in place to
29 provide access to the market for offshore wind energy.

1 However, the climate is changing. Factors including
2 technology advances and supply chain efficiencies have
3 resulted in falling costs making development much more
4 achievable and attractive. We have seen policy changes
5 too, particularly the publication this summer, by 16:06
6 Government, of the new renewable electricity support
7 scheme. This opens up in the near future for offshore
8 wind energy, which we have been advocating for for some
9 time. We are seeing progress too in grid connection
10 policies for offshore wind. 16:06

11
12 This real progress and development in the sector means
13 that these oceans of opportunity are now finally
14 opening up for the establishment of an offshore wind
15 energy industry in Ireland, particularly along the east 16:06
16 coast for Wicklow.

17
18 At SSE we recognise the strides that this Council has
19 made in recent years to identify the new economic
20 opportunities and to increase employment in the county. 16:06
21 In particular we note the extensive work undertaken by
22 the County Wicklow Economic Think Tank in which you
23 have already set specific objectives to capitalise on
24 economic opportunity that offshore wind can deliver.
25 It's heartening to see a council being so progressive 16:06
26 in this regard, and it demonstrates real leadership in
27 the offshore discussion for Ireland. With the Economic
28 Think Tank Action Plan, as well as your more recent
29 Local, Economic and Community Plan set out a clear

1 framework through which Wicklow can realise the
2 potential benefits of its maritime assets. This means
3 that County Wicklow is ahead of the game in terms of
4 its readiness to unlock the potential that offshore
5 wind has to offer, and is well poised to capitalise on 16:07
6 the expansion of the offshore wind industry, especially
7 along the Irish Sea coastline.

8
9 At SSE we believe that this provides a shared
10 opportunity for both County Wicklow, as well as for the 16:07
11 offshore energy industry to collaborate closely to
12 realise this potential. We welcome the suggestion of
13 this Council that an offshore wind energy task force
14 can be established to further work in the industry to
15 coordinate strategy auctions to expand the offshore 16:07
16 renewable energy sector. In this regard SSE would be
17 delighted to play any part or offer any support deemed
18 appropriate for such a task force when it is
19 established.

20 16:07
21 I'd now like to hand you over to my colleague,
22 Murdoch McGee, who will take you through our plan to
23 develop Arklow Bank to its full potential, our
24 anticipated timelines for project delivery and
25 potential opportunities for economic and community 16:07
26 development in the maritime communities along Wicklow's
27 east coast.

28 MR. MCGEE: Thanks, Marian. SSE has a 99-year
29 foreshore lease and consent for the development of

1 Arklow Bank wind Park. This foreshore lease was issued
2 in January 2002 by the Department of Marine and permits
3 the construction of an offshore wind farm in a
4 foreshore site situated between 7 and 13 kilometres off
5 the County Wicklow coastline. The lease area covers 16:08
6 approximately 27 kilometres length by 2.5 kilometres in
7 width.

8
9 Arklow Bank is a shallow water sandbank with water
10 depths between 2 and 4 to 5 metres approximately 16:08
11 through the leased area. This makes SSE's foreshore
12 lease area ideally suited to the efficient development
13 of offshore energy infrastructure.

14
15 SSE's existing foreshore lease provides consent for up 16:08
16 to 200 wind turbines with a minimum total of
17 (inaudible) the requirement of 520 megawatts. However,
18 advances in turbine technology over the last 15 years
19 mean the project can be delivered through the
20 installation of around 100 turbines in the foreshore 16:09
21 lease area - half the total number of turbines
22 originally envisaged.

23
24 The location of Arklow Bank wind Park close to the
25 shore minimises subsea (inaudible). The foreshore 16:09
26 lease consent includes three subsea table options
27 coming into two near shore landing points, one with
28 (inaudible). These landing points are adjacent to
29 Arklow and Ferrybank and also Johnstown.

1 It's envisaged the project will connect via underground
2 cables from the foreshore landing point to an onshore
3 substation, before connecting to the national grid.
4

5 The project is still being developed but it will be 16:09
6 between €1 and €2 billion in total. When fully
7 completed the Arklow Bank Project will be capable of
8 generating enough electricity to power almost half a
9 million homes each year. This would see County Wicklow
10 being an outstanding leadership in helping to meeting 16:09
11 our international (inaudible) to change targets and
12 enhance the County's renewable (inaudible), which are
13 now so important to the large scale international
14 investors, particularly in the energy sector.
15

16 The project will require a land-based hub for servicing 16:10
17 the offshore wind farm. Wicklow Port and Arklow
18 Harbour are already used as bases for servicing the
19 existing wind farm and we envisage new purpose built
20 dedicated base will be required in Wicklow or Arklow to 16:10
21 operate as the service base for the project.
22

23 We estimate the operational wind farm will create and
24 support around 60 full-time local skilled jobs in
25 maintenance of the wind farm. In addition, the 16:10
26 development will support companies in the supply chain
27 and the vessel services, water and fuel, technical
28 goods, loading and unloading the project cargo and so
29 on.

1 Finally, as the largest single contributory to Ireland
2 from wind energy, we envisage that a major community
3 benefit fund would be established. This will
4 financially support communities near the wind farm for
5 its lifetime. This is in addition to any commercial 16:10
6 rates payable to this Council in respect of offshore
7 infrastructure.

8
9 These positive impacts are already being felt in
10 coastal communities near SSE's other offshore wind 16:11
11 projects. In northeast Scotland, for instance, we are
12 seeing the creation of a major new operations base in
13 Wick Harbour (inaudible) our Beatrice offshore wind
14 farm. This has involved the renovation of existing
15 harbour buildings and facilities, out of which 90 local 16:11
16 (inaudible) will be based to support the project.

17
18 As part of our engagement programme for Arklow Bank,
19 with you as public representatives and with marine
20 interests in Wicklow, we'd welcome the opportunity to 16:11
21 be able to demonstrate to you, in person, and on the
22 ground the hugely positive impact that our Beatrice
23 Project is having on the community.

24
25 SSE plans to bring the Arklow Bank wind Park from 16:11
26 construction through to first energy in 2023. There
27 are a number of key regulatory steps which still need
28 to be required to support this however. These include
29 security a grid connection for next year, followed by

1 an application for a renewable energy support scheme
2 structure from Government (inaudible) in 2020.

3
4 Completing these steps will allow SSE to commence
5 construction the following year and export energy for 16:12
6 the first time two years later in 2023. Obviously any
7 onshore elements, such as new infrastructure, including
8 substations and underground cabling, as well as
9 developments associated with the new services in
10 Wicklow or Arklow will go through the normal planning 16:12
11 application process associated with (inaudible).

12 MS. TROY: Members, we'd like you to thank you for your
13 time today. We believe that Arklow Bank Wind Park can
14 truly be a world class project. After 15 years of
15 being installed we are now finally at a point where the 16:12
16 offshore wind energy revolution is about to begin for
17 Ireland and Wicklow can be at the forefront of that
18 revolution. There will be a revolution that will not
19 only help transform the way in which we generate power
20 for a cleaner, low carbon future, but it will also 16:12
21 unlock the enormous economic and job creation potential
22 that the new offshore wind sector can deliver. Our
23 ambition is that this revolution will begin here in
24 Wicklow.

25
26 Thank you, and we look forward to answering your
27 questions.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you very much for the
29 presentation. You're very welcome. Cllr. Matthews,

1 you want to come in here. Like brief questions and
2 answers. Get as much information as you possibly can
3 there.

4 CLLR. MATTHEWS: I will be brief.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: I know you're always brief anyway. I'm 16:13
6 counting on you again to set the trend. Thank you.

7 CLLR. MATTHEWS: Okay. There was a project a couple of
8 years ago proposed off Dublin and Bray. It was called
9 the Dublin and Bray Project. I don't know if that's
10 still underway at the moment. But one of the 16:13

11 suggestions I put it in in a submission for that was
12 that it's obviously talking about generating employment
13 and these are long-term projects that have long-term
14 build, design and operate contracts put into them. So
15 can you consider as part of this to create jobs 16:13
16 directly within the communities such as Arklow or
17 Wicklow or Bray, or wherever it's intended to be,
18 training programmes, internships, directly to be
19 employed on these projects with a view of them being
20 available for this 25, 30, 40-year maintenance projects 16:14
21 that are required for these turbines. So I put that
22 into the Dublin and Bray, but I never heard anything
23 back. Maybe you guys could take it on.

24
25 Obviously you are investing a huge amount of money into 16:14
26 wind energy in Ireland and throughout the world. In
27 about 10 or 12 years we will probably be hitting the
28 target that we need to, in terms of home generated
29 production by wind power, you're nodding your head

1 there. The figures I'm going on anyway. At what point
2 do we become an exporter? Because my concern is - and
3 I would be supportive of wind power, as long as it's in
4 the right place, we got highly criticised by the
5 Minister for trying to put in a proposal to restrict 16:14
6 wind turbines in Wicklow but for offshore it probably
7 is not the same impact. At what point do you become an
8 exporter? There has to be a balance between, you know,
9 damaging, the visual injury of these things and meeting
10 our (inaudible) requirements, rather than just putting 16:15
11 investment in a company like yours to invest in, to
12 export, we need to keep that balance of protecting our
13 environment and how things look around it. Thank you,
14 Cathaoirleach.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Bourke. 16:15

16 CLLR. BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach and, thanks
17 very much for the presentation. I just want to ask two
18 questions in relation to the grid connection. From
19 speaking to other renewable promoters (inaudible) they
20 can't get definite timelines for a grid connection. 16:15
21 How confident are you that you are getting that in
22 2019? Or do you see there's a deficit in communication
23 between (inaudible) that should be addressed through
24 Government. Secondly, with regard to the auction
25 system; do you agree with that system for pricing 16:15
26 because I note that a generator in Dublin or Kildare is
27 tripping down one of their plants because the auction
28 system has cut them out of viability from a gas fire
29 station. Is it Veridion was mentioned? If you could

1 just address those.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Whitmore.

3 CLLR. WHITMORE: Thanks very much, Chair. Thanks for
4 your presentation. I'm just wondering, like
5 Cllr. Matthews, is this energy primarily for export or 16:16
6 is it for domestic use? I would also have concerns
7 about, I suppose the industrialisation of our offshore
8 areas for the benefit of export and my preference would
9 be that that energy be used on the island of Ireland?
10 You say that you have the permission for 200 turbines 16:16
11 but you are only going for 100. Is there a potential
12 that you would go to the 200 and actually double your
13 output? would you be considering that?

14

15 Then just to draw comparisons with Scotland. I think 16:16
16 the Scottish Government have quite a good balance
17 achieved between wind energy and community benefit and
18 they have outlined a number of community benefit areas
19 that wind energy companies, you know, provide, such as
20 apprenticeships, local electricity discounts, things 16:17
21 like that. I would be keen to hear if you have
22 considered all of those. And I would like to see
23 particular things like the apprenticeships being part
24 of your programme and just to get a better outline of
25 what community benefits you see arising from this 16:17
26 project. Thank you.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr. Fitzgerald.

28 CLLR. FITZGERALD: when will the decision on the
29 service base be made? we're ready for you in Arklow.

1 Every morning I wake up I'm looking at seven turbines.
2 I was out there in 2003, I think the Taoiseach of the
3 day Bertie Ahern launched it there that day.

4
5 will the fishing industry have a problem with this? I 16:17
6 mean you have seven, you're talking now about 100
7 turbines. Do they have any issue with this, I just
8 wonder? I mean, certainly I want to emphasise again,
9 you are most welcome to Arklow.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Walsh. 16:18

11 CLLR. WALSH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach, and thanks for the
12 presentation. I think it is to be welcomed and
13 particularly welcomed, it is an exciting opportunity.
14 I think it is time we harnessed the offshore potential
15 we have for wind. I think we can no longer rely on 16:18
16 fossil fuels et cetera, et cetera and we all know the
17 (inaudible). We have seen the weather events that we
18 have been experiencing in the last 12 to 18 months.
19 That's an indication itself of the effects on climate
20 change. But this project, you know, the benefits it 16:18
21 has for the economy and the local economy, you
22 mentioned about the job opportunities et cetera, et
23 cetera. So overall it is to be welcomed and it is
24 certainly, as well as the point that the proposal for
25 onshore has proved, you know, contentious. I think 16:18
26 this is the way forward. Thank you.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Blake.

28 CLLR. BLAKE: Thanks for the presentation. In view of
29 the fact that it took 14 years to move on from the

1 seven that Pat has mentioned there that was constructed
2 in 2003, I just wonder to what extent of success has
3 that particular project been or what level of
4 difficulties have they experienced over the years?
5 Equally so, this project is signing a death knell or a 16:19
6 welcomed death knell of wind turbines on land. There
7 has been a contentious issue (inaudible) planning
8 permission for onshore wind farms. The last point I'd
9 ask you is, you're talking about a rates base, a rates
10 for returns -- you have an onshore rate payment. Is 16:19
11 there no rates payment for offshore wind farms?
12 Thanks, Chairman.

13 CATHAoir LEACH: Cllr. Cullen.

14 CLLR. SHAY CULLEN: Thanks, Chairman. First of all, as
15 has been mentioned by other members here, very 16:20
16 contentious years we have had over the onshore wind
17 farms that were set for County Wicklow and I'm
18 certainly happy to see that sense has prevailed with
19 regards to looking at the offshore wind farm and I
20 certainly wouldn't have any issue with that. A couple 16:20
21 of questions. One is the height of the turbines. Are
22 they similar to the seven that is already in place?
23 And also, could you elaborate a little bit on the
24 community gain we'll say for both Wicklow and Arklow?
25 Hopefully this is not contained to Arklow. And also, 16:20
26 as Cllr. Fitzgerald has suggested, again the whole
27 fishing industry again from Wicklow to Arklow on that
28 coastline, I think that obviously needs to be looked at
29 as well. Those are a few points. Thank you.

1 CATHAoirLEACH: Cllr. Snell.
2 CLLR. SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Like the previous
3 speakers, you know, obviously this is the less
4 contentious of the two options onshore and offshore,
5 but I suppose we also have to be mindful in regards to, 16:21
6 I would like to get some sort of answer to the level of
7 dialogue with the Department of Marine and Fisheries,
8 the local fishermen all along the east coast.
9 Obviously we've a huge amount of people who depend on
10 our shores and on the sea for a living and I want to 16:21
11 know what the affect of that would be on them? I would
12 be very interested to find out in regard to the
13 templates you have in place for the community and
14 voluntary sector. Now obviously people who are
15 affected the most would obviously benefit from the 16:21
16 scheme that you have in place.
17
18 when you talk about over the last 15 years, with modern
19 times and potentially the reduction from 200 wind
20 turbines down to 100. You talked about construction 16:22
21 starting in 2021, you could possibly have 100. would
22 100 wind turbines be constructed in two years or is it
23 a phased process? And if it is a phased process, over
24 what sort of timescale are we talking? Obviously,
25 Cathaoirleach, this is something that already has the 16:22
26 green light. There's a 99-year lease going back to
27 2002, so there is 80-odd years of a lease still left
28 there. I'm just wondering what process do we have to
29 play with this, apart from the planning section, as

1 outlined there earlier, but is there any other process
2 that we, as public representatives, have to raise this?

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Last, Cllr. Dunne.

4 CLLR. DUNNE: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you for
5 your presentation. I really enjoyed it.

6
7 I'm just looking at your map here where you hope to
8 extend the wind farms up to, it looks like it's going
9 up to Wicklow Head. Is there any intention to extend
10 that up further north and if so how far do you intend
11 going north? Thank you, Chairman.

16:23

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you. Marian and Murdoch
13 if you answer those questions.

14 MS. TROY: I will start and pass --

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Whichever ones are relevant to you.

16:23

16 MS. TROY: So the project Dublin and Bray isn't our
17 project, it is one that is still in the offing, at an
18 earlier stage themselves. And the question of local
19 employment, or apprenticeships, as a company, SSE,
20 really tries to enhance and maximise local involvement
21 in projects. For example, we've held (inaudible)
22 events at, for instance, our Galway Wind Park to alert
23 local suppliers to the opportunities that are coming
24 along and to help them during the process and the
25 peculiarity of SSE's procurement process.

16:23

16:24

26
27 we also have engaged, for example, in Galway Harbour,
28 through dialogue with the harbour there we have made
29 some adjustments to the harbour that allowed the

1 turbines to the Galway Wind Park to be delivered
2 through the harbour. So it's something that we're
3 committed to.

4
5 In terms of local training programmes and internships. 16:24
6 I suppose for the project we would be partnering with
7 others in the supply chain and we are engaging with
8 Enterprise Ireland and the IDA and some Irish companies
9 and also a visit to Scotland later in September. So I
10 wonder if that issue is something that perhaps could be 16:24
11 looked at in the task force and to see how that could
12 be dealt with to the maximum benefit of Wicklow. But
13 it is certainly that we would also like to see where
14 there is ongoing maintenance jobs to be looked at.
15 They will be based at our service centre. 16:25

16
17 In terms of wind energy and our renewables target.
18 whilst we have made good progress in Ireland, our 2020
19 is 40% renewable electricity and we are currently
20 sitting at mid 20's. So we're some way off meeting our 16:25
21 2020 target and we are looking at Minister Naughten is
22 looking at a 55% renewables target for 2030. So I
23 think meeting that target will be a challenge in
24 itself. So supplying our own needs really is the
25 immediate and medium term priority. And also for 16:25
26 decarbonisation, you may have seen that decarbonising
27 transport and heating sectors is quite difficult. So
28 it's likely that we'll see (inaudible) of those
29 sectors. So we'll see an increased electricity demand.

1 So really to meet renewable electricity targets we have
2 some way to go.

3
4 This project, our plan is to connect it to Wicklow
5 obviously so it would need to be used on the island. 16:25

6
7 In terms of the grid connection frustrations.
8 Certainly the scheme is never as quick as we would like
9 and it's a number of years since grid connections have
10 been offered. The Regulator is working on that. 16:26

11 They've issued a decision to issue connection
12 agreements in the last fortnight and we know that they
13 are planning to do another around in the next year or
14 so. So we do have confidence that there will be grid
15 connection offers forthcoming. 16:26

16
17 On the question of an auction system. We do agree with
18 an auction system. The auction that has led to the
19 issue of the Huntstown station is a different part of
20 the energy market, I suppose, to be this renewable 16:26

21 auction. It's to do with capacity contracts. If you'd
22 like to speak about that in more detail we certainly
23 can. But it's a different part of the market. This
24 auction would be to allocate renewable electricity
25 support. We agree with it because it means that the 16:27
26 best projects are the ones that go forward and the most
27 competitive projects are the ones that are developed.

28
29 I spoke about export. That's to do with the number of

1 turbines.

2 MR. McGEE: The number of turbines and the question
3 about whether 100 could become 200? No, is the short
4 answer. The 100 would be within the lease. And being
5 that they are slightly larger than the ones that are 16:27
6 there currently, they need to be further apart. The
7 total power output from the other turbines fits the
8 leased area.

9 CLLR. WHITMORE: But they are larger?

10 MR. McGEE: They are. Physically they're larger. 16:27
11 They're within the dimensions -- they're just larger
12 than the ones that are there presently. But they're
13 within the dimensional constraints of the lease. So
14 the hub is 25% higher than the existing machine and the
15 rota is 30% larger. 16:27

16 CLLR. WHITMORE: So visual impact wise, they will be
17 more significant then?

18 MR. McGEE: Yes.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: But there will be less of them.

20 MR. McGEE: There was a question about an extension to 16:28
21 the north. That's not impossible but that would be
22 subject to a completely new licensing and leasing
23 process starting from the beginning again.

24 CLLR. DUNNE: I didn't hear the end of that.

25 MR. McGEE: If we were to extend to the north -- 16:28
26 CATHAOIRLEACH: There's no plans for that at the
27 moment, they'd have to go through a whole new process.

28 CLLR. BLAKE: Do you pay rates?

29 MR. McGEE: You pay -- I think it's called -- yeah,

1 there's a lease payment that's made to --
2 CATHAOIRLEACH: You'll find that goes to the Department
3 of the Marine.
4 MS. TROY: It's akin to a rent payment for the lease
5 but rates would be payable on the onshore portion of 16:28
6 development such as the new hub.
7 CLLR. BLAKE: So no rates on it when it's offshore, is
8 that it?
9 MS. TROY: I believe.
10 MR. CURRAN: There's a significant onshore facility. 16:29
11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Also I think there's a contribution
12 from your company as well to the local --
13 MS. TROY: Yes. So moving on to that community
14 (inaudible) a questionnaire around how these operate.
15 CATHAOIRLEACH: A community benefit? 16:29
16 MS. TROY: So a community benefit scheme is something
17 that's under discussion by the Minister at the moment
18 as part of that renewable energy support scheme. You
19 will have (inaudible) group to look at those issues.
20 If you look, community benefit is something that SSE 16:29
21 has been voluntarily committed to even though it hasn't
22 been a requirement to date.
23
24 If you look at the Galway Wind Park, so as a voluntary
25 contribution to the community we are distributing to 16:29
26 Coillte, €420,000 this year and a similar amount to be
27 allocated each year throughout the project's throughout
28 lifetime.
29

1 Arklow Bank, just looking at capacity. It's
2 approximately four times the size of Galway wind Park
3 so it's a significant community fund, we believe, that
4 would go along with the wind farm. How that is to be
5 administered is something that is, as I say, under 16:30
6 discussion as part of the renewable energy support
7 scheme, but it is certainly something that we'd be
8 interested in hearing some feedback and discussion to
9 see how it is planned (inaudible) for the community.

10
11 As part of our current community benefit scheme we
12 allocate over €1 million annually across the country.
13 So it is significant and something that we're committed
14 to.

15
16 A couple of other points. Discussions with the fishing
17 industry. I suppose today's discussion is part of our
18 communications, we're certainly cognisant that it's an
19 industry that we need to and want to engage in a
20 process with. (Inaudible) marine special planning work 16:30
21 is currently underway and the future coexistence of all
22 of these maritime activities is under discussion so it
23 is something that we note as being very important.

24
25 Let me see if there's -- oh yeah. I suppose there were 16:30
26 discussions about onshore wind turbines and I know that
27 Minister Naughten, when recently speaking about
28 offshore wind opportunities, has discussed that there
29 is great offshore wind potential now and that we are

1 seeing increased constraints on onshore wind
2 development. As somebody working in that space, that's
3 the direction of travel that we're seeing from a
4 ministerial level with great opportunities to develop,
5 in the first instance on the east coast and then as 16:31
6 technologies (inaudible) floating wind turbines on the
7 west coast. That's the signalling, I suppose, that
8 we've seen from Minister Naughten.

9
10 I suppose the other community to mention is that in 16:31
11 that renewable electricity support scheme
12 implementation group there will also be consideration
13 about community ownership. So it's something that the
14 Minister is behind and perhaps something that could be
15 discussed, for example, in a task force. It is 16:31
16 something that we're very interested in and also very
17 keen to see how the Minister can set out guidelines
18 because we're very conscious not to involve communities
19 at an early risky stage of the project, but to provide
20 them also with a valued proposition (inaudible) parts 16:32
21 of the project. I think that was most of the
22 questions.

23 MR. MCGEE: There was a question about when a decision
24 would be made whether we would go for Wicklow or Arklow
25 for a service base. At the moment we are about to 16:32
26 engage consultants to do a study around the constraints
27 that are presented with both harbours. When the work
28 is meant to be begin we will seek to make a decision on
29 that.

1 MS. TROY: we are an onshore wind developer ourselves
2 but we haven't any projects.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Nothing in Wicklow.

4 CLLR. KENNEDY: That's all right. Thank you.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Could I have agreement on just 15
6 minutes extra just to try and finish the agenda today.
7 Hopefully with your support that we'll finish the
8 programme. Okay. Thank you very much.

16:34

9
10 AGENDA ITEM 17

16:34

11
12 CATHAOIRLEACH: In regard to 17, is there any questions
13 on this, the Chief Executive's Report or will we note
14 the Chief Executive's report? will we note that?

15 FROM THE FLOOR: Note it.

16:35

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's fine. we'll move on. 19.

17
18 AGENDA ITEM 19

19
20 MS. GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, this is something that
21 was considered at protocol. It's proposed that the
22 purpose of the policy is to streamline the process in
23 dealing with requests for the suspension of Standing
24 Orders (inaudible) time to consider dealing with the
25 statutory business of the Council. So just the first
26 paragraph sets out the legislative provision in
27 relation to suspension of Standing Orders and the
28 second paragraph, what is contained in the current
29 Wicklow County Council Standing Orders. So really

16:35

16:35

1 paragraph 3 is the proposed amendment to Standing
2 Orders.

3
4 "1. The request for Suspension of Standing Orders to
5 be submitted to the Cathaoirleach or the meetings 16:36
6 administrator in writing and in advance of the Council
7 meeting. Written submissions to outline the nature of
8 the request for the Suspension of Standing Orders
9 contain the name of the Elected Member proposing and
10 seconding the request. The meetings administrator will 16:36
11 read the contents of the written request to the
12 meeting. If clarity is required or requested, the
13 proposer will be invited to provide clarity. The
14 requests can then be put to a vote without discussion."

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Behan. 16:36

16 CLLR. BEHAN: Chairman, I'm completely, totally opposed
17 to this change because it reduces the flexibility of
18 Members who want to raise something in the course of a
19 meeting that they may not have known before the meeting
20 started. I understand you don't want to have a long 16:36
21 discussion on Standing Orders at two o'clock and
22 another one at 4:30. I get that. But I think that can
23 be done by Members acting responsibly. But if we
24 change the existing Standing Orders, Members may know
25 or may not know that in fact if an item arises at 2:30 16:37
26 or three o'clock that becomes an issue that we really
27 have to have an emergency discussion on, if we pass
28 this we won't be able to raise a suspension of Standing
29 Orders unless we have written in advance of two o'clock

1 to look for it. So I think it's tying your hands
2 unnecessarily. I accept, I have always put in my
3 requests for Standing Orders suspensions in advance of
4 the meeting but we never know what day will come when
5 something would arise and we'd need to suspend a
6 Standing Order. So on that basis, Cathaoirleach, I
7 would not be supporting this proposal.

16:37

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Effectively, since I have been on the
9 Council I have never known a Suspension of Standing
10 Orders in between a meeting.

16:37

11 CLLR. BEHAN: It can happen though.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Anything can happen but I mean you
13 can't cover every eventuality. Cllr. Lawless, do you
14 want to come in there?

15 CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah, please. Thanks, Cathaoirleach.
16 Just what Cllr. Behan was saying. Just that the
17 request for Standing Orders to be submitted to the
18 Cathaoirleach. Maybe, Lorraine, you might be able to
19 correct this, but I thought we changed Standing Orders
20 maybe two years ago on this where you had to have the
21 requests in by 12:30 the day of the meeting.

16:38

16:38

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: No, we didn't. That was questions.

23 CLLR. LAWLESS: Was that questions? I thought that was
24 Suspension of Standing Orders. I just wanted
25 clarification on it.

16:38

26
27 Just at point 2, just in regards to if you have to send
28 it in with the Elected Member's name and a proposer and
29 a seconder. There might be a case that you mightn't

1 necessarily have a seconder when you're actually
2 submitting something in so I think there should be an
3 amendment there if this is going through, that if a
4 seconder, you know, when submitting if there is no
5 seconder, that it may be seek to be done on the actual 16:38
6 day because sometimes it might be a bit easier for
7 people who are in political parties to get a colleague
8 to second a suspension of Standing Orders but maybe not
9 necessarily some of the other groups so on the day they
10 may need to seek a seconder there and then at that 16:38
11 moment. It's just a slight little amendment, that's
12 all. Just a slight amendment.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Snell.

14 CLLR. SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I would be
15 supportive of this, as a member of the Policy 16:39
16 Committee, it's something that we have discussed for a
17 long time now and I think everyone was in agreement
18 that it needed to come here in front of the Chamber and
19 a decision be made on it. To my mind the only real
20 change is that someone looking for a Suspension of 16:39
21 Standing Orders would have a seconder. That's the only
22 change and that's something I would support because
23 otherwise I as an individual could come forward with
24 anything, have no support within this Chamber but still
25 get airtime to make any sort of hair brained idea and I 16:39
26 just feel that, you know, at least if one person agrees
27 with you, you have a chance to discuss it here,
28 otherwise you're on your lonesome.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Kavanagh.

1 CLLR. KAVANAGH: Just to take up on Cllr. Behan's
2 point. I do agree that it's very dangerous to tie our
3 hands to completely cut off an avenue. We don't know
4 from day-to-day what exceptional circumstances are
5 going to arise and it may never happen. It may never 16:40
6 happen in the course of the Council meeting but to tie
7 our hands and to not be able to discuss something which
8 could be very, very important in the Council is just a
9 bit dangerous I think.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: All I know in regard to the meeting up 16:40
11 here, if there ever was a situation that arose between
12 hours that was an emergency situation of such
13 importance, I, as a Chairman of the Council, would
14 bring it up myself in regard to that. And it has never
15 been, it has never been the situation where there's 16:40
16 been a suspension of Standing Orders in the middle of a
17 meeting. Never happened for as long as I have been
18 here. And I think really and truly now at this stage,
19 this is just to streamline the business of the meeting.
20 It's not to stifle suspension of Standing Orders. That 16:41
21 can happen. All it is is to give it a structure.
22 What's been happening here is that somebody has been
23 coming in, suspension of Standing Orders and half an
24 hour or so has been spent talking about suspension of
25 Standing Orders, whether we would do or whether we 16:41
26 wouldn't do it, and stuff like that and it's actually
27 wasting time and a lot of stuff that is not getting to
28 on the agenda, which a lot of Members have asked for on
29 the agenda and that's really what this -- it's nothing

1 about stifling Standing Orders. It has never happened
2 before in the past and it's nothing got to do with
3 that. Cllr. Walsh.

4 CLLR. WALSH: Some of the requests for suspensions have
5 actually no relevance to this Council whatsoever and 16:41
6 some debate was just a complete waste of time. So it
7 is important that it is streamlined in some fashion.

8 MS. GALLAGHER: Could I just say two things? Just in
9 relation to Cllr. Behan's reference. You could still
10 apply the same process even, you know, for example if 16:42
11 there was a suspension of Standing Orders that you felt
12 happened during a meeting, you could still apply the
13 same principle in that, you know, you put it in
14 writing, you have it, you put it to the meeting like
15 you could still apply the same process. 16:42

16 CLLR. BEHAN: But the amendment says it has to be put
17 in by two o'clock.

18 CATHA O'RLEACH: You can amend it.

19 MS. GALLAGHER: You could put in something to cater for
20 -- we're just trying to streamline the process. 16:42

21 CLLR. BEHAN: Can I make a suggestion?

22 MS. GALLAGHER: Can I also just say, we can't actually
23 vote on it today because there is not enough Members in
24 the Council Chamber because people have left the
25 Chamber. You have to have at least two-thirds members 16:42
26 present so we need 21.

27 CLLR. BEHAN: No, it's two-thirds of the Members
28 present here at the moment have to vote for this
29 change.

1 MS. GALLAGHER: No, no, it has to be the majority of
2 two-thirds of the Members being present. It has to be
3 two-thirds of the Members being present.

4 CLLR. BEHAN: Present. Two-thirds of the Members
5 present vote in favour. These are the Members present. 16:43
6 The rest are gone. Two-thirds of these must agree but
7 however --

8 MS. GALLAGHER: I thought you had 21 present to change
9 it.

10 CLLR. BEHAN: I'm reading it. I have the Standing 16:43
11 Orders here.

12 CLLR. KAVANAGH: we've often voted with less people.

13 CLLR. BEHAN: we have.

14 MS. GALLAGHER: Not to change Standing Orders.

15 CATHAOIR RLEACH: This is not major issue now. 16:43

16 CLLR. BEHAN: I don't know what it's even coming
17 forward -- if you just listen to my proposal, Chairman,
18 for a minute, and you're not going to be Chairman
19 forever and you won't know what might happen in the
20 future. So agreeing on something because you won't do 16:43
21 it is just not relevant because someone else might have
22 a different opinion. So just listen to me for a
23 moment.

24

25 I think one of the things where it has got lax is that 16:43
26 when somebody puts in a proposal to suspend Standing
27 Orders, like let's say I put in something and I send it
28 to Lorraine and it's done in time before the meeting, I
29 think what should happen is, I propose it, somebody

1 seconds it, it's voted on are we going to discuss it at
2 4:30 or are we not? I don't necessarily think we need
3 to have a discussion at two o'clock and at 4:30. I
4 think that would save time because then you'd have it
5 all over in two minutes at the beginning: Are we going 16:44
6 to discuss this item? Are we going to discuss that
7 item? That's the way it used be years ago and I have
8 no problem with that change.
9 CATHAOIRLEACH: I have no problem with that.
10 CLLR. BEHAN: But I don't agree with the other 16:44
11 proposal.
12 CLLR. FITZGERALD: I think that's a sensible proposal.
13 Let the Members decide if we're going to go for a
14 Suspension of Standing Orders.
15 CATHAOIRLEACH: No discussion on it then? 16:44
16 CLLR. BEHAN: Not on the beginning.
17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposer, seconder, no discussion.
18 CLLR. BEHAN: Proposer, seconder, vote.
19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed?
20 CLLR. RYAN: Just on that, just talk about the whole 16:44
21 reason this came forward in the first place is because
22 that simply doesn't work.
23 CATHAOIRLEACH: It will work now.
24 CLLR. RYAN: It ends up in a debate. I guarantee it
25 won't work. 16:45
26 CATHAOIRLEACH: It will work because I've got a
27 directive now. Agreed? Is that agreed by the Council?
28 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah.
29 CATHAOIRLEACH: I've got a directive now that it will

1 be proposed and seconded and voted on there and then.
2 No discussion.

3 MS. GALLAGHER: If we are amending Standing Orders, can
4 I just say again:
5
6 "Standing Orders shall continue in force or repealed on
7 Notice of Motion carried by a majority of the Council,
8 or at least two-thirds of the Members of being present"
9 not present. 16:45

10 CLLR. BEHAN: It says "present". This is the copy you
11 gave me a month ago, Lorraine, and it is "present". 16:45
12 Present. Present.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll get that clarified.

14 MS. GALLAGHER: You picked me up on it before. You
15 did. 16:45

16 CLLR. BEHAN: I'm right.

17 MS. GALLAGHER: No.

18 CLLR. RYAN: Are you going to vote on that because I
19 would be against it completely. I think that's
20 watering it down. It's a good proposal that came 16:45
21 forward and we should stick to it and not do this.
22 Maybe the next Cathaoirleach may not be as firm as
23 yourself and it ends up being a full discussion and
24 this Council just isn't operating --

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Lorraine was saying that we can't vote 16:46
26 on it today because we don't have the numbers.

27 MS. GALLAGHER: You need 21 members here.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll put it
29 on the agenda for next month's meeting and we'll

1 finalise it.

2
3 AGENDA ITEM 20

4
5 CATHAOIRLEACH: 20. Could I have your attention, 16:46
6 please, just for another 25 minutes and we'll finish
7 the agenda then. Please.

8 MR. LANE: This has been discussed at the SPC and this
9 is regarding the policy of the council homes. There
10 are a number -- that present number at the moment, 16:46

11 we've identified three. So this is not a major number
12 of units. However, we want to dispose of a number of
13 properties that are not economic to refurbish. The
14 programme allows us up to €30,000. We can add to it.

15 But these are units that are extremely uneconomical to 16:46
16 bring back into stock. In at least one case, if not

17 more, there are people in the area who have Local
18 Authority houses who are willing to take the units and
19 through opportunities available to them would be able
20 to bring them back up to -- this was discussed at SPC 16:47

21 but what we're recommending that we would make these
22 units available or offer them to existing Council
23 tenants first and then to people who (inaudible) nobody
24 else available to people who are on the list. Just
25 cutting down the list achieving what social housing is 16:47
26 all about in the first place. It has been agreed with
27 at the SPC.

28
29 This is a policy agreement. It will still be coming

1 back for a Section 183 on an individual basis. You can
2 look at it again and I will be able to answer any
3 queries. So I want approval

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Dunne, is your light on?

5 CLLR. DUNNE: No, it's okay. 16:48

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Lawless and Cllr. Snell.

7 CLLR. LAWLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just a quick
8 question just in regards to the policy going forward.

9 I'm glad to hear it's only three properties. When I
10 read this first I was thinking, said jeez how many 16:48

11 properties do we have? So that answered that question
12 which is great. The existing Council tenants, maybe

13 they might be able to afford it, but anyone that's on
14 the actual Housing List themselves, they have to have

15 an income under €38,000 per year. So if they have an 16:48
16 opportunity to, I presume it is to buy this property,

17 it depends on what condition they're in, Joe. I mean
18 if they're not viable for the Council to refurb back

19 and maybe they're ready for demolition, the possibility
20 is that somebody who is eligible on the social housing 16:48

21 may not actually be able to afford it. So I'm just
22 kind of concerned around that end of it. It makes

23 sense if, you know, we have properties that we can't
24 afford to bring back. I mean it would be great to

25 bring them back. 16:48

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Somebody may be in the working line and
27 would be able to refurbish it much cheaper than the
28 Council would.

29 CLLR. LAWLESS: I was just wondering, and maybe

1 probably John as the Chair, they have probably
2 discussed this at length. The reasoning in behind
3 this. Thanks.

4 CLLR. SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. This is something
5 that has come up through the Municipal District. It 16:49
6 affects two Municipal Districts. There's three units
7 in very, very poor condition. If the Department would
8 give the money that's needed, which is tens and tens of
9 thousands, obviously there would be no debate here at
10 all. It's not something that any member of the Chamber 16:49
11 here wants to be seen to be selling off property and
12 therefore that's why the provisions are in place here,
13 by the Municipal District of Arklow and Wicklow that
14 these units would be specified specifically for people
15 who are in a Local Authority house, or on the Local 16:49
16 Authority housing waiting list. I know a number of
17 Members here have had contact from people in both
18 scenarios. I assume this would be a tendering process
19 where I personally would have an issue, as would all
20 other Councillors, if it was for speculation and if it 16:50
21 was developers coming in to buy up a cheap house and
22 turn it around and put it back out on the rental
23 market. It's not that, Cathaoirleach. It's not to be
24 interpreted as that. This is something that we would
25 hope that perhaps somebody in a Local Authority house 16:50
26 would give back the keys to that house. They have the
27 skill set and probably the family support base to be
28 able to turn around these houses that need a lot of
29 work on them. I know personally I have been approached

1 by other people, as have other Members in Arklow and
2 Wicklow in regards to these three units. That's why
3 we're putting it there in front of these Members.
4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Kennedy and Cllr. Whitmore.
5 There's a number of people here so be quick as 16:50
6 possible. Cllr. Kennedy.
7 CLLR. KENNEDY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just to
8 clarify something there that Joe said a minute ago.
9 Does this still come back to the Municipal District for
10 the approval it of, is it Section 183? 16:51
11 MR. LANE: Full Council.
12 CATHAOIRLEACH: We have to approve of any disposal
13 there.
14 MR. LANE: As we are advertising it, we will inform the
15 Municipal District. That's not a problem at all. 16:51
16 CLLR. KENNEDY: I have a couple of questions so maybe
17 you would just give me a minute on this. Why did these
18 houses get into such bad condition that it's now too
19 expensive to do them up? How long were they vacant?
20 How long have they been vacant before this decision has 16:51
21 been taken?
22 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's fine.
23 CLLR. KENNEDY: I'm not finished.
24 CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll get that answered when everyone's
25 finished, Councillor. 16:51
26 CLLR. KENNEDY: Okay. Are these houses in rural areas
27 or urban areas?
28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Go ahead.
29 CLLR. KENNEDY: That's it for a minute. I might want

1 to come back in in a second.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Whitmore.

3 CLLR. WHITMORE: Thanks, Chair. I'd be sort of -- when
4 we were talking about this here, you're saying that
5 these are buildings that are too far gone that we don't 16:52
6 have the resources, or it's too expensive for us to do
7 them up, yet other people who are in the business might
8 be able to refurbish them. Surely we are in the
9 business of providing housing? I don't understand how
10 someone else could come in and do this at a cheaper 16:52
11 cost than what we should be able to do them.

12
13 My other concern with this is that all over the past
14 number of months, every time Minister Murphy is on the
15 TV or being interviewed he is saying that money is not 16:52
16 an issue. So here is an instance where a Local
17 Authority has houses, we need money to do them up. So,
18 you know, how is that money not coming from the
19 Government rather than actually handing them back into
20 private ownership? I think it's shortsighted on our 16:52
21 part to be doing that.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Blake.

23 CLLR. BLAKE: As Cllr. Snell has said, we did give this
24 a substantial hearing at the SPC and certainly what
25 came back here from that particular meeting it is very, 16:53
26 very strict in terms of who can purchase them. There
27 are lots of people who are already on the Council
28 Housing List, or tenants, so I thinking it is a very
29 restricted -- it is something we do need to move on on.

1 Cllr. Snell has proposed it, I would second his
2 proposal.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. winters.

4 CLLR. WINTERS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just when
5 somebody gets planning permission they're usually 16:53
6 restricted in terms of being able to sell the house on
7 for ten years or anything like that. Will there be
8 some stipulation put on this to make sure that whoever
9 buys the houses isn't doing it for profit and doesn't
10 get to turn them over in a year's time? Thanks. 16:53

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Kavanagh.

12 CLLR. KAVANAGH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. One of the
13 things that came up at the Housing SPC meeting when we
14 discussed this was that if these houses were only to be
15 sold to current tenants to eliminate the possibility of 16:54
16 people coming in to make a profit, then they would
17 actually be relinquishing a house that they're in. So
18 in other words there would be no loss to housing stock.
19 In effect yes, there might technically be a loss in
20 that there is a house that is uninhabitable but because 16:54
21 it is uninhabitable, without spending lots and lots of
22 money it can't be used to house somebody. So by
23 relinquishing the house that the tenant is in, then a
24 house that is ready for a tenant to occupy becomes
25 available. I also agree that there should be a clause 16:54
26 whereby nobody could sell a house within a required
27 period of time, ten years, just, again, to reduce the
28 possibility of somebody trying to make a quick profit.
29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Two more people have to come in.

1 cllr. O'Neill.

2 CLLR. O'NEILL: Cathaoirleach, I'm just looking for a
3 clarification there from the Director regarding the
4 housing situation in West Wicklow. There was blazing
5 headlines in last week's Wicklow People from the 16:55
6 Chairman of the Baltinglass Municipal District that
7 we'll have 15 new social houses built within 12 months
8 in the Blessington area. From my understanding we're
9 waiting on the upgrade of sewerage from Irish Water and
10 I just learned there a few minutes ago that they've 16:55
11 only got further information in, which they were
12 requested to do so, on an planning application for the
13 upgrading of sewerage. I think it is irresponsible for
14 any Councillor or Chairman of any Municipal District to
15 mislead the people of the County, to go to the papers 16:55
16 suggesting that these houses are being built. I want
17 to know is it true or is it not?

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor, we're talking about
19 something totally different now.

20 CLLR. O'NEILL: I'm asking for clarification. 16:56

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Ask for clarification on what we're
22 talking about. We're not talking about a group of
23 houses. Will you just address that. We haven't too
24 long to go now. Just address that. The other thing is
25 a matter that you can bring up some other time but you 16:56
26 can't bring it up under this right.

27 CLLR. O'NEILL: The Director of Housing is sitting
28 there.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: We're not talking about that, we're

1 talking about a proposal here, a recommendation. You
2 agree with it or you don't agree with it. I'm going on
3 to Cllr. Fortune.

4 CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach, I'll just be
5 very quick. I just think, having listened to the 16:56
6 discussion and the key question here is what
7 Cllr. Kennedy has asked in one of his questions: why
8 are these houses in this condition in the first place?
9 I think that needs to be explained because I'm aware of
10 situations where tenants are being moved around because 16:56
11 they're in a house that has become inhabitable. You
12 know, we need to find out why that's the case and we
13 need to have a stronger policy on it.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr. Fitzgerald, please be
15 brief. 16:57

16 CLLR. FITZGERALD: Some years ago there was an
17 incentive for people who were in social housing and
18 found themselves in a position to move to private
19 housing. There was a financial incentive. Is that
20 gone, Director? That was back in the old Town Council 16:57
21 where they got a grant when they moved to a private
22 house. Secondly, one of them houses has been lying
23 there for six or seven years. It's a derelict as such,
24 the one in South Wicklow and it has been looked at many
25 times. That's a new build for whoever buys it so 16:57
26 they'd want to have plenty of money. It has to be
27 gutted. All's that's left there is the walls and a
28 little part of the roof and a few animals.

29 MR. LANE: When I went to housing in 2015, one of them

1 is pre 2015 and the other is post 2015. They're all
2 rural.

3
4 Look, houses -- a lot of these were rural properties
5 originally so that design (inaudible) would now be 16:58
6 contributing to why they have deteriorated. It has
7 deteriorated to a standard of putting them out now. So
8 what they were built for in the 40s, 50s, 60s, we now
9 have to build them up to a totally different standard
10 which is the regulatory standards as of today. So that 16:58
11 creates its own problems.

12
13 The programme is €30,000 (inaudible). what we're
14 saying is, in these particular cases there might be
15 local solutions. In some cases people are willing to 16:58
16 move into them and like a lot of people, and refurbish
17 them bit by bit themselves rather than on a first day.
18 If we have to do it we have to bring them up to 100%
19 standard. That creates a problem. Some people would
20 be able to do these on a phased basis. Like I said 16:58
21 they are rural, three of them are rural. There is no
22 problem with putting in place some formal contract into
23 the sale that they can't be sold for ten years.

24 CLLR. FORTUNE: Can I just get a clarification. Joe
25 has just explained that they're rural houses. Are 16:59
26 these houses with a substantial piece of land with
27 them?

28 MR. LANE: No. Two of them definitely not and one has
29 a problem -- I'm told one has a small piece of land.

1 CLLR. FORTUNE: I'm just conscious that houses like
2 that would have land with them, so therefore, they're a
3 very attractive site you're selling.

4 MR. LANE: No. If you are talking about developmental
5 no. And we can put a restriction on that that they 16:59
6 can't be sold on.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr. Kennedy, do you want to come in?
8 Nobody else after this.

9 CLLR. KENNEDY: Maybe the Director could answer the
10 question that I asked first: why did these houses get 16:59
11 into such bad condition? And the other question is:
12 when was there last a tenant in either of these two
13 houses?

14 MR. LANE: One came out possibly in 2017, 2016, one
15 came out in -- two of them and the third one is a long 16:59
16 time before that.

17 CLLR. KENNEDY: And why were they allowed to get in
18 such a bad condition?

19 MR. LANE: Like I said, when you put people back --
20 when we issue houses we put them up to the current 17:00
21 standards. Some of our houses are older units and
22 would not be up to that standard at the moment. But if
23 I was to relet it today and bring it up to full
24 standards, that's where the problem is. So you're
25 talking about new kitchens, new electricity, new 17:00
26 heating, new windows. It is a total refurbishment. In
27 one particular case, this particular case what the
28 architect says you're better off starting again.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm going for a proposer and a seconder

1 now. We have had enough of this.

2 MR. LANE: Like I said, in each case these will be
3 brought back as Section 183. We're not taking this
4 decision lightly.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: It has to be brought back. Any 17:00
6 recommendation has to be brought back to this Chamber.

7 CLLR. WHITMORE: As a general policy should we not be
8 looking to knock and rebuild and then potentially
9 getting the funding from the Central Government.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: It depends on where it is. Listen, 17:01
11 there's a proposer and seconder here.

12 CLLR. KENNEDY: Cathaoirleach, I will finish on this
13 point. I promise you I'll finish on this point. One
14 of these houses there was a tenant in it up to two
15 years ago or a year-and-a-half ago so it can't have 17:01
16 been in that bad a condition a year-and-a-half ago and
17 now they want to sell it. This is an attack on rural
18 Ireland. We're falling into the same trap. The
19 Government has given no money to build rural houses.
20 The Council are giving no money in rural houses and 17:01
21 these houses are inside in the village boundary.

22 CLLR. FITZGERALD: Can I just say something, Chairman.
23 I just want to make a point here.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Does somebody want to propose?

25 CLLR. FITZGERALD: I just want to make a point here. 17:01
26 Can I make a point? The one in Aughrim, or on the
27 Annacurra Road, if that's a straightforward planning
28 application to do that house up, the site lines are
29 gone there. They won't get planning on that. So

1 that's the difficulty on that one because people have
2 done stuff there which means you cannot come out on to
3 that road.

4 MR. LANE: A local solution would have to be found.

5 CLLR. FITZGERALD: It would have to be found because 17:01
6 whoever buys it they won't be able to build.

7 CLLR. KENNEDY: Is there any problems with site lines
8 on the second house in Aughrim?

9 MR. LANE: The difficulty with that is radon barrier.

10 CLLR. KENNEDY: we're looking to sell that as well, are 17:02
11 we?

12 MR. LANE: we are offering it. Yes.

13 CLLR. KENNEDY: You want to sell the two houses in
14 Aughrim, in a village where there's no sewerage
15 capacity for anybody to get a house in the village? 17:02
16 And we want to sell off two houses.

17 MR. LANE: other than we won't be refurbishing --

18 CLLR. SNELL: They will just sit there. That's the
19 option.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, don't be talking over now, 17:02
21 please. I'm going for a vote. Is there a proposer?

22 CLLR. SNELL: I propose.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Do I have a seconder?

24 CLLR. BLAKE: I second.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay I'm going for a vote. It is a 17:02
26 recommendation from the SPC on housing.

27 CLLR. FITZGERALD: could you read it out please?

28 MR. LANE: As circulated, that when the Council own
29 property and it becomes vacant and the technical

1 reports indicate that the property requires a
2 refurbishment and it is uneconomically viable for
3 initial rebuilding, the Council may offer the property
4 for sale following:
5 1. Existing Council property (inaudible) surrender 17:03
6 their property, they would get priority 1, and then
7 eligible social housing applicants priority 2. In both
8 cases a priority would be given from applicants within
9 the area.
10 [VOTE TAKEN] 17:03
11 CATHAOIRLEACH: To set a date for the next Council
12 meeting, the LPT, I'm suggesting 24th September.
13 That's the local property tax meeting, okay? All
14 right. Is that agreed? Two o'clock.
15 MS. GALLAGHER: Just in respect of the last vote it's 17:05
16 13 for; 3 against; 15 not present; and one abstaining.
17 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will receive a presentation now on
18 the River Basin Management Plan.
19
20 AGENDA ITEM 22 17:05
21
22 MR. SEXTON: Good afternoon, all. I will be as brief
23 as possible. Two minutes of your time, just to update
24 you on the publishing of the River Basin Management
25 Plan. 17:05
26
27 As you know, it has come out of Europe and we have got
28 to get all the rivers and lakes and coastal waters back
29 to good statuses.

1 It's a three cycle plan. The first cycle has already
2 happened in 2015. We are currently in the second cycle
3 now and the River Basin Management Plan covers that
4 cycle up until 2021. You already know we having got
5 advised governance, the Minister now signs off on the 17:05
6 plan and the local authorities implement plan.

7
8 There is now one national river basin district, instead
9 of all regions before.

10 17:06
11 There is three tiers of governance and you can see
12 there that it's the Minister there, Tier 1 and it is
13 the local authorities and stakeholders at Tier 3.
14 That's a lovely structure there for you to bring home
15 with you this evening but we won't go into it. It's 17:06
16 merely to show you the different levels of organisation
17 and the local authorities have ended up at the third
18 tier.

19
20 I know that Theresa circulated the Executive Summary of 17:06
21 the River Basin Management Plan to you. It's about
22 three pages and these are some of the facts that are in
23 it. It gives you the current state of play. The state
24 of the rivers there. 60% at good status now. Lakes at
25 50%. Coastal waters at 60%. Groundwater at 90%. So 17:06
26 it's the current state of play. You'll see there
27 that's a breakdown of it there. You've got your high
28 status awards in blue and your good in green and
29 everything else then is below the targets of the water

1 Framework Directive. There's quite a lot to be done
2 with the rivers and the lakes and also then the
3 transitional waters. That's your estuaries.

4
5 For Wicklow then, which is relevant to yourselves, 17:07
6 you'll see that we're pretty much with the national
7 standards there. 60% of our rivers are at good status
8 or better.

9
10 When you look at the pressures then, this is in the 17:07
11 plan also, you will see that because most of the land
12 is agricultural, that seems to be about the vast
13 majority of the pressures are there.

14
15 Next into waste water and then (inaudible), that's the 17:07
16 sort of structure. There has been channelisation of
17 some drainage works. It goes on then. You can see the
18 public consultation on this part of the plan was much
19 more inclusive than the previous one and there was lots
20 of submissions made on that plan. A huge amount more 17:07
21 than the previous one, thanks to yourselves for getting
22 involved in that.

23
24 If anybody wants to find out more about the water
25 quality in Wicklow, catchments.ie is the website. 17:08
26 There's interactive maps there and surveys and
27 community interaction.

28
29 As part of the new River Basin Management Plan there's

1 two new strands, there's a bunch of people now hired to
2 represent the local authorities. It's a shared
3 service. And they are going to kind of communicate and
4 engage the communities in water quality. That is seen
5 as one of the most important aspects of this new plan 17:08
6 is to try and engage people to realise how important
7 water is and what needs to happen to improve it.
8 There's lots of citizen science projects ongoing with
9 that. We did the Tinahely Show recently there where we
10 had a stand up with water quality and that was quite 17:08
11 successful. Most of the kids seemed to enjoy that
12 aspect of it. There's going to be some citizen science
13 projects ongoing shortly as well.

14
15 There's a map of all of the priority catchments that 17:08
16 have been highlighted as part of the River Basin
17 Management Plan and you were part of that process also,
18 with some submissions on that. There's a list of them.
19 There's eight in Wicklow in particular. There is a new
20 resource, a shared resource again from the local 17:09
21 authorities, 30 new scientists have been hired
22 nationally and there's going to be about five to seven
23 of those working within Wicklow within those water
24 bodies and two of those are sort of top priorities.
25 The Potters and Three Mile Water just outside Wicklow 17:09
26 down and west the Derry River. So you can expect to
27 see those scientists in the catchment very shortly.
28 They'll be holding public meetings and we really want
29 you guys to be aware of those. So you probably will be

1 getting calls from your electorate out there when
2 people start to call and it's important that you're
3 aware of that with the local elections coming up.

4
5 That map there shows you those locations. You can see 17:09
6 down west we've got the Derry, we've got the River
7 Slaney, we've got the Derreen for its progress and
8 status and up north the Dargle as well and some low pH
9 rivers up on the mountains also.

10 17:10
11 That shared service that I was telling you about, 35
12 scientists in seven regions. I've told you there'll be
13 seven working in Wicklow. They've already met us here
14 in the County Buildings and we've gone through the
15 Potters and Three Mile Water and we've gone through the 17:10
16 Derry River. We're sharing our local knowledge with
17 them so that they can get into the catchments and find
18 out what the real issues are.

19
20 When they do find problems, this is the idea of the 17:10
21 cycle that will happen. When they walk the rivers they
22 will be looking at key things and when they find an
23 issue, they're there to engage with the stakeholder.
24 Whether it's a forester, whether it's an agricultural,
25 a farmer, or whether it's Irish Water with a sewerage 17:10
26 treatment plant and they're supposed to advise them on
27 a solution for that and to guide them through it.

28
29 The new policies that are there in the River Basin

1 Management Plan. I'm going to pick you one out of each
2 of these. The public engagement. That's where you
3 have got two new shared services there, working
4 engaging with the public during this process.

5
6 There's a new agricultural sustainability support
7 programme called ASSAP. There's 30 agricultural
8 scientists there to advise throughout Ireland when
9 there is issues with the farm or in a catchment where
10 there is (inaudible) or whatever. They will give free
11 voice to those farmers and give them the options that
12 are there to try and improve water quality. That's
13 funded by the Department of Forestry and Food. There
14 is also something from the Dairy Council there.

15
16 This is one I want to show you, another measure here.
17 The Development of Water and Planning Guidance for
18 Planning Authorities, that is being developed by the
19 EPA at the moment. That will make a big difference, I
20 think, to Wicklow County Council. So that the planners
21 would have strict guidelines on how to protect water.
22 I think that will help protect water rather than allow
23 it to deteriorate.

24
25 You will see that the LAWCO - that's the new shared
26 service there to engage with the community.

27
28 There's a community water fund developed and that's
29 going to increase for next year where local groups can

1 apply for funding to carry out water investigations or
2 water projects. An example of that would be, I think
3 it's in the Derry River, it's the Derry Bubbles
4 Programme, that's been granted funding and that's going
5 to go to the local schools and bring them out to do 17:12
6 some citizen science. Bring them on to the river, kick
7 the samples, show them the water quality. Show them
8 what they can do to improve water quality at home and
9 hopefully that spreads upwards towards the adults.

10
11 That's the community water fund we just spoke about
12 there. I will skip that one, I think, timewise. These
13 are the expected outcomes. That was in your Executive
14 Summary. It just shows you some of the ambition that's
15 there. The first one I just want to speak about: 255 17:12
16 urban waste water treatment projects to progress.
17 That's Irish water nationally and in Wicklow I think
18 you are probably aware that Arklow is progressing.
19 Kilcoole waste water treatment plant, its performance
20 has been improved. The Kilpedder waste water treatment 17:13
21 plant has been improved. Newcastle waste water
22 treatment plant has been improved. Knockananna has
23 been improved. Coolboy has been improved. They really
24 are spending a bit of money out there and hopefully
25 we're going to see the impacts of that at the next 17:13
26 status for the rivers.

27
28 That's the key aims for the next plan. I think the
29 best one there is really that they want to engage

1 people. So as this progress and these investigations
2 and catchment assessments go on it's all about
3 community engagement and working with the community. I
4 hope you can take that message out to your
5 representatives when you meet them. Thanks very much. 17:13
6 CATHAOLRLEACH: Any questions for Jonathan?
7 Cllr. Fortune.
8 CLLR. FORTUNE: Can I just ask a quick question? If
9 there's a particular problem in a given area, can this
10 group of people, through yourself, be contacted to 17:13
11 investigate it.
12 MR. SEXTON: If it's in one of those priority
13 catchments that I spoke about, that is where those
14 crews are going to be in. All of the other catchments
15 are in Wicklow. You can come to us as the first point 17:14
16 of contact, no problem, and we can pass on that
17 information to them. And if it's in another catchment,
18 we'll go in and discuss it with the person then. So
19 it's no problem.
20 CLLR. FORTUNE: Where it's a known problem? 17:14
21 MR. SEXTON: We'd love to know about those. You can
22 certainly pass it on to pollution.
23 CLLR. BLAKE: When did you say the programme was
24 starting? Next year?
25 MR. SEXTON: No. They'll be ready by October, we 17:14
26 think, to go into those two first priority catchments,
27 the Derry water and the Potters and Three Mile Water.
28 End of October I'd say.
29 CATHAOLRLEACH: Okay, thank you. Thank you very much.

1 Sorry we kept you there. Listen, thanks again. Okay
2 the protocol meeting will be held here, it will take a
3 few minutes. Thank you. See you next week.

4
5 THE MEETING CONCLUDED

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