# ANNUL GENERAL MEETI NG OF W CKLOW COUNTY COUNCI L <br> HELD AT W CKLOW COUNTY BU LDI NGS, W CKLOWTONK, 

ON MDNDAY, 18TH JUNE 2018 AT 2PM

Gwen Mal one Stenography Servi ces certify the following to be a true and accurate transcript of the stenographic notes in the above- named action.

THE MEETI NG COMMENCED ON MDNDAY, 18TH DAY OF JUNE, 2018 AS FOLLOVG:

CATHAOI RLEACH Now I would like to welcome you all to this County Council AGM. Before I start, could everyone turn off phones? Councillor Cullen?
CLLR. TOMM CULLEN Yes, Chairman. Thank you very much. First and foremost, Chairman, to congratulate you on your term as Chairman, I think you did an excellent job and very well done. It is great to see a 14:05 Baltinglass man in that position, hopefully we will see you there again.

Chairman, just we are all very disturbed with the Prime Time investigates programme on the KW last Thursday evening, very disturbing issues that were raised, and as this Council has a major involvement in that body I would like to see would it be agreeable that, given that we have over 12,000 students in wicklow who are attending KW's schools. That's very important issues, tens of thousands of people and families in wicklow education for children. And would it be agreeable, Chairman, that $I$ note that this is perhaps for it, but could we have it as a priority issue on the first council meeting in July that we would have a discussion 14:06 on that, Chairman, on the issues raised in the programme and on the KW and maybe have reports from the members, the delegates from the Council, for that meeting?

CATHAOI RLEACH Anyone else have a comment on that issue?

CLLR. FOX: Chairman, I know last month we had the similar thing came up, and I certainly watched the programme Thursday night and would have major concerns about its content. However, it is subject to an investigation. We made that point last month. I do agree with Councillor Cullen, we do need to have a discussion on it at a point in the future. But $I$ think while there is an ongoing investigation we have to be very careful about discussing the matter.

CLLR. TOMM CULLEN Chairman, can I just respond? There is no criminal case under investigation. There is no criminal case, nobody has been charged. In fact three members of the board, including members of this Council, were openly able to discuss it on national television last Thursday night without any problems, and there was no legal restraint for doing that, and the members of the board openly discussed it publicly and have made statements about it publicly. So I see no reason why we can't discuss it here, if it can be discussed on public television, I see no reason why we can't discuss it here. It is an issue of public education and the Electorate Rep Wicklow County Council make up 50 per cent of the electoral representatives on appropriate that if it can be discussed on national public television there is no reason why it can't be -by members of the board themselves mind you -- there is
no reason why it can't be discussed in this chamber, and I think it is imperative that we discuss it in this chamber.

As I said, there is 12,000 students in Wicklow and there is thousands of children in primary school now going forward that will be going into secondary school in a couple of years time, so I think it is very important that we would have a discussion on that.

As I said, I am not looking -- this is the day of the AGM and that and I am not looking for today, but I think it is not an unreasonable thing that we would have a discussion given the huge involvement this County Council has in that body. And I can no reason, there is no legal reason whatsoever why we can't have, as I said, members of the board had no problems going on public television, national television, the other night making statements on it. So I see no reason why this Council is a democratic body representing the parent of wicklow can't have a discussion.

CATHAOI RLEACH Councillor Fortune, you wanted to come in on that as well?

CLLR. FORTUNE: wel1, no, just two quick things: One, is I would support what County Councillor cullen is
saying. I think what he is asking is reasonable in the circumstances and I think for us to be informed about what is going on on the national television, the legal programme on it, we need to resolve that part of it as
well. And the second part I have a suspension in, Chair, to discuss the planning permission granted in Greystones in Blacklion in the RT17, and I am asking maybe that we would take that suspension before we get into the guidance on the agenda, so it doesn't get confused with the alleged --
CATHAO RLEACH I was of a mind that they would take the suspension after the formalities of the AGM and we would deal with the suspension after that.
CLLR. FORTUN: We11 I am asking to take it beforehand, 14:09 that is really what I am asking you.

CATHAO RLEACH we will take it after. Do you have a seconder on that?
CLLR. BEHAN I'11 second it.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor, on the KWETB, I have a few 14:09 other speakers to hear. You are not speaking on the KWETB, are you?

CLLR BEHAN I do but I would like Councillor whitmore first on it.

CLLR. WH TMDRE: Okay, thanks, Chair. Look, obvious7y 14:09 the issues that were raised last week were fairly concerning and this has been an ongoing issue for the Board. I don't think there would be any problems discussing it as long as it was kept within -- like there is obviously certain elements of it that can't be 14:10 discussed, but I think from a process perspective that that -- I can't see any reasons for that. what I would suggest there is actually a new chief executive and perhaps we could invite her in to talk about what she
sees as a vision for the ETB, and there have already been changes made to the processes and due procedures within the organisation and perhaps she could go into that as well so that might be an option available to us. Just to let you know I won't be here at the next meeting either, I am on holidays, so just get it on the record now. But that's a matter --

CATHAO RLEACH Does anyone else want to speak to KwETB issue? Councillor walsh, have you a KwETB?
CLLR WALSH Yes. Just in relation to that proposal, again I watched that documentary, Prime Time documentary, on Thursday night which was alarming. If you do decide to take this, and I don't see why not, I think you would be somewhat curtailed in what we can or cannot discuss during the course of the debate and maybe it would be no harm just to make sure you get some legal advice prior to that. But there is no reason why we can't discuss it but just to mark out the guidelines there on the legislation. Thank you.
CATHAO RLEACH Okay. Councillor Behan?
CLLR. BEHAN Chairman, I have a proposal for another suspension. But just to add my voice to the other, that I actually think it is quite appropriate for us to discuss what is a huge issue as far as I am concerned for this County and for County kildare. Obviously we have to be mindful of legal niceties but I think it is essential as democratically elected politicians that we get an opportunity to discuss this issue because our representatives make up half of the public reps on that
particular board. So I would support Councillor cullen's proposal that it be on the agenda for the next meeting.

I also want to propose a different suspension which is in relation to the withdrawal of very important and vital medical facilities for people from St. Vincent's Hospital and Lough1instown Hospital that effect the entire county of wicklow. I can go into that in a bit more detail: A11 I really want is a letter to be written on behalf of the people of County wicklow, on behalf of this Chamber, to the Minister for Health, to St. Vincent's Hospital, to the HSE, and to St. Columcille's Hospital about the non-availability of a public consultant for orthopedic work in

St. Vincent's and, secondly, the non-availability of ophthalmology service in Lough1instown. Both of these services have been withdrawn and for people are waiting on the public system they are being referred off, in the case of back complaints now they are become sent across the city to the Mater. And in the case of people with eye problems they are basically I think just being left hanging there. So this is an issue that affects many people in the county. I just want to propose them, we don't have to have a discussion, that 14:13 we write to those four bodies that I mentioned.

CATHAO RLEACH I think that is agreed?
CLLR. WH TMDRE: Yes.
CLLR. LANEESS: Yeah.

CLLR. BEHAN Thanks, Chairman.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor -- sorry I will try and resolve the KWETB issue first. Are there any other speakers on the KW issue? Councillor O'Neill, are you on the KWETB? I don't want to go to Vincent Blake because he is -- Vincent, is that something you want to talk about that, is it? I will try and resolve this. CLLR. O NEI LL: We11, no, just on the KWETB issue, I first raised concerns over 12 months ago in the Chamber here about issues in Dunlavin School, including myself and Councillor Behan. But I would be conscious of people's names being bandied around, whether it be on television or elsewhere, and I would like to see some sort of conclusion to the inquiry before that happens because it is not nice for people's names to be bandied around and they could be completely innocent of any of this, so I would be wary of that. But I can't really see any problem in a discussion with so many members of KWETB as part of wicklow County Council. But I would just be caution of it, you know, I wouldn't like to think that people's names are being bandied around or we were suggesting they were guilty of anything and that might not be the case.
CATHAO RLEACH Any other comments in relation to it? My own opinion is we have to discuss it here at some stage.

CLLR. LANLESS: Yeah.
CATHAO RLEACH It is an issue, it is out in the public domain. The question is just when, you know.

CLLR. LAVLESS: Yeah.
CATHAO RLEACH So there is a proposal from
Councillor Cullen to put it on the July meeting as the the second support. Councillor Fitzgerald, do you want to say something?

CLLR. FITZGERALD: Yeah, no, I just agree with what Councillor Cullen has said but looking at that programme it is a huge concern and I believe without -as Councillor o'Neill said, leave the names out of it. But there are concerns that what has happened, that they are being investigated and there are no criminal charges yet, but that's another day's work. But I mean it is a huge concern because, look it, a lot of people just mentioned to me because $I$ am on the Chairman of the Board of the Art Community College which was mentioned in that programme, and I am not going to get into that either. So I would totally support Councillor Cullen's secondment by Councillor Behan I think, that we should discuss it at the next meeting in a careful manner.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Vance?
CLLR. VANCE: Chairman, I don't have a problem discussing it, it is just what we discuss and when we discuss it. Like Councillor walsh is saying there about I think we could do with getting some advice on
discuss. And like what Councillor whitmore there was saying about the getting the chief executive in here and stuff like that, $I$ am aware of some things but $I$ am
not aware of a lot of things on it. I am hearing that 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 we11. 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.

CATHAO RLEACH 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 14:16 effectively we can or cannot discuss in my opinion anyway.
CATHAO RLEACH 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. WH TMDRE: Yeah.
CLLR LANLESS: Yeah.
CLLR. TOMM CULLEN Chairman, perhaps that prior to the July meeting that we would write to the Department 14:17 and ask -- and to the KW -- to furnish the elective Council with the Thorn, the full Thorn report?

CLLR. WH TMDRE: We don't have it yet, Tommy. CLLR. LAVLESS: we can request it.

CATHAO RLEACH But we can request it?
CLLR. LANLESS: Yeah.
CLLR. TOMM CULLEN we can request it to have that for the meeting. We should still have it as a priority issue on the July meeting. As I said, there's 12,000 students in wicklow.

CATHAO RLEACH Yes, you have said that, yeah, Councilman.

CLLR TOMM CULLEN what I am proposing as we11, rather than discussing it here today because there are issue of votes here today, important issues of votes, but perhaps that you would have it on the agenda?
CATHAO RLEACH You are saying, just repeat what you are saying, you are saying we will write to the Department of Education looking for copies of the Thorn 14:17 report.

CLLR. TOMM CULLEN The Thorn report, yeah, and any other documents that they would have be circulated. CATHAO RLEACH And maybe also ask for an updated position.
CLLR. TOMM CULLEN And updated. And in the interim perhaps the five members of that board will bring to us any information that they would have that would be able to help the rest of the Council in making evaluation of the situation.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor whitmore?
CLLR. WH TMDRE: Can I just add to that, perhaps maybe if we wrote and asked that they make -- because the report is in draft stage so we need the Department to
publish it essentially immediately and provide us with a copy of it. There needs to be pressure on the Department actually to publish the final draft of this. Because if we just write to them and ask for them they wil1 come back and say it is in draft, it is not published. I think we need to be saying that -CATHAO RLEACH we could request for it to be published then as well?

CLLR. WH TMDRE: Yeah, like you know immediately and that we get a copy of it.
CLLR TOMM CULLEN And any legal advices that the board would have received from their own advisors. CATHAO RLEACH Can we get agreement then on our approach?
CLLR. LANLESS: Yeah.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Annesley?
CLLR. ANESLEY: Chairman, we paid him a weekly meeting in the morning in his chambers and I think it is very appropriate for us to ask the CE, for the CE to be asked and get a direct answer from Dr. Deirdre Keyes is the lady's name, and I think it would be very appropriate that she is asked to the July meeting, you know, and I don't think she will have a problem coming here. But she can only tell you going forward what's going to happen, she wouldn't have that much knowledge of what has happened. She wouldn't be briefed like we have been briefed. But the documentation we were given was confidential and that's why members of the County Council are a bit aggrieved that they haven't got it
but we were given strict guidelines that we could not discuss it. What was discussed on the Prime Time programme, that was limited as well that they could talk about, but I have no problem discussing this in July. But I think definitely an invite to the CEO should go out for the July meeting.
CATHAO RLEACH Thank you. Is there support for that as an additional?

CLLR MEDONALD Yeah.
CLLR. LAVLESS: Yeah.
CLLR TOMY CULLEN For what, Chairman?
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Annesley is proposing we should invite the CE.
CLLR TOMY CULLEN Chairman, the only reason that we are just looking to discuss this now is because there has been six meetings of the KW Board --

CATHAO RLEACH Tommy, we have reached agreement now.
CLLR TOMM CULLEN oh, that's fair enough, yeah.
CATHAO RLEACH So there is a proposal from Councillor Annesley that we write to the CE to ask her to attend our July meeting, is that agreed?
CLLR TOMM CULLEN yes , but if she doesn't accept it we still have our own discussion.
CATHAO RLEACH oh, yeah.
CLLR. LAVLESS: Yes.
CLLR TOMY CULLEN Fair enough, that's perfect. CATHAO RLEACH Okay, Councillor Blake?

CLLR. BLAKE: Can I take the opportunity of congratulating Lorna Mallick for being selected to
represent Wicklow in the Rose of Tralee. We are all well aware that the Rose of Tralee is a worldwide event and she is one of 48 who are going through to the event on that particular weekend. So can I just on behalf of Wicklow County Council congratulate Lorna and her family and wish her well in the Rose of Tralee event. Thank you, Chairman. CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Fox? CLLR. FOX: Yeah, can I congratulate Áine O'Gorman from Enniskerry who was recently capped for the 100th time by the Irish soccer team at the recent world Cup Qualifier in Norway. I think it is a marvellous achievement for Áine to reach 100 caps and she has been an inspiration for female sport participants in particular around Enniskerry and Bray district. I just want to congratulate her and $I$ think we should all join in congratulations. Thanks, Chairman.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor McLough1in.
CLLR. MELOUGLIN Yes, and thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to send a letter of thanks please to Dee Featherstone from the Strip and Dip that was held in Magheramore Beach two weeks ago. She has raised nearly 500,000 for the charity, more than that, she has put Wicklow on the map worldwide. There isn't a country in the world that that hasn't got publicity. You know, it is a formidable feat and to the two-and-a-half thousand women that did the dip, I would just like to say a congratulations. But I do feel we should send a letter of thanks and congratulations to Dee for all that's going to do for children's
charities.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Gail Dunne?
CLLR. DUNE: Thank you, Chairman. Can I also congratulate the Wicklow ladies' senior football team who reached the intermediate football final. It's a great achievement for them and I would like to wish them the very best for the final.

CATHAO RLEACH Councilior Murphy?
CLLR. MRPHY: Yeah, I would just like to wish the participants of the Special olympics national games, they are taking place at the moment over the weekend, and County Wicklow has been flying the flag in all departments, and it is absolutely brilliant, and I would just like to acknowledge that.
CATHAOI RLEACH Yes, Members, the next item -- sorry, the first item on the agenda, is the election of Cathaoirleach. Before I go into that, I am just going to say short few words, I'm not into long speeches, as you know, so just a few little things I would like to say.

I have been honoured to sit in this chair for the past year. It was really great. I want to thank each of the 31 Councillors for the courtesy you have shown me over had the last 12 months. I want to especially thank my Vice Chair, Pat Vance, who has been a great support over the year, and my predecessor, Pat Fitzgerald. I want to thank my own party for 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 who visit here. We are lucky to live 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
within our county. The current government guidelines actually recognise this but that is a conversation we will have for another day.

That's all I have to say. Thanks very much. (Applause).
MR. CURRAN Cathaoirleach, just on behalf of the staff I would like to thank Edward for his courtesy and professionalism throughout the year. He was a pleasure to deal with and a great help to me when I started. не's had a huge interest in all of the different programmes and, as he said himself, everything that was good for wicklow. He has been here for the start of the housing programme, it's now we're starting to turn sods, and it's really kicking off. A big advocate for outdoor recreation and getting funding in for same and he was here for the launch of the Varty Trails two weeks ago. Big interest in tourism, particularly the China element, I think that market is going to be huge. Edward was here to meet the Chinese ambassador when he called into Powerscourt. He also took a lot of interest in what was happening in the various different towns and he was great support at Blessington and bringing enterprise to a small town and that was a 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 congratulate Edward on doing an excellent job and
thanks again on behalf of myself and all the staff.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Winters?
CLLR. WNTERS: Yes. Just on behalf of the Fine Gael group I would like to both I suppose thank and to congratulate you on your year as Cathaoirleach.

Throughout the year you conducted yourself in a quiet determined and implemented significant changes which will help us, the Members, to develop a county to the betterment of all its residents and businesses. The introduction of the monthly management reports will give us a much better way of monitoring what we're doing and making sure that we are keeping the pressure on to achieve what we want to achieve. The larger discretionary spend on each of the districts I suppose gives us a better understanding of what is available and also for people to see where their local property tax is being spent and I think you also put a great emphasis on a larger drawdown of government and European funding and I think that will benefit projects 14:28 right throughout the county.

Your year saw significant change of management, we have a new CE, and I think that you, along with all of the officials, managed this with the sort of minimum of disruption to both us and to the county. And then as a country we are trying to broaden our markets and our trade agreements and I think that wicklow played its part in that and we saw a very successful and hopefully
beneficial trip to China. I think you are a fair-minded level-headed individual with good communication skills and wonderful attention to detail, and I think that all of those things you brought to your role as Cathaoirleach and did an excellent job and 14:28 I just want to thank you. Thanks.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Lawless?
CLLR. LAVLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I just want to say congratulations on your year. I remember when you first got elected, I didn't really know you that well as a councillor, $I$ was unsure of what way you would conduct yourself for the year and I have to say I was very surprised, pleasantly surprised. I found you very respectful, very easy to deal with, and you're very open as wel1. Any time $I$ know we came to you with any issues you were always willing to listen and take onboard all our views which was very much appreciated.

It's not an easy job sitting up there in that chair. I have to say we have had very thorny issues here in the chambers and we always have done over the yeas, I am sure you will in the coming year, and have to handle 31 voices in sometimes what can be a playground situation, I think you handled it will pretty well on most occasions. So I just want to the wish you well and thank you very much and, yeah, well done. Well done. CATHAO RLEACH Thanks. Councillor Blake?

CLLR. BLAKE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. As having 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 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 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 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.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Fortune?
CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Now on behalf 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 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
a tremendous attribute for anyone to have, so thanks.
CATHAOI RLEACH Councillor walsh?
CLLR. WALSH Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just to follow on from the previous speakers, just to congratulate you on your role as Cathaoirleach over the last year. During that time you were always fair and accommodating and I know sometimes those attributes are severely put to the test but I congratulate. You mentioned the word "respect" there in your address and you certain1y had respect in this chamber. So again congratulations.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Jim Ruttle?
CLLR. RUTTLE: Yes, Cathaoirleach. I want to, on behalf of our group, congratulate you upon your year as Cathaoirleach. You are the third member of your family that I've had the honour to serve with here over the 1ast 30 years, your father and brother, Billy, and yourself. You've lived up totally to the great family tradition of public service who paid respect for people a11 around and total commitment to what you're doing. In the course of the last year you done a great job here, but not just here but in west Wicklow as well, and again I congratulate you on that and thank you for your courtesy and kindness at all times extended to me and to others. You'11 probably have a lot more spare time now and you deserve it all because it is an arduous task and a lot crops up and you have to do an awful lot but you did very we11 and again thank you very much and well done. Thank you.

CATHAOI RLEACH 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 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.

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
attend to their democratic responsibilities and there has not been enough consideration in my view to the needs of people who are not necessarily available in the afternoon or the morning. In other parts of the
country, particularly I think in the big cities, Cork and Dublin especially, meetings are held at night and that means that people who want to run for election, whether they are working a business, they are working for themselves, or whatever the case is, they get a proper opportunity to be involved. I know it must have been -- I assume it must have been extremely difficult for someone in your position to try and have the availability that you did have given that you have to operate as a full-time career as well. So in particular in regard to that I want to thank you because I know you really put yourself out and you really stretched every possible part of your life I'd say in the last year to do the excellent job that you do, and that you did do, and I want to thank you very much for that too. Thank you.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor O'brien?
CLLR. O BRI EN: (Speaks Irish). You performed your functions in this room here like a very good referee, you did absolutely excellent. (Speaks Irish).
CATHAO RLEACH Councilior Murphy?

CLLR. MRPHY: Yeah, I would just also like to echo my fellow Councillors. I think your professionalism was just brilliant. I think you're calm, cool and collected. A presence isn't exactly for us all
because, as Councillor Behan said, it is not easy to fit in a career and your job and everything else. But I think your inclusion and your knowledge for a higher pitch of what we probably -- than the funding of the government and being ready and all the grants aid and whatever, and I think we need that head to kind of kick us sometimes to realise that there is another level and I think your expertise in that is fantastic and I hope you continue with that. I also would just like to thank you for I suppose helping us all this year and your expertise in inclusion as well in every level which we appreciate. Thanks.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Snell?
CLLR SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I suppose, Edward, it has been a quick year, 12 months, but if you look over what's gone through this chamber the last 12 months an awful lot of issues have been dealt with, big issues, and I think you conducted yourself brilliantly on every occasion. And I said to you when you first went up there, as you know, you will probably go a little bit greyer over the course of the year and you've almost come out unscathed, you're just a little bit greyer than when you sat in there. I am sure at times you felt like pulling your hair out up there. But the one thing that you always afforded everyone in this chambers was the utmost respect while you, yourself, would automatically get respect from the members because you and the way you conduct yourself 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.

As a Rathnew man talking to a Baltinglass man, I probably wouldn't agree with what Councillor o'brien said in regards to refereeing and stuff like that. But 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'11 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.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Thornhil1?
CLLR THORNH LL: Cathaoirleach, go raibh maith agat. Cathaoirleach, just a cúpla focail (speaks Irish). May 14:38 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, 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
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
maith agat.
CATHAO RLEACH Thanks very much for your kind words. The next item on the agenda is election of Cathaoirleach. Councillor Walsh?

CLLR. WALSH Yes, thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to propose Councillor Pat Vance for this position. As we know, Councillor Vance has over 30 years experience both serving as a councillor in Bray urban District Council and Wicklow County Council. He has an in-depth, and some would say unparalleled, knowledge of the workings of this Council, and I believe that this wealth of experience and knowledge will serve him well in the role of Cathaoirleach for this Council for its fifth and final year. Thank you.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Gail Dunne?
CLLR. DUNE: I would like to second Councillor walsh's proposal for Councillor Vance. I have known Pat for over 20 years and he has become a good friend. And I know in the last year for council, which can be probably one of the most difficult years with all the elections due, we couldn't have a safer pair of hands than in Councillor Vance. Thank you.

CATHAO RLEACH Do we have any other proposals? we don't appear to have. There is only one candidate so I deem Councillor Vance Elected Chairman of wicklow County Council. (Applause).

M5. GALLAGER: Members, we are just going to get a photograph before we proceed with all of the formalities. Is that okay?

## THE HEARI NG ADI OURNED BRI EFLY AND RESUMED AS FOLLOMG:

(The meeting continued with the new Cathaoirleach, Pat Vance, in the chair).

CATHAO RLEACH Thank you. Thank you very much certainly I would like to thank my proposer and seconder and my party and colleagues and all the members of the Council for the vote of confidence that you have given me this year. I deeply appreciate it.

I want to pay a special tribute to our outgoing chairman, Edward Timmons, and I wanted to use this opportunity to say that Edward was Cathaoirleach in what was a really busy year, particularly in the north of the county, as we we11 now. And for a man from the west of the county I am sure every monthly meeting that we had and Bray generally was being discussed all the time, I think it was difficult enough and there was a few decisions that had to be made as we11, and I just want to thank Edward for his courtesy and good humour during all that.

When I first was chairman with the Council in 1997 Edward's father was the chairman, I was the vice
chairman to him, and it is ironic that this year that I am Vice Chairman to Edward as well. I had a wonderful opportunity to see Godfrey Timmons in action and I 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.

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.

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 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 social and affordable housing. The emphasis all the time seems to be on social housing which we know we need. 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 we11. So certain7y 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.

We also have the infrastructure as well and Councillor Mitche11 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 get full whack that we probably should as we11.

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
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 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 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.

Also in regard to the municipal authorities as well, Edward has championed that more power would go to the municipal authorities, 1 am a champion of that as well and I am going to move along that to see what powers can be moved back into the municipal authorities. I look forward to sit down with the officials and seeing what type of powers that we can give to the municipal authorities as well.

Finally, it is impossible for anyone to do this job without support around this chamber, without the officials of the Council as well and, more importantly, it is important that we get the support at home -- and she is not going to like me for this -- but Mary, my
wife, down at the end of the room there has given me that support when I needed it and kicked me in the backside when I needed it as well and just from my own point of view as well I want to thank her for what she has done for me over the years as well.

So I want to move on now and thank you very much again for your support. I look forward to working with you a11 for the next year and hopefully that will be the year that we make significant progress for the people that we represent. Thank you very much.

MR. CURRAN Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Again on behalf of the staff, I would just like to congratulate Councillor Vance on his election as Cathaoirleach. I can assure him that my door and the door of the staff will be open. We are there to help through the year.

I think we are going to see a lot of progress in the years, as he mentioned. We have already made good progress $I$ think starting with 1,300 social housing units and a lot happening on the private and affordable side as well.

Community outdoor recreation will be important as its tourism. I think we will see the Blessington, the Greenway around the Blessington Lakes move next year, Avondale Forest park will be coming up for planning permission very shortly. A lot happening in economic and tourism. The town centres, the Florentine Centre,

I think we will see very good progress in that as the year goes on as well. As I say, we will be talking about the municipal districts and what powers will go the municipalities and be delegated. So again congratulations and thank you very much.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Bourke?
CLLR. BOURKE: Cathaoirleach, I would just like to congratulate you sincerely on your elevation to the role of Cathaoirleach. Again I think this is probably your third or fourth time in Wicklow County Council.

CATHAO RLEACH Third.
CLLR. BOURKE: Sorry, third time. As I look around the room I was thinking that you must be really loved by your party, greatly loved, and I noticed that --
CATHAO RLEACH They tell me that all the time.
CLLR. BOURKE: -- TDs and Senators have turned up here today to congratulate you and witness your elevation again. It is a great tribute to you personally considering as I look at the Fianna Fáil bench as well to see the great talent and ambition there that they have chosen you again to represent them. I know that you to will do a brilliant job, because I have had the great honour and pleasure of working here on two previous occasions with you in the chair as Cathaoirleach of the County Council, and I look forward 14:58 working with you again and delivering on all of the work that has to be done on the behalf of the people of wicklow. Best of luck to you in the year ahead. CATHAO RLEACH Thank you very much.

Councillor Fortune?
CLLR. FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. The very best of luck with your year ahead as Cathaoirleach. No doubt we will have a bit of arm wrestling with you as the year goes on. You know, I suppose when you were sitting for the past year there as what I describe as the "cornerback" position here behind me, you know, you come in as the wise old owl at the end of every discussion trying to wrap it all up. So I would say to you good luck and obviously it is a great honour for you, it is a great honour for your family. But the banter I am sure will continue and the one thing I would ask you would be just don't kill debate and discussion, let the old ball flow a bit when it's on the ground, okay.

CATHAO RLEACH Sure.
CLLR. FORTUNE: But the best of luck with everything, okay.
CATHAO RLEACH Thank you for that. I am sure you wil1 advise me of that. Councillor Fox?

CLLR. FOX: Thank you, Chairman. I am not sure if your party loves you or that you're ruled with an iron fist. CLLR. MRPHY: The latter one.

CLLR. FOX: I am starting to fee1 my age as well when chairmen come around for the second time, I think it was ten years ago you were probably chairman before.

And before I say anything, can I be associated with the tributes of Councillor Timmons and I think

Councillor Behan summed it up very well when he compared him to his father Godfrey and that decency ran through his DNA, so to speak. So I would like to thank you Edward for a fantastic year.

To yourself, Chairman, congratulations. I would like to welcome Mary to the Chamber. It is a great honour for you and your family. I wish you every success on behalf of the group. You have our support and my support, I certainly will cooperate in whatever way I can.

I know that, as you said, the fifth year sometimes can be a difficult year but I have always been of the opinion that you are a very courageous politician, you're never afraid to go against the trend even if it is unpopular and sometimes being a good chairman requires that skill set which you have. And I wish you every success, $I$ am sure you will do a fantastic job. Thank you, Chairman.
CATHAO RLEACH Thank you very much.
Councillor Lawless?
CLLR. LAVLESS: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just from the Sinn Féin group here we would like to wish you we11. We are looking forward to working with you for Leinster House don't agree with working with Sinn Féin but sure, look, we will work with you down here in county level, Pat, we are getting used to you.

CATHAO RLEACH Been with youse a long time.
CLLR. LAVLESS: That's it. No, I don't have a three-page congratulations like some of your party colleagues thought I had written out for you today. But, no, I do sincerely wish you the best, Pat. I would hope that during the year you would be fair and, you know, you will allow us all to have our say within reason of course. You know, the fifth year is a difficult year and I am sure your wife, she might be -I don't know, she might be glad maybe not to see him so 15:01 often, Mary, keep him busy, keep like the golfers, the widows' golfers, you know. But, no, listen, Pat, sincerely I wish you well for the year to come.

CATHAO RLEACH Thank you. Councillor Ryan?
CLLR. RYAN Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Again I would just like to start off by giving my congratulations to Edward for the wonderful job that he did for his year driving through a number of particular projects, the house building and the efficiency project and the Hainan project, you did a wonderful job, which hopefully you wil1 continue on.

But to yourself, congratulations, like I mean as a child I remember, you know, you were elected. Councillor Behan --
CLLR. DUNE: You're not that young, John.
CLLR. RYAN -- you're seated there forever. And actually I have to say it's the first time I noticed that you had a romantic bone in your body. So, Mary,
congratulations again. I know you always say, Pat, when somebody else gets elected that it is an immense honour --

CATHAO RLEACH It is.
CLLR RYAN -- to actually represent your county as the first citizen and it absolutely is and I think you have done it before and, no doubt, you will do it fantastically well. I think it is a little bit scary that the four years of this five-year term are already gone, it is just gone in a second. And I suppose we have to double our efforts and really work hard to make sure that this last year is a year that has a lasting impact.

I know there are a number of things that you particularly want to drive through and I have no doubt you still have immense energy to make those things happen, and I know in particular in the Bray Municipal District the sporting campus idea that you have a vision for and that you are getting a lot of support for is something that I think would be fantastic if we can get that to another level. But just to be clear you have absolute support from the party and myself to make a really successful year.
CATHAO RLEACH Thank you very much.
Councillor Cullen?
CLLR. SHAY CULLEN Thanks, Chairman. First of al1, I just want to acknowledge my colleague here, Edward Timmons, on his contribution over the 1ast year,
he done a superb job.

And to yourself, chairman, very best of wishes on your new appointment as chairman of the Council. I suppose I have been here four years now and I have listened 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. CATHAO RLEACH Thanks very much. Councillor Sne11? 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 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.

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.

But, Pat, you have always been very courteous, very open, very fair and it is something that I am sure you
are going to continue for the next 12 months and I certainly wish you the best of lock.
CATHAOI RLEACH Councillor Behan?
CLLR. BEHAN Okay, Cathaoirleach, have you got a notebook there?

CATHAO RLEACH I've been waiting for this.
CLLR. RUTTLE: It's the best man speech.
CLLR. BEHAN First of a11, obvious7y I congratulate you, Pat, on your elevation again as Cathaoirleach and there is no doubt that you probably are the most
experienced person now in the Chamber in terms of chairing meetings and so on. I have no doubt we are going to have our battles over the next 12 months.
CATHAO RLEACH No doubt.
CLLR. BEHAN And I look forward to them, as I am sure you do, but I know at the end of the day your interest is for the good of the county as well.

I am just thinking back to when we were both first elected to this body, it was 1991. We were elected to

Bray Urban District Council in '85 but in 1991 there were people here in the Chamber at the time, Vincent's father, Vincent Blake Senior, was a member at that time, Tom Keenan was a member at that time and Frank Hynes, they were kind of the three party stalworths, if you like, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour. And they and many others over those years have made huge contributions to this county as have the 32 members who are here today.

But I in particular want to congratulate Mary as well and all of the family for putting up with you. I would like to thank them for putting up with you and congratulate them as well because I know they fully support you and they will be supporting you throughout the year. And, as I say, I look forward to working with you for the next 12 months. Thank you.
CATHAO RLEACH Thanks very much. Councillor murphy, and before I let Councillor Murphy in I would like to congratulate her on her elevation in Arklow municipal authorities. Congratulations, Councillor.
CLLR. MRPH: Thank you. I wasn't expecting that. CATHAO RLEACH I look forward to working with you for the next year.
CLLR. MRPH: I would like to thank you on behalf of myself and also on behalf of Arklow municipal district. As to what was said, talk about a cute fox. You have got the experience, it just shines out through you, and I have to say you were the first person to ring me on Thursday morning to wish me well and I really, really appreciate that. But I would just like for you to tell Mary what you were doing to me up in the canteen running your fingers through my hair so I hope she is well aware of that and the way you get around people. So I wish you very well and I keep looking forward to that.

CATHAO RLEACH That is between Gráinne and myself. Councillor walsh?

CLLR. MALSH Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Having proposed you for the position I would now like to congratulate you on the role of Cathaoirleach. I have sat beside you here as a new councillor for the last four years and, I tell you, I have learned so much from watching you in action and listening to you.

You mentioned in your address there issues such as housing, transport and employment and I am sure that you will use your vast experience to bequest those very 15:08 important issues for the county of wicklow over the coming year. Best of luck, congratulations and congratulations to Mary and your family. Thank you.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Timmons?
CLLR. TI MMONS: Briefly, Pat, first of all, congratulations in your elevation, it is well deserved, and thanks for your kind words there. I would like to thank you for your support in me over the last 12 months, you have been a really great support. And one of my main things was going to the municipal
districts and you must take some credit for that as well because you very much put forward that and you very much pushed that agenda as well and you pushed it successfully. I admire you as a politician, you call it as it is, you do the right thing and often the unpopular thing and that's a great trait to have and I admire you and I congratulate you.
CATHAO RLEACH Thank you very much. Councillor Thornhill?

CLLR. THORNH LL: 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 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 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 fairly to people.

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 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. But overall I would like to say to you, you know, that you do a good job, you listen to everyone and be fair to everyone. Because at the end of the day $I$ come from a 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
perspectives. So I think at the end of the day it is all about pulling together at end, you know. Go raibh míle maith agat.
CATHAO RLEACH Thank you. Councillor Daire Nolan. CLLR. NOLAN Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would just like to congratulate you on your elevation. It must be a very proud day for yourself and for Mary and for the whole family. I would also like to pay tribute to, not just Councillor Timmons who did a bril1iant job over the preceding year, but in my four years working here to all previous Cathaoirleach; Councillor Fox, Councillor Ryan, Councillor Fitzgerald and of course Councillor Timmons, all of whom brought something different and unique to the post of Cathaoirleach but the one constant was they were always very fair, very even handed and allowed the debate to flow. I suppose it is very good that in the last year of this five-year term that we do have a very experienced and steady hand on the whee 1 and I suppose if we can be guaranteed one thing from the meetings of the coming year we can be guaranteed that at the very least they won't be boring. Congratulations and best of luck for the next year. CATHAO RLEACH Listen, thank you very much I appreciate that. Now can I call for a proposal for the election of Leas-Chathaoirleach.

Councillor McLough1in?
CLLR. MtLOUGLI N Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to propose Irene Doyle as Leas-Chathaoirleach -CLLR. FOX: Irene winters.

CATHAO RLEACH Is there something that we don't know about here?
CLLR. MRPHY: who is she?
CLLR. MELOUGLIN Irene winters. Irene was elected in 2004 as a town councillor and subsequently was elected in 2009 as a county councillor. She is very much known for reestablishing the public interest in the wicklow Enterprise Park and is now a board member. Irene has worked with the Chamber of Commerce and she set up with other the Taste of wicklow and the reignition of the Round Ireland Yacht Race. But I suppose most importantly Irene is known for her honest business-1ike approach to everything she gets involved with. She is passionate about standards of service, value for money and transparency with public expenditure. Irene is known for her ability to look outside the box in order to achieve the greater good. She has that ability to listen to all sides and have her on opinion without feeling the need to be part of the status quo. For those reasons, and many more, $I$ think she will make an excellent Leas-Chathaoirleach and I would love to see her some day as Cathaoirleach as well. So I propose Irene Winters as Leas-Chathaoirleach.

CATHAOI RLEACH Councillor Blake? CLLR. BLAKE: Can I formally second Councillor winters can I congratulate yourself too on your elevation to Cathaoirleach for the year. I am one of only a few year here that actually served with you on the first
time you were Cathaoirleach back in 1998, so you are well experienced in that regard, and I know you will do a fine job.

Equally so, Miriam, to yourself as Cathaoirleach of Arklow --

CLLR MRPHY: Thank you.
CLLR. BLAKE: It's good to see a woman. And of all else though, I think the fact that Irene is the Leas-Chathaoirleach, I think she is only the third person to hold that position in this Council. I think Mary Walsh back in the 70s was actually Cathaoirleach as well on the Council and obviously Ann Ferris as well back in 2000s, the noughties. So to Irene, congratulations, and I certainly look forward to the fact that you may be the third lady member -- we often criticise the fact that we don't have enough women involved in politics -- but it's a great opportunity to fulfil the role as Leas-Chathaoirleach and hopefully as Cathaoirleach in the future. Thank you, Chairman.
CATHAO RLEACH Gerry O'Neill?
CLLR. O NEILL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Before I make a proposal, could I say thanks and well done to Edward Timmons as Chair for the previous 12 months. Edward stuck to his guns as such in that he was always there to be of any help whatsoever when we would call.

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.

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 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 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.

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

John as a good strong republican, a good Irish man, as I say he is no nodding dog, he is no robot, he is there for everyone, and I really ask people to consider John Snell as a vice Chairman for the following year. Go raibh maith agat.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Thornhil1?
CLLR THORNH LL: Yeah, Cathaoirleach, go raibh maith agat. I would like to second that Councillor o'Neill's proposal. I would just like to echo
Councillor o'Neill's proposal, I would like to echo his words and say to everyone also that I believe that we should give other people a chance. I know that at government level there is a Confidence and Supply Arrangement but I didn't think it extended to council level here. So I should think that we should give Councillor Snell a chance and getting it to go around I think in fairness to everyone. Cathaoirleach, go raibh maith agat.
CATHAO RLEACH Councillor o'brien?
CLLR. O BRIEN I would also like to support
Councillor Snell. I don't think $I$ have come across in my lifetime a man who works as hard or is as dedicated as John Snell. When I sat in this Chamber the first day four years ago I mean I saw a clear sign from you and the other Councillors here the respect that you had for John Snell in when he was specifically offered the SPC for housing. Because everyone of you there when that was offered to him, even the guy that was going to 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 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 that they want John Sne11. 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 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 Sne11 for many, many, many years, and you're more likely to find the man helping an old lady move her 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, 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
man to break this and he would show a human extent outside of that. We often say you should hang our party hat outside the door. There is talent there and I am urging you to give John Snell your vote on this. CATHAO RLEACH Any other nomination? No, we will go for a vote then.

ME. GALLAGER Thank you, Cathaoirleach. we have Councillor Irene winters proposed by Councillor Mcloughlin and seconded by Councillor vincent Blake and then we have John Snell proposed by Councillor o'Neill and seconded by Councillor Thornhill. So, elected members, I am going to call out your names and if you can please indicate which elected member you wish to vote for. [Vote taken]. So that's 20 for Councillor winters, seven for 15:22 Councillor Snell, four not present and one abstaining. so Councillor winters has received the majority. (Applause).
CATHAO RLEACH Congratulations.
CLLR. WNTERS: Thank you very much indeed.
CATHAO RLEACH Item 3 is schedule of meetings, if they
can be agreed or is anyone --
CLLR. BOURKE: I propose --
MS. GALLAGER: Can I just say, just the october, it should say Monday, the 1st October as opposed to Monday, the 8th October.
CATHAO RLEACH Is that okay, 1st October instead of the 8th? Agree? All agree. Yeah, okay. Councillor Sne11, 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 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.

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.

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.

CLLR. LAMZESS: Pity Gerry didn't support the majority, Gerry. When you were in the party, Gerry, you didn't support us when you were in the party, Gerry. You didn't support us, Gerry.
CATHAOI RLEACH Just the banter for the moment, that's okay, it won't happen anymore. But anyway go ahead. Go ahead.

CLLR. SNELL: I thought we got rid of the noise box that used to be here in the chambers, unfortunately it's been replaced. But, look it, Irene I
wholeheartedly respect you --
CLLR. LAVLESS: That's low, John.
CLLR. SNELL: -- I wish you the best of luck for the future and I would like to commend you on your success.
CATHAO RLEACH Okay, Councillor Dunne and then
Councillor Winters, and then we are moving on, right.
CLLR. DUNE: Thank you, Chairman. Like
Councillor Sne11, I congratulate Councillor winters on the position of Vice Chairman of Wicklow County Council, it is an honour that she deserves for her work that she has put into every level as she worked in the Council. I had the honour of being on the Council with Councillor Winters, on the Town Council, 2009-2014 and she was always very solid all the advice that she gave me personally over the years from has been wonderful.
So I would just like this opportunity to wish her the very best as Vice Chairman of Wicklow County Council.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Winters?
CLLR. WNTERS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Firstly, I
would like to think Councillor McLoughlin, I know she had to run back to a meeting in work, for her very kind words of proposal --
CATHAO RLEACH She can let us in on her secret.
CLLR. WNTERS: what?
CATHAO RLEACH She can let us in on her secret. CLLR WNTERS: I would also like to thank Councillor Blake and Councillor Snell for his kind words as well. It is nice to actually get support from across all the parties and none. I see the role as

Cathaoirleach and as Leas-Chathaoirleach as non-party political roles that mean that we represent everybody in the constituency, and in my term as
Leas-Chathaoirleach I intend to do that, so I thank everybody for their support. Thank you very much. CATHAO RLEACH Okay. Good woman. Councillor Timmons, do you want to come in there?
CLLR. TIMONS: Yeah, just briefly I would just like to congratulate Irene on her elevation to
Leas-Chathaoirleach. I have absolutely no doubt she will do a wonderful job. She is a person with great independent thinking and I look forward to her being Leas-Chathaoirleach. Thank you.
CATHAO RLEACH Irene, just from my perspective as well, congratulations, I look forward to working with you in the next year. Thank you very much. Now I am moving on. Now Suspension of Standing Orders?
ME. GALLAGER Proposed by Councillor Fortune and seconded by Councillor Behan.

CATHAO RLEACH Yes, Councillor Fortune?
CLLR. FORTUN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, I would just like to raise the issue of the planning permission that was granted in Blacklion at the Lid1 store in Greystones.

CATHAO RLEACH Yes.
CLLR. FORTUN: There was an objective agreed here in the Chamber in the County Development Plan. Now the background to this is the district Councillors had a meeting with Fergal on last Friday and we discussed around it and we articulated the residents' perspective on it in the area. To say that there is devastation would be a gross understatement. They cannot understand or believe that we made a decision, and if you look at what the wording of the objective RT17 is, it says:
"Conscious of the fact that pl anning has an important role to play in promting and facilitating active and heal thy living patterns for local communities, the following criteria will be taken into account in the assessment of devel opment proposal s for fast-food/takeaway outlets, including those with a drive-through facility.

Excl ude any new fast-food outlets whi ch offer foods that are hi gh in fat, and salt or sugar frombeing built or fromoperating within 400 metres of the gates or site boundary of schools, parks or playgrounds
excl udi ng premi ses zoned town centre".

And then it goes on to say that:
"Fast-food outlets or takeaways with proposed drive-through facilities will generally only be acceptable within Maj or Town Centres or District Centres and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis;

Location of vents and ot her external services and thei $r$ i mpact on adj oi ning amenities in terns

Of noi se/ smel I/visual impact".

So basically the astonishment of the residents comes from that. We did listen to what Fergal was saying to us last week about that. We did say, or I certainly said, and I don't know if my colleagues would support me that at the end of the day the residents don't accept the decision that has been made. The part of it, and I have articulated this, and I can't understand 15:29 is when all the members here in the process of the County Development Plan put that in as something that should be there, when a file like that would land on a desk I would -- and I said this on Friday, I am only repeating it -- I would have thought that it would be 15:30 quite normal and natural to say, hang on a minute, 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.

The residents have, and I know all members got an e-mail this morning from the Chairman of the Residents 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.

CATHAO RLEACH Okay. Council1or Mitche11, I know you are there, but maybe if $I$ let the Director in, Sean Quirke, and then we will let you in there after that, is that okay --

CLLR. MTCHELL: okay.

MR. QU RKE: Thanks, Chairman. I know five or six Greystones members were briefed on this on Friday, but for the benefit of the rest of the members in the room, it is probably no harm just to give you some of the details of it and I think maybe the deliberation on the 15:32 application probably was reflected in the discussions that were had here at the time when the policy was put into the Development Plan in the first place. But briefly anyway the application was for change of use from a gym to a restaurant/takeaway and associated signage at Unit 1A Blacklion Retail Centre. It came in on the 11th April, there were no submissions or observations on the file. It is for a restaurant/takeaway of 115 square metres. I think about 59 square metres of that is seating and it's food 15:33 preparation area, and so on, as well. It was granted on the 1st June subject to four conditions, one of which was that the takeaway cannot operate before 5 o'clock, 5pm, in the afternoon.

Now I suppose the there are 35 rough1y, 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 where 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.

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 15:34 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.

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.
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 unl ess the devel opment to whi ch the permission rel ates no longer conforms with the provisi ons of the devel opment plan".

I don't think that is clear in any way so 1 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
say to you is, one, is that the appeal period is still open. It could be in the first part of the appeal to this, and also that the board today notified us that they had received a letter seeking leave to appeal, which means somebody who didn't make a submission in the first instance has looked -- now I don't know if it is -- but Council looked for leave to appeal so that may well still happen. So that is the position. CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Mitchell?

CLLR. M TCHELL: Thank you. Yes, just to say to you obesity is a major national problem, as we all know, and it is a very much increasing one particularly in young people.

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 thought we had banned. So that's certainly are of concern.

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
a country, need to do an awful lot more about obesity in children and we certainly need to tighten the wording here, it is not good enough to stop it, and we certainly need to tighten it in relation to large restaurants of the type mentioned in the past which weren't targeted at children.

As I understand it, this is not necessarily a chinese restaurant which is stated in the papers to be, it could be any, and I certainly have a concern that this has been approved. I think it better if it had been objected and it would have been left to the decision of An Bord Pleanála.

CATHAD RLEACH Councillor Matthews?
CLLR. MATTHEWG: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I just want 15:38 to clarify, did I hear the Director say that there wasn't one single submission in this application?

MR. QU RKE: Yes.
CLLR. MATTHEVG: I find that incredible, Cathaoirleach, that no one public representative from Greystones put in a submission on this. It was something that was very contentious at the time, people worked very hard to get it in the development plan. I think the public reps in an area they have a duty to look at these planning applications and if they see something contentious going in or something that they feel wouldn't be proper planning for the area, they should put in a submission on it and, had they done that, they would now be in a position to appeal this to An Bord

Pleanála.

I think at this stage, from my reading of Section 44, and other sections, Councillors no longer have a role in this. As the Director says, the applicant may appeal it to An Bord Pleanála and at that stage somebody can put in a submission at that stage to An Bord Pleanála as an observer and pay the fee. But I see that's the only role that anybody in this chamber or member of the public has in this now if we are to comply with the Act. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

CATHAO RLEACH Okay. Councillor Walsh?
CLLR. WALSH Thanks, Cathaoirleach. As we know the reason for this objective and the plan in the first instance was in response to an application by McDonalds to set up a premises directly opposite the door of the three schools in the Templecarrig area. So that was the objective.
so I suppose it was unfortunate, in response to
Councillor Matthews, that there were no submissions lodged in relation to this recent application. I suppose people looking at the application would have thought the fact that this condition was in place in the Development Plan that there was no particular need. But that's experience and that's water under the bridge now.

I suppose we could say the decision in itself probably0
dilutes the Development Plan as it stands at the moment and undermines its value. So maybe going forward we need to look at that Development Plan because it is due for renewal and we need to revisit this and maybe tie it down and maybe place more restriction on it and tie it down further so this type of situation doesn't arise again in the future.

And I mean I've read the decision on the Wexford application, and it's something quite similar. So I have just learned there from the Director that somebody -- that we weren't sure as to whether there was an option to apply to the board but somebody obviously has ticked that box and has gone to apply for leave to appeal, so hopefully that will get a chance to 15:41 run its course.

So other than that, this is something that we are going to have to look at when we review the pl an and make sure that maybe this is tied down better than it is at present.

CATHAO RLEACH Councillor Behan?
CLLR BEHAN Thanks, Cathaoirleach. We11 I think this decision by the Executive makes an utter and complete and total laughing stock of the 32 members of this Council. It is unbelievable having spent so many hours discussing the County Development Plan and having spent so much time talking about the wording of that 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 followed by the officials, the policy has to be applied for by the officials, and we have the Director of Services saying, 'we11 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 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'.

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.

As far as I am concerned what Councillor Fortune said still applies. Mr. Quirke might say it doesn't really 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 legal advice, we might not'. It should be done. This 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, Cathaoirleach. So let's hear from the Chief Executive 15:44 what he thinks about this but I think it should be completely reversed and there is the power to do it. CATHAO RLEACH okay. Councillor Lawless and then Councillor Fortune back in again. So

Councillor Lawless?
CLLR. LAVLESS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, like previous speakers, I mean I am extremely disappointed that this has been granted considering the hard work that was put in by the members of the public and by the 15:45 Councillors here as well. And I feel as an Elected Rep it really has made a laughing stack of us here.

I mean the County Development Plan in itself was a massive piece of work that we worked on and, you know,
we really put a lot of input into it and to think that this one particular item has been, you know, to me it's like we have found a loophole nearly in it and you are kind of looking at the rest of the County Development Plan and saying, well, are you going to do that on other issues that we have fought over very hard as Councillors here to ensure that, you know, we are doing right for the county.

For me, I think we could change this decision, we
should change this decision, and I have to say I am absolutely disgusted as a Local Rep. I kind of feel what is the point of me sitting here, you know, if planners can just come along and just trump everything else.

Now I don't know planning law inside out, I will be the first to say like it is complicated. But this was very, very clear we did not want takeouts within 400
metres and it doesn't matter if Lid1 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.

I know Councillor Matthews pointed out there that there 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 -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.

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
actually looking at this "No Fry Zone" and, you know, will possibly adopt it. They have also been up in front of the Oireachtas Committee as we11 and have commended them on this as wel1. You know, this is the first time it has come into play and here we are and it 15:47 is just not good enough.

CATHAO RLEACH Okay. Councillor Fortune?
CLLR. FORTUN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, just if I can just take up, I am surprised at Councillor Matthews' point really because the local district representatives and the public at large in that area would say very strongly that the position is in the County Development Plan, that's why they put it in. So when it was put in you would assume that that would carry and it wouldn't just, you know, change. And I mean there is another item in the CDP I think as well that has been interfered with, that's for a different discussion, and there is correspondence in the Council on it.

So really my attitude to this is that it is grossly unfair. Common sense doesn't seem to have been applied in any shape or fashion. I said this to Fergal on Friday, that surely on the basis, as I said already, Chair, that this was put into the County Development Plan, it went through a lot of discussion in here, it 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
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 15:49 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 15: 49 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
just can't understand this.

Yes, there has been the leave of appeal, similarly to why, when this happens saying, what are we going to do? So the residents have gone back to the board to try and 15:50 get the leave of appea1. But I would say to you, the Executive, they shouldn't have had to do that, you should be working with them. We are all part of the same county.

I mean I just think this is wrong and, you know, how we can stand over this -- this is why at times I get kind of animated here in the Chamber on some of the issues because you can't be -- I just don't believe you should be allowed to do things like this. You really shouldn't. And it is easy to look at the planning and say, 'well under planning, $I$ can do this, this, and this'. But everyone knows that this was put into the County Development Plan for the purpose of not allowing takeaway/fast-food outlets to be built within 400 metres of a school gate.
CATHAO RLEACH Okay, listen, there is a couple of more people, I want to finish up here because we all know this is Suspension of standing Orders that are not normally taken on an AGM and I want to finish up this and get as much information as $I$ can from members in regard to this. Councillor Fitzgerald?

CLLR. FI TZGERALD: Yes, I just see the -CATHAO RLEACH Please try and be --

CLLR. FITZGERALD yes, I am going to be very brief. CATHAO RLEACH Yes.
CLLR. FITZGERALD I just see here on the latest communication that the gentleman here that sent us that:

[^0]"We feel very strongly this permission will render Obj ective RT17 meani ngl ess".

So there is legal action now being contemplated. So I will not be getting involved in it, I voted against this, and I have no issue saying that because I didn't see you clamour my town for it. So effectively once there is legal action now being taken I understand here ${ }_{15: 52}$ from this "we propose that you will appear as a witness in this legal action". I won't be appearing anywhere except in the chambers. CATHAO RLEACH Right.
Councillor Timmons and Councillor o'Neill, they are the only two now I am taking.
CLLR. M TCFELL: I have a specific proposal, I have had my light on for a while?
CATHAO RLEACH I noticed that but you have been in before, Councillor.

CLLR. M TCHELL: I know that. Can I just be brief and you might --

CATHAO RLEACH Be very brief now because I am not going over the thing twice for people now.

CLLR. TI MMDNS: Could I just ask a question?
CATHAO RLEACH Yeah, okay, Councillor Timmons?
CLLR. TI MMDN: Could I just ask the question; what organisation at this stage can repeal the decision?
CATHAO RLEACH Yeah, okay. That's fine, I will get that answer. Councillor O'Neill, you haven't been in? CLLR. O NEILL: Yes, can I just briefly, Cathaoirleach, and again thanks for taking this on the day that is in it. But again I would like to concur with what Councillor Matthews there that it is unbelievable that in Greystones municipal area you weren't aware of this the last three months, that's a bit Irish. And also in fact, $I$ know if that was in the Baltinglass municipal area I think we would be very well aware of it. This issue of Greystones we have had it before, we went through the whole lot before, we have prepared that for the rest of the county and, you know, I gave my opinions on top of it. I find it very hard to believe that there was an issue there for three months and the Greystones Councillors were snoozing, snoring, because they didn't know anything about this. That is absolutely unbelievable. I have a problem with it. I know too that the permission was granted to the restaurant only last Friday evening. So I mean that is another side to the argument. But again I just can't
believe that the Councillors didn't know for three months about this process.

CATHAO RLEACH Just briefly Councillor walsh and Councillor Mitche11, I am finished then.
CLLR. BEHAN We11 we need a decision here.
CATHAO RLEACH Pardon?
CLLR. BEHAN We are not finished until we get some sort of a decision.

CATHAO RLEACH I want to let the CE in, Councillor. CLLR. BEHAN That's fine, yeah. We're not finished at 15:54 al1 yet.

CATHAO RLEACH He has been waiting to try and get in here. All the Councillors have been coming in, they seemed to have stopped, and now there is a dribble again, do you know what I mean. Councillor mitchell?

CLLR. MTCHELL: Thank you. There is a list of prescribed bodies who are entitled to object without objecting to the first stage of planning in the County Council. That list so far as I can see the only relevant people in it are the HSE who are entitled to object on a health matter. And I think that we, the Councillors, should ask the HSE to object to this to An Bord Pleanála.

CATHAO RLEACH Okay. Councillor walsh?
CLLR. WALSH Just a quick point, Cathaoirleach, I am 15:54 going back over this again. On the previous application $I$ brought all this up which referred to McDonalds and the schools, et cetera. That was granted and there was an objection submitted and the reason
given for the granting was that this was not specifically catered for in the County Development Plan, and by catering for it in the plan I think well we though, well that's it, that is catered for. That's just in reply to Councillor o'Neill's comments, I mean it was facilitated for in the plan.
CATHAO RLEACH okay, letting the CE in now. MR. CURRAN Okay, thanks, Cathaoirleach. The County Development Plan is quite specific it says that RT17 should be taken into account. It was taken into account in the sense that there is no fast-food served before the schools are well concluded. The zoning on the site is neighbourhood centres and there is policies there around neighbourhood centres and smarter travel for the people living in the neighbourhood are entitled to have their services discussed, including restaurants, et cetera.

As well as that there is the previous An Bord Pleanála decision where they would have granted. So I don't think the County Development Plan has been contravened and, for that reason, you can't go down the Section 44 route which is quite clear in a sense that:
"Pl anni ng authority shall neither revoke nor modify a permission under this section unl ess the devel opment to whi ch the permission rel ates no longer conforms with the provisi ons of the devel opment pl an".

This decision does conform with the Development Plan. CATHAO RLEACH Just on that, Councillors, we are still in the period where an application could come in to the board, and somebody has already put in an application in regard to An Bord Pleanála. Councillor mitchell said that prescribed bodies can have regard to this as well. Could I just suggest that we allow this to happen if it does happen and then if there is an appeal to the board, fine. In the meantime $I$ can get the legal advice in regard to what can happen now and have it on the agenda for the meeting in July if that's agreeable. Is that agreeable? Thank you, okay. CLLR. BEHAN Mr. Chairman, sorry, one thing that I didn't say but I meant to say it, it is quite interesting that the first planner who looked at this from the staff, the Executive Planner, actually spotted a lot more quickly than her seniors that it was potentially going to contravene the Development Plan, now she was subsequently overruled obviously by her seniors.

CATHAO RLEACH okay.
CLLR BEHAN Now therefore that means that you can't say that you didn't know that this was what we wanted in our Development Plan. And what the County Manager is now saying is well bits of the plan we will quote and other bits we will quote for our own particular purposes. That is just not good enough, Chairman. CATHAO RLEACH Councillor, you are well aware, I am finished the meeting now, but you are well aware that
junior planners or planners are often --
CLLR BEHAN An Executive Planner.
CATHAO RLEACH -- yeah, an Executive Planner is often overruled by senior people and --
CLLR BEHAN Yeah, but all I'm saying is she had the ${ }_{\text {15:58 }}$ foresight to see it was against our own policy.

CATHAO RLEACH But I am just saying to be fair, I mean often at the instigation of Councillors as well who want to overturn planning recommendations as well.
CLLR. BEHAN That's a different issue.
CATHAO RLEACH I am just saying it happens all the time as you're well aware. If that's agreeable then we will go for refreshments, okay. There is refreshments upstairs. Thank you very much.

## THE MEETI NG THEN CONCLUDED





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[^0]:    "We hope you will support and appear as a witness in the Iegal application that we propose to take".

    I won't be appearing in any action, I won't be getting involved in a legal case.

