

ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT
WICKLOW COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW TOWN ON
MONDAY, 1st DAY OF APRIL 2019 AT 2:00 P.M.

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communication support.

Elaine McCarthy

Elaine McCarthy

CATHAOIRLEACH: Can I have your attention, votes of sympathy.

>>: I'd like to propose a vote of sympathy to Ann Rowntree of Newcastle who died recently, was a great contributor to Newcastle community and Wicklow lifeboats.

CLLR WINTERS: I'd like to propose to the family of Maureen Doyle who died at the weekend and her son Seamus works here and Andrew Daley's TD.

CATHAOIRLEACH: To the family of Paddy Dunne who passed away last Friday, from Greystones, Paddy was one of the first members of the Sugarloaf Lion's Club the area there, so condolences to Paddy's wife Mary and extended family.

CATHAOIRLEACH: No other votes of sympathy?

MS GALLAGHER: Yes, for James Johnson, member of our colleague Jon Braine, we also opened a Book of Condolences for the victims of Christchurch victims attack. Duncan worked with Wicklow County Council as resident engineer a number of years ago.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members we have two requests for suspension standing orders. The first one Lorraine.

MS GALLAGHER: Yes. Cathaoirleach this has come in from Cllr Gerry Walsh and seconded by Cllr Pat Vance and in accordance, or Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, sorry, and accordance with the protocol I'm going to read it to the members and members can decide then without further discussion as to whether it is to be heard or not. As chairperson of the economic development and enterprise support SPC for Wicklow I wish to request suspension of standing orders to be considered in order to discuss the recent revaluation process by the Valuation Office of all commercial and industrial properties in Wicklow. Proposed valuation certificates being received by small businesses over the past two weeks have resulted in considerable confusion as well as a high level of anxiety to the recipients, we imposed rates to 2020 over 100% in many cases, clinics proved ineffective to the timing as business owners were just receiving new evaluation certificates and did not have time to absorb, digest the consequences of the changes to the business. Clinic being held during day time business hours were also not an option for small business owners

occupiers, business owners have 40 days to make representation regarding new evaluations from the day of issue, I contend the situation should be considered urgent to the business of this council.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I don't have a problem with that, is that agreement? Yeah. 4.30. There's another one now.

MS GALLAGHER: OK the next suspension request for suspension of standing orders was submitted by Cllr Brendan Thornhill, and seconded by Cllr Oliver O'Brien so I'm going to read it to the members and the members can decide then whether they're going to hear it or not. I wish to seek suspension of standing orders at the Wicklow County Council meeting at 2pm to discuss urgent planning and related matters that have come into the public realm in the past three weeks, Cllr Brendan Thornhill councillor will propose suspension and Cllr Oliver O'Brien will second the proposal.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm going to make an order on this particular proposal and the reasons for it are as stated now: In regard to this there may be a future High Court action. There may be a future Garda year as well. And people are entitled to their

good name and reputation and two years ago on March 7th meeting 2016, planning issues were discussed and we had a representation from the planning department in regard to various claims and various things were happening in regard to the planning department who were very upset and we decided that meeting that there were procedures that go through when a complaint came in in any shape or form and these procedures are set out in part 15 of the Local Government Act 2014, namely the ethical framework for local government framework service and this is how this particular problem will be dealt with. And I am ruling on this matter in accordance withstanding order number 44. And that says the Cathaoirleach shall have power to deal with any matter not covered by standing orders. And I'm dealing with that we're not taking this suspension of standing orders. OK.

CLLR THORNHILL: I would just like to say that I think we should - I was given sworn affidavits.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm not having any discussion on this at all. There's no discussion on this, I'm ruling this is not going to be discussed at all. Right there, is a procedure for this counsellor you

are he well aware of it, well aware of it and it was agreed and I'm not taking it.

I'm not going to look, listen, we're not discussing this, I'm ruling on this, this is not going to be taken here today. Right. Not going to be taken.

And I moving on, I want to confirm minutes of the meetings Cllr Pat Fitzgerald and Cllr Gail Dunne.

MS GALLAGHER: Consider disposal of .0379 hectares of Ballinaclogh Rathnew to Mr Aubrey Armstrong as per notice previously. To consider the disposal of part of the free hold interest in the property comprised in folio WW5279F being 25 Hawthorn Road, Bray to Mr James Mulrooney and Ms Elizabeth Carroll legal represents of Mr James Mulrooney Bray County Wicklow.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Who wants to propose this, I'll and second it, Oliver O'Brien.

MS GALLAGHER: Is that agreed? Consider the disposal of part of freehold interest in property comprised folio WW5279F being 25a Hawthorn Road, Bray to Mr Rossa Murray and Deirdre Murray, 25a Hawthorn Road, Bray. Cllr John Snell propose, and seconded Cllr Nicola Lawless. Is that agreed. Thank you very much.

MS GALLAGHER: Item five to consider the disposal of .00208 hectares of Merrymeeting Rathnew, being 50 Seaview Heights, Rathnew to Mr Thomas Butler and Elaine Butler, 50 Seaview Heights, Rathnew as per notice.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr John Snell and Cllr Pat Kennedy. Cllr Gail Dunne is that agreed? Yeah.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Item six. Yeah. We're item number six. No, listen, you're item number six. We're going with that.

We're on item number six you could have asked the start of the meeting.

CLLR CULLEN: You haven't acted in a democratic way.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm on item number six. The Chief Executive's monthly report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I'll take the report as read Cathaoirleach and take any questions.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Any questions on this? Chief Executive's report? Cllr Pat Kennedy you there no.

CLLR TOMMY CULLEN: I've been in contact about the

document I received, and it is a serious document and it's referring to the issue of a certificate of compliance and planning without the full planning levies being paid in the Greystones area on residential houses. And I'm not going to go into.

CATHAOIRLEACH: This is the Chief Executive's report.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We're not taking anything that's not in the executive report.

CLLR TOMMY CULLEN: This involves a major residential development in the Greystones area, which I've been in communication with and it involves, Chairman, I have this document here and there's communications between Mr Fergal, a senior executive engineer and senior planning officer of the council. Five after the letter of complaints and there's the document there.

CLLR LAWLESS: It's on. (inaudible).

CLLR LAWLESS: Can I come in the cold winter initiative, it is an item in the Chief Executive's report and I believe it was closing down recently and we have an extension I believe for four weeks

which is fantastic, but I'm wondering, if the Chief Executive and obviously with housing as well they would actually look and speak to the minister again and see if we extend that for a further couple of weeks (INAUDIBLE - ALL SPEAK AT ONCE)

CATHAOIRLEACH: You've done your headline stuff for the day you're a bit ...

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: The cold weather ...

(INAUDIBLE DUE TO MANY PEOPLE SPEAKING AT ONCE)

CATHAOIRLEACH: People look after want to co-do council business.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: As I say it has been extended for your weeks, we'll contact department in relation to extending that and having more permanent facility in place.

CLLR LAWLESS: Sorry, I would appreciate that because obviously we're very short in emergency accommodation and that's through no fault of our own here. So, yeah, it would be very welcome if you would investigate because I believe the minister if you ask, we'll possibly get that because we would like to ensure piece people aren't out on the streets. So, thank you very much for

that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Anything else in the Chief Executive report. We're moving on. Sorry.

CLLR WALSH: Just a comment there, looking at the supply programme, 355 units that is to be welcomed at long last we're seeing social housing come on stream and things in the pipeline, like Kilmac, kill bride lane, but as I said before, Cathaoirleach there's still an overreliance on the private sector to supply our housing and we still have HAP, hope to have HAP houses for part fives rather than, a hundred more, so we're still, overreliance on the private sector, but we're making strides and that's to be welcomed. Thank you.

Cathaoirleach thorn.

CLLR THORNHILL: Go raibh maith agat I would just like to ask the Chief Executive an item in relation to Whitestown remediation, maybe he will be able to let me know or the Chamber here know the update on that situation, because it will involve a lot for the future.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll get them in now.

CLLR BLAKE: Briefly that's for the presentation,

in relation to the issue concerning the problems we have with water and waste water in the county the Chief Executive did say here in recent meetings they would convene a meeting to have this discussed. To see if we can have some level of improvements, particularly my own area, where we have significant efficiency in sewage capacity. And Dunlavin where we have water deficiency and the he would say he would convene a meeting in the near future, any update regards to that?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Anything else no. OK.

CLLR DUNNE: Thank you Chairman I just welcome the progression of interviews for last week, and this is a welcome situation, and hopefully they will be appointed as soon as possible.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Could I ask the Chief Executive in regard to the engineering system in Bray municipal authorities in regard to, is there any movement on extra engineering staff in regard to that as well.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: OK. Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

Just relation to Whitestown we have appoint a consultant to do full remediation report, that's on going, they did a top graphical survey and

appointed a contractor to do full site investigation, set up a website and liaised with the different landowners so they'll be back in September with fuel remediation plan, to bring EPA and talk to the landowners and look to set out a programme for the remediation, so that's where it is at the moment. They're involved in detailed site investigation and done a lot of investigation including water quality and river et cetera, so that's on going. Waste water and water, picture them following the last meeting and they just on the ones mentioned here hereabout road is by director water programmes, approved for funding and with design build, Ballyconnell scheme was mentioned, the it is finalise and documents is prepared, and a large percolation area required and but all that design work is done, documents being prepared, Dunn laugh sarin, significant work tonight in testing the groundwater source and they will be pushing on with that one. Discuss the issue with on terms of staff, a lot of the staff we had involved in Capital office were looking at the bigger schemes only, whereas we had maintenance staff would work on the smaller programmes. They

have difficulty getting staff, I said we'll take on staff here, we have a panel of executive engineers to work on that if they give us approval, we'll take them on if that helps the scheme. We'll get extra staff and us ago the normal maintenance staff to run with the schemes as well, so we'll keep in contact with them and keep you informed. Just in relation to the outdoor staff and engineering staff, we have done a workforce plan so the interviews are held for general operatives, we're filling vacancies and taken an extra ten over the next two years, we will have an assistant foreman working with each supervisor and taking on five apprentices and we'll have a panel then of temporary staff we can take on if various funding if they have a particular scheme, take them on for a particular purpose so looking at that, the engineering resource in the Bray area, that's something we're looking at to get the best mix so once we finalise that we'll come back on that as well.

CLLR BEHAN: You might remember in relation to Irish Water and I know the Chief Executive has referred to it there in his reply, when they had

their clinics there last month I raised the point I had submitted a request for information on a particular project in Bray, in good time as we had been asked to do, on the day in question, three employees of Irish Water looked at me if they didn't have a clue, they said about the issue of engineering staff and however, I was told on that day they would come back to me with a response, to date he was received no response. Now what that means for everybody else, I think is that Irish Water have gone off the boil now, pardon the pun, when it comes to dealing with public representatives. I think because the whole charging regime has been parked, they feel the pressure is off them, that's another pun by the way, but they feel the pressure is off at this stage and that they can basically treat public representatives in a way that is just very offhand and not serious, and while I accept the Chief Executive might have a response, as public representatives we were told this system was designed to give us feedback and allow us to raise our case. I'm asking we write to Irish Water management and we, make it very clear when we go

to the clinics and raise issues, we expect a response on the day if we do it in advance but definitely entitle today a response very quickly afterwards. CHIEF EXECUTIVE: The people were Capital office have to be at meetings as well, what you're getting is the programme staff who are not familiar with the Capital schemes, so they need to have the replies re-allied and Capital people there on the day.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll write a forceful letter.

CLLR KENNEDY: Thank you Cathaoirleach, I just want to thank the Chief Executive for the report and welcome the news of the outdoor staff and especially the apprentices as well, well done to the management team for putting that in place, I thank them for that.

CLLR FITZGERALD: Just one matter there on transportation and roads infrastructure which regard to public lighting and I know there's great work being done by Declan here but on the statistics there on hold at 16th February, 305 lights, 247, January up to 305, and then, I see, the figures there, underneath that, 293 grand totals. Is, we don't seem to be getting the number of lights, the

number of lights out of order repaired very quickly. I know myself that electricity is doing their best, but the numbers seem to be going up and up here, on hold means 305 out of order does it?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: It is about 2.5% which is in line with the rest of the country, sometimes there's spikes and depending on the time of year. It is something, I don't know if Michael Flynn is here now, it is something we're working with electricity, we're going for tender for a new supplier, but it is pretty much, 2.5% which is all over the country, it should be lower and we're working on that.

>>: The other thing is if a light goes and it is a cable issue, you then have to wait for the ESB to fix the cable. I mean, I know of lights, two lights in Avoca that's out for eight months, they're waiting on a cable to be put down, so there's other lights as well and Airtricity are there, but they're hand is behind their back there at times because it is not their problem with you there's a huge amount of lights out at the moment. Particularly in the area I know.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: We'll be retendering it, ESB networks we're stuck with, we need to have the supply, they seem to be improving but.

>>: We have a hundred new poles, but it led to a lot of people had to be rejigged again because the lights didn't work.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'll be saying this for a long time.

>>: When we get to the summer people don't complain as much, but once you get past April, people say will you put that on the sexes for me, but at the moment I name many placeness Arklow that are in darkness and outside Arklow, it needs to be rectified I want to commend Declan to in doing the things and gets things moving but it is dangerous and a lot of elderly people are seriously worried about the number of lates that's out of synch.

CLLR FOX: Thank you Chairman. Thanks to the Chief Executive for the report. Just in relation to recruitment: And in particular the law department I know our law agent that is retired and I wish him well in his retirement and we have a new replacement and I wish her well in her role, but some of the disposals that we have disposed of

earlier in the meeting, could take a number of years to sort out because of the staffing issues within the law section. I have disposals, I have one particular disposal and it is probably seven or eight years at this stage, that's been caught in the system. It is an area that needs recruitment, can I get some assurance from the Chief Executive that the legal or law department will acquire additional staff because we need to get the legal issues like disposal notices and other issues sorted out the length of time these issues are taking is not appropriate thank you Chairman.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm well aware of that as well and I talked to the Chief Executive I'll let him answer that himself

CLLR FORTUNE: It is pretty urgent we get the ESB to act I'll he a tell you why, I'm aware of a situation in my area lights have not been working for nearly over a year-and-a-half at this stage and there's no sign of it being fixed. It would be dangerous in the dark evenings we'll have dark evenings for another short while but if somebody could get on to the ESB and get them to do it,

because they don't seem to be reacting to being asked what they're asked to do. and also, there's in the, in Kilcoole the Ballycoan area there are lights installed by a developer, they never worked but I wonder under Sean's area planning section if we can put pressure on to get sorted because it is a serious problem as well because it is on the way to a school. So, it does need to be dealt with as well. I'm saying it now and Sean is listening to me. So, but it is very important.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: In relation I have a new law agent coming so we have a solicitor and two executive solicitors, we advertised for a temporary executive solicitor to deal with the backlog, there wasn't much interest so we re-advertised for permanent post, as of Friday, we have six in, so we'll have somebody to concentrate on that, so these interviews will be coming up. Lighting, we re-tendering it, and we need to talk to ESB networks that's the other part of the equation we need to speed up on.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Seven to note joint, note that.

OK. 8.

CLLR MCLOUGHLIN: Presentation by Mr M Nicholson and Cllr Grainne McLoughlin.

>>: Cllr Grainne McLoughlin will say a few Words First.

CLLR MCLOUGHLIN: Thank you Michael, I never thought I'd see the day I'd be sitting up here but anyway, when I took over the Chair from Pat Casey the LCDC were coming to grips with new responsibilities for the major development programmes in the county, along with the department, and the partnership companies were still working out the strategic and governance arrangements for each of the partners, we were all dealing with the scale of change that was going on, but we got there. And both side cap and leader are up and running and making a huge contribution to community and enterprise development in the county. This report is testament to that. In 2016, the local economic and community plan had just been completed and adopted and the implementation phase of that was just beginning, this plan, combines community and economic elements working together for the development of

the county, it is not a static plan. It is monitored and adapted every three months by the LECP advisory committee and progress report to the LCDC to development and enterprise report SPC, over the three years, the progress has been simply amazing, we have worked with major agencies delivering high quality integrated services, such as the HSE, connection for life, action plans for suicide prevention in County Wicklow and healthy Wicklow county plan, children and young people's plan and now working on a new plan. W County Wicklow food and beverage, age friendly strategy and digital strategy and others with JPC, CWP and KWETB. LCDC is developing a migrant development strategy in Wicklow, we have avenue had hugely successful meeting W ten meetings with excellent participation, and this does not include the many off site communities we had and the subgroup meetings, we have worked closely with other agencies, and especially with County Wicklow with rural and you are again regeneration such as town and village scheme, Clar, community enhancement programme, urban and rural regeneration scale, healthy Ireland fund and outdoor recreational

structural fund. We have supported the civil society in taking part in the works of LCDC and other agencies through the PPN which is strongly represented in the LCDC. This will be gone to promoting active citizenship. There is no doubt that it takes a huge commitment to be on the LCDC, the leader budget for the county is over 6 million, leaders possessing between five and ten projects per monthly meeting, it is over 40% through the Budget and still more projects are coming in. We have funded private entered prize such as Wicklow farm laws cheese, wolf brewery, fat bike adventures and hidden value holidays with Arklow and Wicklow teams, we funded community improvements such as community halls and funded local festivals. And there's a load more we're doing just not enough time to tell you here. Similarly, not project base asked bringing significant resources in the county and having a positive impact on most marginalised in the county, the annual report in front of you reports in 2018 side cap programme supported 30 community groups and 100 individuals. However, it sounds like I'm not selling it the positive impact of the LCDC is more than rewarding, the strength

of coming together to identify the issues of the county is, I believe, the most effective way of the working, Wicklow as every other county have a complex range of development structures and organisations that deliver services, while we do work together on the LCDC, there was little way of structural coordination for this work. Today, socio-economic problems are complex, the challenges that face us require integrated multiagency responses.

The focus of local government reform putting people first is about maximising the resource to improve services to our citizens. The LCDC is integral part of that, this annual report, before you, shows how much we have achieved. Finally, I would just like to say, sincere thanks to our director of services, Michael Nicholson, who has spearheaded a huge amount of work throughout all the other bits we get involved with, and all the team in here in Wicklow County Council. Some are here.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Just before I go on to Michael Nicholson, on all our behalf, I believe I'm speaking on all our behalf to sorry Grainne, to thank Grainne for the I can just say wonderful job

she's done underneath the radar in lots of cases as we all know, a huge amount of work has gone in in this particular area, and Grainne has put in a huge amount of time over the years and in a quiet type of way to deliver the types of programmes very successfully. I think it is one of the areas that we've really been successful in Wicklow County Council as well and there's a tremendous community spirit out there, and that's evidence all the time, particularly when awry Chairman of the council and go around the county and see what is happening there. And that goes, in no small at to the people Grainne has mentioned but particularly to herself, on all our behalf we'll all be sorry, Grainne's not going again, like other people, but I do feel she's made a tremendous contribution that will be there for a long number of years and thank her for on your behalf.

(APPLAUSE)

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Now follow that director.

>>: I'd like to endorse the comments you made, you certainly have a strong Chair of the LCDC, and you are a very strong Chair, and thank you for your

work. It has been a while since we did a presentation on the LCDC, so I've taken the opportunity to put together a comprehensive presentation, on all aspects of the LCDC, just to start off and say, while the general modus operandi is to build communities from the ground up, we have specific roles leader, SICAP and PPN. I'll send you the slides after the presentation. That's a background where the LCDC came from, it mentions putting people first and the relevant legislation, you can read that in your own time. So, we've 19 members, representing all the various agencies across the county and with a makes the LCDC work so well we sit around the table, we leave the baggage outside the room and we're not wearing hats at the meeting, we're working for Wicklow, and that's unique, the other thing is worth mentioning while we are a committee, we make decisions, unlike say for example the GAPC and USPCs, they send recommendations to the county council, the LCDC make decisions, that's the difference between them @ other county committees. With that comes responsibility because when you make a decision, you can sue and be sued so it comes with

responsibilities as well.

That's the main functions of the LCDC to prepare the six-year plan, in fact we're starting to work on the next plan, because the first six-year plan is complete next year. We are responsible for the community elements of the plan and work hand-in-hand with our economic SPC, who look after the economic elements of the plan, we work together and have advisory group so we're both working off the same hymn sheet and we have other responsibilities as well, which you can see this. So that in a nutshell is what the LCDC four functions are. SICAX, leader programme, local mike and pick participation network plan. A quick paragraph on receive leader is as you know has been around for a long time, it's a programme for the rural areas - now when I say rural areas the whole of Wicklow is a rural area from EU perspective, so every county is covered. Social includes programme, we have Bray area partnership for Bray and Greystones MD and County Wicklow for the other MDs. And again, I'll be dealing with more of these, local economic plan ten high level goals, 20 objectives and 130 objectives, and PPN.

So, start off with SICAP, around for a long time, delivered by 45 programme implementers, there's two in County Wicklow, most counties have one. The Bray area partnership, budget of 711,000 a year. And those two companies won the contract in 2018 to deliver SICAP for another seven years. There was a tender based process and they won the goals. The goals are to support socially disadvantaged areas, a lot of the money spent is spent on wages, it is providing training courses et cetera by the staff. Again, that's just where the legislation came from current programme is to 2022, and key aims is to engage in community development most marginalised neighbourhoods and support disadvantage in all its form, anyone who feels excluded from the society is covered under the SICAP programme. Grainne mentioned some of these, highlights from last year, 38 groups supported, 721 disadvantaged were supported.

495. They get involved in actions, a lot of public health initiatives and particularly in mental health, huge focus on mental health and adult education, early school leavers, people who have fallen out of the system and they bring them back

in through other methods. We've also focused on substance misuse as well. Now, we want a leader. A leader, apologies for the acronyms, leader is an acronym too. That's where it originated, EU funded programme, originally it was on the CAP programme, supported through European fund for rural development and delivered nationally. Again, that's just background you can read, explains what leader is. Each county has to do a local development strategy and that sets out the plan how to spend leader funds in each county during the six years of the programme. They're the seven key features of leader, that's what is called the leader approach. How project, developed locally, area-based development. The whole area of leader is it is from the community up, so groups come together make a project and make application, so it is from the ground right up as opposed to top down approach. It has been around for a long time, and been here since '92, so over 25 years, total spend before this programme of 15 million euros, 32 projects, so big impact on the county, a big funder.

And the current programme is 6.3 million. And

that's where it is broke up, the total budget for the national Budget is 250 million. So separate allocation for food, one for co-operation projects and one for the REDZ development.

A lot of players involved in leader, and it is worth noting who they all are. There's two different departments involved, and also Pobal, they act as go-between ourselves and the departments. We have local action group in the case of Wicklow and others, it is the LCDC is a local action group.

Now, interesting enough, in this programme, there's the financial partner and there's important, here before it would be the implementers would be partners, what that means if something goes wrong the book stops with us, so we carry the risk. If we pay out on a project that is deemed subsequently not to be eligible, the book falls on us. That's the first time, that was a big change in the current leader programme. We have an independent evaluation assessing all the projects, completely independent. In Wicklow, this has been done by County Wicklow partnership. And then we have the actual applicants and they come from the private or the community area. So they're all the

LCDC will act as a lag is to build capacity, to determine the direction of strategic changes, fair and transparent cry tear a we have to be careful that when we're voting on any projects as a LAG group, 50% of decision-making votes is not from the public authorities so we have to do a check to make sure we have the 54/49 split which can be difficult but we always manage it.

And we put out calls for various proposals for particular teams. The meetings themselves we have to have at least 50% quorum which is high, we have to have at least 10 people to have a meeting we've managed to have a quorum. But we've managed it, sometimes a few phone calls are made, and we get as many as we need. People have to declare conflict of interest if they have leader is tight on that, any member that has a conflict of interest has to excuse themselves from voting if they're involved in a local group they can't vote which is transparent, leaders have to sign documents not to discriminate so it is very tight and that's all because it is EU funding, no additional vote for the Chair, if it is voted on, if it doesn't get a majority it doesn't go ahead, there's no casting

vote on the Chair. There is a procedure where whereby, if we have an important decision to make and we're stuck for numbers, we can do a poll by phone, we can have someone teleconference in and make a vote. There is that, we haven't used it that often, once or twice, it's a facility we have, which again is unique to the LCDC. And financial partner, the count is a financial partner and has onus implications. Obviously we make payments and we carry all the cheques, they're called article 48 cheques, the buck stops with us, if we pay out that is deemed to be ineligible it could come back on us and we could pay the money back so it is a big onus on us to get the thing right and make sure projects adhere to all the rules. Also, with leader, someone may know, we only pay out when a project is complete, when a grant is awarded the people have to take money from bridging finance, and once severing expected and above board is only when we pay out. County Wicklow partnership take the applications in and to check them all, they constantly do calls for various teams as well, they monitor and do the initial checks on the applications and they do you will the

administration before to comes to the council. That's just a breakdown of the Budget that we have. And the various themes we have. I'll go through them in a bit more detail. There you have it there. There's the 6.3 million, only 4.77 is available for projects, the rest is administration over the five years of the project. There's 25% of budget guess on administration. The biggest fund is rural tourism and enterprise and job creation, rural towns and basic services, and so forth. That's how we break it up. And that was all done, at consultation stage when we're doing local development strategy, it was the public that wrote the LDS after weeks and weeks of consultation, so it came from the public, it is their document we're implementing. And we have loads of operating rules, we have to comply with all of the planning, heritage guidelines, national standards, else, et cetera, all the procurement law in particular, health and safety and all national law. We have some specific policies in our LDS, and we focus on those type of projects as well. Types of funding, most is for Capital works, there is a certain amount of funding that will be paid

out for marketing, training and analysis and development, but most goes on Capital works They're the levels of grant we can pay out. In some case, 50% depending, some 75, it can go to 9 a, on a um cough occasions we pay out 100% of funding, and that can be onus on some groups to get 25% matching funding. That's I suppose the project lifestyle from the very start to the finish and there's a lot of stages from the initial number one there, is the initial call, we put out, expression of interest, right the way through, article 48 checks there's several of them. By the time it gets to the payment stage really it has been checked so many times there shouldn't be a problem, there's a lot of checks along the way and that's because of the financial implications if we miss something. Then, independent evaluation committee is exactly what it says on the tin, it is independent, there's nobody involved that has any hand act or part in leader funding it is transparent and it is a thorough inspection carried out by County Wicklow partnership before they get to the LCDC, so they have been checked thoroughly, I mean, anybody who has been through the process, will know how

thorough the applications are. They're involved and supporting documentation is strong as well. Again, you have to do that because it is EU fund, they're very tight what you need to do. again, we have to take on board a lot of data protection issues, GDPR, freedom of information, conflict of interests and declaration forms signed by lag staff, and all the committees by all the staff it is all very tight. There's some issues for the independent evaluation, which they raise with us the capacity of the promoters, there is a fear some of the established groups are better placed to get leader funding and that's why they're working with smaller groups to get it across the line and animate is the word they used to animate locally to get the projects in

Again, that's our budget, 4.7 million, I suppose three main teams are there, social inclusion, and enterprise job creation. We're careful we're not grand aiding something they can grant aid, there's Leo involved with that as well. There's the three teams, broke down into minor teams as well. Again, just summary of the grants we pay out, most will be 75%, couple we will give 90ers. perspective but

most 75%. Now, where are we to date? At the end of 2018 we have paid out as you can see there, we've committed 1.7 million and 2.9 million left. We will spend that between next and the year after, loads of projects are lined up, big spenders as you probably imagine is rural tourism, we've spent a lot of money on basic services for hard-to-reach towns and enterprises development they're the three main ones and a good bit in rural towns. There's a bit of money left so if anyone knows of projects send them into the Wicklow partnership. In rural tourism I've spotted three projects we've funded, maximum is 200,000. There are projects under enterprise, we've paid out a couple of big ones, Wicklow SPCA, Wicklow Brewery and Glencree society as well. And interesting projects, a lot had jobs creating projects as well. On the rural towns we've spread is across the county, we have money going to all five MDs, various things like Taste of Wicklow, Around Ireland, Cartoon Festival, Festival of Lights all got money. Basic services, brand new playground was funded through leader, mostly with matching funding. One of our biggest we can pay more than 200,000 in

special one was 2,000 and 7,000. Low local biodiversity. They're complex so slower to come in. So, strategy for the next two years: We've almost three million left to spend, we have 1.6 project in the pipeline so they will come through this year and we've another 2 million as well that are at the preliminary stages, so, we're very confident we'll spend all our money by 2020. Again, just going to focus a little bit more on the areas of low spend, rural youth, buy co-diversity and we can move money around, if they don't come in on the headings, we can move the money to other areas as well so we will look at that, we won't lose any money. A couple of things, we launched our social end prize strategy last month, we will put in a call for shortly for: There are other leader opportunities, there are a separate allocation for food strategy and co-operation projects and money for a Blueway, for Wicklow and Wexford waterway. Progress in, six-year plan for economic LCDC, and LCDC is it inquiries all the councils existing plans into one plan and deals with anything to do with the community and the economic elements of the Copty. We have some community goals, there's a few

of them there, you can read them at your leisure. You probably know these. We have programmes, down the village, outdoor recreation and new scales and they provide money for us to advance the goal set out in the LCDC, you can see how they fit in. They were late back to the LECP which is starting to fit in and make sense. Again, we've had strategies, healthy Wicklow strategy, food and beverage, strategy of Somalia families, we fed in the region and children and young person's plan and feed into leader, so a lot of the series CAP will come from the LECP, so it is starting to group together. We have advisory group to ensure, as Grainne mentioned, LECP is fluid, it doesn't sit on the shelf for six years, every angle has been in amendment and this group meets three or four times a year to ensure everything is implemented and they are a met and members come from LCDC and Leo planning department and economic SPC as well. Again, some recent strategies we've done, a lot come from the LECP, shows it working in the community. PPN, this is my final few slides, public participation network, fabulous resource to have in the county. PPNs are been around since

2014, they used to be community forum, it is a network of community groups from all over Wicklow, we have nearly 300 at the moment in the PPN. So groups can register with the PPN by their municipal area or college grouping is the word they use in social inclusion and environmental and all the groups together form the County Wicklow PPN, three main functions to provide a structure for groups to nominate representatives, a lot of the reps are on all council committees and other committees, and they it works two ways, feed information back to the other groups as well. And the they organise workshops and various things, and make submissions on various things. They've made submissions, recently on the regional space strategy, climate Action Plan, all this sort of thing, they're good at makings presentations like that.

Why do we need one, local knowledge expertise inputted, the development of the Luas inclusion issues and local issues, and these are the kind of groups PPN are represented on all the SPCs, LCDC, joint policing committee, children's committee, you'll see them all there: Representing on all the

groups the council has.

Some committees look for nominations through the colleges for example in LCDC, we look for specific nomination for social inclusion and the environment. And then the role of representatives is to feedback and make sure they come to meetings and bring issues back to the PPN and spread widely if you send e-mail about a particular event coming up, they'll send it out, it will hit thousands of people it is a great network to have.

And they've' great work plan laid out for the next few years, get more groups involved and communication and capacity building. Why be in it? Because you're kept informed of all local government plans and decisions in your area, opportunity to be a strong collective voice and make sure you contain the number of elements miss out on anything, really every group should be in the PPN.

Now, it is 290 members, started off with 640, it has been growing steadily, target is to break 300. I think they will do that.

At the moment they're on 27 representatives on 16 committees, they made five submissions last year

and three this year, so they're getting very big on submissions. They have newsletters, e-mails, and 900 followers, take regular submissions in county wise, county newsletter makes a feature and loads of interviews and radio.

And then that's what they inform. They do funding hand book, trading fairs, nine workshops last year in particular, and obviously one-to-one support when needed. Thank you Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Michael.

CLLR MURPHY: Yeah I'd like to thank Grainne and Michael for the presentation, personally Grainne I think you've been a great chairperson, as a woman, I knew you would be strong, but it is amazing the work that it does, now I can understand why Michael's never there to answer the phone, he's constantly working there on that. I'd like to say that the LCDC, I suppose at times is difficult for the lay person to understand and it is probably been a quite a while for all of us to understand it. But I think when you see what Michael has presented here today, it just amazing work, it just reaches out to very, very many varied sections of our society and our community and rural town and villages.

And also, for me, it gives great encouragement for individuals to be part of their own community. And for businesses to be developed in that area, where they have something to services got businesses, people have got their area to see what they have, for example the likes of Knockananna and look at the links developed through all the grants, and I think some of the examples from that can be Outreach to others in the years to come. I think they the leader, the leader staff are just so encouraging, like the staff here in county council as well, but they're just fantastic to make it very simple for the lay person to go in with their ideas, that when they go in first, they may say, look it, I have a stupid idea but come out feeling absolutely that it is worthwhile project which I think needs to be encouraged. I certainly think there's one of the best positive areas of Wicklow County Council, and I'm so glad that to see the funding being streamed down again over the next year, I'm sitting here writing a few notes and I can describe it like it is like baking a cake, there's lots of ingredients but the outcome is very good. I have two questions that might be answered. One is a suggestion that

we found through the town team, that with funding coming on stream all the time, that it is very difficult for the administration in the municipal offices to reach on those and would it be maybe any way possibility of looking down the line and having a staff in each municipal district regarding just grants coming through, because it is quite an ordeal applying for these grants and also, just a question what is the changeover on the committee for that group? So well done.

CATHAOIRLEACH: There's a number of members here, so, I'll ask members to be as quick as they possibly can with regard to this

CLLR WALSH: I would like to echo your sentiments to Cllr Grainne McLoughlin I've seen her work close hand and that's done tremendous work for leader during her last term on this council, and I acknowledge that, and certainly say she will be missed going forward. Just in relation to later, I know Michael through it there, the work and benefits it product to local communities was it 36 local groups have been supported through the scheme, and it brought in both social and economic differences to the areas. When first introduced

I know there were teething problems in relation to the application process, and I want to acknowledge the great work done by the County Wicklow partnership in addressing this and the local workshops they held throughout the county and this helped to create a buy-in for leader, and that's again, been proved by the we see the projects in the pipeline at the moment, there's 1.6 million projects in the pipeline and another 2 million at preliminary stage so there's been a huge take-up, as Michael said the projects have been spread right across the county so again, congratulations to Grainne and well done to Michael on their work so far, thank you.

CLLR RUTTLE: Thank you Grainne and Michael to the presentations, I want to congratulate Grainne on all her great work in advancing these projects over all the years. Her ability to meet people and communicate with people, her phone was always available, and she was the face on other people and representatives as well so congratulations you certainly made a great mark in all you've done. And as director of County Wicklow partnership I'm

aware of the great work that is done, when you see it on screen the amount of moneys we're getting out into communities, this is real, at the coalface, bottom up thing it is fantastic what it is doing for areas. I do agree and I know why it has to be the case application system looks complicated and very convoluted and it does put people off but I would like to compliment all the staff involved here for liaising people and helping them get over this, it is wonderful to see what the staff do, and I mean, one time, years ago there was leader on its own but now this has come along, it was the only show in town and we're all working together and well done and thank you euro thank you so much from Michael and Grainne and a job all done.

CLLR SHAY CULLEN: I'd like to congratulation Grainne, I've had the pleasure in working with Grainne for the past five years and I know how passionate that is, and as a member of the committee there, I can see the work first-hand the SPC, that has been done, and huge credit to the staff. I suppose, a couple of things, the I suppose one thing I'd like to say is that the public interest @ public involvement and particularly the community groups,

town teams, district forums, and over the last number of years there's been a strong buy-in from the communities and the groups across the county and the funding that is being secured right across the county is very much efficient now, community groups are seeing the benefit of all the schemes we're looking at, town and village enhancement and community enhancement and outdoor recreation and it is giving confidence to communities to apply for funding and that's to me that's a very, very important point in all of this. We can do so much here but we need the community groups to buy into the process and I certainly think that is happening. And indeed, there's a roadshow at the moment where the committee within the council community group here within the council are meeting with groups across the county and that's proven very popular and has done for the last an number of years. I suppose the funding will you healthy Ireland enhancement schemes, the Clar, outdoor recognition creational, new strategies developed, healthy Wicklow strategy, County Wicklow food and beverage strategy, refugee integration strategy, these are all very welcome all across the county

and need to be given priority. I suppose, one point I would make on the leader programme and I hear this quite a bit speaking to community groups is, there's a nervousness about applying for leader in that the community groups feel the paperwork and the amount of time has to be put into leader tends to put a bit of concern through groups. It is something that if it was possible to make the paperwork less onerous, I think it would be welcome. Nevertheless, when you see the community groups that have been rewarded, obviously things are done right there. Rural tourism has been mentioned it is critical, we're obviously currently working on a Glendalough overall plan for the county at the moment and you know, rural tourism we're a fantastically well populated rural area from a point of view of tourism and what can be gaped through our county and I think rural tourism is 1.3 million has been allocated and that's fantastic. My final point is supporting the CCSD department, I wonder should we look at providing a project team to liaise with, the community groups and CCSD and councils officials here on applications to try and get the best applications forward? Because I feel

if we can really improve our applications, there's obviously a lot more funding available to this county and I would certainly welcome that thank you.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks Chairman. First of all, like the other speakers, I'd like to congratulate Grainne and thank her for all the work she's done, she's an extremely committed person to this project and done a fantastic job, I'd like to thank Michael for his thorough presentation. I'd like to iterate what others have said, and add other things, given there's so much money now, grants coming down the tracks and so many different areas of grants, and it really is a mind field and I don't know does any one person have a full handle on all the different streams of funding coming in? I would ask that any grants that are given to different groups in the county that you each municipal the local councillors are informed once the grants are awarded. A couple of reasons, obviously we should give us visibility of what is going on, extra information, that we might not otherwise have known, but given there's

discretionary funding now, which I was a promoter of, discretionary money in the districts we as councillors are making decisions as having a say to where money is spent. So, to make informed decisions, we should know what groups have got money, et cetera. So, I would urge that that is put in place, some kind of system, I don't whether it is done quarterly or through the Chief Executive's report, and allied to that, I have no doubt that from what reassurances I've got, there are detailed systems in place for checking and the grants application system I know myself is extremely thorough, but again, given it is public money, given that it is a lot of it is new public money, it is very important that it is all completely accounted from audit trail perspective and you see, that we get full end-to-end transparency on how the money is spent, it is a precaution to protect everyone involved in the projects. I brought this in my role in the audit committee and I believe there will be internal audit to verify the procedures and strengthen procedures if we identify weaknesses as internal audit does, it shows weaknesses and where it can

be improved. That's all to put in place to ensure everything is properly done and to protect all those people involved who you know, who obviously we all want to focus on developing. Rural Wicklow and supporting these groups. And I'm completely for that thank you.

CLLR BLAKE: Thanks Chairman I too would like to thank Michael and Grainne and wish Grainne well for the future. Leader was in Baltinglass and moved to Rathdrum and with Wicklow County Council buildings, that's a loss to the rural part of the county and there's talk at the moment of reallocating some of the work to the old courthouse in Baltinglass and I support that, and I sincerely hope the County Wicklow and partnership and council will ensure we do get that office back into Baltinglass.

I think part of the problem there is in regard to the side cap in the rural areas is difficult, particularly when you don't have a regional office and I think that's why the office in Baltinglass will be progressive in that regard. I think Michael the fact that a 50% at meetings is pointing and needs to be looked at. This is probably the

most important to me, meetings that we have in the county, probably is the most important and 50% of meet syncs somewhat disappointing in that regard. I'd advocated here for expansion of the Clar programme, I don't see it happened, it hasn't happened, Nokia nana is the only village where it operates. I see the small towns and villages in county Carlow, they're included in the Clar programme and we have to continue to pursue the department in regard to include a lot more County Wicklow in the programme. I know Michael you have attended some of the Board meetings of Wicklow partnership in the past and in view of the fact there's new members coming on to the Board recently and some are joining in the next few weeks ago well, it is important that you yourself Michael, would come back to the Board meeting in the near future and give update what is actually happening with the leader programme and all the different aspect in regards to it is important we continue to inform the Board of what is actually happening there. So, thanks very much both of you.

CLLR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Thank you. Thanks for the presentation and more so, thanks for the report,

I genuine lie enjoyed reading the report, that might sound a bit nerdy but it was full of action, everything that was there jumped out at me and then there was more and then there was more and that is to be commended, and I think when Michael talks about people coming into a room and taking off their hats metaphorically, I think that's important because in one sense it is easy to do collaboration and get people around but cohesion is a different world and get people to work together and buy into something, clearly this report shows us that has worked and I hope that is maintained, in the future. I'd like to commend how for me, and I work in the youth sector more so than everywhere else and I see young people throughout the report and I really appreciate that, and so do they, and I want to recognise that all this stuff happens and it is out there, and we get our recognition, but it channels back in here and that's important. So, we have our link person in this building, and it is important that the recognition travels all the way back. So, I really, as I say, enjoyed the report and if we could, if the people out there, heard more and more these stories and they were transmitted in a way

that's accessible, I think they maybe would appreciate a lot of work is done and should be commended so thanks.

CLLR THORNHILL: Go raibh maith agat first of all I concur with everyone has said and I would like to wish Grainne the best of luck in her retirement and like to say to Michael well done because it is until you see what is involved in all the different items, in relation to myself, I've been involved in numerous items in relation to the PPN, but there's one item there, County Wicklow older person's council, and I must say it's great to see this being promoted and last week I was in Belfast with a group and seeing how the work is being done up there in relation to community, and I think it is a great that you could see community relations being fostered between north and south and great to see what they're working there and what we can learn. In relation to Bray area partnership which I see here has been involved with a lot of participants and groups, one thing I see there is how they overachieve targets. One question I would like to ask Michael is I know a while back

there was a breakdown the PPN, the Bray area partnership in relation to the whole thing about funding and whichever, maybe he might be able to explain to me exactly what was the background to that and how are things going for the future? Go raibh maith agat.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That's it finished and Michael briefly as brief as you can. We want to move on.

Michael: There's a few questions there.

Yeah, I mean, I suppose the more work we do in CCSD, the more depend on the MD staff. But so far, we've managed to do that very well. We do have workshops, it was mentioned we're having workshops over the county where we're encouraging people to make applications and we have lined up speakers who have been through the process, so they explain how the process worked for them and that's proving to be fruitful. Changeover the committee, we'll have new LCD team and when the local elections next month we'll have new members on the LCDC and new Chair as well so that will take place after the elections. As regards the time it takes for leader application, the reason why we're having workshops is to explain people there's no real need to be

nervous, it is straightforward but you have to go through metaphorically, a lot doesn't apply to every application and those through the process, while it takes time it is very, very worthwhile because there is serious money available for those who make the applications. We don't really need project team as such, we have enough on the ground to do the applications, we did look at project team but with the staff of CWP make themselves available to go through applications and they're very well and sit down with anybody and go through an application. But something we look at certainly if we see a problem, we'll revisit that. As regards audit, up to now the local authority had no role in the audit of SICAP and that's changed this year, the local government auditor can now audit so we can be audited by the auditor ourselves and department and the EU. So, I think it is fair to say that from audit point of view things are very tight and should be no problems there.

The 50% is the quorum for meetings but we get full attendance. We need 50% but we get an awful lot more. We're good although attending all sectors. Sometimes we need to ensure we get a 49/51 split

but people do attend very well. That's all the questions that I can talk to individuals, regard to the last question with Cllr Brendan Thornhill we can talk to him privately. We have a role to oversee SICAP and leader and we take our job very seriously, if we have issues, we have no problem raising them, but I'll talk to Cllr Brendan Thornhill privately if that suits you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much and thank you for the work you have done with regard to this, it is very successful department thank you very much indeed.

Now we're into nine. Progress record from the regional spatial strategy. Head planner in this area Sorcha Walsh.

Sorcha: I hope you don't have presentation fatigue. Thank you, OK, this is the regional plan for our region, as you probably all know at this stage, we have a larger region than we ever had before so it includes Dublin counties and ourselves and Meath and Louth and well as Longford Westmeath Meath Offaly and leash. So, here's a diagram of the process, where we're at, on the right-hand-side are the various different stages

of public consultation and preparing draft plans and so on, and we're on the second last stage public Connell consultation on material amendments.

This public consultation phase is going from the 15th of March, to 12th of April, any submissions can be made to regional authority, not to be made to us. So, the assembly adopted a draft regional plan before Christmas, and invited submissions between 5th of notch, and at the time we would have given a presentation on this, we made a submission, two one from the executive and one from yourselves, they received 315 submissions in total. So, our two submissions, we'd quite a number of issues we raised, eye to the up, we raised 38 points in the executive submission and 19 in the members submission, but a lot of the points did overlap. So, the director of the Regional Assembly prepared a report on the submissions and issued it to the members of the Regional Assembly in February and had a meeting two days later. They didn't have a lot of time to consider it in the last two days, we assessed it and we, there were a number of issues we felt the regional team hadn't addressed or had hadn't addressed in the way we liked, and we

provided our assessment to the regional assembly members. After that meeting, on the 15th, the members were invited to propose motions. So, 29 valid motions were submitted including eight from our Wicklow County Council representatives which is a good proportion, so you can see how the representatives are engaged in the process. The director of the Regional Assembly did a report on the proposed motions and the full Regional Assembly considered all motions and passed some and didn't pass others. And those, agreed changes are what on public display now. Now only the changes that are material are on display, which as I'll come to later is problematic, as you know when we do development plans if any of the changes are material, we publish the whole lot even the ones that aren't material so the public can see everything and comment on everything, in this case, they've decide today only publish material amendments so there's a few amendments that haven't been published but are to be made. So, it's a bit challenging because it is a bit, there's gaps in it, but we'll do our best to get through it. This terms of the motions put forward by the County

Wicklow representatives, although we had raised 30 points when it came to that stage we realised that the director of the Regional Assembly and their team and lots of the other members weren't necessarily going to exceed every one of our requests, the representatives had to sit down and say what are our priority issues key issues, what will we put in motions for, what suggestions any chance of getting through the other members and counties so. The focus was firstly, the issue of population. As you know in the national planning framework revised population targets were given to each county but there was a sentence in the national planning framework that allowed that in certain circumstances the population growth in Bray could come out of the Dublin pot rather than the Wicklow pot. And if that were the case, then huge changes wouldn't necessarily be required to the Wicklow population targets. We had requested the regional plan sped clearly that all of Bray's growth would come out of the Dublin pot, however, I'll come to know what they decided to do in that regard, but we felt that was an important aspect to get in the regional plan. We asked for, well your

representatives asked for additional tests and objectives for Wicklow and Rathnew, particularly in regard to public transport and rail to both locations. The third item was to ensure that the list of road schemes in the regional plan reflected our desires to include N11 and M81 in there, employment there's a bias on development recurring within the M50 even Bray Wicklow and Rathnew has been designated and growth towns so we were keen to ensure there wasn't a resumption against development in those towns. Item five, was related to, there was a number of lists and tables of infrastructure and cultural heritage assets that we felt key places in Wicklow were missing and the final thing was a number of map corrections, there was a number of maps that didn't accurately represent aspects of Wicklow. So, in terms of what was the outcome of those motions that your representatives put forward? Priority one issues the population redistribution from Dublin to Bray, the regional didn't accept our proposal that would be made unequivocal the population of Bray would come out of Dublin pot, but this was what was proposed:

MASP is metropolitan regional plan. Is our concern being the timing of the agreement. So, we will be starting review process for the county development plan this year and we need to know urgently what our population allocation is going to be. In addition, it is not clear who is going to be in this MASP implementation group and what properties, and structures will be put in. So, it is pushed to later stage, to we feel we should make a submission on this aspect again. The second item, enhanced scriptive text and objectives for Bray and the asked objectives have been mostly you had considered; however, this clearly wasn't teemed to be a material amendment so it is not in the published document so we can't say exactly what text scriptive text will be used for a Wicklow, which is a bit of a problem. We did ask for objectives and texts set out that major enhancement of major rail infrastructure is needed for Wicklow and Rathnew, and this text hasn't been included, they do talk about ensuring that there's good quality public transcript but having gone as major enhancement of the rail line down the East Coast. The third item, road objectives, we had expressed

concern there's a number of road objectives in the draft regional plan that had lesser strategic value than our project so the amendment, they've kept in the N11 and N81. At one stage they wanted to take out all objectives but through members' intervention the N81 is staying in the regional plan. The issue of the sequential policy emanating out of Dublin, again, as I said, we were concerned that this, these policies would prioritise city locations over key growth towns, so, the changes the simple addition of the word "and" in the policy which ensures priority locations of the city and growth towns, it wasn't clear. So, it looks like a small change, but it is important change. With regard to green and blue infrastructure the projects listed in red there are proposed amendments, so these are assets that we wanted them to include in the regional plan, so they've agreed to make that amendment. So, you've got Wicklow Town as a maritime town, wasn't listed in the original regional plan, we didn't have lock Dan, the River Slaney, Blessington Greenway, coastal Greenway, Avondale, Baltinglass, so a number of cultural and heritage assets weren't

listed so we're happy they're proposing to put them back in. Priority issues, we had a good discussion about this about different stages from Dublin to Rosslare corridor so there was emphasis on Dublin to Belfast corridor in the report on submission did actually exceed to this, and say the plan will include new section on strategic connections, and Dublin to Rosslare corridor which is important or Wicklow but not deemed to be a material amendment because it doesn't appear in this document which is surprising because it is a whole new section and strategy that's added to this, so I suppose we will draw that to the Regional Assembly's attention and I understand some of our members will at the next meeting they have.

Some of the second priority issues were the lack of references to Wicklow generally in the regional plan. As an in of you brought that up at one of our last meetings that it is hard to distinguish between the counties and the region and assets are in and challenges in each county and we ask for there to be a clear piece, and introductory section on each county but haven't agreed to that, they think it should be regional plan without emphasis

on individual counties. There was a number of references to the IDA site under the Bray Heading, so, again, that's proposed to be removed, it will be in the Greystones section but again not in the material amendments, obviously not deemed to be significant. And inaccurate maps, there was green infrastructure map that showed green assets inaccurately in Wicklow and we asked for a number of times for it to be removed and it is now proposed to be removed entirely rather than fixed. The map of economic assets didn't show Clermont or IDA site in Bray and there's no proposed material amendment in relation to that, although the director did say Claremont will be included in the final maps. The final map was the map of areas under urban influence, this is a map that's going to have to be generated for every county, which shows what rural areas are under the influence of larger towns, because it will affect our rural housing policy going forward. In accordance with the NPF, areas under urban pressure to social and economic need play a part in rural application, if there are areas that aren't under urban pressure it is exciting and design and other criteria should be

the policy. So, we ask the regional to prepare the maps because they have the assets and data to prepare it, and they've resisted doing that, so we'll keep pushing at that one and see if we can get that from them. Employment in the MASP area, this is like earlier policies, we were concerned that the priority would always be Dublin city and inside the M50 to they have propose add new piece of text that, it says:

In earlier version it more or less excluded everything outside the M50 to now places with high quality public transport, namely Bray and Greystones but they're not precluded or second best for employment development which is important for Bray, and for the likes of IDA site in Greystones, places like that. So, the next steps are the Chief Executive making a submission, reflecting the concerns I outlined and other issues that will arise following further summaries. As you know the submission, we made wasn't from planning, but it would input from roads and development so on, so we need to analyse is from all those regards as well. We're happy to prepare a submission on your behalf like we did before but of course you're

entitle today make individual submission if you so wish. And again, just to note it is only the proposed amendments on display, and your submissions can only relate to the proposed material amendments and nothing else. They can't raise new issues or issues that aren't the subject of material amendment as you're used to with development plans.

So that's everything Cathaoirleach, happy to take questions.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Open it to the floor now.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks for a fairly thorough and summary and you're answered my questions with I is next steps at the end. You said there's gaps in that document that we, the 30, whatever, 40 page document we received, and on page 34 it refers to the N81, but the linkage from the M9 to Baltinglass and Dunn laugh sarin, is that taken out or is that a gap they didn't include that, I'm anxious we make a submission that that goes back in? And yeah, I think that's it. Was there something else, give me a secretary. OK, we can't introduce anything new at this stage. OK thanks.

CLLR FOX: Thanks Chairman, thanks Sorcha and

initially say a lot of the amendments are positive and well done to everybody who got the additional amendments in, which will benefit County Wicklow. A couple of observations: First of all, An Bord Pleanála set trends, it is disregarding county development plans. I think especially in relation to rural one-off plans, this would probably spell the end of one-off plans in the north and east of the county. Which is unfortunate. But that trend has already started with An Bord Pleanála. With the Board and in particular population distribution, we've seen a trend from the Board, where they are looking for increased densities on zoned land.

Now, if councils like this are to make core strategies or strategic decisions on where to allocate population, and if we are apportioning population to Bray or Greystones or wherever, and an Bord Pleanála come at a later stage and encourage those densities to increase, that has to influence population, distribution and population allocation. So, for example, if we zone a site for 50 houses and An Bord Pleanála encourages a hundred houses to be put on that site, really and truly what

we're doing is a waste of time. Because the Board are making the decision anyway. I'm concerned there's no place for local democracy within An Bord Pleanála's decision-making, we can't make representations on an individual basis, our county development plan has been totally and out territorial dismissed and even now, when we allocate population to a town or village in County Wicklow, it has been disregarded as well. So, for me, An Bord Pleanála lacks credibility and this is the document they move forward. We have seen them already take a lot of time making decisions on applications to the detriment in a lot of cases, if An Bord Pleanála, if something is appealed or something goes straight to the Board over a hundred house, it is take as inordinate amount of time for the Board to make a decision and surely documents like this should include time frames, if not planning legislation, certainly should. And if we take for example an appeal on the data centre in Arklow where if we have to wait twelve months for a decision, that has huge implications for strategic decisions made by a business. So, I certainly would be concerned about this document

in so far as how it will play into An Bord Pleanála's decisions and in particular the population distribution, and maybe you can give an opinion, how An Bord Pleanála increases densities how it will alter.

CLLR MATTHEWS: Thanks for the presentation and thanks for the original submission, it was a good idea to pull 32 opinions together and put it in a document. The nonmaterial amendments are immaterial amendments, are they available anywhere, is it minuted from the meeting? The second question is on MASP and I contacted Moxray about this, is this a separate document within this document and at what stage will we see this detail that, if Bray is to be included on MASP, it is important we know about that. Three three new objectives have been put in that mention Bray but probably other areas as well, there's one on place making and regeneration and public realm, and I'm glad to see that, because IDA highlighted that to this meeting importance to trying to encourage investment in towns and pray has been doing that for five years, our public realm money, discretionary fund, we've invested that totally in

public realm, objectives and it is good to see we're doing at local level is reflected at regional level. It is good to see that. Number 38 concerns me it is Luas to Bray, and just reading through documentation, I mean, it is talked about for a long time Luas was going to be Bray and always a proposal, but Luas to Bray seems to be back in the mix with Luas to Finglas and Luas to Lucan, and everybody seems to be promoting to Luas to their own particular area, so I'm concerned that the decision that was made on Metro south recently how is that going to impact on Luas to Bray? This is probably a question for the Chief Executive, we were told at presentation that and it is in the regional transport strategy, that Metro north was first, then Metro south to bridges Glen Helen and then Luas to Bray, if Metro south isn't going to proceed and put on the long finger, Luas is at capacity, how is that going to affect Luas to Bray, the members need to bring that back and have Luas to Bray moved further up the list than the scattering of proposals from every TD and councillor throughout the eastern region for a Luas and Metro for their own area. And sorry, number

39 as well there's a new objective to promote walking and psych killing and that's through all government document how much of our budget is spent on pedestrian and infrastructure, I don't need that answer now.

But if I could get that at future meeting. Just to find out where we are in the spend in that

CLLR WALSH: Comprehensive as usual. The proposed population targets and pray figure, I mean the response you're getting there, more or less there's no time line and is going to be pushed out to a later stage and obviously that's going to have implications for county development plan to be welcomed though is the fact that the

Dublin/Rosslare corridor has been a proposal which has been seen to, even though it is not material amendment and that should have positive implications on the plan, transport issues going south of Bray. The references to the IDA site in Greystones, you say there's a reference, not again a material amendment. But it might tie in there with the fact that the locations inside the M50 and mass reported indicated such as IDA site is included in that, but I take that's a positive

overall the two will link up. From our perspective, timeline-wise, what overall implications, I know it is nearly improper to say, does this have on our county development plan going forward and local area plans, I know there's a Newtown plan in the pipeline and awaiting you to address a plan for the Greystones area and that's it thanks.

CLLR BEHAN: I think counsellor fox has made the most profound contribution on this whole issue. That I have heard for a long time. And it is ironic he's coming to the end of his term as a councillor and his father was a councillor in the 70s, when that issue of one-off planning for people resident of County Wicklow, particularly in rural areas, was a subject that he highlighted and championed very successfully, for so many years followed on by his centre mill dread and himself. But what I see happening here is what, and he has point it out more clearly than I could, this whole process is removing the ability of the elected representatives in County Wicklow to set a policy, for how people in rural parts of this county are going to get planning permission in the future. It

has been taken away from An Bord Pleanála at the moment as he said rightly, it is going to provide a document and excuse for An Bord Pleanála to finish it completely. We as public representatives in Wicklow and in awful the other counties are watching this, slip away from us. Because one of the things that Sorcha said when all the documents are prepared, we're going to be drawing up a new development plan and it is going to be all subject to this particular set of plans that are now being improved. We're going to be guided in our core strategy by what is decided on in this process. Effectively it is spelling the end of local authority involvement, local representative involvement in rural planning. And for us in County Wicklow, it is effectively saying that most development for the next eight to ten years is going to happen in Dublin and not in Wicklow, even in the urban areas. And like, it is a very significant moment particularly there's election coming up next month, there's going to be 32 new councillors coming in, this will mill Tate against proper representation of the people that we're all going out to ask to give us their vote of confidence and

it is very, very serious as far as I'm concerned the people who are responsible for this, are the Government of this country, who have set this system up in the first place. And they are made up of politicians from around the country. And they are allowing the powers of local representatives to be taken away when it comes to particularly rural planning and it is a disgrace. I fully agree that what Cllr Christopher Fox said. And the other specific question, in relation to these amendments that are not considered for material. Does that mean that all of those amendments are now assumed to be included? Or are they assumed to be excluded? Or who decides that? Or is it basically something we don't to worry about now, that they're morals in the plan? Thank you.

CLLR MITCHELL: Yes, just like to come in on one point there, which was raise are raised by Cllr Stephen Matthews the decision not to put the Metro to Sandyford, is likely to delay I think the Luas coming to Bray which the LTA hope to be designed by 2027, people won't get on Luas further in, and therefore, I think they will be reluctant to expand it to Bray, and Wicklow. Now that they've actually

seem to be putting it to go somewhere else, or not to go somewhere to Sandyford, it needs to go through, it's a high-density area, as is cherry wood and as is Bray.

So, somebody in here should protest the national transcript authority about the decision which will effectively delay the Luas to Bray thank you.

Sorcha: We're finished now, and I'll be coming in after.

>>: There's a number of questions that aren't for me with regard to Luas and roads projects and so on.

But just in terms of the Luas to Bray, what we were always told was that Luas couldn't be extended to Bray beyond bridges Glen Helen until it was upgraded to Metro to bridges Glen Helen because there wouldn't be the capacity in the route between bridges Glen Helen and Ranelagh, so once was upgraded there's capacity to extend to. It is an issue that need to be looked into, now that the proposal has changed. Just going back to the beginning, the N81, as we understand this is no

amendment with regard to the N81, because in the draft regional plan one of the projects listed was the N18, including link to Dunlavin. Through the intervention, that proposal wasn't agreed so it stays as it was in the draft plan. So, it doesn't appear as far as I recall, there may be references to it in the amendments, but it is in. And it is staying in.

>>: Including the N9.

>>: Yes. With regard to Cllr Christopher Fox's points An Bord Pleanála, slightly different issue I'm here to talk about today, but, interestingly, when the national planning framework was first published and our discussions thereafter with the department, they made it very clear they weren't going to be giving us population caps and figures. That everything would be qualitative, so the quality of the development rather than the number of the units. And that would mean once land was zoned, well first we had to make sure you only zoned the best land, you didn't in each town you didn't say we need to zone enough land for a thousand units because that's what they say and you pick the best number of acres, they are their point is you zone

the right land first, if you you've zoned the right land if there's higher density that is prevailing in the town shouldn't be the issue if it is the right land and close to schools and services, perhaps extra density could be allowed, however after the national was published, last summer we received a supplementary document which gave us population caps so we have both going on at the moment so we're still in the world of caps or targets but the philosophy of the best land and getting the best out of the land so there's a dichotomy between the two, which prevails. So, look, we're going to get clarity on that, when we start to prepare our new county development plan because you're right that we put targets for each town and village, and if the bored are expecting double density on T it queues our population figure and core strategy becomes meaningless. We did seek this through the process and been seeking it from the department, but we still don't know the answer to that one yet. So hopefully it will become clearer on the next six months. As soon as siege rational plan is, maybe six months to development plan, so that's a lot of time to get some answers and I think what we'll

probably have to do straightaway is to start looking at what core strategy might look like in this new world and talking to the department and the Regional Assembly about that, well before we need to start the process of reviewing the plan so we know where we stand. In terms of nonmaterial amendments, the first director's report, report prepared in February once submissions came in, I'm not sure if they're on that website but it is an open document so you'll see for ever river submission put in, with a they proposed so there will be amendments in there, that would be the nonmaterial ones. And there's subsequent documents which are the directors response to the proposed motion, so again, I don't think any of these, there's a problem being published but I'll circulate everything I can, and you will see the nonmaterial amendments, but the nonmaterial amendment are to be taken as accepted, that they're going to be in the regional plan, so affectively the draft regional plan was adopted let's say but with only some amendments to be finally agreed, so everything that's been done to this state that is nonmaterial is going to be in the plan. The MASP,

is my understanding what we've been told is MASP is part of the regional plan so the chapter in the regional plan is the MASP, there isn't another one coming, there's MASP implementation plan, so that sets the principles so on for the MASP but there will be exercises to implement it. So, one of the things is this piece about population. And where does the population for Swords and Bray come from, which pot does it come out of it? This is MASP implementation group, we don't know whether it is officials or members or other bodies, or Irish Water or NTA, we're jet to know what that is but I'm sure on the regional standing can get clarity on that in their next few meetings. They do assure us that the right people will be on the group whatever that means. And that it will be done quickly because it has to be done quickly because a number of counties are depending on t Cllr Gerry Walsh came up about the development plan, we have 26 weeks to start the process of either varying review of the county development plan, as it's time our proposal is to review the county development plan which is to kick-start the full two year process because we'll do it next year anyway, and

there's no sense to do a variation that could take a year and once that's up to start a new development plan all over again, so it means we do a new development plan this winter which is compliant with the regional plan and national planning framework so at the latest that process will start in November, and as you recall the initial phases are the public consultation and seeking submissions so it won't be until this time next year we will be starting working on drafting a new draft plan.

So that's the time line for that, but in terms how it affects local area plans, it puts local area plans in a difficult position in local plan we might adopt this year, within two years, once the county development plan is adopted it could have different growth parameters or objectives so that is a concern, and I suppose our advice is that you know, we should not that we should try to avoid that, but if local area plans that are working and doing what they need to do, then we should wait until the county development plan is reviewed and we know what the new parameters have, so we do local area plans after the county development plan. So,

we can move through the county plan quickly if it is shorter than two years, that's great but we'll have a number of new counsellors so they may not be possible and straight after we'll start our programme of doing local area plans.

I think that's everything. Cathaoirleach

CATHAOIRLEACH: Briefly now. Cllr Sylvester Bourke, I'm disappointed about nothing was said about Irish Waters commitment to improving infrastructure. I'm thinking, like Aughrim and Avoca, we've been asking them for the last number of years to upgrade the sewage treatment plant there, and they've done nothing and to plans to, how will that sit with this plan, when we have no investment in infrastructure to allow any growth in the small villages that are crying out for growth. People are being refused planning permission. That is what I would be concerned about, it sounds great and it is very wordy, but practically what is it going to deliver for the ordinary people of the county.

Sorcha: In terms of Irish Water and providers, their investment plans are required to be consistent with the regional plan. So, anywhere

where the regional plan, identifies as a get town or any growth is required, Irish Water should be aligning their plans there. But ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: They are obliged.

>>: But the problem is approach taken in this regional plan is not to identify realms and realms of smaller settlements, even in the last regional plan with he had Bray, Greystones, Arklow, Blessington and Newtown and two tiers of towns under that, the approach this time is we have Bray and Wicklow are two key growth towns, everything else is your decision subject to complying with criteria how you designate your towns, it will be up to Irish Water then, up to us to engage with Irish Water to ensure they deliver on our core strategy as well as regional plan. The thing is we develop a plan that's consistent with the regional plan, if we don't the infrastructure providers will say you're doing a solo run here, you're doing something different, so we have to be careful and cautious and make sure we do the right things to get the right infrastructure.

CLLR BOURKE: It is surprising An Bord Pleanála

refused a planning permission because of lack of sewage infrastructure. That was sent to us last week.

CATHAOIRLEACH: In regard to this, as long as people don't get overboard about this, there's a county development plan which the members of this council are going to make in two years' time. And, it does not go into the minutiae of going down into the local villages and that, that's what a county development plan is for. And they've specifically stated that where development is expected to go that, infrastructure has to follow that development. And particularly in the major areas like Bray being in the metropolitan area that effectively there's a legal obligation of the statutory bodies to provide the necessary facilities to facilitate that particular development so, in strategic sense, but it does not go into the smaller type of areas that a county development plan, that the members of the next council are going to have to handle in regard to here, and that includes one-off rural houses and various things like that. There's a debate about that, and the rural, a lot of the rural councillors

brought this up time and time again through the other counties. When this started out, there was major problems in regard to Wicklow and population and various things like that, that the members on this committee have been able to turn it around, and bring significant advantages to Wicklow, that other counties decided to go out and down the negative route and decide today to oppose everything, and they've ended up with practically very little. Whereas Wicklow because of the fact that Bray was pushed into the metropolitan area it effectively opened up for population in regard to the rest of the county. They did indicate and we'll get clarification in regard to population and that, they did indicate certainly the person who is going into the national planning director, that he did indicate that there will be a review after a number of years with regard to how developments are coming about, and it would be based on delivery of housing within the particular areas to see which, if any or in which adjustments need to be made to improve the population area and that type of thing, whereas an area where it delivered in population, will is a possibility of more

population going into that area, like what Cllr Christopher Fox was saying more zoning and that, so there's a flexibility in that, but I'll get that clarified. The next meeting of the council is on Friday, Thursday and Friday week and then the final meeting is on the 10th of May, that's the final meeting where the adoption of this strategy will happen at that. But from Wicklow's point of view, I think there's clarity that is needed in what Sorcha is saying there, and the members will get this clarity and bring it back to the council. Could I just before, I leave, could I acknowledge the help that Sorcha and her staff in the planning department have given us, the members of the region, because we couldn't do what we've done without particular, that expertise and professional help with regard to advising us and the terminologies and various things and that, and we got way, way more help than a lot of councillors off their officials in their particular area. On all our behalf and certainly on my behalf I'd like to acknowledge and appreciate the work that particularly Sorcha as done in regard to this, your advice was necessary, and that brought us the

results that we have here today. Which I think are very beneficial to Wicklow. Thanks again.

Grand, OK. Then we're on to ten now the water framework. And I want to finish the agenda today with your co-operation, I want to get into the notice of motion and clear them today if that's possible. Thank you.

Tomorrow: Good afternoon, I have a presentation for you on the water framework directive and the water quality in County Wicklow. So, it covers rivers, lakes, groundwater, rivers and coastal water and for example, in a river, what does good status mean? That, and also, looking at the river employee, and the whether that's supports the aquatic life and habitat in our rivers and lakes. We're on the stage of the second plan now. It says we're in our current plan at present with engage with local community to see what their ...

The first plan, this is where we stood in terms of whether we met the criteria or not:

(comfort break).

...This is an example, Kilcoole Tidy Towns were undertaking water community project. It is a

small amount of funding, but they were successful and the closing date for this year that is passed and hopefully we'll see more applications for funding, it the funding ranges from 5-15 to 25,000, and it is capped at 180,000. Sustainable uplands agricultural environment scheme, this was the first of its type in Ireland and it received a fund of 1.95 million. The key objective is over the five-year project is to address the complex agricultural and environment and socio-economic challenges that face land management in the uplands, and also in the areas of Wicklow. So, what have we been doing Wicklow County Council, we have been involved in public engagement, we met with those community-led projects, the Suas Rivers Trust, and also, the updating yourselves in terms of progress has been made. And in terms of implementation, what we'll continue to do is to co-ordinated through the operation and management committees, and we continue to take our samples in order to engage the progress that's been made. There will be local catchment assessments, farm surveys, licensing, of waste water discharges, septic tank surveys and monitoring, all this work

will continue

You no in the priority assessment area, catchment team to identify the reason for the low quality, taking on board the outcome of their assessments, and refer to the matter to the local authority under local RD public authority responsible for the measure that maybe acquired, whether it is forestry service or EPA or others. And the EPA will assess the worthwhile state suss on rolling period of three years to show improvement hope fly by 2021. These are some of the benefit of high and good quart quality. Protect our drinking water supplies unless treatment may be required, promotes Ireland's green image. And attacks environmental conscious tourism and industry. And added value to our exports, and it meets requirements wealth framework directive. There's are trends we see more recently in 2017, we drill down into those and it shows there's still a decline in the status of our rivers, 3% decline which leaves it at 44% are on that, unsatisfactory condition. Our high-status rivers with pristine waters in the uplands, we continue to lose those rivers, and it is important that we maintain those.

On a positive note there's reduction in river bodies classified as bad quality. Up to from, recently in 2014-2017, they've dropped to two sites.

This is a trend over the last 30 years, we go up and down these terms of percentage, rivers at unsatisfactory condition. But what we need to achieve is a sustained downward trend and that's the object of this new initiative of the local authority programmes office who identify why this trend is happening. And try to understand why it's working or why it's happening and put in appropriate measures to protect and improve.

So nationally, the future focus is going to be on point sources and more effort is required in terms of the diffuse sources. So in 2016, biological surveys that were carried out on the EPA, three-year river cycle, show improvements and obviously when you have more improvements than disimprovements, and even the same catchments, both the Slaney and Liffey we can see it there, so we have a lot of our water bodies going from moderate status to good status, and in terms of a decline, we see it is going from good status to

moderate status and for example, in the Liffey, Lemontown Stream it goes from high down to good and that's not permitted even though it is still good, you have to protect existing water quality. So, this is our focus over the next three years, basically assisting the catchment scientist, and community water officers, and we'll be carrying out local assessments outside the priority areas, to help achieve the overall aims of water framework directive. We'll continue with our sample of rivers and lakes, and septic tank inspections, farm surveys, licensing, discharge, and monitoring private water supplies, bathing waters and investigation of pollution complaints. And also, to report on planning applications for an environmental point of view. The lastly, just to finish up, there was a query on the Avoca mines at last presentation, given

MYRA: Colleague Jonathan sex ton, and the department responsible for the mines, they have made some progress in terms of health and safety issues, which have an impact on water quality. And small be it. But they've capped the spoil heaps and reclaimed the Ore bins and mine audits have been

remediated but still more work to be done. This is at a very initial stage, but it is still on the agenda and thank you all.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you again from Cllr Stephen Matthews you want to come in there.

Briefly.

CLLR MATTHEWS: I'll be very brief, could I just ask Tom is it true agricultural run-off and municipal waste discharges sincere the two biggest contributors to water pollution at the moment, and we're unlikely unless there's changes in intensive agricultural practices and investment in waste water treatment plants. We're aware of the impact current agricultural practices is having on climate emissions but it is really badly affected our water quality as well. Thank you.

CLLR BLAKE: You mention the aspect in regards to the farmer and level of pollution, I know farmers are making big impacts in terms of their improvements in collecting farm waste and so forth to ensure that no discharges are going in the river, but you mentioned the fact there's grants out there, and I know we were doing inspections in the past as well, and what level of inspections are

being carried out and what level of grants are being given out to one-off houses or farming communities with regards to improvements? Secondly, it mightn't be directly related to you but aspect that leads on is the sea farm programme, and the consequences of their actions in where they have restricted planning, and drawn a map around particular rivers and said they were prone to flooding, even though local people there, people in the area have said it never flooded yet because of the fact that a map drawn around them, people can't get planning permission, even close to villages as well, that we can't develop, whether it be one-off off houses or villages as well, they can't take place because of the sea farm proposals, it is all linked together but may not be linked to our programme, but it is part of it.

Thanks.

CLLR WHITMORE: Thank you Chair. Tom thank you for the presentation, and just want to acknowledge the work that yourself and Jonathan and the rest of the team do in this area, but it is very difficult because I feel that a lot of the time you're firefighting and it is very difficult for you to

get to the very much proactive aspect of what you'd like to do, so it is good there are positive developments that you have, started up and between that @ project of the community group such as Wicklow rivers trust, that that actually will mean there will be more positive activity done on the ground that may help and assist with seeing a better picture from water quality perspective but thank you for the presentation.

Tom: Yes, I suppose with the county council don't give out grants but they're still available, provided they're qualified the applicants qualify.

In relation to sea farms it is an issue for ourselves. But the department will continue to give out grants for farmers should they qualify.

In terms of the issues and pressures, they're reflected by the land use and populated areas you're going to have urban waste water being a particular issue, and more rural areas, agricultural is more

An issue and upland areas forestry more of an issue, so it depends on the situation and the catchment area.

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK with regard to Mark Devereaux will answer with regard to sea farms.

Mark: First of all, the OPW manage the sea farms process and they've had extensive consultation with ourselves, and the public in the areas affected. And there's opportunities for people to comment on or to add to the body of knowledge that led to the adoption of sea farms, that's the first thing, second thing it is guidance, so developers are people wishing to do developments where the sea farms have different a status to the area, they're open to do a flood risk assessment and delve into the local knowledge, to people have come to me in recent terms and it is a cyclical process, the OPW launched cycle two of and there will a further round of consultation on that, and there will be further expansion of the areas examined under that, and there will be opportunities under the OPWs, minor works programme to carry out improvements if improvements are available. So, it is not an open and shut case, think I as councillor suggested but anybody who has against T contact OPW themselves near the trim office or local concerns I'll have

a look at them.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Tom and Mark thank you very much for that. We're moving on to correspondence.

CLLR LAWLESS: Can we have the presentation.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That's fine, that's no problem we'll do that yeah. We're on to correspondence now.

MS GALLAGHER: Yes, members were circulated with a polling day order for the local elections, on the 2

Th of March as you know the polls and local elections will be held on the 24th of May, for a period from 7am until 10pm. Cathaoirleach that's exciting news for everyone.

Most people anyway! We're going into that's the find correspondence, we're doing notice of motion at 4.30 and then I'll take suspension standing orders.

>>: Notice of with name of Cllr Jennifer Whitmore that Wicklow County Council install a network of water fountains and bottle refill stations across each minis pal district to help reduce the use of single use packages, such as plays it can water

bottles. Greystones have installed a Killincarrig road, Wicklow MD have concerns about vandalism and soiling of tap but again, supporting it. Arklow MD will consider purchasing installing network of refill space stations if funding is, I had provided for same, and Bray, supports the similar to the scheme introduced to the UK earlier this year, refill Ireland is voluntary environmental project that's promoting refill stations in businesses throughout the country, refill dot IE provides a map to all refill stations in the country.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Maybe amalgamate that and item number three which is similar. If that's agreeable.

MS GALLAGHER: This motion is in the names of Cllr Nicola Lawless and Cllr Mary McDonald council recognise feasibility of installing drinking water fountains in areas within the county that have high volumes of foot fall, this ensures improved access to drinking water and there be reduced plays it can waste of bottled water. The environmental office says that office installed bolt refill stations in three and is due to install one more in Arklow, this

project is funded as none centralisation project under local authority prevention network and aims to address the shift in drinks culture to reusable bottles to it goes on to talk about schools offers scope to engage the public more deeply in changing attitudes and may have your on waste that can be achieved through again public campaigns. Other local authorities have installed refill stations in public places and public buildings with LAPN funding, concern has been expressed about maintenance and sanitation required in fountains in open spaces and this should be considered prior to installation. They're lengthy.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Give a copy everybody, that's agreeable. Thank you.

CLLR WHITMORE: Just for a second. It is a good opportunity for Wicklow to lead on this, no other county has a county-wide initiative, a few counties have put them in here and there, but it is a good idea to lead.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Grand. Number two.

MS GALLAGHER: This is the names of Cllr Nicola Lawless, Cllr O'Brien and Cllr Mary McDonald, but this council recognises the landmark decision in

the European Parliament when MEPs voted overwhelmingly in favour of an EU wide ban on single use plastics in all county council buildings in county and Wicklow and any funded functions within three months of passing motion. So, there is a response to this: And again, it is coming from the CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll send out that response, it is lengthy to read out.

MS GALLAGHER: It is two paragraphs: It is lengthy it is a full A4 page.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll send that out.

MS GALLAGHER: It gives the background and challenges, it is a priority for the county canteen that it should use reusable and as a result plastic cutlery not feature, there will be more challenges, in we'll say monitoring that or banning it for council funded function that is are provided by outside agencies, but the thrust of it is ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Positive.

MS GALLAGHER: I'll send it to all members.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That's grand, we'll correct that.

Moving on to four.

MS GALLAGHER: Notice of motion number four in the names of Cllr Nicola Lawless, Dermot O'Brien and Cllr Mary McDonald - Reads out Motion - it gives background to 17 sustainable goals which covers all the work of work of Wicklow County Council, and I'll cut to the last paragraph, will I? Local government has a crucial role to play in translating national policies into tangible practical actions, it is anticipated that Wicklow County Council will add to its existing work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through structures such as the local community development committee, strategic policy committees, public participation networks and development plans and local and economic community plans. I'll circulate this.

CLLR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Just to at this stage, maybe to again with the new council that we get someone that it is the blueprint for save the world and I think when the new council comes in, that would be ...

MS GALLAGHER: Climate Action Plan will be on the agenda next month.

CATHAOIRLEACH: It is on the end of the month that's on. Yeah right OK.

Councillor, five, I'm going to finish the three motions, before getting to - I'm going to finish the three motions, then that's it finished.

MS GALLAGHER: From the motion of five ... (reads out motion 5)

CLLR KAVANAGH: Yeah, I would as outlined they have a campaign where they're trying to highlight issues for women suffering from cervical cancer, full disclosure and proper starting and start date to the disclosure of 1800 smears to be audited and problems that have arisen as a result of the incorrect diagnosis which lead to the early death of a number of women. Too so, I said I would bring it, it has been passed by over 25 councils in the country to date, we're one of the later councils to bring it up, Dublin, Galway, Donegal, Limerick, Kerry, Monday happen, Waterford, Westmeath, Sligo, Mayo, Cork City have passed this motion, so if I could pass this:

CATHAOIRLEACH: I want to second that, is that agreed? OK. Grand.

That's agreed thank you.

MS GALLAGHER: Moving on to motion number six:

(reads out Motion 6)

CLLR THORNHILL: Yeah thanks very much. May I first of all say this is not a motion which some people might get the impression that I'm against people who are on the council for years. There are many years on this council, but you see, OK, there are many members on this council who have a long continuous service, right. Now this is the way it is, we can't do anything about that, that's the way it is at the moment. But thinking behind this motion is that in the future policy should be introduced whereas people who are council members, should be limited to 15 years.

Then, a break. And if they go forward then and get re-elected well and good. Few look at other areas, I mean after all you only do two terms in the presidential election right. When people are in the council for years, they can lose interest and

be complacent.

This also would give more people new people in getting involved. And in private industry for example emphasis always placed on freshness and turnover. When people are a long time in an elected role, they can sometimes become overfamiliar.

Familiarity breeds contempt. And this can lead to an awful lot. It can lead on to nepotism and can lead to dynasties, overall, I would like to hear from other members as I think this proposal should be given that people should think about this, because, at the end of the day it is not a negative thing. I'm thinking of the overall thing because I know that over the years people said to me, now people - I stress, not against people and there are people here that have been members for years and years, but sometimes as I just said there, it is stress the importance of freshness, and vision, and if you're there for years and years, which has happened in an awful lot of roles throughout the country. I know that, in one organisation, there's one individual he's been expect for years and years, but I'm just thinking there's a

turnover. And it gives people a chance to get involved.

And I think that it should be put to the members whatever they want to vote. But it is something that I always thought about.

CLLR MCLOUGHLIN: I disagree, it is impossible to become a councillor when you're very young if you're lucky if you're a woman and try to have children, it is impossible, if you get experience, what Cllr Brendan Thornhill is proposing you have leave, I cannot imagine what chaos would ensue if councils brought this in, it is a daft idea.

CLLR CULLEN: I concur can Cllr Grainne McLoughlin, the first thing I'd say is we're losing some very good members who are not seeking re-election for the next term.

And at the end of the day experience in this job is in my opinion essential. And you know, I would be delighted to see some of the members who are not seeking re-election to be back here in for the next term but obviously that's the way it is. But, you know, it is very difficult at the moment to encourage young energetic people to run for

election for many reasons. I suppose, first you know, it is hard to be a full-time councillor when you have a full-time job, it is all earning time, but certainly I would like to see if someone has energy and interest and making difference, I wouldn't see a reason for them to stand down after three terms. I'd go as far to say there's quite a few retired people that have joined the council and you know, we certainly don't want to turn this Chamber into a retirement home, but I would be off the view if somebody is of sound health and mind and willing to make a difference for their community, I think they should be encouraged to participate and be Wicklow County Council.

CLLR WHITMORE: Any council the better the balance on a council the better it is for a democracy. So, there's a balance between men and women, people who have a lot of experience and people who are new to the job, people with disabilities, and you know, people who don't, so that is what we should be looking for and that's what will give us the best democracy we can have and ultimately, it is the public who will decide whether or not they believe their public representatives after three terms

have lost their vision or their energy or their interest. Because, they are the ones who will vote people in and I think rather than us deciding that after three terms someone is sort of shall we put out to pasture, the public will vote as to who they feel is their best representative. So, I can't, I wouldn't be able to agree with that motion at all.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Could we have agreement if necessary, to go to 5.15pm, including suspension orders, but I don't think we will need to do that.

CLLR RUTTLE: Thank you very much.

Look, I'll be one of the fellas around a long time. I think that Cllr Pat Doran and myself are the last of the 85-91 council, I echo what Cllr Jennifer Whitmore said it is a decision of the people. And everyone has a right to put their name forward and it is a decision of the people whether they elect you or not. I certainly wouldn't like to be terminated 15 years ago, but I don't know, looking around me, sometimes it might be better if I did. It is not the in the spirit of it, you only go forward, you don't elect yourself, other people elect you and so I wouldn't see any situation like that, it's a free public evaluation system,

probably the biggest job interview you could go for, and you know, I couldn't see how we limit the amount of time that anyone can get in their stride doing a lot of good perhaps, and then you're gone and go for five years and get yourself relented again. I don't see any value in that at all. So, I wouldn't be in support of the motion at all.

CLLR DUNNE: Thank you Chairman. Like a lot of the members, I agree that it will be the public that will make the decision in seven weeks' time and they'll decide whether it is one term or four or five terms as this goes on, some people might get one term, following their performances in the council, and if you have done your job, yeah you will get a second, third, fourth term, so I couldn't agree with that motion.

CLLR O'BRIEN: I thought he was saying a break, he said serve fifteen years and then take a break, I know there might be a guy mad get in and get the nod, but the other has control of the system and there's no fresh blood coming in and they're only coming in for one break and then go back in, I don't think it is a bad idea and I accept what people are

saying the people make the decision in the end but he mentioned dynasties as well and we've had a lot of them in our country that haven't gone well and he is suggesting a fresh why, he is not suggesting a total overthrow or change, but a break after fifteen years, and I don't see anything wrong in that, if they can't do it in fifteen years, they can't do it.

CLLR BEHAN: People having served a councillor have to defend their record, they have a bigger Chancellor edge, as a new councillor you don't have a record to defend, you're making commitment you're going to work for the piment. If you get re-elected, having served as a councillor, that's the challenge, if people decide to elect you, that's means they want you there, because of your record. The other point I'd make, which is a more immediate problem, and it is something that has been raised time and time again, and I think it continues to be a problem, one of the biggest disincentives of people running for election in my opinion is people who have 9-5 job who cannot make meetings during the day time. In other local authorities, particularly in Dublin, they have

meetings at night. And it is wiping out an entire group of people who have to work normal business hours, they cannot run for election, because they're restricted in how they would be able to do their job. And I think, obviously it would be a matter for the new council, on the last one, when this began it was 2014, I proposed or Cllr John Ryan proposed and I seconded it, meetings times should be moved to 6.30 to allow others the opportunity to serve if that's what the people want them to do. And, hopefully whoever gets elected to the next council, will take that up again. Because I think it is very important.

CLLR FITZGERALD: I thought it was adjoining, I thought I was reading a fairy tale when I see it. I'm one of the ones that couldn't go for the county council, I could have gone in 2004 but had a young family and whatever else, and I decided I was elect today go in 2009, and got elected and I've every intention of going in 2019. And, you said it, I didn't say in a, but the fact is that the people will decide. That's stupid thing to putted down on an agenda. We're getting like, halts pictorial weekly with that, you must be thinking at night,

something to make up and put on the agenda. Will you cop on to yourself, the people will decide who or when we're to come off the, when we are not councillors and that's t not you with a bloody hairy fairy, I couldn't believe it when I see tax-payers it is ridiculous, I have to say, it is totally waste of time talking about it to be honest for, I'm not for t

CATHAOIRLEACH: From my point of view, not the longest on the council, but came in 198 a, and I've seen a lot of people coming and going, and actually I seen a lot of people coming and going after five years. That they couldn't stand the job, that didn't do the job and they didn't, stand again, if they stood again they didn't get elected because they didn't do a job, they came in to a certain job and didn't do it, I remember talking to an official, even from the first few weeks that you have new members in the Chamber, you can nearly pick out the people that will actually last longer than five years, because they want to do something for the community and you can know people who actually haven't really settled in and not capable, absolutely not capable of doing the job they were

elected as well. At the end of the day, what everyone says, the people always have the say and the people are always right.

Whether we like it or not, statements we do, sometimes we don't, you always, everyone loves to be loved. I didn't know anyone that doesn't like to be, and particularly at election time, everyone loves to be loved. But, to say that, say that, probably three quarters of this council shouldn't be there, because they're there fifteen years or longer, to say the least, that's a huge amount of experience that the council have. The council's always about, and always about balance.

The balance between political parties, the balance between individuals, the balance between different particular points of view as well. And different age groups as well. In regard to that. And, good councils have a good balance of political thinking, and ages and genders and various things like that. And certainly, anything that would disrupt that and disrupt member of the public, voting for two they ever want to do has to be not a good thing that we live in the democracy, we live and die by democracy, we go up hoping we will get elected but we all accept

the fact that we don't make it, and are delighted if we do as well, so really and truly, certain councillor who I'm not going to name, says to me, a month ago when he seen this, he said that if Cllr Brendan Thornhill reduced that from 15 to five he'd vote for it. But listen, I don't think there's appetite for this going further. I'll let you in because it is your proposal.

CLLR THORNHILL: OK thanks Cathaoirleach, Cathaoirleach, I'm not overall surprised at the reaction. But I would like to go back to what clown owe prion said, I didn't say, and as Grainne said about ageism, I have no problem with people, all I said was a break. A break, all I said was that a person, people would be for 15 years and then there would be a break and then if people get re-elected so I mean, the thing about it is, and I gave about private industry how of emphasis is on fresh turnover and freshness and vision, if people are there year in and year out, and I have seen it, now, I like councillor Fitzgerald as well, I couldn't go into the council myself because I was in the Garda Siochana, so I had to go in at a later

stage as well, but after five years, and if you see people going through the same thing for 30 years whichever, so I think, as someone said to me, fifteen years, five years and get elected, five years to get bedded in, and then five years to polish off and as councillor O'Brien said if you can't do it within fifteen years, and then a break, I am I'm not against, I would like to emphasise that.

CLLR MURPHY: I came in too late. I just want to say that, it is like with your other private employment, this employment, what we sit here, we're in the public eye 24/7 we are, and I mean, it is the public's choice, and we can't hide from that. But nobody is going to tell me personally that what I can give up and when I can give up. I won't be dictated like that. I think that is just exactly what you're saying, you're saying fifteen years is up, get out.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm moving on, so there's no appropriate title for that among the members. Final one seven. And then I'm going on to the suspension standing orders.

MS GALLAGHER: Notice of motion number seven:

(reads out Motion 7)

CLLR MURPHY: Thanks for that.

This is a group that as is fine explanatory, adoptee identity rights group which was formed September 2018. This is to create awareness of the social and health challenges that is faced every day by people who are adopted and to lobby for allow access to seek their own information on health, heritage and history. As we see all of us and see many programmes on the rights or lack of rights for people who are dropped, they have no rights to get their history or anything from the post. Irish adoptees have no automatic rights for their own information. They have no ownership of their own identity. And this is towards international norms, medical best practice and right of other Irish citizens, and this is really what they want to do, is that they want to send a letter to minister ...

What's her name Sapone. Who is supportive of this, and this is something that a lot of people need to aware, public awareness and give them a voice, so, I would appreciate some support on this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'll second that. Agreed. Mary Kavanagh seconded that. We're on to suspension of standing orders, can I apologise Cllr Walsh, we've plenty of time now.

CLLR WALSH: Thank you to give background to this, I was prompted to make this application after contacted by a number of small business owners in recent days who received their proposed evaluation certificates from the evaluation authority in the last week or so, in some cases, in a lot of cases in the area I represented the Greystones area the bills were doubled and created confusion to say the least, and you know, acted as a bombshell actually when they saw the final figure. And you know, Wicklow, I think it has been the last county to be revalued, I know this is going across the country, last to be revalued and some cases, in some properties, maybe last re-evaluation is done up to 40 years ago so hence the difference in rates. As business owners points out to me, this is coming at a time when they're come be back on their feet after downturn and tremendous amount of work on their behalf, they're hit with the increase in VAT and those who is employees you have wage increase,

and then he was the added threat of on-line shopping and also in some cases, the threat of hard Brexit which is becoming real now. So, lots of things going on there. As I said earlier, we have walk in advice clinics and there was one in our area as well, last Wednesday this, coincided with the time where people were getting these letters, and you know, hadn't time to absorb or digest the information in them, and as also pointed out the point the clinic was in the day during working hours didn't give opportunity to attend, those who did attend weren't satisfied with the advice they were getting from the people there. And a lot of the advice, referred them back to Wicklow County Council, which I don't think would be correct. Well, so, what I would like to propose here after hearing from the directors is, we extend the clinics and have a rerun of them in the same areas, and if possible, have an evening one. With people there that can go through the proposals with the clients.

And advise them accordingly. And also, there's a 40-day appeal process there for people to make representations on their valuations and that's

from the date of the actual letter which in a lot of cases was 15th of March, I spoke to people who didn't get the letters until after the tot, so they're eating into the 40-day period, so again, I don't know whether I would like to explore the option of extending the 40 of day period and also one last point - I know one person who had their rates, increased in the value of circuits 6,000 Euro and they were saying to absorb this huge increase in the first year is going to prove difficult, so again the question was asked could this, or any increase for that matter, be absorbed over a period of time, rather than having this, face this hit straight off. I know it isn't coming into effect in January 2020, but that's not too far away. They're the main points I want to make in relation to the request thank you.

>>: When you read the, you got this bill or whatever you want to call it not of the occupier and there was a proposed valuation on it of saying 5,000, it wasn't clear, and I understand from talking to Brian this morning, you were multiplying by 228, I had a chap up to my door, 14,400, and if

you multiply that by 0.228 it is 3,200 which was increase. But the fact this evaluation, Wicklow County Council, as pointed out by the people down there, get the same money from rates as they would have under the old set up. And, but, I know it is difficult, you couldn't have 0.228 on the letter that went out but it caused huge problems, I was here in Wicklow County Council and there was a queue of people waiting to see in the evaluation office I found that disturbing, those people were waiting and waiting, I think there should be more clinics to be honest. I have concerns about the valuation system, they went around, they looked at the properties, some of them but only done as I understand it, a percentage of the properties and valuation was agreed for the properties. So that valuation in my opinion, in some cases, would not be right to be quite honest about it, but the fact is that, then the other one also goes up and some will come down, there were people whose rates have come down and they're delighted. Right. But the ones who went up, some of them were excessive to be honest, I have I've seen some, some went up a couple of hundred percent and I just think it

is very, it needs to be looked at because a lot of people have issues and they weren't satisfied with the clinics held in Arklow last week, so we should ask for extension or for a further on that 40 days, and let people, let it be explained to people, the valuation process and everything that goes with it so, I just 0.228, that should be told by someone, to get the bottom line figure, and that may have allayed disturbance and annoyance to some shopkeepers.

CLLR MITCHELL: Notice they are complicated, and I'm sure the information was simple and available, what was on rates and assumed number 0.30228 or whatever it was, and that number should be put on the form. I got a sample from the office and that number didn't seem to be anywhere on the form, and people seem to think they've gone up four times the rates, so, I would advise any business, who is very concerned about a large increase to go to rates consultant and get their case argued.

CLLR WHITMORE: Yeah thanks very much. Just thank Gerry for bringing this motion, there's confusion out there, I've been contacted by some businesses

as well, and people are quite worried about it. So I would absolutely support the extension of the time frame for the 40 days, because it has taken people you know, a week to really understand what is going on, I think it is important that we seek that extension, I know there are extra meetings called, I'm not sure whether the dates for those are available for those yet. As a council, we need to get the message out there, this is not a council initiative. The one thing I see everywhere is the councillor putting up the rates, and we need to get the message out this, is a national programme, that the council isn't going to get additional funding from this. And I think that's something we need to get out as quickly as possibility

CLLR DUNNE: Yeah like a lot of other councillors I've been contacted by a number of chaps in Wicklow Town and last Saturday week I went around to each and every one of them, what we found was that the0.228 they didn't know how to work it in their rate, some stories are horrendous, one person has 14,000 euros rates and now it is gone up to 40,000 in a yard so he can't believe it he's talking about

closing his business, he can't

CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes on with that sort of hit, I understand that, the clinics, while they were good they were held at the wrong time, most of the small owners of shops around Wicklow Town especially around the area, they found it very difficult to get in during the day, they can't hire somebody in to look after a shop for a day so what we really need is evening clinics that give them the opportunities for people to extend the opportunity to go in and see what they are actual rates are. There is an appeal process, people have to look at that, and understand that, I don't know if they understand it, the valuation of things, Cllr Jennifer Whitmore is dead right, there's a feeling out there that the councillors have done this, and it is not, the Valuation Office and that's needs to be addressed by some sort of statement from the council.

CLLR KAVANAGH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Sorry I just wanted to say that like Cllr Gail Dunne and a number of councillors around the Chamber I was contacted by a number of people who are absolutely in panic stations. And confusion is reigning

supreme, and if we're not careful there's going to be a mutiny because an awful lot of people are now talking about holding meetings, they're inviting councillors and people along, and if we don't handle this properly, I fear there could be a non-payment of rates if we don't deal with this properly. As by eliminating the confusion, if people haven't been factoring in the 0.228 in equations that's one thing, but in some cases people are telling me they've had a 50% increase, I work in Bray, and our rates actually went up very little by comparison, it was almost identical so I thought these people were losing the plot a little bit, but in actual fact some people based on the revaluations of properties down around here, that haven't been done for donkeys years have a genuine increase of 50% and I don't know about other people, but they have businesses people working I grew up in a small family business, and I know that it is very, very hard at times to keep your head above water and something like rates, which used to provide service charges, and provide bin collections, and water, it used to provide all these things, is now just a tax on business, there's

nothing given in return for rates like there used to be, they still have to pay for their revenues to be collected and pay for year water and pay for their staff, they have to pay rates before they even make one cent profit. Now, in the private sector, you pay this can tax on your profit. So, if you don't make profit you don't pay income tax this is a very, unfair tax. I think it has been ill thought out, it is railroaded through, and in one foul swoop, a big concrete block landed on top of people, they need this like they need a hole in the head. So am people are talking about having to close their businesses down. So, we either have to clarify people who have confused ...

OK all right.

CLLR RUTTLE: Just quickly, yeah, like other people, I have been approached by number of small businesses, and they were shocked at what's happened, some cases they feel rates have been doubled and business can be borderline already and some businesses are very important to the fabric of Wicklow. We need clarification and probably extension, that's all I want to say, but I'm very concerned over it.

BRIAN: Thanks. I'll answer the questions as best I can, from the outset, and it has been pointed out by a number of people, just to make it clear, this is entirely an exercise carried out by the Valuation Office rather than Wicklow County Council, and while we collect the rates we do not set the valuations and we have avenue no input into the valuations and or how they're determined, so I suppose, that's something we want to make crystal clear and the fact that this is a revenue-neutral exercise, there's is absolutely no cent, extra cent generated to Wicklow County Council as part of this process. There's increase, individual increases and individual decreases but the bottom line stays the same.

Just regarding point of information, I just got statistics from the Valuation Office today, and in County Wicklow the initial information that they have this relation to increases decreases approximately 56% of rate payers had a reduction, in the county, 41% increases and 3% there was no change. So that would be in line with the norm across previous valuable 500 ways that have taken

place across the country. There are seven other counties that are undergoing the exact same revaluation process as we speak. They would have had their certificates issued all at the same time, so it is not just Wicklow this is happening too to. In relation to the specific queries raised the phasing in that would require change in legislation, whereby any increase would be phased in over a number of years because the legislation states that the valuation takes place on the first of January the following year. Also, there would be an issue in that regard as regards the people who received reductions, obviously wouldn't want their reductions phased in over a number of years, because it has to balance out, but I'm told that a change to this legislation would be required to have a phasing in of any increases. The appeal period of 40 days was raised by a number of people - that is also included in the valuation act so would also require a change in legislation. Unfortunately I've raised this issue with the Valuation Office based on discussions already with a number of councillors, and they've said that's not possible, due to a requirement of change in legislation, but

they have pointed out there is still over three weeks left in order to complete the evaluation, so it is important that councillors get across the message to all rate payers to contact the Valuation Office, if they're dissatisfied with the valuation, if they don't understand it, or feel it is incorrect. The only way they will be able to address it, is contacting them directly, applying on-line or getting a hard copy application form in order to make a representation, but the key thing is it has to be evidence-based appeal. You can't appeal and say, my rates are too high I don't want to pay them, there has to be proof in the rental value that is on the certificate is incorrect, based on evidence they can show whether it's rental they are paying, whether it's rental that are similar business and premises is paying based on information, Valuation Office, get information from the property services regulatory authority. There's a commercial lease register there, there's information there, so there has to be, and square footage if they have the wrong square footage on the certainly, that's a piece of evidence that you can use. But I suppose the emotional argument will

not be accepted. In this regard it has to be evidence of based but I think it is important that when they're talking to councillors and TDs, that the representatives tell them to contact the Valuation Office because with GDPR, you're not going to be able to ring up and say I want to talk about this individual rate payer and their property. They have to go back and talk to the valuation, we don't want a situation, and I've been told that's what happened in previous revalues, where rate payers assumed that a local representatives is looking into it for them and then it is finalised this September, and they ring up the Valuation Office and they say well I was talking to councillor X or councillor Y on this matter and that's totally irrelevant. They have to make direct contact with the Valuation Office on this matter.

In relation to extra clinics, we're hoping to organise extra ones in on the 17th and 18th of April.

They would be day clinics, now I'll raise the issue with the Valuation Office about clinics in the evening time. As I say I can't speak for the

Valuation Office, but I'll bring whatever asks you have to them. And I'll try to relay the responses. Regarding the issue I suppose of confusion over the multiplying of the indicative ARV, first of all, the ARV wasn't available to put on the forms when they issued them. They had to give us a total because global valuation for county Wicklow before the indicative ARV could be done. In any event the attitude of the Valuation Office is they prefer to have a kind of a separation of functions, the actual bills are issued by Wicklow County Council and the valuations are issued by Valuation Office, so they like to keep the two separates. As regards examples where valuations have increased by 50%, 100%, I just re-emphasised the requirement for the individuals in that case to contact the Valuation Office.

Immediately, if they feel they're too high.

Also, on that, and I suppose, on the issue of confusion and people not knowing what to do, I suppose, our role in this and it is very little but we it is saltated the Valuation Office by making our offices available for the clinics, we also, tried to advertise and put up as much information

as we could on the website, on Facebook, on Twitter, there an example on the Facebook on the rates valuation and it states about using the multiemployer on it.

But it is important for people to maybe to refer people to that piece on the website. If you're unsure. Anything else? I think that's it.

I think I've covered everything on that. If I haven't, if someone would let me know.

CLLR WINTERS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach just when the Valuation Office came to this Chamber to give us a talk on this, from what they said on the day I understood that they already knew what the answer was going to be, that the 100% money we got at the moment would be the 100% money we would end up getting. So, any system that starts off with the answer before the actually done the calculation is fairly flawed. And, if they have reduced the rates of X amount of people, they have to increase the others, there is a huge problem with the system, that has an answer before it's done the job.

Thanks.

CLLR WALSH: Thanks Cathaoirleach and thanks Brian

for your responses there, two quick queries in relation to the clinics on the 17th and 18th April, you didn't know where they would take place, I would request if Greystones wasn't included you would question an additional clinic, there's a direct line number that people can contact, I think it is, maybe we get that out there as well. I know, when we did have that presentation back in our February meeting, we were told that the valuations office typically visited 25% of the property, so the rest would be self-assessed and I would probably guess a lot of the people getting assessment letter didn't get the opportunity to fill them in or didn't know what to require. It is a shame that at that time when we're trying to encourage businesses back in small towns and with the threats of the out of town shopping centres and on-line shopping, we're trying to reduce our vacant units and then we have this confuse reigning, so it doesn't help thanks.

CLLR O'NEILL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach just as briefly, again, would there be intention about walk in clinic in west Wicklow.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll see if that's possible, right.

CLLR O'NEILL: If the appeals are in before the 23rd, the decision will be after that? So once the appeal is in by the 23rd, people are OK yeah.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll keep you up-to-date if they're going to give extension of a week or something like that.

CLLR BEHAN: I would like to thank Brian about his availability, row activity in relation to this issue from the start, it was well flagged and well explained, this is a national office not local office, and I think he's doing a very good job to mitigate the as far as he can, and I would like to thank him and his staff.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. Protocol after this. Thank you very much.