## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

## HELD AT WICKLOW COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW TOWN,

ON MONDAY, 18TH JUNE 2018 AT 2PM

Gwen Malone Stenography Services certify the following to be a true and accurate transcript of the stenographic notes in the above-named action.

GWEN MALONE STENOGRAPHY

1	THE MEETING COMMENCED ON MONDAY,
2	18TH DAY OF JUNE, 2018 AS FOLLOWS:
3	
4	CATHAOIRLEACH: Now I would like to welcome you all to
5	this County Council AGM. Before I start, could
6	everyone turn off phones? Councillor Cullen?
7	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Yes, Chairman. Thank you very
8	much. First and foremost, Chairman, to congratulate
9	you on your term as Chairman, I think you did an
10	excellent job and very well done. It is great to see a $_{ m 14:0}$
11	Baltinglass man in that position, hopefully we will see
12	you there again.
13	
14	Chairman, just we are all very disturbed with the Prime
15	Time investigates programme on the KW last Thursday
16	evening, very disturbing issues that were raised, and
17	as this Council has a major involvement in that body I
18	would like to see would it be agreeable that, given
19	that we have over 12,000 students in Wicklow who are
20	attending KW's schools. That's very important issues, 14:0
21	tens of thousands of people and families in Wicklow
22	education for children. And would it be agreeable,
23	Chairman, that I note that this is perhaps for it, but
24	could we have it as a priority issue on the first
25	council meeting in July that we would have a discussion $_{ m 14:0}$
26	on that, Chairman, on the issues raised in the
27	programme and on the KW and maybe have reports from the
28	members, the delegates from the Council, for that
29	meeting?

1	CATHAOIRLEACH: Anyone else have a comment on that
2	issue?
3	CLLR. FOX: Chairman, I know last month we had the
4	similar thing came up, and I certainly watched the
5	programme Thursday night and would have major concerns 14:0
6	about its content. However, it is subject to an
7	investigation. We made that point last month. I do
8	agree with Councillor Cullen, we do need to have a
9	discussion on it at a point in the future. But I think
10	while there is an ongoing investigation we have to be 14:0
11	very careful about discussing the matter.
12	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Chairman, can I just respond?
13	There is no criminal case under investigation. There
14	is no criminal case, nobody has been charged. In fact
15	three members of the board, including members of this 14:0
16	Council, were openly able to discuss it on national
17	television last Thursday night without any problems,
18	and there was no legal restraint for doing that, and
19	the members of the board openly discussed it publicly
20	and have made statements about it publicly. So I see 14:0
21	no reason why we can't discuss it here, if it can be
22	discussed on public television, I see no reason why we
23	can't discuss it here. It is an issue of public
24	education and the Electorate Rep Wicklow County Council
25	make up 50 per cent of the electoral representatives on 14:0
26	that State body, it is a public body, and I think it is
27	appropriate that if it can be discussed on national
28	public television there is no reason why it can't be
29	by members of the board themselves mind you there is

1 no reason why it can't be discussed in this chamber, 2 and I think it is imperative that we discuss it in this 3 chamber. 4 5 As I said, there is 12,000 students in Wicklow and 14:08 6 there is thousands of children in primary school now 7 going forward that will be going into secondary school 8 in a couple of years time, so I think it is very important that we would have a discussion on that. 9 10 14 · 08 11 As I said, I am not looking -- this is the day of the 12 AGM and that and I am not looking for today, but I 13 think it is not an unreasonable thing that we would 14 have a discussion given the huge involvement this 15 County Council has in that body. And I can no reason, 14:08 16 there is no legal reason whatsoever why we can't have, 17 as I said, members of the board had no problems going 18 on public television, national television, the other night making statements on it. So I see no reason why 19 20 this Council is a democratic body representing the 14:08 parent of Wicklow can't have a discussion. 21 22 CATHAOI RLEACH: Councillor Fortune, you wanted to come in on that as well? 23 Well, no, just two quick things: 24 CLLR. FORTUNE: 25 is I would support what County Councillor Cullen is 14 · 08 I think what he is asking is reasonable in the 26 saving. 27 circumstances and I think for us to be informed about

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29

what is going on on the national television, the legal

programme on it, we need to resolve that part of it as

1	well. And the second part I have a suspension in,	
2	Chair, to discuss the planning permission granted in	
3	Greystones in Blacklion in the RT17, and I am asking	
4	maybe that we would take that suspension before we get	
5	into the guidance on the agenda, so it doesn't get 14:	: 09
6	confused with the alleged	
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: I was of a mind that they would take	
8	the suspension after the formalities of the AGM and we	
9	would deal with the suspension after that.	
10	CLLR. FORTUNE: well I am asking to take it beforehand, 14:	: 09
11	that is really what I am asking you.	
12	CATHAOIRLEACH: We will take it after. Do you have a	
13	seconder on that?	
14	CLLR. BEHAN: I'll second it.	
15	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor, on the KWETB, I have a few 14:	: 09
16	other speakers to hear. You are not speaking on the	
17	KWETB, are you?	
18	CLLR. BEHAN: I do but I would like Councillor Whitmore	
19	first on it.	
20	CLLR. WHITMORE: Okay, thanks, Chair. Look, obviously 14:	: 09
21	the issues that were raised last week were fairly	
22	concerning and this has been an ongoing issue for the	
23	Board. I don't think there would be any problems	
24	discussing it as long as it was kept within like	
25	there is obviously certain elements of it that can't be $_{14:}$	:10
26	discussed, but I think from a process perspective that	
27	that I can't see any reasons for that. What I would	
28	suggest there is actually a new chief executive and	
29	perhaps we could invite her in to talk about what she	

1	sees as a vision for the ETB, and there have already
2	been changes made to the processes and due procedures
3	within the organisation and perhaps she could go into
4	that as well so that might be an option available to
5	us. Just to let you know I won't be here at the next 14:10
6	meeting either, I am on holidays, so just get it on the
7	record now. But that's a matter
8	CATHAOIRLEACH: Does anyone else want to speak to KWETB
9	issue? Councillor Walsh, have you a KWETB?
10	CLLR. WALSH: Yes. Just in relation to that proposal, 14:10
11	again I watched that documentary, Prime Time
12	documentary, on Thursday night which was alarming. If
13	you do decide to take this, and I don't see why not, I
14	think you would be somewhat curtailed in what we can or
15	cannot discuss during the course of the debate and
16	maybe it would be no harm just to make sure you get
17	some legal advice prior to that. But there is no
18	reason why we can't discuss it but just to mark out the
19	guidelines there on the legislation. Thank you.
20	CATHAOI RLEACH: Okay. Councillor Behan? 14:17
21	CLLR. BEHAN: Chairman, I have a proposal for another
22	suspension. But just to add my voice to the other,
23	that I actually think it is quite appropriate for us to
24	discuss what is a huge issue as far as I am concerned
25	for this County and for County Kildare. Obviously we 14:17
26	have to be mindful of legal niceties but I think it is
27	essential as democratically elected politicians that we
28	get an opportunity to discuss this issue because our
29	representatives make up half of the public reps on that

2	Councillor Cullen's proposal that it be on the agenda	
3	for the next meeting.	
4		
5	I also want to propose a different suspension which is 14:	12
6	in relation to the withdrawal of very important and	
7	vital medical facilities for people from St. Vincent's	
8	Hospital and Loughlinstown Hospital that effect the	
9	entire county of Wicklow. I can go into that in a bit	
10	more detail: All I really want is a letter to be	12
11	written on behalf of the people of County Wicklow, on	
12	behalf of this Chamber, to the Minister for Health, to	
13	St. Vincent's Hospital, to the HSE, and to	
14	St. Columcille's Hospital about the non-availability of	
15	a public consultant for orthopedic work in	12
16	St. Vincent's and, secondly, the non-availability of	
17	ophthalmology service in Loughlinstown. Both of these	
18	services have been withdrawn and for people are waiting	
19	on the public system they are being referred off, in	
20	the case of back complaints now they are become sent	12
21	across the city to the Mater. And in the case of	
22	people with eye problems they are basically I think	
23	just being left hanging there. So this is an issue	
24	that affects many people in the county. I just want to	
25	propose them, we don't have to have a discussion, that 14:	13
26	we write to those four bodies that I mentioned.	
27	CATHAOIRLEACH: I think that is agreed?	
28	CLLR. WHI TMORE: Yes.	
29	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah.	

particular board. So I would support

1	CLLR. BEHAN: Thanks, Chairman.
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor sorry I will try and
3	resolve the KWETB issue first. Are there any other
4	speakers on the KW issue? Councillor O'Neill, are you
5	on the KWETB? I don't want to go to Vincent Blake 14:13
6	because he is Vincent, is that something you want to
7	talk about that, is it? I will try and resolve this.
8	CLLR. O'NEILL: well, no, just on the KWETB issue, I
9	first raised concerns over 12 months ago in the Chamber
10	here about issues in Dunlavin School, including myself 14:13
11	and Councillor Behan. But I would be conscious of
12	people's names being bandied around, whether it be on
13	television or elsewhere, and I would like to see some
14	sort of conclusion to the inquiry before that happens
15	because it is not nice for people's names to be bandied 14:14
16	around and they could be completely innocent of any of
17	this, so I would be wary of that. But I can't really
18	see any problem in a discussion with so many members of
19	KWETB as part of Wicklow County Council. But I would
20	just be caution of it, you know, I wouldn't like to
21	think that people's names are being bandied around or
22	we were suggesting they were guilty of anything and
23	that might not be the case.
24	CATHAOIRLEACH: Any other comments in relation to it?
25	My own opinion is we have to discuss it here at some 14:14
26	stage.
27	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah.
28	CATHAOIRLEACH: It is an issue, it is out in the public
29	domain. The question is just when, you know.

1	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah.	
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: So there is a proposal from	
3	Councillor Cullen to put it on the July meeting as the	
4	the second support. Councillor Fitzgerald, do you want	
5	to say something?	14:15
6	CLLR. FITZGERALD: Yeah, no, I just agree with what	
7	Councillor Cullen has said but looking at that	
8	programme it is a huge concern and I believe without	
9	as Councillor O'Neill said, leave the names out of it.	
10	But there are concerns that what has happened, that	14:15
11	they are being investigated and there are no criminal	
12	charges yet, but that's another day's work. But I mean	
13	it is a huge concern because, look it, a lot of people	
14	just mentioned to me because I am on the Chairman of	
15	the Board of the Art Community College which was	14:15
16	mentioned in that programme, and I am not going to get	
17	into that either. So I would totally support	
18	Councillor Cullen's secondment by Councillor Behan I	
19	think, that we should discuss it at the next meeting in	
20	a careful manner.	14:15
21	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Vance?	
22	CLLR. VANCE: Chairman, I don't have a problem	
23	discussing it, it is just what we discuss and when we	
24	discuss it. Like Councillor Walsh is saying there	
25	about I think we could do with getting some advice on	14:16
26	what we could discuss and what we may not be able to	
27	discuss. And like what Councillor Whitmore there was	
28	saying about the getting the chief executive in here	
29	and stuff like that, I am aware of some things but I am	

there could be criminal cases or there may not be criminal cases. So I really don't want to get into a situation that we are discussing something here that may involve criminal charges with somebody or other as well. I have no problem with discussing it but I would like to know what effectively we could discuss and we may not, and maybe by the time July comes around we may have a more information in regard to what we can discuss and what we can't discuss and various things like that. CATHAOIRLEACH: I suggest then CLLR. VANCE: But I think we need to get advice on effectively if there is going to meeting about discussion of this, we have to get legal advice of what effectively we can or cannot discuss in my opinion anyway.  CATHAOIRLEACH: Could I suggest then that we put it in for the July meeting and get some legal parameters from the law agent as to what we discussed?  CLLR. VANCE: Yes. CLLR. WHITMORE: Yeah. CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah. CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Chairman, perhaps that prior to the July meeting that we would write to the Department and ask and to the KW to furnish the elective Council with the Thorn, the full Thorn report? CLLR. WHITMORE: We don't have it yet, Tommy.  CLLR. LAWLESS: We can request it.	1	not aware of a lot of things on it. I am hearing that
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27 Council with the Thorn, the full Thorn report? 28 CLLR. WHITMORE: We don't have it yet, Tommy.	25	the July meeting that we would write to the Department 14:17
CLLR. WHITMORE: We don't have it yet, Tommy.	26	and ask and to the KW to furnish the elective
	27	Council with the Thorn, the full Thorn report?
29 CLLR. LAWLESS: We can request it.	28	CLLR. WHITMORE: We don't have it yet, Tommy.
	29	CLLR. LAWLESS: We can request it.

1	CATHAOIRLEACH: But we can request it?	
2	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah.	
3	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: We can request it to have that for	
4	the meeting. We should still have it as a priority	
5	issue on the July meeting. As I said, there's 12,000	14:17
6	students in Wicklow.	
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, you have said that, yeah,	
8	Councilman.	
9	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: what I am proposing as well,	
10	rather than discussing it here today because there are	14:17
11	issue of votes here today, important issues of votes,	
12	but perhaps that you would have it on the agenda?	
13	CATHAOIRLEACH: You are saying, just repeat what you	
14	are saying, you are saying we will write to the	
15	Department of Education looking for copies of the Thorn	14:17
16	report.	
17	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: The Thorn report, yeah, and any	
18	other documents that they would have be circulated.	
19	CATHAOIRLEACH: And maybe also ask for an updated	
20	position.	14:18
21	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: And updated. And in the interim	
22	perhaps the five members of that board will bring to us	
23	any information that they would have that would be able	
24	to help the rest of the Council in making evaluation of	
25	the situation.	14:18
26	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Whitmore?	
27	CLLR. WHITMORE: Can I just add to that, perhaps maybe	
28	if we wrote and asked that they make because the	
29	report is in draft stage so we need the Department to	

1	publish it essentially immediately and provide us with	
2	a copy of it. There needs to be pressure on the	
3	Department actually to publish the final draft of this.	
4	Because if we just write to them and ask for them they	
5	will come back and say it is in draft, it is not	14:18
6	published. I think we need to be saying that	
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: We could request for it to be published	
8	then as well?	
9	CLLR. WHITMORE: Yeah, like you know immediately and	
10	that we get a copy of it.	14:18
11	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: And any legal advices that the	
12	board would have received from their own advisors.	
13	CATHAOIRLEACH: Can we get agreement then on our	
14	approach?	
15	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah.	14:19
16	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Annesley?	
17	CLLR. ANNESLEY: Chairman, we paid him a weekly meeting	
18	in the morning in his chambers and I think it is very	
19	appropriate for us to ask the CE, for the CE to be	
20	asked and get a direct answer from Dr. Deirdre Keyes is	14:19
21	the lady's name, and I think it would be very	
22	appropriate that she is asked to the July meeting, you	
23	know, and I don't think she will have a problem coming	
24	here. But she can only tell you going forward what's	
25	going to happen, she wouldn't have that much knowledge	14:19
26	of what has happened. She wouldn't be briefed like we	
27	have been briefed. But the documentation we were given	
28	was confidential and that's why members of the County	
29	Council are a bit aggrieved that they haven't got it	

1	but we were given strict guidelines that we could not	
2	discuss it. What was discussed on the Prime Time	
3	programme, that was limited as well that they could	
4	talk about, but I have no problem discussing this in	
5	July. But I think definitely an invite to the CEO	14:20
6	should go out for the July meeting.	
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Is there support for that	
8	as an additional?	
9	CLLR. McDONALD: Yeah.	
10	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yeah.	14:20
11	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: For what, Chairman?	
12	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Annesley is proposing we	
13	should invite the CE.	
14	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Chairman, the only reason that we	
15	are just looking to discuss this now is because there	14:20
16	has been six meetings of the KW Board	
17	CATHAOIRLEACH: Tommy, we have reached agreement now.	
18	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Oh, that's fair enough, yeah.	
19	CATHAOIRLEACH: So there is a proposal from	
20	Councillor Annesley that we write to the CE to ask her	14:20
21	to attend our July meeting, is that agreed?	
22	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Yes, but if she doesn't accept it	
23	we still have our own discussion.	
24	CATHAOIRLEACH: Oh, yeah.	
25	CLLR. LAWLESS: Yes.	14:20
26	CLLR. TOMMY CULLEN: Fair enough, that's perfect.	
27	CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Councillor Blake?	
28	CLLR. BLAKE: Can I take the opportunity of	
29	congratulating Lorna Mallick for being selected to	

1	represent Wicklow in the Rose of Tralee. We are all	
2	well aware that the Rose of Tralee is a worldwide event	
3	and she is one of 48 who are going through to the event	
4	on that particular weekend. So can I just on behalf of	
5	Wicklow County Council congratulate Lorna and her	4:21
6	family and wish her well in the Rose of Tralee event.	
7	Thank you, Chairman. CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Fox?	
8	CLLR. FOX: Yeah, can I congratulate Áine O'Gorman from	
9	Enniskerry who was recently capped for the 100th time	
10	by the Irish soccer team at the recent World Cup	4:21
11	Qualifier in Norway. I think it is a marvellous	
12	achievement for Áine to reach 100 caps and she has been	
13	an inspiration for female sport participants in	
14	particular around Enniskerry and Bray district. I just	
15	want to congratulate her and I think we should all join $_{ m 12}$	4:21
16	in congratulations. Thanks, Chairman.	
17	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor McLoughlin.	
18	CLLR. McLOUGHLIN: Yes, and thank you, Cathaoirleach.	
19	I would like to send a letter of thanks please to	
20	Dee Featherstone from the Strip and Dip that was held	4:22
21	in Magheramore Beach two weeks ago. She has raised	
22	nearly 500,000 for the charity, more than that, she has	
23	put Wicklow on the map worldwide. There isn't a	
24	country in the world that that hasn't got publicity.	
25	You know, it is a formidable feat and to the	4:22
26	two-and-a-half thousand women that did the dip, I would	
27	just like to say a congratulations. But I do feel we	
28	should send a letter of thanks and congratulations to	
29	Dee for all that's going to do for children's	

T	charities.	
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Gail Dunne?	
3	CLLR. DUNNE: Thank you, Chairman. Can I also	
4	congratulate the Wicklow ladies' senior football team	
5	who reached the intermediate football final. It's a	14:22
6	great achievement for them and I would like to wish	
7	them the very best for the final.	
8	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Murphy?	
9	CLLR. MURPHY: Yeah, I would just like to wish the	
10	participants of the Special Olympics national games,	14:23
11	they are taking place at the moment over the weekend,	
12	and County Wicklow has been flying the flag in all	
13	departments, and it is absolutely brilliant, and I	
14	would just like to acknowledge that.	
15	CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, Members, the next item sorry,	14:23
16	the first item on the agenda, is the election of	
17	Cathaoirleach. Before I go into that, I am just going	
18	to say short few words, I'm not into long speeches, as	
19	you know, so just a few little things I would like to	
20	say.	14:23
21		
22	I have been honoured to sit in this chair for the past	
23	year. It was really great. I want to thank each of	
24	the 31 Councillors for the courtesy you have shown me	
25	over had the last 12 months. I want to especially	14:23
26	thank my Vice Chair, Pat Vance, who has been a great	
27	support over the year, and my predecessor,	
28	Pat Fitzgerald. I want to thank my own party for	
29	nominating me and supporting me for this position. I	

thank the officials of this county for the support they have given me, I thank the CE, Frank, and his predecessor, Brian Doyle. I want to pay particular thanks to Lorraine Gallagher for the superb professional job she does and the support she has given 14:24 to me and all Councillors. I also want to mention Christine Flood and Niamh Drain for the support they gave me over the past year.

We all have different styles and we must respect each other's way of doing things. What I think and say may not make any difference to what I think but here is what I think: Wicklow is on the up, we are progressing. We must always be guided by the principle of what is best for Wicklow, its people and the people of what is best for Wicklow, its people and represent this place. It is a privilege.

I will repeat the issues which must be our priorities and I mentioned these exactly a year ago, and they are still relevant: Maximise drawdown of national funding in all areas, this should be monitored monthly.

Continued increase decision-making and spending at local level, I think this is happening from the last meeting. A new proposal I have is that planning rules should differ in different parts of the county, parts of the County that are not under urban pressure. We shouldn't really have a one-size-fits-all approach and we should recognise the vast differences that exist

1 within our county. The current government guidelines 2 actually recognise this but that is a conversation we 3 will have for another day. 4 5 That's all I have to say. Thanks very much. 14:25 6 (Applause). 7 MR. CURRAN: Cathaoirleach, just on behalf of the staff 8 I would like to thank Edward for his courtesy and professionalism throughout the year. He was a pleasure 9 10 to deal with and a great help to me when I started. 14 · 26 11 He's had a huge interest in all of the different programmes and, as he said himself, everything that was 12 13 good for Wicklow. He has been here for the start of 14 the housing programme, it's now we're starting to turn 15 sods, and it's really kicking off. A big advocate for 14:26 16 outdoor recreation and getting funding in for same and he was here for the launch of the Varty Trails two 17 18 Big interest in tourism, particularly the weeks ago. 19 China element, I think that market is going to be huge.

Edward was here to meet the Chinese ambassador when he

interest in what was happening in the various different

called into Powerscourt. He also took a lot of

towns and he was great support at Blessington and

bringing enterprise to a small town and that was a

14:26

14 · 26

great achievement in its own right. And also a big
interest in major infrastructure which we need, such as
the N11, the Arklow wastewater treatment and the flood
relief schemes, et cetera. So, look, I just want to

29 congratulate Edward on doing an excellent job and

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1	thanks again on behalf of myself and all the staff.	
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Winters?	
3	CLLR. WINTERS: Yes. Just on behalf of the Fine Gael	
4	group I would like to both I suppose thank and to	
5	congratulate you on your year as Cathaoirleach.	4:2
6		
7	Throughout the year you conducted yourself in a quiet	
8	determined and implemented significant changes which	
9	will help us, the Members, to develop a county to the	
10	betterment of all its residents and businesses. The	4:2
11	introduction of the monthly management reports will	
12	give us a much better way of monitoring what we're	
13	doing and making sure that we are keeping the pressure	
14	on to achieve what we want to achieve. The larger	
15	discretionary spend on each of the districts I suppose 14	4:2
16	gives us a better understanding of what is available	
17	and also for people to see where their local property	
18	tax is being spent and I think you also put a great	
19	emphasis on a larger drawdown of government and	
20	European funding and I think that will benefit projects 14	4:2
21	right throughout the county.	
22		
23	Your year saw significant change of management, we have	
24	a new CE, and I think that you, along with all of the	
25	officials, managed this with the sort of minimum of	4:2
26	disruption to both us and to the county. And then as a	
27	country we are trying to broaden our markets and our	
28	trade agreements and I think that Wicklow played its	

part in that and we saw a very successful and hopefully

1	beneficial trip to China. I think you are a
2	fair-minded level-headed individual with good
3	communication skills and wonderful attention to detail,
4	and I think that all of those things you brought to
5	your role as Cathaoirleach and did an excellent job and 14:2
6	I just want to thank you. Thanks.
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Lawless?
8	CLLR. LAWLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I just want to
9	say congratulations on your year. I remember when you
LO	first got elected, I didn't really know you that well 14:2
L1	as a councillor, I was unsure of what way you would
L2	conduct yourself for the year and I have to say I was
L3	very surprised, pleasantly surprised. I found you very
L4	respectful, very easy to deal with, and you're very
L5	open as well. Any time I know we came to you with any 14:2
L6	issues you were always willing to listen and take
L7	onboard all our views which was very much appreciated.
L8	
L9	It's not an easy job sitting up there in that chair. I
20	have to say we have had very thorny issues here in the $_{14:2}$
21	chambers and we always have done over the yeas, I am
22	sure you will in the coming year, and have to handle 31
23	voices in sometimes what can be a playground situation,
24	I think you handled it will pretty well on most
25	occasions. So I just want to the wish you well and
26	thank you very much and, yeah, well done. Well done.
27	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks. Councillor Blake?
28	CLLR. BLAKE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. As having
29	proposed you last year, very proud of the fact of the

job you have done for the year, it has been absolutely	
excellent. And, as chair of the Baltinglass district,	
can I just say thanks on behalf of the members from	
Baltinglass, and the people in Baltinglass district as	
well, for the cooperation and help you gave to the	14:30
members. It was great the fact that the Cathaoirleach	
of the Council attended the Baltinglass meetings as	
well on a monthly basis and certainly gave us a hand up	
in regard to what was actually happening at county	
level as well. So on behalf of which can I just say	14:30
well done to you, you done have a very good job in the	
year, and yourself and your family. You have certainly	
adopted the position that your own father has done here	
in this county as well, being chairman as well, so we	
are finally in a very strong position and your	14:30
reputation lived up to it, and I certainly do believe	
you did that. So congratulations on a job well done	
for the year. Thanks very much.	
CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Fortune?	
CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Now on behalf	14:31
of the Independent group I would like to say thanks and	
well done for the year you just served. I think you	
have been very fair-minded, I think you have been a	
good chair. I think you allowed debate when it was	
right to allow it and when you had to step in and cut	14:31
it, you did the same. I think that is an essential	
skill for any chairman. And I would just like to say	
thanks and well done and wish you the very best. You	
know, your decency came across at all times and that's	

1	a tremendous attribute for anyone to have, so thanks.	
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Walsh?	
3	CLLR. WALSH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just to follow on	
4	from the previous speakers, just to congratulate you on	
5	your role as Cathaoirleach over the last year. During	14:31
6	that time you were always fair and accommodating and I	
7	know sometimes those attributes are severely put to the	
8	test but I congratulate. You mentioned the word	
9	"respect" there in your address and you certainly had	
10	respect in this chamber. So again congratulations.	14:32
11	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Jim Ruttle?	
12	CLLR. RUTTLE: Yes, Cathaoirleach. I want to, on	
13	behalf of our group, congratulate you upon your year as	
14	Cathaoirleach. You are the third member of your family	
15	that I've had the honour to serve with here over the	14:32
16	last 30 years, your father and brother, Billy, and	
17	yourself. You've lived up totally to the great family	
18	tradition of public service who paid respect for people	
19	all around and total commitment to what you're doing.	
20	In the course of the last year you done a great job	14:32
21	here, but not just here but in west Wicklow as well,	
22	and again I congratulate you on that and thank you for	
23	your courtesy and kindness at all times extended to me	
24	and to others. You'll probably have a lot more spare	
25	time now and you deserve it all because it is an	14:32
26	arduous task and a lot crops up and you have to do an	
27	awful lot but you did very well and again thank you	
28	very much and well done. Thank you.	
29	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Behan?	

CLLR. BEHAN: Cathaoirleach, again I will just join with all my colleagues in thanking you very much for your courtesy, for your availability and for your sense of fairness in all your dealings with the members of the Council, no matter what your personal views were or 14:33 what the individual councillor's views were, and I want to thank you for that.

And just looking up at you there, and going on from what Councillor Ruttle said, physically and in every way that you behave, you very much remind me of your father, your late father, in his approach. I always felt he was a very fair man, he was a man that was willing to listen and he was a man that always put the good of the county first. And I have to say I don't think it would be possible to pay a greater honour to you than to say that you are very definitely following in his footsteps. And for those of us who served with about Godfrey we certainly remember his approach was very, very successful as public representative as well. 14:33

I want to make one other point and it is a general point, not specific for you, Cathaoirleach, but you were one of the people that I suppose it effected. Because of the fact that so much of the business of this Council is done during 9:00 to 5:00 hours it is very, very difficult for people who have a normal 9:00 to 5:00 job who were involved in business or involved in other professions to actually be able to fully

14:34

1	attend to their democratic responsibilities and there	
2	has not been enough consideration in my view to the	
3	needs of people who are not necessarily available in	
4	the afternoon or the morning. In other parts of the	
5	country, particularly I think in the big cities, Cork	14:34
6	and Dublin especially, meetings are held at night and	
7	that means that people who want to run for election,	
8	whether they are working a business, they are working	
9	for themselves, or whatever the case is, they get a	
10	proper opportunity to be involved. I know it must have	14:34
11	been I assume it must have been extremely difficult	
12	for someone in your position to try and have the	
13	availability that you did have given that you have to	
14	operate as a full-time career as well. So in	
15	particular in regard to that I want to thank you	14:35
16	because I know you really put yourself out and you	
17	really stretched every possible part of your life I'd	
18	say in the last year to do the excellent job that you	
19	do, and that you did do, and I want to thank you very	
20	much for that too. Thank you.	14:35
21	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Brien?	
22	CLLR. O'BRIEN: (Speaks Irish). You performed your	
23	functions in this room here like a very good referee,	
24	you did absolutely excellent. (Speaks Irish).	
25	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Murphy?	14:35
26	CLLR. MURPHY: Yeah, I would just also like to echo my	
27	fellow Councillors. I think your professionalism was	
28	just brilliant. I think you're calm, cool and	
29	collected. A presence isn't exactly for us all	

1	because, as Councillor Behan said, it is not easy to
2	fit in a career and your job and everything else. But
3	I think your inclusion and your knowledge for a higher
4	pitch of what we probably than the funding of the
5	government and being ready and all the grants aid and 14:3
6	whatever, and I think we need that head to kind of kick
7	us sometimes to realise that there is another level and
8	I think your expertise in that is fantastic and I hope
9	you continue with that. I also would just like to
10	thank you for I suppose helping us all this year and
11	your expertise in inclusion as well in every level
12	which we appreciate. Thanks.
13	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Snell?
14	CLLR. SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I suppose,
15	Edward, it has been a quick year, 12 months, but if you 14:3
16	look over what's gone through this chamber the last 12
17	months an awful lot of issues have been dealt with, big
18	issues, and I think you conducted yourself brilliantly
19	on every occasion. And I said to you when you first
20	went up there, as you know, you will probably go a
21	little bit greyer over the course of the year and
22	you've almost come out unscathed, you're just a little
23	bit greyer than when you sat in there. I am sure at
24	times you felt like pulling your hair out up there.
25	But the one thing that you always afforded everyone in 14:3
26	this chambers was the utmost respect while you,
27	yourself, would automatically get respect from the
28	members because you and the way you conduct yourself
29	and your family for many, many decades but I felt that

at times you afforded the utmost respect to each and every member of this chambers.

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As a Rathnew man talking to a Baltinglass man, I probably wouldn't agree with what Councillor O'Brien 14:37 said in regards to refereeing and stuff like that. I do wish you the best in regards to your future and you've another year left in this chamber, the same as the rest of us, and I've no doubt that you'll go back and represent the people of west Wicklow and the county 14:38 as a whole as you have in the past year, and I just want to commend you for a great year in the chair. CATHAOI RLEACH: Councillor Thornhill? CLLR. THORNHILL: Cathaoirleach, go raibh maith agat. Cathaoirleach, just a cúpla focail (speaks Irish). I just say that thanks very much for a great year, you know, it's a very difficult position to be as a Cathaoirleach, you know, it is very difficult, you know, to be everything to everyone. But in the year that's gone past there was an awful lot of things, 14:38 controversial and otherwise, you know, and I must say that had you dealt very fairly and you listened and I think myself, you know, you gave everyone a reasonable chance to have their speak, you know, like. But I am sure that in the future the incoming Cathaoirleach will 14:39 also recognise, you know, because here in Wicklow there are an awful lot of things that we should have to face up to, you know, like but I think that, you know, I

think that you did a very good job and go raibh míle

1	maith agat.
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much for your kind words.
3	The next item on the agenda is election of
4	Cathaoirleach. Councillor Walsh?
5	CLLR. WALSH: Yes, thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would 14:39
6	like to propose Councillor Pat Vance for this position.
7	As we know, Councillor Vance has over 30 years
8	experience both serving as a councillor in Bray Urban
9	District Council and Wicklow County Council. He has an
10	in-depth, and some would say unparalleled, knowledge of 14:40
11	the workings of this Council, and I believe that this
12	wealth of experience and knowledge will serve him well
13	in the role of Cathaoirleach for this Council for its
14	fifth and final year. Thank you.
15	CATHAOI RLEACH: Councillor Gail Dunne? 14:40
16	CLLR. DUNNE: I would like to second Councillor Walsh's
17	proposal for Councillor Vance. I have known Pat for
18	over 20 years and he has become a good friend. And I
19	know in the last year for council, which can be
20	probably one of the most difficult years with all the 14:40
21	elections due, we couldn't have a safer pair of hands
22	than in Councillor Vance. Thank you.
23	CATHAOIRLEACH: Do we have any other proposals? We
24	don't appear to have. There is only one candidate so I
25	deem Councillor Vance Elected Chairman of Wicklow 14:41
26	County Council. (Applause).
27	MS. GALLAGHER: Members, we are just going to get a
28	photograph before we proceed with all of the
29	formalities. Is that okay?

1		
2	THE HEARING ADJOURNED BRIEFLY AND RESUMED AS FOLLOWS:	
3		
4	(The meeting continued with the new Cathaoirleach,	
5	Pat Vance, in the chair).	14:4
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Thank you very much	
7	certainly I would like to thank my proposer and	
8	seconder and my party and colleagues and all the	
9	members of the Council for the vote of confidence that	
10	you have given me this year. I deeply appreciate it.	14:4
11		
12	I want to pay a special tribute to our outgoing	
13	chairman, Edward Timmons, and I wanted to use this	
14	opportunity to say that Edward was Cathaoirleach in	
15	what was a really busy year, particularly in the north	14:4
16	of the county, as we well now. And for a man from the	
17	west of the county I am sure every monthly meeting that	
18	we had and Bray generally was being discussed all the	
19	time, I think it was difficult enough and there was a	
20	few decisions that had to be made as well, and I just	14:4
21	want to thank Edward for his courtesy and good humour	
22	during all that.	
23		
24	When I first was chairman with the Council in 1997	
25	Edward's father was the chairman, I was the vice	14:4
26	chairman to him, and it is ironic that this year that I	
27	am Vice Chairman to Edward as well. I had a wonderful	
28	opportunity to see Godfrey Timmons in action and I	

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always had tremendous admiration for the man, I never

met him before I came on the Council but the admiration I had for that man, that he was non-political, all he wanted to do was what was best for the county. And often he would come across and if he felt you were making a mistake or something like that he would never slam you at the Council Chambers he would whisper in your ear, 'I think you might have got that wrong', and generally speaking when he said that you knew that you had got it wrong as well. But it was always that type of advice to everyone, to all political parties, that he imparted to us.

And it was my pleasure to work with Edward this year and I have to say that Edward represented the county at, both home and abroad, absolutely tremendous. And really and truly what the highlight of I think Edward's year, and he did say it here, was the trip to Hainan in China. It was very intensive, it was at a very, very high level, and it was wonderful to see Edward perform and to see the respect that the Chinese had for him in his capacity of promoting the county, and it was absolutely marvellous for anybody that was there at that particular time would have been particularly proud of him.

14:50

Could I just say that the fifth year of the Council is generally a fairly tough year. The first year is always tough embedding people into the Council but the fifth year is particularly tough. I am prepared to

give as much time as much as possible to the members, to the officials, to make this a successful year as I possibly can. I certainly can't do that without the help and cooperation of all the Councillors and officials in this Council as well. It is very important that we get that. I know it may not be possible to get it all the time but I am just asking for your help and cooperation to help me move the items along and do the best we can for our county.

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The concentration next year, as it has been for the last number of years, as Edward has said, he referred to various issues that he raised there will be my issues as well for next year. But I think last week we had a presentation on housing and whereas it is moving 14:51 along, it is moving quite slowly as we well know, and certainly not at the speed that we would like, not the cause of our officials here in the Council, but it is something that I would be particularly interested in in moving as quickly and speedily as we can in providing 14:52 social and affordable housing. The emphasis all the time seems to be on social housing which we know we I think there is a huge need out there for a lot of people on the social housing list for affordable housing, people want to buy, and in most cases they are 14:52 capable of buying their own houses and I think it is important that maybe in the next year that we will concentrate our efforts in trying to provide affordable

housing for the people we represent as well.

Also the employment opportunities, we had the IDA here last Friday morning, not everyone could come, it was a worthwhile meeting as well, it was very interesting to see what they were saying about the opportunities that wicklow have and the various things that we can do to make it better to encourage people to come in and employ people in their county. I think we have a marvellous product here and I don't think we are getting the best value out of it as well. So certainly from my point of view I would welcome an opportunity of meeting anybody who wants to come in and provide the type of opportunities and employment opportunities that we have as well.

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We also have the infrastructure as well and Councillor Mitchell often talks about the N11, and various things like that, which will be a big issue for us as well. The wonderful tourist product that we have in this county, it is an unbelievable county when you look around the county and the opportunities for tourism. I think that is another area that we don't

what is really very important from my point of view, I am a member of it as well, and Councillor Cullen is a member of it, Councillor Mitchell, Councillor Winters is on it, is the Regional Assembly. People don't realise how important the Regional Assembly is and the

get full whack that we probably should as well.

plan under the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy that the draft is going to come out in September. And this is vitally important for development in Wicklow for population in Wicklow for infrastructure in Wicklow, for jobs, and 14:54 various things like that. It is a really important document that people -- and it was due out in July, it is going to be out now in September, because a lot of people weren't very happy with what we seen, and that we needed change to so that we can bring a plan that 14:54 will encompass all the needs of the likes of County Wicklow that we represent as well. So that is a really very important document that it is going to chart our lives for the next 10/20 years.

Edward has championed that more power would go to the

municipal authorities, I am a champion of that as well

look forward to sit down with the officials and seeing

what type of powers that we can give to the municipal

and I am going to move along that to see what powers

can be moved back into the municipal authorities.

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16 Also in regard to the municipal authorities as well,

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25 Finally, it is impossible for anyone to do this job without support around this chamber, without the 26

authorities as well.

27 officials of the Council as well and, more importantly, it is important that we get the support at home -- and 28

29 she is not going to like me for this -- but Mary, my

1	wife, down at the end of the room there has given me	
2	that support when I needed it and kicked me in the	
3	backside when I needed it as well and just from my own	
4	point of view as well I want to thank her for what she	
5	has done for me over the years as well.	: 5
6		
7	So I want to move on now and thank you very much again	
8	for your support. I look forward to working with you	
9	all for the next year and hopefully that will be the	
10	year that we make significant progress for the people 14	: 5
11	that we represent. Thank you very much.	
12	MR. CURRAN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Again on behalf of	
13	the staff, I would just like to congratulate	
14	Councillor Vance on his election as Cathaoirleach. I	
15	can assure him that my door and the door of the staff $_{14}$	: 50
16	will be open. We are there to help through the year.	
17		
18	I think we are going to see a lot of progress in the	
19	years, as he mentioned. We have already made good	
20	progress I think starting with 1,300 social housing	: 5
21	units and a lot happening on the private and affordable	
22	side as well.	
23		
24	Community outdoor recreation will be important as its	
25	tourism. I think we will see the Blessington, the $_{ m 14}$	: 5
26	Greenway around the Blessington Lakes move next year,	
27	Avondale Forest park will be coming up for planning	
28	permission very shortly. A lot happening in economic	

and tourism. The town centres, the Florentine Centre,

1	I think we will see very good progress in that as the	
2	year goes on as well. As I say, we will be talking	
3	about the municipal districts and what powers will go	
4	the municipalities and be delegated. So again	
5	congratulations and thank you very much.	14:57
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Bourke?	
7	CLLR. BOURKE: Cathaoirleach, I would just like to	
8	congratulate you sincerely on your elevation to the	
9	role of Cathaoirleach. Again I think this is probably	
10	your third or fourth time in Wicklow County Council.	14:57
11	CATHAOIRLEACH: Third.	
12	CLLR. BOURKE: Sorry, third time. As I look around the	
13	room I was thinking that you must be really loved by	
14	your party, greatly loved, and I noticed that	
15	CATHAOIRLEACH: They tell me that all the time.	14:57
16	CLLR. BOURKE: TDs and Senators have turned up here	
17	today to congratulate you and witness your elevation	
18	again. It is a great tribute to you personally	
19	considering as I look at the Fianna Fáil bench as well	
20	to see the great talent and ambition there that they	14:58
21	have chosen you again to represent them. I know that	
22	you to will do a brilliant job, because I have had the	
23	great honour and pleasure of working here on two	
24	previous occasions with you in the chair as	
25	Cathaoirleach of the County Council, and I look forward	14:58
26	working with you again and delivering on all of the	
27	work that has to be done on the behalf of the people of	
28	Wicklow. Best of luck to you in the year ahead.	
29	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much.	

1	Councillor Fortune?	
2	CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. The very best	
3	of luck with your year ahead as Cathaoirleach. No	
4	doubt we will have a bit of arm wrestling with you as	
5	the year goes on. You know, I suppose when you were	14:58
6	sitting for the past year there as what I describe as	
7	the "cornerback" position here behind me, you know, you	
8	come in as the wise old owl at the end of every	
9	discussion trying to wrap it all up. So I would say to	
10	you good luck and obviously it is a great honour for	14:59
11	you, it is a great honour for your family. But the	
12	banter I am sure will continue and the one thing I	
13	would ask you would be just don't kill debate and	
14	discussion, let the old ball flow a bit when it's on	
15	the ground, okay.	14:59
16	CATHAOIRLEACH: Sure.	
17	CLLR. FORTUNE: But the best of luck with everything,	
18	okay.	
19	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you for that. I am sure you will	
20	advise me of that. Councillor Fox?	14:59
21	CLLR. FOX: Thank you, Chairman. I am not sure if your	
22	party loves you or that you're ruled with an iron fist.	
23	CLLR. MURPHY: The latter one.	
24	CLLR. FOX: I am starting to feel my age as well when	
25	chairmen come around for the second time, I think it	14:59
26	was ten years ago you were probably chairman before.	
27		
28	And before I say anything, can I be associated with the	

tributes of Councillor Timmons and I think

1 Councillor Behan summed it up very well when he 2 compared him to his father Godfrey and that decency ran 3 through his DNA, so to speak. So I would like to thank you Edward for a fantastic year. 4 5 15:00 6 To yourself, Chairman, congratulations. I would like 7 to welcome Mary to the Chamber. It is a great honour 8 for you and your family. I wish you every success on behalf of the group. You have our support and my 9 10 support, I certainly will cooperate in whatever way I 15:00 11 can. 12 13 I know that, as you said, the fifth year sometimes can 14 be a difficult year but I have always been of the 15 opinion that you are a very courageous politician, 15:00 16 you're never afraid to go against the trend even if it 17 is unpopular and sometimes being a good chairman 18 requires that skill set which you have. And I wish you 19 every success, I am sure you will do a fantastic job. 20 Thank you, Chairman. 15:00 CATHAOI RLEACH: 21 Thank you very much. 22 Councillor Lawless? 23 CLLR. LAWLESS: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. 24 the Sinn Féin group here we would like to wish you 25 well. We are looking forward to working with you for 15:01 26 the next year. I know that your party colleagues up in 27 Leinster House don't agree with working with Sinn Féin 28 but sure, look, we will work with you down here in 29 county level, Pat, we are getting used to you.

1	CATHAOIRLEACH: Been with youse a long time.
2	CLLR. LAWLESS: That's it. No, I don't have a
3	three-page congratulations like some of your party
4	colleagues thought I had written out for you today.
5	But, no, I do sincerely wish you the best, Pat. I 15:01
6	would hope that during the year you would be fair and,
7	you know, you will allow us all to have our say within
8	reason of course. You know, the fifth year is a
9	difficult year and I am sure your wife, she might be
10	I don't know, she might be glad maybe not to see him so 15:01
11	often, Mary, keep him busy, keep like the golfers, the
12	widows' golfers, you know. But, no, listen, Pat,
13	sincerely I wish you well for the year to come.
14	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Ryan?
15	CLLR. RYAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Again I would 15:01
16	just like to start off by giving my congratulations to
17	Edward for the wonderful job that he did for his year
18	driving through a number of particular projects, the
19	house building and the efficiency project and the
20	Hainan project, you did a wonderful job, which
21	hopefully you will continue on.
22	
23	But to yourself, congratulations, like I mean as a
24	child I remember, you know, you were elected.
25	Councillor Behan 15:02
26	CLLR. DUNNE: You're not that young, John.
27	CLLR. RYAN: you're seated there forever. And
28	actually I have to say it's the first time I noticed
29	that you had a romantic bone in your body. So, Mary,

1	congratulations again. I know you always say, Pat,	
2	when somebody else gets elected that it is an immense	
3	honour	
4	CATHAOIRLEACH: It is.	
5	CLLR. RYAN: to actually represent your county as	15:02
6	the first citizen and it absolutely is and I think you	
7	have done it before and, no doubt, you will do it	
8	fantastically well. I think it is a little bit scary	
9	that the four years of this five-year term are already	
10	gone, it is just gone in a second. And I suppose we	15:03
11	have to double our efforts and really work hard to make	
12	sure that this last year is a year that has a lasting	
13	impact.	
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15	I know there are a number of things that you	15:03
16	particularly want to drive through and I have no doubt	
17	you still have immense energy to make those things	
18	happen, and I know in particular in the Bray Municipal	
19	District the sporting campus idea that you have a	
20	vision for and that you are getting a lot of support	15:03
21	for is something that I think would be fantastic if we	
22	can get that to another level. But just to be clear	
23	you have absolute support from the party and myself to	
24	make a really successful year.	
25	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much.	15:03
26	Councillor Cullen?	
27	CLLR. SHAY CULLEN: Thanks, Chairman. First of all, I	
28	just want to acknowledge my colleague here,	
29	Edward Timmons, on his contribution over the last year,	

he done a superb job.

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And to yourself, Chairman, very best of wishes on your new appointment as chairman of the Council. I have been here four years now and I have listened 15:04 intently to your contribution in that period of time. and I suppose if I could use the term "wily old fox" would sort of come to mind. But certainly when you speak people take note and I have no doubt that you will be a great success and the best of luck. 15:04 CATHAOI RLEACH: Thanks very much. Councillor Snell? CLLR. SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I want to wish you sincerely the best of luck for the year ahead. I am one of the lucky Councillors that served under you almost a decade ago and you were very fair open and 15:04 honest then and you have been every day since when you were up there serving as Cathaoirleach or down here as a councillor, the same as the rest of us.

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To your wife, Mary, and children, it is a great honour to the whole Vance family, the grandchildren. And some of the members are talking about you lead with an iron hand in your party but I am sure you don't lead in the family home because, looking up at Mary there, I am sure she keeps you under the thumb so she will be glad to get rid of you for the next 12 months.

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But, Pat, you have always been very courteous, very open, very fair and it is something that I am sure you

1	are going to continue for the next 12 months and I	
2	certainly wish you the best of lock.	
3	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Behan?	
4	CLLR. BEHAN: Okay, Cathaoirleach, have you got a	
5	notebook there?	15:05
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: I've been waiting for this.	
7	CLLR. RUTTLE: It's the best man speech.	
8	CLLR. BEHAN: First of all, obviously I congratulate	
9	you, Pat, on your elevation again as Cathaoirleach and	
10	there is no doubt that you probably are the most	15:05
11	experienced person now in the Chamber in terms of	
12	chairing meetings and so on. I have no doubt we are	
13	going to have our battles over the next 12 months.	
14	CATHAOIRLEACH: No doubt.	
15	CLLR. BEHAN: And I look forward to them, as I am sure	15:05
16	you do, but I know at the end of the day your interest	
17	is for the good of the county as well.	
18		
19	I am just thinking back to when we were both first	
20	elected to this body, it was 1991. We were elected to	15:06
21	Bray Urban District Council in '85 but in 1991 there	
22	were people here in the Chamber at the time, Vincent's	
23	father, Vincent Blake Senior, was a member at that	
24	time, Tom Keenan was a member at that time and	
25	Frank Hynes, they were kind of the three party	15:06
26	stalworths, if you like, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and	
27	Labour. And they and many others over those years have	
28	made huge contributions to this county as have the 32	
29	members who are here today.	

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2	But I in particular want to congratulate Mary as well	
3	and all of the family for putting up with you. I would	
4	like to thank them for putting up with you and	
5	congratulate them as well because I know they fully	15:0
6	support you and they will be supporting you throughout	
7	the year. And, as I say, I look forward to working	
8	with you for the next 12 months. Thank you.	
9	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much. Councillor Murphy,	
10	and before I let Councillor Murphy in I would like to	15:0
11	congratulate her on her elevation in Arklow municipal	
12	authorities. Congratulations, Councillor.	
13	CLLR. MURPHY: Thank you. I wasn't expecting that.	
14	CATHAOIRLEACH: I look forward to working with you for	
15	the next year.	15:0
16	CLLR. MURPHY: I would like to thank you on behalf of	
17	myself and also on behalf of Arklow municipal district.	
18	As to what was said, talk about a cute fox. You have	
19	got the experience, it just shines out through you, and	
20	I have to say you were the first person to ring me on	15:0
21	Thursday morning to wish me well and I really, really	
22	appreciate that. But I would just like for you to tell	
23	Mary what you were doing to me up in the canteen	
24	running your fingers through my hair so I hope she is	
25	well aware of that and the way you get around people.	15:0
26	So I wish you very well and I keep looking forward to	
27	that.	

CATHAOIRLEACH: That is between Gráinne and myself. Councillor Walsh?

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1	CLLR. WALSH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Having proposed	
2	you for the position I would now like to congratulate	
3	you on the role of Cathaoirleach. I have sat beside	
4	you here as a new councillor for the last four years	
5	and, I tell you, I have learned so much from watching 15:	: 08
6	you in action and listening to you.	
7		
8	You mentioned in your address there issues such as	
9	housing, transport and employment and I am sure that	
10	you will use your vast experience to bequest those very 15:	: 08
11	important issues for the county of Wicklow over the	
12	coming year. Best of luck, congratulations and	
13	congratulations to Mary and your family. Thank you.	
14	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Timmons?	
15	CLLR. TIMMONS: Briefly, Pat, first of all,	: 08
16	congratulations in your elevation, it is well deserved,	
17	and thanks for your kind words there. I would like to	
18	thank you for your support in me over the last	
19	12 months, you have been a really great support. And	
20	one of my main things was going to the municipal 15:	: 08
21	districts and you must take some credit for that as	
22	well because you very much put forward that and you	
23	very much pushed that agenda as well and you pushed it	
24	successfully. I admire you as a politician, you call	
25	it as it is, you do the right thing and often the 15:	: 09
26	unpopular thing and that's a great trait to have and I	
27	admire you and I congratulate you.	
28	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much.	
29	Councillor Thornhill?	

CLLR. THORNHILL: Cathaoirleach, go raibh maith agat. I would just like to, Cathaoirleach, wish you well as Cathaoirleach next year and I would just like to say that I wish you well in that position. And I also would like to remind you, I am sure as your position of 15:09 Cathaoirleach, it is a very responsible position and I am sure you are well aware of it, you have been around a long time now, 30 years, and you have vast experience and in the future I do hope that you will address the key issues as you know Wicklow has been involved in an 15:10 awful lot of controversies over the years, such things as illegal dumping and Florentine Centre and other issues like the St. Paul's which was only with us a few months ago, but I am sure that these are issues that I am sure that you will listen to people, and listen 15:10 fairly to people.

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And also I would like to say, another thing I would just like to mention as well, because I know that you have with been involved with the Hainan, Chinese, it is 15:10 something that I had in the past been trying to get on the agenda and it is something that I am sure that you will do something for the Chinese in the future. overall I would like to say to you, you know, that you do a good job, you listen to everyone and be fair to Because at the end of the day I come from a evervone. different -- I am actually a new member, like Councillor Walsh, I am only four years here, you are 30 years, and like we come from two different

15:10

1	perspectives. So I think at the end of the day it is	
2	all about pulling together at end, you know. Go raibh	
3	míle maith agat.	
4	CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Daire Nolan.	
5	CLLR. NOLAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would just	15:11
6	like to congratulate you on your elevation. It must be	
7	a very proud day for yourself and for Mary and for the	
8	whole family. I would also like to pay tribute to, not	
9	just Councillor Timmons who did a brilliant job over	
10	the preceding year, but in my four years working here	15:11
11	to all previous Cathaoirleach; Councillor Fox,	
12	Councillor Ryan, Councillor Fitzgerald and of course	
13	Councillor Timmons, all of whom brought something	
14	different and unique to the post of Cathaoirleach but	
15	the one constant was they were always very fair, very	15:11
16	even handed and allowed the debate to flow. I suppose	
17	it is very good that in the last year of this five-year	
18	term that we do have a very experienced and steady hand	
19	on the wheel and I suppose if we can be guaranteed one	
20	thing from the meetings of the coming year we can be	15:12
21	guaranteed that at the very least they won't be boring.	
22	Congratulations and best of luck for the next year.	
23	CATHAOIRLEACH: Listen, thank you very much I	
24	appreciate that. Now can I call for a proposal for the	
25	election of Leas-Chathaoirleach.	15:12
26	Councillor McLoughlin?	
27	CLLR. McLOUGHLIN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would	
28	like to propose Irene Doyle as Leas-Chathaoirleach	
29	CLIR FOX: Trane Winters	

1	CATHAOIRLEACH: Is there something that we don't know
2	about here?
3	CLLR. MURPHY: who is she?
4	CLLR. McLOUGHLIN: Irene Winters. Irene was elected in
5	2004 as a town councillor and subsequently was elected 15:
6	in 2009 as a county councillor. She is very much known
7	for reestablishing the public interest in the Wicklow
8	Enterprise Park and is now a board member. Irene has
9	worked with the Chamber of Commerce and she set up with
10	other the Taste of Wicklow and the reignition of the
11	Round Ireland Yacht Race. But I suppose most
12	importantly Irene is known for her honest business-like
13	approach to everything she gets involved with. She is
14	passionate about standards of service, value for money
15	and transparency with public expenditure. Irene is 15:
16	known for her ability to look outside the box in order
17	to achieve the greater good. She has that ability to
18	listen to all sides and have her on opinion without
19	feeling the need to be part of the status quo. For
20	those reasons, and many more, I think she will make an $_{ m 15:}$
21	excellent Leas-Chathaoirleach and I would love to see
22	her some day as Cathaoirleach as well. So I propose
23	Irene Winters as Leas-Chathaoirleach.
24	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Blake?
25	CLLR. BLAKE: Can I formally second Councillor Winters 15:
26	for Leas-Chathaoirleach. I think as well, Chairman,
27	can I congratulate yourself too on your elevation to
28	Cathaoirleach for the year. I am one of only a few
29	year here that actually served with you on the first

1	time you were Cathaoirleach back in 1998, so you are	
2	well experienced in that regard, and I know you will do	
3	a fine job.	
4		
5	Equally so, Miriam, to yourself as Cathaoirleach of	15:14
6	Arklow	
7	CLLR. MURPHY: Thank you.	
8	CLLR. BLAKE: It's good to see a woman. And of all	
9	else though, I think the fact that Irene is the	
10	Leas-Chathaoirleach, I think she is only the third	15:14
11	person to hold that position in this Council. I think	
12	Mary Walsh back in the 70s was actually Cathaoirleach	
13	as well on the Council and obviously Ann Ferris as well	
14	back in 2000s, the noughties. So to Irene,	
15	congratulations, and I certainly look forward to the	15:14
16	fact that you may be the third lady member we often	
17	criticise the fact that we don't have enough women	
18	involved in politics but it's a great opportunity to	
19	fulfil the role as Leas-Chathaoirleach and hopefully as	
20	Cathaoirleach in the future. Thank you, Chairman.	15:14
21	CATHAOIRLEACH: Gerry O'Neill?	
22	CLLR. O'NEILL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Before I make a	
23	proposal, could I say thanks and well done to	
24	Edward Timmons as Chair for the previous 12 months.	
25	Edward stuck to his guns as such in that he was always	15:15
26	there to be of any help whatsoever when we would call.	
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28	And, Pat, I would like to wish you the best of luck for	

the following 12 months. I know that you will be, like

Edward, you will be a fair chairman and good luck to you.

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Could I just make a proposal there, I will make it brief more or less to the Chamber, here that, you know, 15:15 I have only been here four years and I see the way things work and I see the way, you know, the back rubbing or whatever. And I would like to feel that we, as a chamber, would -- we're going for something different this year for Vice Chairperson, and in doing 15:15 so, I think it would send out a signal there that we are, you know, we consider every one of the 32 Councillors and not the usual thing of Tweedledee and Tweedledum. And I know that John Snell has the respect of everyone in this Chamber, and I think John in the 15:16 past year he has proved he is no nodding dog to anyone. I think he has huge respect right around the room here and I know that he has respect even outside the room here upstairs and in the offices here.

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John is a very, very fair man, he has been here now in the Chamber I think for about nine-year or whatever, you know, and I really think that about -- I know people's minds are made up there, and I know all about the wheeling and dealing before the votes here and that, but even at this late stage I would really beg of people sending out a signal there that we could put a good person in here, a really good person, for 12 months time. So I would ask you to, and I am proposing

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1	John as a good strong republican, a good Irish man, as	
2	I say he is no nodding dog, he is no robot, he is there	
3	for everyone, and I really ask people to consider	
4	John Snell as a Vice Chairman for the following year.	
5	Go raibh maith agat.	15:17
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Thornhill?	
7	CLLR. THORNHILL: Yeah, Cathaoirleach, go raibh maith	
8	agat. I would like to second that Councillor O'Neill's	
9	proposal. I would just like to echo	
LO	Councillor O'Neill's proposal, I would like to echo his	15:17
L1	words and say to everyone also that I believe that we	
L2	should give other people a chance. I know that at	
L3	government level there is a Confidence and Supply	
L4	Arrangement but I didn't think it extended to council	
L5	level here. So I should think that we should give	15:18
L6	Councillor Snell a chance and getting it to go around I	
L7	think in fairness to everyone. Cathaoirleach, go raibh	
L8	maith agat.	
L9	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Brien?	
20	CLLR. O'BRIEN: I would also like to support	15:18
21	Councillor Snell. I don't think I have come across in	
22	my lifetime a man who works as hard or is as dedicated	
23	as John Snell. When I sat in this Chamber the first	
24	day four years ago I mean I saw a clear sign from you	
25	and the other Councillors here the respect that you had	15:18
26	for John Snell in when he was specifically offered the	
27	SPC for housing. Because everyone of you there when	
28	that was offered to him, even the guy that was going to	
29	do that, he was going to shake the hands on that	

agreement. As I say, another thing that sometimes disturbs me it that it can become just a numbers game, you know, every single one of us is elected here in this Council, okay, but not everyone one of us actually (inaudible) disenfranchise the number game, you don't 15:18 get the input, you don't get what you need from your people when they gang up together. I am saying that like John Snell and other people in this chamber, he has been elected by the people and has topped the poll a number of times, that's the people out there saying 15 · 19 that they want John Snell. I think we have to change the way we do it, I often heard Councillor Bourke saying we need to change the way we do business in this house and then what you need to have to have somebody put into every council, not when you add up the 15:19 numbers, they become 16:14, it's 14 or disenfranchise, that everybody should have an input and should have a say, and I say that you couldn't have -- I know John Snell for many, many, many years, and you're more likely to find the man helping an old lady move her 15:19 furniture and stuff like that. I have seen it time and time again. He would be an excellent man on the ground, he's a practical guy, and I think there are an awful changes that are needed in this Council Chamber. You've often heard me talk about over-administration, 15:19 too many filing cabinets and stuff, that is not an insult to the people doing the work. But I do feel sometimes that the way it is it's a numbers game on the Council, and I think John Snell would be an excellent

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1	man to break this and he would show a human extent	
2	outside of that. We often say you should hang our	
3	party hat outside the door. There is talent there and	
4	I am urging you to give John Snell your vote on this.	
5	CATHAOIRLEACH: Any other nomination? No, we will go 15	5:20
6	for a vote then.	
7	MS. GALLAGHER: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. We have	
8	Councillor Irene Winters proposed by	
9	Councillor McLoughlin and seconded by Councillor	
10	Vincent Blake and then we have John Snell proposed by 15	5:20
11	Councillor O'Neill and seconded by	
12	Councillor Thornhill. So, elected members, I am going	
13	to call out your names and if you can please indicate	
14	which elected member you wish to vote for. [Vote	
15	taken]. So that's 20 for Councillor Winters, seven for $_{15}$	:22
16	Councillor Snell, four not present and one abstaining.	
17	So Councillor Winters has received the majority.	
18	(Applause).	
19	CATHAOIRLEACH: Congratulations.	
20	CLLR. WINTERS: Thank you very much indeed.	5:22
21	CATHAOIRLEACH: Item 3 is schedule of meetings, if they	
22	can be agreed or is anyone	
23	CLLR. BOURKE: I propose	
24	MS. GALLAGHER: Can I just say, just the October, it	
25	should say Monday, the 1st October as opposed to 15	5:22
26	Monday, the 8th October.	
27	CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that okay, 1st October instead of	
28	the 8th? Agree? All agree. Yeah, okay.	
29	Councillor Snell, yeah.	

CLLR. SNELL: Could I just, first and foremost, commend
all the Councillors that turned up today for voting and
to cast their vote. I think it is very important that
Councillors actually attend meetings and express their
democratic right in voting. And it is ironic that when 15:2
everyone goes around knocking doors or put up posters
the understanding is when they get elected they will
turn up and carry out their functions. Because at the
end of the day it is a paid position and it is
disappointing that there is absentees from this AGM. 15:2
In regards to the vote could I commend Councillor Irene
Winters Trene is someone that I have worked with

In regards to the vote could I commend Councillor Irene Winters. Irene is someone that I have worked with closely over the last ten years and, irrespective of Irene's agenda, she will be an excellent person to do that role. I have seen her work on the Town Council, I have been lucky enough to serve on the old area council and the most recent one, Municipal District for East Wicklow. But Irene is someone that is not afraid to take on the battle, irrespective of people's opinions of whether she be in the minority or the majority, she will speak out for everybody. I think she will make an excellent Leas-Chathaoirleach for Wicklow County Council and I am sure one day she will fulfil the role of Cathaoirleach of this Council.

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It is interesting to note that already the cosying up between Sinn Féin and Fine Gael has started. CLLR. O'NEILL: I seen it here. Up the Rebels.

1	CLLR. LAWLESS: Pity Gerry didn't support the majority,	
2	Gerry. When you were in the party, Gerry, you didn't	
3	support us when you were in the party, Gerry. You	
4	didn't support us, Gerry.	
5	CATHAOIRLEACH: Just the banter for the moment, that's 15:2	25
6	okay, it won't happen anymore. But anyway go ahead.	
7	Go ahead.	
8	CLLR. SNELL: I thought we got rid of the noise box	
9	that used to be here in the chambers, unfortunately	
10	it's been replaced. But, look it, Irene I	25
11	wholeheartedly respect you	
12	CLLR. LAWLESS: That's low, John.	
13	CLLR. SNELL: I wish you the best of luck for the	
14	future and I would like to commend you on your success.	
15	CATHAOI RLEACH: Okay, Councillor Dunne and then 15:2	25
16	Councillor Winters, and then we are moving on, right.	
17	CLLR. DUNNE: Thank you, Chairman. Like	
18	Councillor Snell, I congratulate Councillor Winters on	
19	the position of Vice Chairman of Wicklow County	
20	Council, it is an honour that she deserves for her work 15:2	25
21	that she has put into every level as she worked in the	
22	Council. I had the honour of being on the Council with	
23	Councillor Winters, on the Town Council, 2009-2014 and	
24	she was always very solid all the advice that she gave	
25	me personally over the years from has been wonderful. 15:2	26
26	So I would just like this opportunity to wish her the	
27	very best as Vice Chairman of Wicklow County Council.	
28	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Winters?	
29	CLLR. WINTERS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Firstly, I	

1	would like to think Councillor McLoughlin, I know she	
2	had to run back to a meeting in work, for her very kind	
3	words of proposal	
4	CATHAOIRLEACH: She can let us in on her secret.	
5	CLLR. WINTERS: what?	15:26
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: She can let us in on her secret.	
7	CLLR. WINTERS: I would also like to thank	
8	Councillor Blake and Councillor Snell for his kind	
9	words as well. It is nice to actually get support from	
10	across all the parties and none. I see the role as	15:26
11	Cathaoirleach and as Leas-Chathaoirleach as non-party	
12	political roles that mean that we represent everybody	
13	in the constituency, and in my term as	
14	Leas-Chathaoirleach I intend to do that, so I thank	
15	everybody for their support. Thank you very much.	15:27
16	CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Good woman. Councillor Timmons,	
17	do you want to come in there?	
18	CLLR. TIMMONS: Yeah, just briefly I would just like to	
19	congratulate Irene on her elevation to	
20	Leas-Chathaoirleach. I have absolutely no doubt she	15:27
21	will do a wonderful job. She is a person with great	
22	independent thinking and I look forward to her being	
23	Leas-Chathaoirleach. Thank you.	
24	CATHAOIRLEACH: Irene, just from my perspective as	
25	well, congratulations, I look forward to working with	15:27
26	you in the next year. Thank you very much. Now I am	
27	moving on. Now Suspension of Standing Orders?	
28	MS. GALLAGHER: Proposed by Councillor Fortune and	
29	seconded by Councillor Behan.	

T	CATHAUTRLEACH: Yes, Councillor Fortune?
2	CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, I would
3	just like to raise the issue of the planning permission
4	that was granted in Blacklion at the Lidl store in
5	Greystones.
6	CATHAOI RLEACH: Yes.
7	CLLR. FORTUNE: There was an objective agreed here in
8	the Chamber in the County Development Plan. Now the
9	background to this is the district Councillors had a
10	meeting with Fergal on last Friday and we discussed 15:
11	around it and we articulated the residents' perspective
12	on it in the area. To say that there is devastation
13	would be a gross understatement. They cannot
14	understand or believe that we made a decision, and if
15	you look at what the wording of the Objective RT17 is, $_{15}$ :
16	it says:
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18	"Conscious of the fact that planning has an important
19	role to play in promoting and facilitating active and
20	healthy living patterns for local communities, the
21	following criteria will be taken into account in the
22	assessment of development proposals for
23	fast-food/takeaway outlets, including those with a
24	drive-through facility.
25	
26	Exclude any new fast-food outlets which offer foods
27	that are high in fat, and salt or sugar from being
28	built or from operating within 400 metres of the gates
29	or site boundary of schools, parks or playgrounds

1	excluding premises zoned town centre".
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3	And then it goes on to say that:
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5	"Fast-food outlets or takeaways with proposed
6	drive-through facilities will generally only be
7	acceptable within Major Town Centres or District
8	Centres and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis;
9	
LO	Location of vents and other external services and their
L <b>1</b>	impact on adjoining amenities in terms
L2	Of noise/smell/visual impact".
L3	
L4	So basically the astonishment of the residents comes
L5	from that. We did listen to what Fergal was saying to 15:2
L6	us last week about that. We did say, or I certainly
L7	said, and I don't know if my colleagues would support
L8	me that at the end of the day the residents don't
L9	accept the decision that has been made. The part of
20	it, and I have articulated this, and I can't understand 15:2
21	is when all the members here in the process of the
22	County Development Plan put that in as something that
23	should be there, when a file like that would land on a
24	desk I would and I said this on Friday, I am only
25	repeating it I would have thought that it would be 15:3
26	quite normal and natural to say, hang on a minute,
27	yeah, we need to think about this or we need to talk to

the members or we need to do this but that didn't

happen. That is seen by the residents as being

somewhat disingenuous.

So I am asking through this suspension, and I think I am speaking for my colleagues, I am asking that this particular planning be called back and it can be done, as I understand, under Section 44 of the 2000 Planning Act.

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The residents have, and I know all members got an e-mail this morning from the Chairman of the Residents 15:30 Group outlining or indicating what they were going to do. But the whole idea that we come into a process because when the original fast-food outlet was applied for and the residents objected to it, they were told that because it wasn't in the CDP, the Council's hands were basically tied. And then subsequently through the process of a CDP it was put in and that still doesn't seem to matter, and that is where people have the big problem and it is a big issue.

And while, as I say, we acknowledge the points that Fergal was making on Friday, we have to say back to the Executive that the residents don't accept that at all, particularly on the basis that this is a fundamental part of such an important document agreed on a democratic basis, you know, and we are just astounded. So I would like for the Executive to go back to the drawing board and relook at this on behalf of the residents.

1	CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Councillor Mitchell, I know you	
2	are there, but maybe if I let the Director in,	
3	Sean Quirke, and then we will let you in there after	
4	that, is that okay	
5	CLLR. MITCHELL: okay.	15:3
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: in regard to an explanation of what	
7	I am not aware of the technical, why it was looked at	
8	the way it is, so we will just find out exactly what	
9	the situation is in regard from the planner's point of	
10	view.	15:3
11	MR. QUIRKE: Thanks, Chairman. I know five or six	
12	Greystones members were briefed on this on Friday, but	
13	for the benefit of the rest of the members in the room,	
14	it is probably no harm just to give you some of the	
15	details of it and I think maybe the deliberation on the ${}^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{d}}}$	15:3
16	application probably was reflected in the discussions	
17	that were had here at the time when the policy was put	
18	into the Development Plan in the first place. But	
19	briefly anyway the application was for change of use	
20	from a gym to a restaurant/takeaway and associated	15:3
21	signage at Unit 1A Blacklion Retail Centre. It came in	
22	on the 11th April, there were no submissions or	
23	observations on the file. It is for a	
24	restaurant/takeaway of 115 square metres. I think	
25	about 59 square metres of that is seating and it's food	15:3
26	preparation area, and so on, as well. It was granted	
27	on the 1st June subject to four conditions, one of	
28	which was that the takeaway cannot operate before	
29	5 o'clock, 5pm, in the afternoon.	

Now I suppose the there are 35 roughly, 35 retail policies in the County Development Plan. They don't always sit neatly beside one another, sometimes there are conflicts between. This is a neighbourhood centre the objective is to provide services for people in the locality that they don't have to travel for their services whether it's shopping or convenience or food. So there is that and there is the RT17 which Councillor Fortune has read out as well. So there is a 15:34 conflict there between those.

The other thing to say is that the application is for a restaurant/takeaway, it doesn't specify what kind of restaurant it is nor is it required to specify what kind of restaurant it is, it is just that is the use, it is the physical planning and development that has to be considered under the Planning Acts.

15:34

So I suppose the options were there to, you know, to refuse it but the basis for refusal I would suggest would have been a week. There is another matter that maybe should be taken into consideration, there is a precedent on this that went to the board in Wexford County Council where Wexford had a policy of not having takeaways within 200 metres of a school and the board overturned it and granted it and the condition they put on it was that the takeaway couldn't operate until after 4:30.

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So taking all those factors into consideration it was granted subject to the four conditions and, as I say, the thrust as I understand it from the discussion by the members at the time was to avoid the exposure for school children to takeaways and to establishments that sold foods that are high in fat or high in sugar. Difficult enough now I'd say there is a deli beside it that sells confectionery, it sells hot food to take away. So I don't think we could ever -- our planners could ever be able to ask to adjudicate when does something become high in fat, what the content of sugar should be for or shouldn't be, we should refuse it, but they are the factors that we looked at at the time.

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With regard to Section 44 of the Planning Act, I don't think that that can be invoked at this point in time. It says:

"A planning authority shall neither revoke nor modify a permission under this section unless the development to which the permission relates no longer conforms with the provisions of the development plan".

I don't think that is clear in any way so I will need to take some legal advice on it but I don't believe that the circumstances prohibit it in this case.

The other two things, the other two factors, I would

1 say to you is, one, is that the appeal period is still 2 It could be in the first part of the appeal to this, and also that the board today notified us that 3 they had received a letter seeking leave to appeal, 4 5 which means somebody who didn't make a submission in 15:37 the first instance has looked -- now I don't know if it 6 7 is -- but Council looked for leave to appeal so that 8 may well still happen. So that is the position. CATHAOI RLEACH: Councillor Mitchell? 9 Thank you. Yes, just to say to you 10 CLLR. MI TCHELL: 15:37 11 obesity is a major national problem, as we all know, 12 and it is a very much increasing one particularly in 13 young people.

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Just, at a personal level, I certainly find this

embarrassing, I collected the award on behalf of the
whole council at the Royal College of Surgeons at a
conference on obesity. So certainly embarrassing for
me personally to find that on a site next to three very
large schools that would now grant it permission for
what we thought we had banned. So that's
certainly are of concern.

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I note that we were told on Friday, given a copy of the Wexford decision, which had a fairly similar section in 15:37 the Development Plan. But I have to say I would very much have preferred that the Council would have objected to this and it would have been left to An Bord Pleanála to make the decision. Because I think we, as

1 a country, need to do an awful lot more about obesity 2 in children and we certainly need to tighten the 3 wording here, it is not good enough to stop it, and we certainly need to tighten it in relation to large 4 5 restaurants of the type mentioned in the past which 15:38 weren't targeted at children. 6 7 8 As I understand it, this is not necessarily a Chinese restaurant which is stated in the papers to be, it 9 10 could be any, and I certainly have a concern that this 15:38 11 has been approved. I think it better if it had been 12 objected and it would have been left to the decision of 13 An Bord Pleanála. Councillor Matthews? 14 CATHAOI RLEACH: 15 CLLR. MATTHEWS: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I just want 15:38 16 to clarify, did I hear the Director say that there 17 wasn't one single submission in this application? 18 MR. QUI RKE: Yes. 19 CLLR. MATTHEWS: I find that incredible, Cathaoirleach, that no one public representative from Greystones put 20 15:39 in a submission on this. 21 It was something that was 22 very contentious at the time, people worked very hard 23 to get it in the development plan. I think the public 24 reps in an area they have a duty to look at these 25 planning applications and if they see something 15:39 contentious going in or something that they feel 26 27 wouldn't be proper planning for the area, they should 28 put in a submission on it and, had they done that, they 29 would now be in a position to appeal this to An Bord

1	Pleanála.	
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3	I think at this stage, from my reading of Section 44,	
4	and other sections, Councillors no longer have a role	
5	in this. As the Director says, the applicant may	39
6	appeal it to An Bord Pleanála and at that stage	
7	somebody can put in a submission at that stage to	
8	An Bord Pleanála as an observer and pay the fee. But I	
9	see that's the only role that anybody in this chamber	
10	or member of the public has in this now if we are to	40
11	comply with the Act. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.	
12	CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Councillor Walsh?	
13	CLLR. WALSH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. As we know the	
14	reason for this objective and the plan in the first	
15	instance was in response to an application by McDonalds 15:	40
16	to set up a premises directly opposite the door of the	
17	three schools in the Templecarrig area. So that was	
18	the objective.	
19		
20	so I suppose it was unfortunate, in response to	40
21	Councillor Matthews, that there were no submissions	
22	lodged in relation to this recent application. I	
23	suppose people looking at the application would have	
24	thought the fact that this condition was in place in	
25	the Development Plan that there was no particular need. 15:	40
26	But that's experience and that's water under the bridge	
27	now.	
28		

I suppose we could say the decision in itself probably0

1 dilutes the Development Plan as it stands at the moment 2 and undermines its value. So maybe going forward we 3 need to look at that Development Plan because it is due for renewal and we need to revisit this and maybe tie 4 5 it down and maybe place more restriction on it and tie 6 it down further so this type of situation doesn't arise 7 again in the future. 8 And I mean I've read the decision on the Wexford 9 application, and it's something quite similar. 10 15 · 41 11 have just learned there from the Director that somebody -- that we weren't sure as to whether there 12 13 was an option to apply to the board but somebody 14 obviously has ticked that box and has gone to apply for 15 leave to appeal, so hopefully that will get a chance to 15:41 16 run its course. 17 18 So other than that, this is something that we are going 19 to have to look at when we review the plan and make 20 sure that maybe this is tied down better than it is at 21 present. 22 CATHAOI RLEACH: Councillor Behan? CLLR. BEHAN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. 23 Well I think this 24 decision by the Executive makes an utter and complete 25 and total laughing stock of the 32 members of this 15 · 41 26 Council. It is unbelievable having spent so many hours 27 discussing the County Development Plan and having spent so much time talking about the wording of that 28

particular provision, it is unbelievable that people

such as Fergal and Sean Quirke could sit there and say that they thought this would be a weak grounds for refusing a planning application for a takeaway beside three schools. They have to have been aware of the discussions that happened in this chamber. And for the 15:42 people in the public who relied on the public representatives, particularly in the Greystones area on this occasion, but across the county to say, look, we can't influence planning decisions but we can put it in the development plan so that the decisions have to be 15 · 42 followed by the officials, the policy has to be applied for by the officials, and we have the Director of Services saying, 'well no, we didn't think that applied', his opinion, and 'we might get legal advice, sure if somebody pushes us we might get it if we have 15:42 to' type of thing, 'but basically move on, it doesn't matter, you made your decision but it doesn't matter we are going to make our decision instead'.

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Now the one person I want to hear about this is the

Chief Executive. The Chief Executive has
responsibility for decisions that are made by this
authority and he has a decision to make, as far as I am
concerned, about whether he obeys the policy set by the
members of this Council or he decides to do his own
thing. I have never in my life seen such a clear
example of a development plan saying one thing and
unelected executives do the complete opposite. It may
be their personal view that this doesn't matter and you

can have a takeaway or you can have a delicatessen, that's not relevant with the greatest of respect, that doesn't matter if there's three or four delicatessens. We made a provision in the plan no takeaways to be given permission within that distance of schools and the officials have completely flouted that decision. So the Chief Executive now should answer for that. Because I think as Chief Executive his position is untenable if he is going to continue to preside over decisions being made by the Executive totally in contravention to decision made by the Elected Representatives.

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As far as I am concerned what Councillor Fortune said still applies. Mr. Quirke might say it doesn't really 15:44 matter. It does go against the Development Plan, it quite obviously contravenes the Development Plan. Therefore there is a reason for refusing it, for going back on that decision and that is what should happen. It shouldn't be ifs, buts, maybes ands, 'we might get 15:44 legal advice, we might not'. It should be done. was our view, it was almost a unanimous decision at the time of the Development Plan that this would be put in the plan and on principle it should have been obeyed, So let's hear from the Chief Executive Cathaoirleach. 15:44 what he thinks about this but I think it should be completely reversed and there is the power to do it. Okay. Councillor Lawless and then CATHAOI RLEACH: Councillor Fortune back in again.

1	Councillor Lawless?
2	CLLR. LAWLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, like
3	previous speakers, I mean I am extremely disappointed
4	that this has been granted considering the hard work
5	that was put in by the members of the public and by the $_{15:}$
6	Councillors here as well. And I feel as an Elected Rep
7	it really has made a laughing stack of us here.
8	
9	I mean the County Development Plan in itself was a
10	massive piece of work that we worked on and, you know, 15:
11	we really put a lot of input into it and to think that
12	this one particular item has been, you know, to me it's
13	like we have found a loophole nearly in it and you are
14	kind of looking at the rest of the County Development
15	Plan and saying, well, are you going to do that on 15:
16	other issues that we have fought over very hard as
17	Councillors here to ensure that, you know, we are doing
18	right for the county.
19	
20	For me, I think we could change this decision, we
21	should change this decision, and I have to say I am
22	absolutely disgusted as a Local Rep. I kind of feel
23	what is the point of me sitting here, you know, if
24	planners can just come along and just trump everything
25	else.
26	
27	Now I don't know planning law inside out, I will be the
28	first to say like it is complicated. But this was
29	very, very clear we did not want takeouts within 400

metres and it doesn't matter if Lidl is there, Lidl was an existing business, this was for new businesses. New businesses. And the excuse of that neighbourhood centres or the existing centre that's there, that wasn't part of what is in the RT17. It is very, very clear it is fast-food and takeouts 400 metres are not allowed within the school gates and I just think it is a disgrace.

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I know Councillor Matthews pointed out there that there 15:46 was no submissions put in and maybe there was naivety on us, on the part of the Greystones' Councillors, but we were under the impression that with the RT17 in place that we didn't have to put submissions in on this particular case because this restaurant or takeout --15:46 or whatever it is going to be because we don't know exactly what food it is going to be selling -- was well within the 400 metres. It is 129 or 150-something, I can't remember the exact thing, so that's why we didn't put submissions in. So that worries me now that every 15:47 single piece of planning now that comes up, you know, we have to be very, very eagle-eyed on this, are we going to be sitting back here again in the same situation.

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I actually think it is very embarrassing on us. As Councillor Mitchell said, we collected an award there last month, we are supposed to be leading the way. There are other counties around the country that are

15:47

1 actually looking at this "No Fry Zone" and, you know, 2 will possibly adopt it. They have also been up in front of the Oireachtas Committee as well and have 3 commended them on this as well. You know, this is the 4 5 first time it has come into play and here we are and it 15:47 is just not good enough. 6 7 CATHAOI RLEACH: Okay. Councillor Fortune? 8 CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, just if I can just take up, I am surprised at Councillor 9 Matthews' point really because the local district 10 15 · 47 11 representatives and the public at large in that area 12 would say very strongly that the position is in the 13 County Development Plan, that's why they put it in. So 14 when it was put in you would assume that that would 15 carry and it wouldn't just, you know, change. 15:48 16 mean there is another item in the CDP I think as well that has been interfered with, that's for a different 17 18 discussion, and there is correspondence in the Council 19 on it. 20 15:48 So really my attitude to this is that it is grossly 21 22 unfair. Common sense doesn't seem to have been applied 23 in any shape or fashion. I said this to Fergal on 24 Friday, that surely on the basis, as I said already, 25 Chair, that this was put into the County Development 15 · 48 Plan, it went through a lot of discussion in here, it 26

went through the draft version of it, if you recall,

and it went through the final version, and in the final

version it got bigger support than it got in the draft

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version because there was so much discussion and in-depth conversation on it. And there was also lots of input in it from obesity experts and various people. This is a national issue that is being discussed and, as I said at the outset and I said in my opening comments, the reason that I am articulating this today is because the residents are just astounded and some of the media, national media, has picked this up over in the last few days. And, you know, to put it in context Councillor Mitchell went off to pick up an award on the back of all this and it is just, in that sense, it is grossly embarrassing.

But really and truly, I mean you will have to ask the question and, you know, we do have our battles here on all kinds of different things. But in being constructive, I mean what are we about? I mean, as I said very, very simply when the original application came in the people were told, 'I am sorry, it is not in the County Development Plan, we can't help you'. Then the Public Reps with the support of the Members here in the Chamber debated this, put it in, and of course Councillor Matthews was saying, well naturally you are going to say 'it is in the County Development Plan, that's secure' and it should be. To say that it's not, 15:50 I mean the way that Councillor Behan has articulated it, just to relay it back to you, is a number of residents at a meeting we attended articulated it in the very same way that he has just done. So people

1 just can't understand this. 2 3 Yes, there has been the leave of appeal, similarly to why, when this happens saying, what are we going to do? 4 5 So the residents have gone back to the board to try and 15:50 6 get the leave of appeal. But I would say to you, the 7 Executive, they shouldn't have had to do that, you 8 should be working with them. We are all part of the 9 same county. 10 15:50 11 I mean I just think this is wrong and, you know, how we 12 can stand over this -- this is why at times I get kind 13 of animated here in the Chamber on some of the issues because you can't be -- I just don't believe you should 14 15 be allowed to do things like this. You really 15:50 16 shouldn't. And it is easy to look at the planning and 17 say, 'well under planning, I can do this, this, and 18 this'. But everyone knows that this was put into the 19 County Development Plan for the purpose of not allowing 20 takeaway/fast-food outlets to be built within 400 15:51 metres of a school gate. 21 22 CATHAOI RLEACH: Okay, listen, there is a couple of more 23 people, I want to finish up here because we all know 24 this is Suspension of Standing Orders that are not 25 normally taken on an AGM and I want to finish up this 15:51 and get as much information as I can from members in 26

Yes, I just see the --

Please try and be --

regard to this. Councillor Fitzgerald?

CLLR. FITZGERALD:

CATHAOI RLEACH:

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1	CLLR. FITZGERALD: Yes, I am going to be very brief.	
2	CATHAOI RLEACH: Yes.	
3	CLLR. FITZGERALD: I just see here on the latest	
4	communication that the gentleman here that sent us	
5	that:	15:51
6		
7	"We hope you will support and appear as a witness in	
8	the legal application that we propose to take".	
9		
10	I won't be appearing in any action, I won't be getting	15:51
11	involved in a legal case.	
12		
13	"We feel very strongly this permission will render	
14	Objective RT17 meaningless".	
15		15:51
16	So there is legal action now being contemplated. So I	
17	will not be getting involved in it, I voted against	
18	this, and I have no issue saying that because I didn't	
19	see you clamour my town for it. So effectively once	
20	there is legal action now being taken I understand here	15:52
21	from this "we propose that you will appear as a witness	
22	in this legal action". I won't be appearing anywhere	
23	except in the Chambers. CATHAOIRLEACH: Right.	
24	Councillor Timmons and Councillor O'Neill, they are the	
25	only two now I am taking.	15:52
26	CLLR. MITCHELL: I have a specific proposal, I have had	
27	my light on for a while?	
28	CATHAOIRLEACH: I noticed that but you have been in	
29	before, Councillor.	

1	CLLR. MITCHELL: I know that. Can I just be brief and
2	you might
3	CATHAOIRLEACH: Be very brief now because I am not
4	going over the thing twice for people now.
5	CLLR. TIMMONS: Could I just ask a question?
6	CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah, okay, Councillor Timmons?
7	CLLR. TIMMONS: Could I just ask the question; what
8	organisation at this stage can repeal the decision?
9	CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah, okay. That's fine, I will get
10	that answer. Councillor O'Neill, you haven't been in? 15:5
11	CLLR. O'NEILL: Yes, can I just briefly, Cathaoirleach,
12	and again thanks for taking this on the day that is in
13	it. But again I would like to concur with what
14	Councillor Matthews there that it is unbelievable that
15	in Greystones municipal area you weren't aware of this 15:5
16	the last three months, that's a bit Irish. And also in
17	fact, I know if that was in the Baltinglass municipal
18	area I think we would be very well aware of it. This
19	issue of Greystones we have had it before, we went
20	through the whole lot before, we have prepared that for 15:5
21	the rest of the county and, you know, I gave my
22	opinions on top of it. I find it very hard to believe
23	that there was an issue there for three months and the
24	Greystones Councillors were snoozing, snoring, because
25	they didn't know anything about this. That is
26	absolutely unbelievable. I have a problem with it. I
27	know too that the permission was granted to the
28	restaurant only last Friday evening. So I mean that is
29	another side to the argument. But again I just can't

1	believe that the Councillors didn't know for three	
2	months about this process.	
3	CATHAOIRLEACH: Just briefly Councillor Walsh and	
4	Councillor Mitchell, I am finished then.	
5	CLLR. BEHAN: well we need a decision here.	15:54
6	CATHAOI RLEACH: Pardon?	
7	CLLR. BEHAN: We are not finished until we get some	
8	sort of a decision.	
9	CATHAOIRLEACH: I want to let the CE in, Councillor.	
10	CLLR. BEHAN: That's fine, yeah. We're not finished at	15:54
11	all yet.	
12	CATHAOIRLEACH: He has been waiting to try and get in	
13	here. All the Councillors have been coming in, they	
14	seemed to have stopped, and now there is a dribble	
15	again, do you know what I mean. Councillor Mitchell?	15:54
16	CLLR. MITCHELL: Thank you. There is a list of	
17	prescribed bodies who are entitled to object without	
18	objecting to the first stage of planning in the County	
19	Council. That list so far as I can see the only	
20	relevant people in it are the HSE who are entitled to	15:54
21	object on a health matter. And I think that we, the	
22	Councillors, should ask the HSE to object to this to	
23	An Bord Pleanála.	
24	CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Councillor Walsh?	
25	CLLR. WALSH: Just a quick point, Cathaoirleach, I am	15:54
26	going back over this again. On the previous	
27	application I brought all this up which referred to	
28	McDonalds and the schools, et cetera. That was granted	
29	and there was an objection submitted and the reason	

Т	given for the granting was that this was not
2	specifically catered for in the County Development
3	Plan, and by catering for it in the plan I think well
4	we though, well that's it, that is catered for. That's
5	just in reply to Councillor O'Neill's comments, I mean $_{15}$
6	it was facilitated for in the plan.
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, letting the CE in now.
8	MR. CURRAN: Okay, thanks, Cathaoirleach. The County
9	Development Plan is quite specific it says that RT17
10	should be taken into account. It was taken into
11	account in the sense that there is no fast-food served
12	before the schools are well concluded. The zoning on
13	the site is neighbourhood centres and there is policies
14	there around neighbourhood centres and smarter travel
15	for the people living in the neighbourhood are entitled $_{15}$
16	to have their services discussed, including
17	restaurants, et cetera.
18	
19	As well as that there is the previous An Bord Pleanála
20	decision where they would have granted. So I don't
21	think the County Development Plan has been contravened
22	and, for that reason, you can't go down the Section 44
23	route which is quite clear in a sense that:
24	
25	"Planning authority shall neither revoke nor modify a
26	permission under this section unless the development to
27	which the permission relates no longer conforms with
28	the provisions of the development plan".

1	This decision does conform with the Development Plan.	
2	CATHAOIRLEACH: Just on that, Councillors, we are still	
3	in the period where an application could come in to the	
4	board, and somebody has already put in an application	
5	in regard to An Bord Pleanála. Councillor Mitchell	15:56
6	said that prescribed bodies can have regard to this as	
7	well. Could I just suggest that we allow this to	
8	happen if it does happen and then if there is an appeal	
9	to the board, fine. In the meantime I can get the	
10	legal advice in regard to what can happen now and have	15:56
11	it on the agenda for the meeting in July if that's	
12	agreeable. Is that agreeable? Thank you, okay.	
13	CLLR. BEHAN: Mr. Chairman, sorry, one thing that I	
14	didn't say but I meant to say it, it is quite	
15	interesting that the first planner who looked at this	15:57
16	from the staff, the Executive Planner, actually spotted	
17	a lot more quickly than her seniors that it was	
18	potentially going to contravene the Development Plan,	
19	now she was subsequently overruled obviously by her	
20	seniors.	15:57
21	CATHAOI RLEACH: Okay.	
22	CLLR. BEHAN: Now therefore that means that you can't	
23	say that you didn't know that this was what we wanted	
24	in our Development Plan. And what the County Manager	
25	is now saying is well bits of the plan we will quote	15:57
26	and other bits we will quote for our own particular	
27	purposes. That is just not good enough, Chairman.	
28	CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor, you are well aware, I am	
29	finished the meeting now, but you are well aware that	

1	junior planners or planners are often	
2	CLLR. BEHAN: An Executive Planner.	
3	CATHAOIRLEACH: yeah, an Executive Planner is often	
4	overruled by senior people and	
5	CLLR. BEHAN: Yeah, but all I'm saying is she had the	15:58
6	foresight to see it was against our own policy.	
7	CATHAOIRLEACH: But I am just saying to be fair, I mean	
8	often at the instigation of Councillors as well who	
9	want to overturn planning recommendations as well.	
10	CLLR. BEHAN: That's a different issue.	15:58
11	CATHAOIRLEACH: I am just saying it happens all the	
12	time as you're well aware. If that's agreeable then we	
13	will go for refreshments, okay. There is refreshments	
14	upstairs. Thank you very much.	
15		15:58
16	THE MEETING THEN CONCLUDED	
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