

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



Wicklow County Council
COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL MHANTAIN

Transcript of the County Council Meeting Held on 7 July 2014 In the County Council Chamber, Wicklow



Text streamed live to the web on www.seewritenow.ie



Telephone (0404) 64355
Fax (0404) 64354
Email info@pcr.ie
Website www.pcr.ie

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7 Wicklow County Council Meeting - 7 July 2014

8
9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Good afternoon members.

10 Cllr BEHAN: Mr Chairman.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Behan.

12 Cllr BEHAN: Could I propose that a suspension of standing orders to discuss the withdrawal of
13 the local studies service from the county, which has been based in the Ballywaltrim library
14 please.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, a seconder for that. Is that agreed? Cllr Ruttle. We will deal with
16 that at a quarter to five. Cllr Bourke.

17 Cllr BOURKE: Cathaoirleach, I would like --

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, there is a queuing system okay.

19 Cllr BRADY: I spoke to you on Thursday,

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry Cllr Brady, it is your light.

21 Cllr BRADY: I spoke to you last week just in relation to the property tax issue here in Co
22 Wicklow and I think it's timely that we should have a discussion on it, because there is
23 indications in the local or national papers there that the 80% take that we were promised that
24 would be safe guarded within the county here, it looks like that may no longer be the case.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, so you are proposing a suspension --

26 Cllr BRADY: A suspension of standing orders.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Have I a seconder for that. Cllr Kavanagh seconds that. Is it agreed?
28 Yes. Okay. Thank you. Cllr Bourke?

29 Cllr BOURKE: I would like to propose that we suspend standing orders to discuss the lack of
30 out of hours emergency response to water leakages, because we had a burst water main yesterday
31 in Arklow, major leak, and myself and other Councillors contacted Irish Water, and we were told
32 there is no out of hours emergency cover to fix water leaks. There is a major leak in Arklow,
33 only that some of the Councillors had good contacts with former staff members of the old
34 regime, the old Town Council, we were lucky we got Sean McBride out to fix it, we would have

1 been wasting hundreds of thousands of gallons of water, and it's ridiculous to think that Wicklow
2 is one of five counties that has no emergency cover for out of hours. It was argued yesterday it
3 could be Bray or Wicklow Town or anywhere in the county tomorrow, and I think it's
4 disgraceful to think we haven't got that service.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, have I a seconder for that.

6 SPEAKER: I would like to second that.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed? We will deal with that from a quarter to five to five. We
8 can't run over the time today because we have the Community Awards presentation, there is a lot
9 of people coming from all over the county, so we want to press on with the business.

10
11 I want to propose a slight change to the agenda. After the statutory business, which is one to
12 eleven, we will move up a presentation from Mr Joe O'Connell, to number 12, if that's
13 agreeable? Agreed? Okay. Have I any votes of sympathy?

14 MS GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, Eleanor Canterbury, mother of our colleague Carmel
15 Canterbury and Mary Paisley Bracken, mother of our colleague Tom Bracken.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, we will stand for a moment.

17
18 (A minute's silence)

19
20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you, just before we start can I offer our congratulations to
21 Katie Taylor who once again had an outstanding achievement since we last met, her sixth
22 European title in a row. Many congratulations to her.

23
24 Also to a great ambassador on the rugby field for Wicklow, Mr Leo Cullen, who retired recently
25 after a long career with both Leinster and Ireland, again many congratulations, and finally to all
26 the athletes from Wicklow who competed in the Special Olympics down in Limerick recently, I
27 would offer them all on your behalf, our congratulations as well. Okay, so we move on item
28 number one to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Wicklow County
29 Council held on Monday 7th April. Copies of all of these were circulated by email. Proposed.
30 Cllr Casey. Seconded Cllr Bourke.

31
32 To confirm and sign the minutes --

33 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, I want to abstain please.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, that's noted.

1 MS GALLAGHER: Which minutes, 28th or 7th.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: 7th April, Cllr Cullen? Cllr Cullen, you are abstaining on the 7th April
3 minutes.

4 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Yes Chairman, thank you.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Number two to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
6 held on Monday 28th April, 2014, proposed? Cllr Fitzgerald. Seconded? By Cllr Blake.

7 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I wish to abstain again Chairman.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen abstains again. Is that agreed? Item three, confirm and sign
9 the minutes of Special Meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 19th May, 2014?

10 Proposed Cllr Vance, seconded --

11 Cllr SNELL: Cathaoirleach, just on the minutes of the Special Meeting which was held in the
12 Grand Hotel in Wicklow Town, I raised a query at that specific meeting in regards to the docking
13 of the deceased fire fighter's wages, and I was subsequently received the answer that in written
14 correspondence and it was shown documentary evidence from senior officials in the Council. I
15 assume it's something that will come up within other forums, whether it be a civil case or
16 otherwise, but I am happy to place on record that I have got the answer to the question, and it
17 seems that they were not docked money. Thanks.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: So you are withdrawing what you said.

19 Cllr SNELL: No it wasn't, it was a question Cathaoirleach.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, so you have received clarification.

21 Cllr SNELL: It was a question which was asked in the public interest and I believe in the public
22 interest, the answer to that question should be put in the public domain, thanks Cathaoirleach.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Can I have a seconder for the minutes? Councillor
24 Ryan. Okay to confirm and sign minutes of the annual meeting of Wicklow County Council
25 held on Friday 6th June, 2014, proposed? Cllr Casey. Seconded? Cllr Blake.

26

27 Okay, item number six - sorry, another one, to confirm and sign minutes of the Special Meeting
28 of Wicklow County Council held on Friday 6th June, 2014. Proposed by Cllr Vance, seconded
29 by Councillor Ryan.

30

31 Item number six --

32 Cllr FORTUNE: Sorry, Chair, can I just ask a question?

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah. Cllr Fortune.

34 Cllr FORTUNE: Just a point of clarification for the minutes, it was agreed at the protocol

1 meeting, the last one, that the record of the meeting would be archived and made available for
2 members and the public, it's just not on the agenda anywhere.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, we had a protocol meeting last week, and there were a number of
4 recommendations that came from the Protocol Committee, the first was that the captioning live
5 streaming would, well it already goes out live, but it would also be archived on the website,
6 which I think is a good idea. So we are going to put the wheels in motion on that Cllr Fortune.

7 Cllr FORTUNE: Can I propose it formally here in the Council meeting now?

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: You can yeah.

9 Cllr FORTUNE: I propose that.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah and I will second it, okay. There was another recommendation that
11 the chains of office from the Town Councils could be used by the municipal chairpersons, we
12 want to formally propose that here? Cllr Kavanagh is proposing it, Cllr Ruttle is seconded it.
13 Thirdly on the seating arrangements, it was proposed at the protocol meeting that the seating
14 arrangements would stay the same for 12 months, do I have a proposer on that? Cllr Snell?
15 Seconded by Cllr Kavanagh. Okay, are we happy with that? Okay.

16 Cllr FORTUNE: Just on clarification, I presume what you and I have just proposed is effective
17 from now.

18 MS GALLAGHER: All of this would have come up under the adoption of the protocol minutes
19 at the end, all the recommendations are contained therein, once Council has agreed, it's agreed.

20 Cllr FORTUNE: It's effective from today?

21 MS GALLAGHER: Yeah.

22 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Cathaoirleach, just on the seating arrangements, I think at the protocol the
23 proposal there was by Cllr Matthews that we just leave it as is, I don't think it was implied that it
24 would be left for 12 months, I think it was just leave it as is.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: My understanding was 12 months was mentioned.

26 Cllr BRADY: No. That was stated early on in discussions when nothing was agreeable to
27 members of Fianna Fail, it was decided then in fairness, Cllr Matthews brought in that --

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: It was my understanding it was for 12 months, I will check the minutes.

29 Cllr BRADY: It's contained in the minutes there that the proposal was that we just continue as
30 is, there was no stipulation for 12 months or otherwise.

31 Cllr VANCE: Chairman just in regard to this, I was prepared to let this go for the 12 months, the
32 fact of the matter is the Fianna Fail group are the second largest group on this Council,
33 something that other people tend to forget, and effectively we are split here and we were deeply
34 unhappy about the seating arrangements. Now the Protocol Committee, other people decided

1 they were happy where they were and various things like that and it wasn't because - we were
2 prepared to actually move as long as the seven people of Fianna Fail were together. And Cllr
3 Brady is disingenuous in that in that he only has a group of six and we have a group of seven.
4 Cllr BRADY: I don't have any group, it's a Sinn Fein group.

5 Cllr VANCE: I was prepared to leave it for 12 months until we see how it works out and have a
6 look again if necessary. I am happy enough with that. If not, if that's not the case, and if is
7 being challenged then, my decision will change in the sense that we are unhappy about our
8 seating arrangements here, I think there was three independents that were unhappy about their
9 seating arrangements as well at that particular time. I don't want to make a big issue about this.
10 But the fact of the matter is that's the fact. In 12 months time people might think we are well
11 settled in we don't want to move anyway, but that's the position now. If it's being pushed out
12 another way now, we will challenge it then.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Ruttle.

14 Cllr RUTTLE: I would have been one of the independents that would have preferred to have
15 returned where I've been for the last 26 or 27 years, and that would have remained my position,
16 but we will have a period of 12 months to see how it pans out. I don't want it based on the
17 financial way it was laid out, but I wouldn't consider this totally satisfactory as a chamber at all
18 Cathaoirleach.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Kavanagh.

20 Cllr KAVANAGH: Two things, first of all I don't recall it being mentioned 12 months, as I
21 understood it, it was a permanent arrangement, but that's neither here nor there. One thing on the
22 protocol minutes that wasn't recorded and that was that I would have asked that the stenographer
23 would have headphones so she can link directly into what is said on the microphone rather than
24 having to listen to noise around her and that wasn't recorded on the minutes as well.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you Councillor. Councillor who's light is up. Cllr Blake?

26 Cllr BLAKE: Thanks Chairman, my understanding at the meeting when we were asked were we
27 happy with the arrangement where we were on behalf of the Fine Gael group, I said we were
28 happy where we were, that was my understanding at the time. It was acknowledged some
29 political parties were divided, Fianna Fail are divided into four and three and we took that on
30 board as well, and it was my understanding from that meeting that we were given an initial
31 period of 12 months to see how it worked out and see if people could settle into the position, so I
32 would on behalf of the Fine Gael group, we are happy, but if something comes up into the future,
33 a year's time, things can be changed around, we are happy to look at it in that regard. But from
34 my understanding, it was an initial trial period.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Fortune.

2 Cllr FORTUNE: Thanks Cathaoirleach, just a small point, as a matter of accurate record, the
3 largest group in the Chamber is the independents, with ten.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Vance?

5 Cllr VANCE: Sorry Chairman, Cllr Fortune has indicated I believe to the officials that he is a
6 group of six. Right. That's correct. They're the group that Cllr Fortune heads up now. They're
7 not the largest group in the Council.

8 Cllr FORTUNE: You are still the Chair of the Council

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen.

10 Cllr VANCE: I am just stating a fact.

11 Cllr FORTUNE: You are really the Chair of the Council. You like to be.

12 Cllr VANCE: Right.

13 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, I am not happy with this situation here where the
14 independents, there is ten elected independents, and I don't think that putting all the independents
15 in here into this small space and I think there is ample room for a better seating arrangement than
16 this. It seems a very rushed job, and it's like shoving the independents into a sardine can here,
17 and, you know, I have a view that this has to be looked at with a better option for perhaps
18 extending out that area a bit more. I think it's a fair point that the Fianna Fail group should be
19 entitled to be sitting together as a group. I think that's not unreasonable to suggest. It's also not
20 reasonable to say that the independent Councillors here, many of us long serving, should be put
21 into this type of sardine can here, when there is other rooms there for expansion and I would
22 certainly ask the planning people of the Council to come up with a better solution than this, it's
23 not acceptable.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: You are finally on the inner circle!

25 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: It's always a dangerous place to be.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay well then --

27 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Cathaoirleach?

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah.

29 Cllr BRADY: Just to read from the minutes of the protocol, I don't want to hang it up here, it's
30 important that it is portrayed accurately, it says Cllr Matthews proposed leaving the seating
31 arrangements the way they were, seconded by Councillor Tom Fortune, that's contained in the
32 minutes of the protocol. Look, certainly I have no problem with it being left as is for a year,
33 with a view to making some change outside of there. It's obvious at this stage that people are
34 unhappy for a number of different reasons, and I think it can be accommodated. Look, over the

1 course of the 12 months, I would agree that look, it needs to be looked at with alternative
2 arrangements put in place, but that is what is contained in the minutes of the protocol and I think
3 it's important to point that out.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Matthews?

5 Cllr MATTHEWS: Thanks Chairman, just to clarify I didn't mention 12 months in my proposal
6 at all, I would like the minutes amended to reflect that. The only reason I made the proposal was
7 I believed too much time was spent talking on seating arrangements. I think it's very petty for
8 people to be arguing where they're going to sit. (INAUDIBLE)

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's a number of members' opinion that 12 months was mentioned, but
10 look it's only a recommendation in the protocol, we make the decision here, so are we happy to
11 leave it for 12 months? And we will review it after 12 months.

12 Cllr RUTTLE: Cathaoirleach, could we explore other layouts in the course of that that would be
13 more conducive than this. This was the determined by finance and time, but there must be a
14 better option than this, could that be looked at?

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed then?

16 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: This Chamber when it was built, it was '77, was it, and I think the
17 population of Wicklow has doubled since then, and also the number of Councillors has increased
18 by one-third. Now there was work there carried out on the extension of the public gallery, I
19 don't think it was that expensive, but whatever this Chamber is going to be is probably going to
20 have to last for another 40 or 50 years, so I don't think it's beyond the bounds of possibility that
21 there should perhaps be some extension to the Chamber to facilitate the new reality of the
22 population of the county and the amount of numbers. That's happening in every Local Authority
23 in the country, and I think Chairman that's something that perhaps we should look at in this
24 review, thank you.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Last word to Cllr Murphy.

26 Cllr MURPHY: I would like to agree with previous Councillors, we started late and we have
27 wasted 15, 20 minutes on issues of seating arrangements. I mean I would sit outside once I was
28 at the meeting, it's ridiculous, it's actually sad. And I would sit wherever I feel comfortable as
29 well, I can move, my Chair moves anywhere I want. But I think it's sad to think that grown men
30 and probably women are fighting over where to sit, when we have such an agenda and our
31 meeting started late as well.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay on that note, we will move on, okay. Number six, consider the
33 material contravention of the Blessington Local Area Plan for a primary care unit.

34 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: This is an application for a primary healthcare centre in Blessington, but

1 the land was zoned employment and this particular land was made up most of the employment
2 land. It was on that basis that we felt this was materially contravening the plan. In all other
3 respects, it's a good development, worthy of it, and we put before you the plan.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay proposed? Do you want to speak Cllr Ruttle.

5 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I will second it Chairman.

6 Cllr RUTTLE: This is an exciting development for Blessington, it's a very good community
7 service as well, it's highly professionally backed by people with great standing in the
8 community, and I have no hesitation in proposing this contravention to bring about the
9 development of this primary care centre at Blessington.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen.

11 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I would like to second that proposal.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Hold on Cllr Cullen. Cllr Timmins.

13 Cllr TIMMINS: Thank you Chairman, I would like to formally second that proposal and to
14 commend the applicant for bringing this valuable and much needed resource to Blessington.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen now.

16 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, I would also Chairman like to support, second the
17 Councillor's motion, but anyway, I think it's a good idea and I think primary care is the way
18 forward for health services in many rural areas in the future. And I hope to see primary care
19 services expanded throughout Wicklow and the various towns in future. Thank you.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, thanks Councillor, Cllr O'Neill.

21 Cllr O'NEILL: Could I ask if I have to leave the Chamber, there would be a conflict of interest
22 there, a family member is working for this company, so I feel I have a...

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's noted, okay thank you. Councillor lawless.

24 Cllr LAWLESS: I have a quick question in regards to the planning, maybe Des could answer
25 this for me. Reading through it, fantastic, there is a primary care development in Blessington,
26 just in regards to car park spacing, as a local resident there is 83 car park spaces and I am
27 wondering how many is designate today disabled parking considering that it is a primary care
28 centre and usually these places disabled parking is limited to five or six. I am wondering is this
29 a specific percentage being allocated out of those 84 spaces for people with disabilities.

30 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: I don't actually have at my finger tips the details of any application like
31 that, but I can let you know afterwards how many spaces there are.

32 Cllr MURPHY: Through the Chair, it's one in twenty.

33 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: I am just saying this particular application, generally the planners goes
34 through all these things and deal with them.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Take a vote.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr O'Neill, do you want to leave the Chamber for the vote. Thank you.
3 Okay, roll call.

4

5 (A vote was taken)

6

7 MS GALLAGHER: 31 for, and one not present.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, just tell Gerry there to come back in. Okay, item number seven to
9 consider disposal of the Council's interest in 0.016 hectares or thereabouts for land in the town
10 land adjacent to Baltinglass East to Shay Byrne, Ballycullane, Castledermot, Co. Kildare. A
11 proposer? Cllr Doran. Seconder?

12 Cllr TIMMINS: Chairman, could I just ask a question on just more detail in relation to this
13 disposal. Like I believe it's a Council house and I am just wondering is there any prospect that
14 the house could have been refurbished?

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Cullen?

16 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, I would agree, was that investigated because we have an
17 acute housing shortage in the area, and I actually have received no notice of this disposal
18 strangely enough. Maybe it's not that strange. And - the first I have seen it was on the agenda
19 here. So I would like this sob deferred until I get a copy of the notice of disposal and perhaps we
20 shall also get a report about the - now that the Government have allocated funds for the making
21 houses viable, given the huge housing waiting list we have, perhaps you would get a report on
22 that too Chairman. I genuinely haven't received a copy of it. I have documents here and I have
23 received nothing, no notice of disposal.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: It went out on 13th June.

25 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I haven't got it.

26 MS GALLAGHER: Just for the record Cathaoirleach, disposal notices are circulated within the
27 Local Government Act, and ten days notice is required before it can sit on an agenda and it was
28 circulated on 13th day of June to each elected member.

29 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, as you recall there was another disposal a couple of months
30 ago back in March I didn't receive either and perhaps, I mean, I would like to know what's going
31 on in the town where I live. I would ask this would be put back until the next meeting until I get
32 a copy of the notice of disposal, and also we have some idea about - for this house to be brought
33 back into the housing allocation scheme.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen proposes it will be put back. Do I have a seconder for that?

1 Cllr Timmins.

2 Cllr TIMMINS: As I said at the outset, I think we are lacking in information to make a decision
3 here, and I did receive the notice in accordance with the act, and that's fine, the only problem
4 with it is the level of detail that you receive is fairly sparse. For example, you couldn't even say
5 that it was a house for disposal, there were no details of the address or the reason why the
6 Council would dispose of a house. I think we need more detail to make a decision.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Lorraine.

8 MS GALLAGHER: This was a house that was repossessed by Wicklow County Council, you
9 are aware we repossessed a number of houses, we did submit the schedule of houses brought into
10 stock at the end of 2013. This wasn't bought into stock because of the cost of refurbishment
11 which is in excess of 60,000, if not nearer the 100,000, and that wouldn't be funded. The only
12 proposals the department were taking on to buy it back is if it was going to cost 5,000
13 refurbished to be ready for reletting, whereas this was in excess of that so we wouldn't be
14 allowed bring it back into stock. Our proposal is to sell it, we put it out to tender for the sale of
15 house last year, we have three quotes, we currently have an offer for 40,000 for the purchase of
16 the house which we would use towards other housing acquisitions and refurbishments.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Timmins.

18 Cllr TIMMINS: Could we have that detail fleshed out a little bit. 60,000 does sound an awful
19 lot to refurbish what is a three bed terraced house, so again I would say maybe --

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Given there is two local representatives have concerns about the detail,
21 shall we put this back to a future meeting? Is that agreed? We could deal with it at the special
22 housing meeting later this month. Okay, agreed. Okay, number eight consider the disposal of
23 the Council's interest in 7008 hectares or thereabouts in land in the town land of Carrig Glen,
24 Blessington, to Peter Behan, 28 Carrig Glen, previously circulated. Cllr Ruttle.

25 Cllr RUTTLE: I propose that.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: A seconder. Cllr O'Neill. We will have a vote.

27

28 (A vote was taken)

29

30 MS GALLAGHER: 30 for and two abstaining.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Item nine to consider the report on the variation of the Ashford town
32 plan. Director.

33 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Thank you Cathaoirleach. This plan was on display, we had some
34 submissions on it, not very many, you have all seen the Manager's Report. We had a session this

1 morning for the Area Councillors and for any other Councillors who were interested in coming.
2 I think it was pretty useful for new Councillors, because it is a complex procedure, and so there
3 is nothing more to offer, it's in the Manager's Report, I recommend the plan.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Cllr Casey?

5 Cllr CASEY: I have proposed amendments to the actual plan, and I think a copy was given out
6 there, it's in relation to lands at -- SLO 1 lands and all it basically is the movement of the
7 strategic land reserve in it. It's just divided separately on the site into two banks, one is 4.4
8 hectares and one 3.4 hectares, but everything else remains the same, the density, the number of
9 houses.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, have I a seconder for that. Cllr Kavanagh. Is there a second
11 amendment. Cllr Winters?

12 Cllr WINTERS: Thanks Cathaoirleach, having looked at it, the M11 at the moment the setback
13 is 100 metres which is usually to allow for service infrastructure. There is a roundabout to the
14 North and South of Ashford, so there would be very little likelihood that another roundabout
15 would be required within that two to three mile strip and also the road is substantially wider and
16 there is room so you don't need additional look. I am looking to maybe change that back to 50
17 metres, one of the reasons is that the road is actually below the level of where any future housing
18 will be on the Ashford side in the zoned land. But it's built into this amendment would be that it
19 would be up to the developer to actually maintain suitable (INAUDIBLE) controls, so it's just to
20 allow for - given the narrowness of it, if you look at the map, the narrowness of certain aspects
21 of it, it needs to have - it will need to have access to roads within the estates and green areas and
22 all the rest of it. I am proposing and I think it's been passed to everybody, that in the Ashford
23 area that we would have the road set back from the M11 at 50 metres, not 100 metres.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Have I a seconder for that. Cllr Cullen. Okay.

25 MS GALLAGHER: Agreed?

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: I will let the Director back in okay.

27 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Cathaoirleach, we have obviously no objection to the first amendment.
28 There is a different language for these things. Because it's just moving space around and figures
29 all seem the same. We have a little bit of revelation on the setback line, on the basis that it's
30 there for a long time, a lot of it is for noise pollution for future residents and I accept that Cllr
31 Winters has put in noise abatement measures into her proposal. But it is a step change in a
32 policy that's been there for a very, very long time, so that we have some reservations about.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, then we need a vote on the variation, plus the amendments.

34 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: No, this will --

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: This is going on display, is it?

2 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: So if you want to take those amendments separately or the whole lot
3 together. I am happy enough either way.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will take the amendments separately. Amendment number one, Cllr
5 Casey's amendment, seconded by Cllr Kavanagh, we will have a roll call on that, okay.

6

7 (A vote was taken)

8

9 MS GALLAGHER: 29 for and three abstaining for amendment one.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Amendment number two, proposed by Cllr Winters, seconded by Cllr
11 Cullen.

12 Cllr CASEY: Can we make it clear to the new members, we are only putting these back on
13 display now, we are not actually adopting these today, we are making these amendments to go
14 back on display for public consultation before they're brought back in.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: The final vote on this, which will be the Manager's Report will be to put
16 it out on public display, not to actually finally agree it, okay. This vote is on the amendment
17 number two, okay.

18

19 (A vote was taken)

20

21 MS GALLAGHER: 27 for, three against, and two abstaining.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, so final vote is on the Manager's Report, plus --

23 Cllr CASEY: Do we need to propose the Manager's amendments and vote on them.

24 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: I think we are proposing to accept the Manager's Report and initial the
25 two amendments and any changes consequent but it will be put back on display again for public
26 consultation.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

28

29 (A vote was taken)

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31 MS GALLAGHER: 31 for and one against.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay item ten the report on the variation of the Dunlavin town plan.
33 Director.

34 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Cathaoirleach, actually you are referring to the County Plan, it used to

1 be a Local Area Plan and the law changed on the specials for these and we are now doing the
2 variation of the plan. Very similar to the previous Dunlavin plan. It's been on display, there
3 were only two submissions from the public, and we have had the Manager's Report, so I
4 commend this to the Council. If there are no amendments to this, we will actually be adopting
5 this plan, because there is nothing in the Manager's recommendations that would be material.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Timmins?

7 Cllr TIMMINS: I would like to propose this plan at the moment.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Ruttle.

9 Cllr RUTTLE: I would like to second the plan. Thank you.

10 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, is there any lands being dezoned in this plan from the
11 original town plan?

12 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: There is no new lands being zoned, there has been lands have changed
13 zonings.

14 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: What lands are those being changed zonings.

15 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: The land around the school, the two schools has been reconfigured in
16 consultation with the Department of Education, to make it more usable should the schools want
17 to expand and I think the land by the old rectory have also changed designation as well.

18 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: What about the lands on the opposite side of the school?

19 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: On the opposite side of the school?

20 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Of the secondary school.

21 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: That's the fair green, isn't it?

22 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: No, on the opposite side, going up pound road, the back of Pound Road.

23 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: This is on Pound Road.

24 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: No, the lands on the opposite side of the road from the secondary school
25 going up the hill.

26 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: That's zoned RE. Existing residential.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

28 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: That is as it was?

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, we are going for a vote on this, there is no amendments proposed.

30 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: So it's adapting the plan as per the Manager's Report, as per the Chief
31 Executive's report.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: To adopt the plan as per the report.

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34 (A vote was taken)

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MS GALLAGHER: 31 four, one abstaining.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you, item number eleven, to consider the Chief Executive's report on submissions in relation to proposed additions to the Co Wicklow record of protected structures.

DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Cathaoirleach, as part of the review process of the Dunlavin plan, it was studying potential pedestrian (INAUDIBLE), it was thought that the old railway station buildings was worthy of protecting, and we have gone through the process, we have written to the landowners, and we actually got no submissions on this. So we would recommend this be added to the record of protected structures.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Ruttle. Result rut I propose that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by Cllr Timmins.

Cllr TIMMINS: I would commend the planners for recognising the heritage value in the old railway buildings in Dunlavin.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen.

Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, my grandfather's cattle were there back in 1902 - I have a photograph of them in Dunlavin. Chairman, I support the preservation of old buildings, but I also support the preservation of what's remnants of the old lines, and there was the old railway line that went up through Naas and out through Tullow and out through Shillelagh and from Wexford on that line. Could we have a look at preserving the existing stretches of the original track, trackways that's left on the railway - on that line from Dunlavin into the Rathvilly area down to the red wells. There is a few old bridges left in place. A number of the old bridges, which were beautiful works of granite stone, some of them up to 30 feet high, and 50 feet across, cast iron on top, and beautiful, a couple of these have been removed in the last 12 years because they weren't protected. I think there is about three or four of those bridges left with stretches of the old rail line. Could we have a look at some preservation order being placed on protecting the remnants of the old railway line and the railway bridges that are left intact, because the railway bridges themselves are a work of very fine architecture and also have I fine workmanship by the stone masons who built them. And whereas we look at the railway station, which is a small red brick building, we haven't looked at the - protecting the railway bridges and what's left of the railway line. Could we agree that we will have a look at some report being done about protecting and preserving what's left of the railway bridges and the stretches of the line that are left, before they're all wiped out?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you proposing that during the County Development Plan process, I

1 am happy to support it.

2 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Yes, Chairman, yes.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, it goes to a vote.

5

6 (A vote was taken)

7

8 MS GALLAGHER: 32 for.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you, I am going to take item number 16, I would like to
10 welcome Mr Joe O'Connell and Shelly O'Connell, to the Chamber, to give us a presentation, if
11 you want to come up Joe. You are very welcome. As you know, Joe has developed film studios
12 in Ashford. He has sent out correspondence to all the members in the last couple of weeks. And
13 a couple of members indicated they'd like Joe to come in and give a presentation so he has come
14 into us today. You are very welcome Joe.

15 MR O'CONNELL: Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to come in and address
16 you today. It's nice to come in with a good story. I think we have a good story to tell. I quickly
17 want to give a bit of history to where we got to so far. I was born in Graiguenamanagh, and I
18 went to the Dominican Convent of Wicklow at the age of 12. Sorry the age of nine. Then we
19 left at the age of 12, it was the last year that they had boys in the school. It was nothing to do
20 with me, I can tell you, but they decided to cancel out on the boys at that stage. We moved to
21 Dublin and I went to Christian Brothers, and then went to war reckons town agriculture college,
22 studied agriculture because I grew up on a farm. We had some farming and general merchant,
23 my father was a general merchant in Graiguenamanagh. I decided after two years farming it
24 wasn't for me and I really wanted to go into business.

25

26 At 19, I started a business which is Tack Packaging, and basically we borrowed 500 pounds and
27 we imported some bag sealers from Austria and they're now in every butcher's shop in the
28 country. Tack Packaging eventually got into engineering, conveyors, end of line packaging and
29 I spent a lot of time travelling virtually to pretty well every factory in Ireland and in the North of
30 England over a 25 year period, selling end of line packaging systems, which basically was
31 advising factories how they lay out, and how they structure their factory to eliminate
32 unnecessary labour and produce twice the product with maybe half the input. And bring in
33 efficiencies. And in a lot of discussions and selling equipment to them, I kind of got on the
34 ground what you see on TV at the moment is how it's made but I suppose I would have sat down

1 with the managers of the factories and discussed after we made the sale and we were having a
2 cup of coffee, actually how does this factory work? How do you make the tooth brush? How
3 does everything work here? How does Intel, how - not Intel but Microsoft, how does the disc
4 work? And I got into factories that a lot of people wouldn't get into because of the privacy but
5 because we were selling equipment and that was absolutely fantastic.

6
7 Tack Packaging prospered and at the age of 35, I got Hodgkin's disease, and we had just bought
8 the same year, spent 400,000 buying the new plant up in our new facility up in Sandyford
9 industrial estate which is now beside Microsoft's Head Office. We borrowed 400,000. And in
10 the same year, when I got cancer, Hodgkin's, and that year we lost money. That cured my cough
11 about borrowing. I suppose I would like to think I was really smart in that I saw the crash
12 coming in terms of the recent crash, but I had had a fright many years before because of that
13 borrowing and things all going wrong, they come in threes. Generally something happens, it's
14 not one thing, a couple of things come together that cause a downfall. I became very adverse to
15 the idea of borrowing. Our idea was if the business was good and it made profits, why would
16 you need to borrow, just keep re-investing, and just build and grow at the rate your business can
17 grow rather than taking a big risk, grab early on and try and expand as fast as you could.
18 Through that experience set up the format for how we ran our businesses and how our business
19 model worked. Tack Packaging prospered and ultimately bought the farm. I am rushing this
20 now because I know I am under pressure for time. We live at Ballyhenry in Ashford and Tack
21 Packaging bought that farm, and we have lived there for 27 years. Now, how did we get
22 involved? Tack Packaging then funded, after 20, 25 years, I was looking restless, because I had
23 done 20 years in chasing through Ireland, through England, selling our packaging equipment and
24 machinery and materials and so on, and I wanted to get into a bigger business in terms of where I
25 could supply to the multiples, and I met a gentleman called Alistair Tidy, the son of Don Tidy,
26 who was running at the time the supermarket chain. And we eventually after looking at a lot of
27 products, I said I am really good at engineering, I understand manufacturing, I have been at it a
28 long, long time, you are really good on marketing, you understand retail and multiple selling.
29 And you come up with the product, and I will make it.

30
31 So we looked at a lot of things and eventually we came up with this Christmas tree idea and it
32 seemed that at the time they were selling Christmas trees at 69 quid but when they reduced them
33 to 39, they flew. It turned out the packaging in film for sealing boxes was PVC film. Funnily
34 enough Christmas trees was made of PVC film as well. At the time we were injection coding

1 tape dispensers. Christmas trees were made with injection coding as well. The technology fitted
2 really, really well and you think where is the relationship, well there is the relationship. And so
3 we got to the stage where we were selling more Christmas trees throughout the world than
4 Coillte, four times more Christmas trees than all of Coillte were selling in real trees. It was a
5 very, very successful business and that was funded and got going and sponsored by Tack
6 Packaging. Then we funded the universal innovations which started to manufacture gas
7 appliances, and so we had a number of businesses now that were quite profitable. So where is
8 the film business come out of? We moved Tack Packaging down to Kilcoole because we had
9 started to take a small piece of the largest industrial building in Wicklow, which was the a
10 factory in Kilcoole and we took initially 10,000 square feet; the IDA had it there as a big white
11 elephant. Two companies before us had gone bust. Because Christmas trees, you only sell one
12 time of the year, so we needed slowly but surely a huge amount of space to cater for the stock.
13 So eventually we moved, well going on to the film business, we moved down to Sandyford and
14 moved everything down to Kilcoole, it was closer to Ashford and I hated commuting. They
15 rented the building in Kilcoole, or in Sandyford for Braveheart. So as I was always curious in
16 the same way as I would have gone into a factory, just to say how does that work, I went up to
17 see what they were doing. It turned out they were in ten locations, they were using ours just for
18 costume and they were in Kildare, Ardmore, everywhere. I met Morgan O'Sullivan, about 15
19 years ago, and at the time I just said this is completely crazy, your loss is particulars are nuts,
20 this cannot work. So he said tell me about it. it's a fantastic movie, it's really, really good, there
21 is a lot of money being spent here, but yeah, it is all over the place. Why don't you build me a
22 studio. So I said, okay. So I had a look at all the figures, I got all the figures from Ardmore and
23 looked at the records, and I ran away. Because really, you know, it didn't make money, it was
24 bouncing from crisis to crisis, the film would come and go. So I just went back and said it's not
25 for me. This is not a business. You can't make money on film studios because people coming in
26 basically are subsidised, and they're not going to pay a lot of money for a studio. So I said no,
27 that won't work. But eventually we wanted to move - am I going too fast, is it okay? We
28 basically wanted to move out of Kilcoole and go into a newer premises because our power
29 appliance business was going so well and we wanted a presence. And we were going to move,
30 we got permission to move up to beside Glanbia and then time took over and our customers
31 abroad said we don't want to ship anything into Ireland, we want to buy everything from your
32 plant in Asia. At that stage we had bought our own plant in China on a 20 acre site and we have
33 a big premises there which we own outright. All product is developed and R&D'd in Ireland.
34 The product is made in China, and all receipts and profits are sent back to Ireland. So I went

1 back to Morgan and I said maybe if I go ahead and I convert this facility now, which would have
2 been our new headquarters, distribution headquarters for Europe, which now has been taken
3 over, can you guarantee me you will get the business. He said I can't guarantee I will get the
4 business, but I will do my level best. But you better have a plan B, because there is no
5 guarantee, film will come and go, and they can come and go in a week, they can go anywhere in
6 the world and they're in and out. But I liked that about him because he didn't say yeah it will all
7 be fantastic, it will all happen. We finished on Friday, started constructing and we spent seven
8 years, and I spent most of that time talking to everybody in the industry, because of my
9 inquisitive nature of how things work, I went to everybody in every department within the film
10 business and said what do you want? How do you want the beams? How do you want to lift the
11 things from the roof? How do you want your hair and make-up department? How big do you
12 want the room? What size do you want the shelves? We discussed with hundreds of different
13 people in the film industry to find out in every department how they'd like it and it was kind of
14 the old adage, find out what they want and not just give them what they want, give them better,
15 because then you have got a really, really good business. That was the adage and the business
16 model. From that I got to know over seven years exactly how to build the studio. And that was
17 not just talking to Irish people, there was people from America, people who already had studios
18 to producers and directors and so on. And the great thing about what we have done is that when
19 the people now come into the studio in Wicklow as most of you have seen, and it's really a great
20 pleasure for me, they say Joe that's the best studio we have ever seen. How did you get the
21 figure out all the bits and pieces, how did it work? It was simple, we just asked all the different
22 people what they wanted and tried to make it slightly better.

23
24 That's the good news. The bad news is that they paid last year 1.4 million, if I had universal
25 innovations in that building, they'd have to be turning over 20 million to justify the spend of that
26 infrastructure. So we are getting a 10% return on the investment. That's the bad news.

27
28 Now I think potentially the good news going forward, you have got to treat the infrastructure of
29 the studio as a write-off. That's basically a sprat to catch a mackerel. If we can get the
30 companies to come here and make the films, like they've done with the Vikings, and imagine if
31 we could put that times ten, now the Vikings have been here for three years so far, as I said we
32 finished on Friday, they came in on Monday. They've been here ever since. So technically we
33 are saying to people when they come, we had delegations coming from China, delegations
34 coming from America saying can we come down. We are saying look at the moment no,

1 because basically we have nothing to offer. When Tony To came over from Disney and he came
2 down and he said yeah, that's great, can we pencil in what's in after the Vikings? And I said well
3 not really, because I don't know when the Vikings are going to finish. Excuse my French, I kind
4 of pissed him off. Because he wanted a facility and he would come with the movie in question
5 was Artemis Fowl, and the potential for that could be in their opinion the next Harry Potter. If
6 we got things like the Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings or that type of movie coming into
7 Wicklow, that's a brand, the brand - Wicklow isn't a brand - I suppose at the last meeting where
8 we were talking about the Chairman for Bord Failte was talking about we are going to offer no
9 money to anybody in Wicklow to get a tourist to come here, but he said what we will do is bring
10 people into Ireland and you have to get them from the airport to come to Wicklow. But
11 Wicklow doesn't have a brand. The West of Ireland with the new western way, the Atlantic way,
12 and they're trying to create a brand with that. But the bad news is we have no brand but the good
13 news again is we are close to Dublin. I just thought if they can in New Zealand get one in ten
14 people who goes to New Zealand, pre-books to go to see Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings, can
15 you imagine if we had say ten things like the Vikings going on at the same time, and four of
16 them or two or three of them came good and we could leave those sets standing rather than
17 tearing them down every year and get really clever about how we do filming and filming in
18 Ireland and get the big guys. Disney are talking about spending a billion on Artemis Fowl.
19 Movies are a great product. You are all going to go home tonight maybe and watch a movie.
20 The product - I love the product. It's a fantastic product. Why we are not making them here is
21 because we don't have any infrastructure. And you are not going to come - I can't go to China
22 and go into some old building. I need proper structure, I need a proper building to operate from.
23 And when Disney or Universal or indeed the next batch of Irish people who are going to start
24 developing products for the networks, they need properly facilities to work in. We have an
25 excellent (INAUDIBLE) which gives an advantage of coming here and we have super crews, but
26 we can't get it off the ground without the up infrastructure. The first infrastructure we have built
27 now as a showroom has worked really well. The customers have indicated they'll come here, but
28 we can't build it on the basis that we then have to pay planning charges, levies, rates, on
29 something that basically doesn't make any money. So we made a pitch to the Government and
30 asked them to support it and they've agreed in principle that they'll subsidise it to the tune of 30
31 pounds per square foot, 30% of the actual finished cost, of the real cost. What I am asking for
32 you today is we come together with some sort of a plan to figure a way as to how, and unlike in
33 Spain where the equivalent of the County Council in Spain, they spend 80 million building a
34 studio. So we are not asking for any money from the local County Council. We are just asking

1 you not to send bills. Not to charge it. To treat this as infrastructure which basically is going to
2 spawn, I think an enormous tourist industry, enormous. It will also - if we do the same as in
3 Pinewood, Pinewood have 300 companies who service Pinewood. In the day that I went there,
4 Paul McGuinness who owns a part of Ardmore kindly arranged a trip for me to go to Pinewood
5 and the day I went there. Now it's not a nice place, it's a big industrial place build 40 or 50 years
6 ago, then again they haven't spent any money. We are trying to spend huge to create
7 infrastructure, but there were 5,000 people working on site, 300 companies there, and when you
8 come out of the gates of Pinewood, you are into suburbia. When you come out of the gates of
9 Ashford, you are into, as you saw in the book, or as you know, the most incredible scenery and
10 the reaction that comes back from the visitors when they've come in and looked at the studio and
11 then looked, I mean you see the backdrop there in the pictures, the scenery and so on, they're
12 blown away. I think if we are competitive, we have the skills here in Ireland, and if we give
13 them more infrastructure I am really confident they'll come. I don't know how we can, and I
14 don't know the procedures of how we can consider the possibility of not making these charges on
15 the infrastructure but treating all the other stuff as separate. So the add-ons or the bolt-ons like
16 the tourist centre, or the - if you take Pinewood there on the screen, everything in blue is a
17 studio, everything in green would pay rates, that's all rateable, and the top one there is Ava.
18 Beside our site in Sandyford is Ava. I am saying to them why don't you put your corporate
19 headquarters in Ireland, why don't you move out of Pinewood? All those companies could be
20 located here on site, plus all the spin-off business around and they all pay their rates. So
21 basically it's a sprat to catch a mackerel. Any questions?

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Joe. Councillor Ryan?

23 Cllr RYAN: So Joe thank you very much for the presentation, and to your daughter. Thanks
24 also for the tour of your facility, which is quite incredible. I suppose I am coming from a
25 slightly difficult position in that when there was a proposal before this body a couple of years
26 ago, I abstained on the vote for Ashford. At the time I was trying to get clarity from Ardmore
27 studios and the then CEO as to whether or not Ashford would actually damage Bray and would it
28 actually damage the employment in Bray and I couldn't get clarity on that, so I was concerned at
29 that time that it would actually cause a problem, so I decided to abstain and I hope that's not seen
30 as small mindedness, it was just a fear. But I think at this stage from my information, both
31 studios have managed to thrive, which I am absolutely delighted about. So from that point of
32 view, I think it's fantastic. I think what you have managed to achieve is spectacular. I think you
33 take a very different approach, I think as one of the people sitting on the Co Wicklow economic
34 think tank, the meetings that we have had, it's very clear that you come across with a huge

1 amount of passion, and belief, and you do see things differently. So congratulations for what
2 you have achieved so far. That's stage one.

3
4 In terms of what you are actually asking, it's an unusual thing to come to a Council with that
5 request, but I think we should investigate and see what the potential actually is, because there is
6 many ways that you can actually do things, much the same as when people talk about maybe
7 town centres and maybe not charging rates on particular premises to try and get more people to
8 start up businesses, you always have the question well you can't do one and not do it for the
9 other and the like, but certain towns in Ireland have managed to introduce schemes like that and
10 they seem to be working for them. So they've brought creativity to that area of rates.

11
12 If we choose to do nothing, I don't believe anything will actually happen in Ashford. So I think
13 what we have to do here is investigate and put a lot of energy and time into it. I know of a
14 system whereby we could become shareholders in the studios and that's built into a buy back
15 mechanism where you could buy back. I believe what you are saying that this is a wonderful
16 opportunity. I believe we should become the centre in Ireland for film. We have everything in
17 place except as you say the actual infrastructure that's necessary to do that. But it's one of the
18 things that's coming out of the economic think tank, this is one of the biggest opportunities for
19 this county in terms of trying to be the centre for film excellence and to take some of those
20 movies that are going elsewhere and bring them into this area. I for one would put a huge
21 amount of effort into trying to show creativity in terms of meeting you part of the way in terms
22 of what you are requesting here and I think the Council should investigate the possibility of
23 showing creativity and trying to make this happen and be partners in success.

24 MR O'CONNELL: Could I just answer, I spoke to some people in America, they have
25 something called TIFF. Let's say they wanted to put in a ship building yard in some place, and
26 this huge investment, they have a mechanism whereby if there is a huge advantage and spin-off
27 in that area, that the Councillors come up with a solution as to how to solve this problem. I
28 accept this is not - I don't have any problem in terms - I am not asking for a freebie, I am just
29 saying you can't get blood out of a stone. The other point was that when we are full, we are not
30 full, because they're going to leave in September, or December, they don't come back for five
31 months later. The set stays standing, so actually the studio when it's full is almost half empty
32 and you have to leave the set standing, so it's a very unusual industry. And some years they
33 don't tell you until a week before for coming back. This third series, until they see the ratings,
34 they can't confirm they're coming back, so it's all open ended, or loaded on behalf of the

1 customer. So you have to rock and roll with that. On the other hand, the customer is always
2 going to make another movie and another movie and he needs a factory, so if you give him the
3 opportunity that he will utilise that as a factory he will keep coming back to Wicklow.
4 Particularly if all the sets and the back drops are there, he doesn't have to start from scratch. The
5 other thing Tony To said to me is we are not going to go anywhere where they don't speak
6 English. I think we have to treat it as infrastructure in this regard, so collectively we have to
7 come up with some solution.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you. Cllr Murphy.

9 Cllr MURPHY: I missed the trip last week, I am so delighted to hear the background of it, and I
10 will give you a little bit of history, my late brother and my father and two other brothers and
11 their grandchildren was actually in part of Braveheart, and I will actually send you a photograph,
12 that was taken in the area. I also sit on the Board of Wicklow Tourism, and for the last few years
13 and I have to say it's one thing that both the Chairman and the Committee work hard for is trying
14 to get people to Wicklow in all forms and shapes. And it's something that is in the grip of our
15 hand. It's an area that we probably are not used to, but I think we need to sit up and listen, and I
16 think from a man of your experience, I think we should all work together on this.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Cllr Fortune.

18 Cllr FORTUNE: Thanks Cathaoirleach, Joe and Shelly, thanks very much for the presentation.
19 Joe when you wrote to me and asked me would you be able to come in and do this, I
20 immediately wrote to Ms Gallagher about this, it's a hell of an opportunity for the county. You
21 talked about tourism, we have fantastic tourism in this county which is totally under-utilised if
22 you stand back and look at it objectively. I think what you are talking about and the added value
23 that your project would bring to it is phenomenal. The way I look at the world, I would totally
24 agree with what you have come here today with us to ask. For me it's a no-brainer. I think in the
25 next ten days, yourself and Morgan and whoever and the Chief Executive and whoever should
26 sit down and have an initial discussion on this. I think this is an investment in Wicklow. It's an
27 investment in tourism in Wicklow. It's an investment in Ireland. And that's why I am not
28 surprised, I get the impression the Government gave you a positive type of reaction when you
29 spoke to them. I am not surprised, why shouldn't they? This is an opportunity to put Wicklow -
30 we all talk about we will do this, put Wicklow on the map, this could put Wicklow on the map
31 forever more. I just think this is a breath of fresh air, this is what you are our meetings should be
32 about. We spend a the who of time in this Chamber talking about nothing and fighting and
33 arguing with each other and arguing over stuff that doesn't help anybody. But really what you
34 have brought here today to us, if we don't grab this and go with it, without delay, this idea of

1 maybe we will look at this and maybe we will look at that, I think we should say yes Joe, thanks
2 very much for coming into us. What you have put here today, for me it's beyond words. I think
3 we should go with this. If we don't make this happen, we are committing a serious, serious
4 crime against the Co Wicklow here. I would suggest that what you have said to us, you have
5 explained your background and most of us are aware of it, I have been to the studios, they're
6 fantastic. When you sit down and talk to you which I have done once and twice, your whole
7 enthusiasm and natural drive to make it happen, if you get the support you are looking for, you
8 will make this happen, I know you will. I would say to the members here today, based on what
9 you said to us, that we should go with this straight away. We should have a strategy in our plans
10 put in place over the next couple of months with you to make this happen. Again can I say to the
11 two of you, thanks very much for coming in, I think what you have presented to us is a hell of an
12 opportunity and if we don't make it happen, there has to be serious serious questions asked. I
13 again repeat, I think the Chief Executive should grab hold of this straight away, sit down with
14 yourselves and make this happen. Anything we can do, obviously I am Chair of Wicklow
15 Tourism, I think tourism, and I say this on a regular basis, tourism and agriculture could have a
16 situation in this county where we have full employment, and that has stuff that reaches across the
17 whole spectrum of all the demographics across the county and this is cream. This is just
18 fabulous.

19 MR O'CONNELL: The plans are already done for stage two. We have the plans already
20 finished and done and presented. I put them in, I presented them into the Planning Department
21 under AN Other and it was kind of like an agriculture, a different arrangement, but they've come
22 back. Everything is ready to go. All the plans are done. The people who have come in and said
23 can we come back here with a project later on, they've said keep me posted how you get on,
24 when are you going to have them up, I said I will keep you posted. We need to go back to them.
25 Scotland and Northern Ireland, they're going to build, so is pine wood going to build. There is a
26 timescale here, and yeah, I think first up best dressed, if we can get moving and going on it, and
27 say to the guys we are building - I want 40,000 square foot stages, he told me exactly what he
28 needs, he said if you build them I will come over. I won't guarantee how long I will come for
29 but if you make a success, there is no reason for me to go elsewhere. He is waiting for the call.
30 Cllr FORTUNE: I think that's a plain message you are giving here today. I think action should
31 happen on this with you straight away. Begin can I say to the two of you thanks for coming in
32 and talking to us like this. This is what we need more of. Anything I can do in a small way
33 through Wicklow Tourism to lobby or whatever the case may be, I would be only delighted to do
34 it, we have a fantastic board who are very proactive, and I would be delighted to work with you

1 in any way I can. It has to happen in this building in the next couple of weeks.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Mitchell.

3 Cllr MITCHELL: Thank you very much, it was a very interesting presentation. I have to admit
4 when I first heard of the plan, maybe ten years ago, I was a bit sceptical, but then later I saw the
5 studios in place, and I was amazed at the scale and the reality of it and many people approach us
6 with ideas, why things are going to work and if they want things to be different, this certainly
7 was very real when I saw it, and I also saw it on the induction trip the other week and it was even
8 more impressive. Obviously there is a huge track record there which maybe I didn't think of at
9 the beginning, but - and this is something we should very much want in Co Wicklow, a very
10 large number of jobs that they could bring to the county and publicity. I would suspect that on
11 some of the things which you are asking, this Council has quite limited powers in relation to
12 other Local Government systems around the world and I would suspect we might not have the
13 ability to do away with some of these levies and other things, but I would think that the
14 Cathaoirleach and the Chief Executive should get together in some way with the TDs, and
15 maybe the Minister for jobs, whoever that is going to be, and try and get something done quickly
16 to get some special arrangements put in place for this to happen. It's very important that this is
17 done. I don't think that we here, I wait to be corrected by the Chief Executive, but I suspect we
18 don't have the powers to do a lot of the things which you are requesting. Certainly I can see the
19 urgency of it and the importance of it. Thank you.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Cllr McLoughlin.

21 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Joe and Shelly, it's great to have you here and fantastic to see what you
22 are planning to do and you have 100% my full support. It's a fantastic project. I do think we
23 need to possibly get down exactly, and put plans in place of how we can do this and see what we
24 need to do or not do. Joe you mentioned there that if you don't build, they're going to build in
25 Northern Ireland or Scotland. You no I presume the same criteria happens in Northern Ireland
26 and Scotland happens here, it's not viable to be just building these stages, so do they have
27 policies in place there from the Government or councils --

28 MR O'CONNELL: When I spoke, I got a call from auto delegate in Scotland and he said can I
29 come over and have a look. I said feck off, no you can't, we spent a lot of time getting this right.
30 No you can't. I got chatting to him. I said what's the deal over there. He said if we raise so
31 much money they'll match it. So there is a scheme, in Northern Ireland it's a lot worse. In
32 Northern Ireland, they - Dracula was the last movie that came over and they wanted to come into
33 Ashford but as I say we can't with the Vikings, so they went to Northern Ireland. They got hello
34 money of two million quid. So effectively they got the whole facility for nothing. I can't

1 compete with nothing. And that's the reality. Where they're given such an attractive deal to go
2 to Northern Ireland, and pine wood now are starting to build, so we can't compete with nothing
3 for sure, but if we give the facilities at fair prices and eliminate all the working practices,
4 historically bad working practices and Disney said they went away with a bad taste in their
5 mouth on how the charges escalated particularly in travel times, but I haven't seen that in the last
6 three years, I just can't believe how hard those guys work on site. They're really all committed,
7 certainly at the moment. I kind of feel if you think of - we can't compete with nothing, but if we
8 give a really good deal and good facilities, we will get the business.

9 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Have the Government committed to the 30,000 square foot?

10 MR O'CONNELL: I have had a lot of dealings with the finance department and the senior civil
11 servants and we worked out over a three year period how much it will cost, and the - it would be
12 €30 per square foot is what they've said is doable. At the moment there is a submission gone
13 into the film board and the film board are taking submissions for anybody in the country who
14 wants to provide these levels of facilities. And on the basis of those submissions which are now
15 going in, they would then, as I expect, according to the discussions I have had with the civil
16 servants, that they'll agree a package.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Cllr Brady.

18 Cllr BRADY: Thanks Cathaoirleach. I would like to welcome Joe and his daughter, sorry,
19 Shelly. I think it was a brilliant presentation there, I think it's something that we as a County
20 Council, if we don't buy into it, we would be abdicating our responsibilities. I think Wicklow,
21 we have a very proud tradition of film here within the county. I mean just up the road we have
22 the national film studios, which you are well aware was established here in Co Wicklow and to
23 have two film studios now within the county certainly puts us on the map for all the right
24 reasons. I think unfortunately over many years, we don't - I don't think we have done enough, as
25 a Council, to promote tourism. And secondly to exploit the strong links to the film industry. In
26 the past I have spoken about areas that as a county we should have such things as a film museum
27 to tap into the strong history that we have to the film industry. I think we should have an
28 enterprise centre specifically dealing with the film industry. We have great people coming
29 through college, with excellent skills, that we as a County Council, if we were to put in place
30 enterprise centres dealing specifically with that end of things I think would help what you are
31 about as well.

32
33 I think that's a local level. At a national level, I think the Government and I acknowledge the 30
34 euro per swear foot that they're talking about there, but I think they can actually go more, further.

1 When you have a look at a key or critical industrial projects, issues such as anything over 15
2 wind turbines is deemed to be a critical infrastructural project and it goes through a different
3 planning process. I think this is of such national significance it should be treated similar. It
4 should be deemed as a critical infrastructure project, not just here for Wicklow, but because of
5 the national implications that can stem from it. And encourage the relevant department to look
6 at that.

7
8 Also in terms of tax designation, when you look at different areas around the country, around the
9 26 counties, areas such as the Shannon region that have been given specific tax breaks and the
10 like to promote specific types of industry in the there, I think Wicklow can put forward a very,
11 very strong argument for specific tax breaks in this field as well. That's also something that
12 should be addressed and maybe this Council can correspond with whoever the new Minister for
13 jobs might be. If Richard Bruton is going to move on to greener pastures or a different portfolio
14 or whatever. I think we as a Council also should look at all the other issues such as levies and
15 that and I agree with what some of the other members said. I think unfortunately some of these
16 issues may well be out of our control as a Local Authority, but having said that, I think they all
17 should be explored. But I think unfortunately, a lot of it does go further up the road, up to
18 national level. Having said that, it's an excellent, excellent project, and I fully support it, and I
19 think anything that can be done should be done to facilitate it. Because you spoke a number of
20 times about pine wood studios over in the UK, and the number of different companies actually
21 located and based there, I think the figure was in the hundreds. If we were to get a fraction of
22 that, buying into the film industry, feeding the film industry or whatever, I think from an
23 employment point of view, it would be colossal. In terms of the pay back to this Council and to
24 the State coffers, it will be enormous and I think it's an opportunity that we cannot miss. I think
25 we are talking about setting up employment hubs and all that sort of thing, economic hubs within
26 the Council here and I think this should be number one on the agenda to deal with, to try and
27 promote and advance it as much as we can. Thanks Cathaoirleach.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Cllr Kavanagh.

29 Cllr KAVANAGH: Hello Joe and Shelly, thanks very much for your presentation, it was
30 terrific. I would like to thank Joe for having the vision and the energy and the commitment to
31 have brought it this far. I am sure when it was an idea, it was a risk you took, you were prepared
32 to take and fair play, that you have brought it this far.

33
34 I would say at this stage that this is probably bigger than Wicklow County Council, and I would

1 concur with Cllr Brady that this is something that needs to, that Wicklow County Council with
2 yourselves and every other State body you need to get together on to promote this. It's a
3 sustainable growing industry. It's a clean industry, and it's ideally situated in the heart of Co
4 Wicklow where we have fabulous locations, and when you are talking about the likes of Disney
5 coming in, this is really beyond any of our expectations, and I think it is a national issue that
6 needs to be taken up with all the State bodies, and certainly I mean we would be shooting
7 ourselves in the foot if we didn't help and support you in whatever way we can, so you have my
8 support anyway 100% and hopefully we can take it forward. As I say, on a bigger stage, than
9 this.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor. Cllr Winters.

11 Cllr WINTERS: Thanks very much for that, for the presentation and I concur with all my
12 colleagues who said they would support you. I think that maybe Councillor Ryan is right, we
13 need to sit down and work out how we can support you and when you talk about Universal or
14 Disney or whatever, I suppose if the IDA arrived into Wicklow in the morning and said
15 Universal or Disney want to build a studios, what support would the IDA provide to bring one of
16 those companies in to provide the facilities? And that's what we should be doing. Ultimately,
17 what you will be doing, is bringing in foreign investment, so I think those are the level of
18 support that we should be getting. It would be the same as if the IDA were bringing in a
19 multinational from the States. What we can do again is probably limit it in some way, but we do
20 need to sit down and deal with Councillor Ryan's idea about being a shareholder. Every business
21 that comes into us looking for jobs would need a delegation on levies and all the rest of it and we
22 have to look at it and how we provide services to the rest of the residents. As you know yourself
23 in business, you can't just say yeah let's go for it. It is a fantastic idea and I do hope we can as a
24 Council support you in every way that we can and we can get you the level of support from the
25 Government that you would get if you were a multinational and anything that we can do to
26 support that, I would like to help.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Cllr Casey?

28 Cllr CASEY: Thank you Chairman, also Joe and Shelly, thank you for your presentation today,
29 I also received it last year when you presented to the tourism AGM and I would be fully aware
30 being in the tourism sector the impact the film industry has on tourism locally and nationally.
31 The other huge impact that the film industry has is job creation and the quality job creation that
32 the film industry brings with it when it brings a film, it's not just about tourism, it's actually
33 about the quality of job creation that the film industry brings to the county. And we have a
34 number of small indigenous companies, special effects companies, set production companies,

1 who are working now out of your studios and out of Ardmore studios, who are living in places
2 like Glendalough. The example I have of the importance of the film industry was going back to
3 the year of foot and mouth, when the tourism sector in Wicklow was completely shut down for a
4 six-month period. The only thing that happened in that first half year was ring of fire on the
5 Wicklow gap road. That kept over 150 people employed of quality employment, of quality take
6 home pay. And we cannot forget that end of it as well, the job creation end of it that the film
7 industry does bring.

8
9 I have recently been elected as Chairman of the economic and enterprise SPC. I look forward to
10 working with you in relation to your proposal. We can do things here in this Chamber. The
11 development contribution scheme is within our right to amend, and change. And we did that
12 only two years ago when we amended the levy scheme in relation to employment opportunities
13 where we reduced it by 30% and gave an additional bonus of 20% of any employment
14 opportunities that commenced within a two year window, so we have that power within this
15 authority here and we can look at it moving forward and it would be interesting to find out
16 exactly your breakdown on what you believe is the infrastructure and then what can be levied
17 and what can be commercially rateable in the future. And the commercial rates, there is ways
18 around commercial rates. Legally we cannot touch commercial rates as far as I know, my
19 understanding is, but we can offer rebate schemes on commercial rates, we can offer you - like I
20 believe that you should be, and maybe you are not paying, if the set is standing there for six
21 months, you shouldn't be paying commercial rates for six months because it's not being used, I
22 am not sure if you are availing of that at the moment. There is certain things we can start
23 thinking outside the box. Their vision is fantastic, it has huge job opportunities, huge sustainable
24 industry to the county and I would support you in whatever way I can moving forward. Thank
25 you.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Cllr Snell?

27 Cllr SNELL: Thanks Cathaoirleach, I assume you were leaving the best until last but I will be
28 short and brief.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Absolutely.

30 Cllr SNELL: I couldn't let the occasion go without mentioning the man who championed this in
31 this chambers for the last ten years or more, Councillor Nicky Kelly, and I know it would be
32 ironic if he was here today listening to some of the speeches or whatever, because he was the one
33 who supported it, he spoke on every occasion, probably overspoke about it on occasions, but I
34 suppose being from your home village in Kilkenny, Graiguenamanagh, he grew up with you, and

1 he knew the type of calibre or person that you were, or are, and he knew that you could bring it
2 to fruition. I have been lucky enough to get a tour of the premises on three occasions in the very
3 early stages and I have seen it grow. I think particularly the people in East Wicklow will have
4 seen the benefits that's been felt around Ashford, East Wicklow. But it's not just even Co
5 Wicklow. This is good for Ireland. And I believe it would be very disingenuous of us to ask the
6 O'Connells to go back at national level. Certainly go and talk to all them people, TDs. But
7 they've come here specifically today to ask what we can do. Rather than kick the can down the
8 line, let's see what we can do. There is a number of strategic policy committees, which could
9 take on board what Joe O'Connell is suggesting here. Let us investigate them. Let us go to the
10 Chief Executive. I am sure he is the same as everyone else in the Chambers here, positive about
11 this. And we all see that it can grow from strength to strength. They certainly seem to have the
12 support of everyone here. I hope everyone rows in and rather than putting obstacles in the way,
13 let's try and find a solution to try and get more employment and actually take a proactive role in
14 this, rather than trying to push it back on members of Dáil Eireann or elsewhere, thanks
15 Cathaoirleach.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. I would just say a couple of quick words myself
17 before I let Joe back in. Certainly there are a number issues there that the Councillors have said.
18 In practical terms, the financial aspects of it, planning charges are set nationally. We do have the
19 power to look at the levy scheme. It's a county scheme. The rates are a little more complex. We
20 could look at a rebate type scheme. But I would - I am certainly encouraged to hear that Cllr
21 Casey is going to take this up hopefully at the first economic and development SPC meeting,
22 because this is exactly the type of project that that committee should be getting involved in. So
23 if you are happy to do that, councillor, I would hope that you would discuss it pretty quickly.

24
25 But just to finish by saying well done Joe on what you have achieved to date and we look
26 forward to the future, and if you want to respond, I will give you the final word on responding to
27 some of the issues raised.

28 MR O'CONNELL: It's nearly 17 years, it's been a slow process and it's been 17 years. The
29 plans are sitting on my desk at the moment. What I would suggest is we should put those plans
30 in. It's a requirement of 70,000 to go in with. We don't have 70,000. We have to find the cash
31 to build those studios to three times the size of what they are to eventually to ten times the size.
32 One of the Councillors said we could get something, a part of what they have in the UK. I
33 genuinely believe and bear in mind I have come from a business where the largest manufacturers
34 in the world in outdoor heaters, we were the largest manufacturers in the world in Christmas

1 trees, why can't we be the largest centre of film in the world? If we build, they're not building
2 new studios in the States. They built studios in the States 50 years ago like we are doing now.
3 Out of town. On land on large banks of land. The towns have now moved out to those areas, so
4 the people are not using - I don't think they use the studios in the same way they'd use them in
5 Wicklow. I genuinely believe over the next 15, 20 years, this could be the biggest thing in film
6 in the world and there is a huge, huge demand. The plans should go in. We should at least be
7 looking at the plans, in other words in tandem we are trying to work out the finances. At least
8 see can we get through the planning process, that's the next issue. At least I can go back to the
9 Tony toes of this world and say the plans are in, they're being considered. I have sent in the
10 plans and we sent them back. We have tripped over ourselves, because we have a system,
11 because you have to fit in with the criteria, because you need to get the funds in with the
12 planning permission. So we are doing nothing at the moment. Let's do something, if we all
13 agree a really good plan, let's get the process going and see can we solve it. If we can't solve it,
14 and we can't come one a solution, we can't finance it. We are all agreed, I think, that it's a good
15 project. We are going to get a lot more out of this than doing nothing.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thanks Joe and Shelly for coming in, thank you very much. And
17 certainly as I said before we need to come up with practical ways that we can support Ashford
18 studios, and Cllr Casey will take it upon himself to investigate that. Thank you. We will move
19 on.

20
21 Item number 12 to consider the Wicklow County Council draft SPC scheme.

22 MS GALLAGHER: The draft strategic policy scheme has been prepared having regard to the
23 guidelines that was circulated by the Department. It sets out the role of the SPCs, the meeting of
24 procedures. And the principles in relation to the appointment of Wicklow County Council
25 members and sector representatives. The overall framework configuration is set out on page 4
26 and provides for the five SPCs committees which were decided at this the Council at their annual
27 meeting of the 6th June. The guidelines say a minimum total membership of nine and each SPC
28 must have a third of sector interests. The scheme is considered by the CPG this morning and it
29 was recommended to the Council. If the elected members choose to approve the draft scheme
30 today, we will publish a notice in the paper of a minimum of one month to six weeks, it will then
31 be forward today the community sector and appropriate contact points for consultation. We will
32 be writing to each elected member to indicate their preference for positions on the committee
33 with a view to bringing back the draft scheme to the elected members at the September meeting.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Councillor Ryan?

1 Cllr RYAN: Thanks Cathaoirleach. I suppose I am happy to propose the draft scheme but
2 having sat on the Council for ten years I am just kind of reviewing how the actual SPCs work, I
3 suppose I would be a little bit frustrated in that I think they could be better. Sometimes I feel
4 that the SPCs work in isolation, and they don't link in with this actual Council particularly well,
5 so probably what I would like to see is if there was some sense that we could give a degree of
6 direction for each of the SPCs as to things we think are important that they should actually work
7 on, and that the membership of those SPCs would come back with a programme of work and
8 policy areas, and really try and look at all the potential that is held within the remit that they
9 have, and put a plan together, and then actually maybe we will have an SPC Chairman once a
10 month come in here and give an update on how they're actually getting along in terms of the
11 plan. I think it would work an awful lot better than the current system. Thank you.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Appendix 2 of the report certainly outlines some of
13 that, and the second item is that work programmes of the SPCs should be set out. Okay. Cllr
14 Kavanagh?

15 Cllr KAVANAGH: Thanks Chairman. I want to refer to appendix 3 on page 8 there, and the
16 appointment of Wicklow County Council members, number seven there of the principles. The
17 allocation of the SPC chairs shall reflect the spread of elected representation on the County
18 Council. Now about a quarter of this Council are made up of women, but there isn't one woman
19 to my knowledge who is Chair of any of the SPCs, and I would like to address that within this, I
20 think it's a conflict of the principles.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Fortune.

22 Cllr FORTUNE: Thanks Cathaoirleach, I would concur with most of what Councillor Ryan
23 said. I do think there needs to be a better link back to the chamber, because I think in the
24 previous regime that - there wasn't that kind of link. Just on page five, item two where it says
25 that the CPG should decide the work programmes of the SPCs and recommend issues to be
26 considered by the SPCs, I am just wondering looking at that if the CPG which seems to be the
27 main Council in the structure as we look at it, if they're going to be doing that, will what they
28 look at come back to this Chamber before it would then be passed directly on to SPCs? I think I
29 said at the AGM, I think that all matters, if they get discussed in committees that's fine, but they
30 should come straight back in here for full discussion and full adoption wherever necessary. I
31 would think looking at appendix two, I think that should be tweaked to reflect that if the CPG
32 come up with let's call it a work programme or whatever terminology you want to put on it, that
33 it would come back in here before it would go back to the SPCs.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you Councillor. Cllr Brady.

1 Cllr BRADY: Thanks Cathaoirleach, just a couple of items there in relation to it, firstly just in
2 relation to the number of meetings that the SPCs hold and the significance and I suppose the
3 added responsibility now with the abolition of the Town Councils, I think the SPCs are going to
4 hold a critical position now in the development of policy right across the entire county, and
5 already at district level in Bray we have been told quite categorically what our responsibilities
6 are, and all policy related issues will be kicked down to Wicklow to work their way through the
7 SPCs. My experience of the SPCs over the last five years, it's a very, very slow pro system -
8 process, particularly when they're only meeting every quarter, four times a year, it's very, very
9 difficult to get any work done, to get anything through, and I think now that all policy issues are
10 going to go through the SPCs, that needs to change. The number of meetings held every year
11 has to dramatically increase, and I have been critical in the past that the chairs of the SPCs were
12 getting €6,000 a year for convening - some of them - only four meetings a year, and indeed I was
13 very critical around that. And issues, I mean, I know in fairness Cllr Behan raised an issue that I
14 have been working on over the last year or so, and it relates to a policy in Bray, in Springfield
15 cemetery where the Council holds a cemetery where it's lawn only, now we are told it's down to
16 Wicklow County Council.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: We are not getting into that.

18 Cllr BRADY: I am just using it as an example, that has to now go through the SPCs here in
19 Wicklow, whereas before it would have been through the Town Council, there is going to be
20 additional workload there and huge responsibilities there.

21
22 Just in addition to the outside sector, the public sector or voluntary sector that sits in on the
23 SPCs, I am not sure how that process, whether it's advertised in the papers or whether we write
24 out to specific organisations. I know there is specific headings there, trade unions, etcetera. But
25 I know, and I have spoken to groups such as Comhairle na n'Og, which are interested in taking a
26 more hands-on role within the Council, how we formulate policy and all that. All organisations
27 and there is other groups out there dealing with mental health, others dealing with homelessness
28 and I think they all should be included and I fear that just advertising it in a local newspaper
29 unfortunately, it misses an awful lot of the groups that I feel should be sitting on the SPC, so
30 critical is the work moving forward that they are going to be carrying out. Maybe if we can get
31 some clarification around that and maybe if a mechanism could be devised that it would be a
32 more targeted approach, I am not going to be critical of them, because they all approach from a
33 voluntary perspective, but some areas probably let the side down more than others, and in terms
34 of buy-in, and that has to be addressed and I think the more targeted approach would be hugely

1 beneficial. Thank you.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Murphy.

3 Cllr MURPHY: Just you know as a new comer here, I think it's actually good to hear Councillor
4 Ryan saying of his experience of ten years that this group really, you know, wasn't probably
5 working to the full potential. But - and I think that needs to be on board. I would have liked to
6 have seen maybe minutes, previous minutes, of these groups, that I can - because I think more
7 about exactly what they've done. We have got minutes for everything else. I think these minutes
8 really should have been received by all of us. Again what Cllr Snell said, we have people in the
9 community that probably are not involved in large community groups but just for example
10 Arklow resource community centre, it's a drop-in centre, and they're open to loads of other little
11 groups coming in, and like how do we deliver the message of those people being represented
12 because of resources being cut in other groups, they're now in kind of under one building. And
13 also this is what I certainly went around web canvassing saying, you know the community are
14 going to have a more proactive role in the county through these groups, and I think we need to
15 make sure that it works, we need to make sure that there is communication, and we need to make
16 sure that we get a report back as other previous Councillors have said.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor. Councillor -

18 Cllr CASEY: Thank you Chairman, just in relation to the number of elected members on SPCs,
19 we are proposing six on planning, six on transportation, six on (INAUDIBLE) seven on
20 community and seven on economics. It doesn't give any flexibility. That's exactly 32. I am
21 wondering could we make them all a minimum of six with a maximum of seven. It might make
22 it a little more flexible when it comes to people's preferences on what one they want to sit on.
23 The way it's structured now, somebody could be put on their second choice.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's my hope that the Councillors will get on to the SPCs that they desire
25 to get on to. When are we talking about putting out the priority question to the Councillors?

26 MS GALLAGHER: We will do that straight away once the scheme goes through this afternoon
27 as a draft scheme, it will be advertised and in the paper, and just to pick up on Cllr Brady,
28 definitely we will be consulting with the community forums that are out there, and all of the
29 sectors are really, they're well laid out in terms of guidelines and it does talk about no single
30 interest group being allowed to participate. There will be a month to six weeks engagement with
31 the community.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thanks.

33 Cllr CASEY: Chairman, I wasn't quite finished. Just in relation to the workings of the SPC, I
34 would agree that sometimes they don't work, but they have been very useful to this Chamber

1 over the years to solve certain problems, especially in relation to planning and they have been
2 there to deal with issues that occur on an ad hoc basis to dealing with and bring back solutions to
3 the Chambers for them to vote on. I wouldn't like to rule out the workings of the SPC
4 completely, they've done some good work when it needed to be, but I would propose some
5 flexibility in relation to the numbers.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Vance.

7 Cllr VANCE: One would get the impression listening to some Councillors that the SPCs only
8 meet four times a year, and that they discuss policy and make policy, which we all know is not
9 the case. They discuss policy and recommend policy to the main Council. It's the main Council,
10 all the Councillors here who make the policy. And all the Councillors here get the minutes of
11 those meetings as well. That's for information for new Councillors. So they know exactly
12 what's going on in SPCs. Certainly I chaired the planning SPC for a few years, and I can tell you
13 there was very few occasions when we met four times a year, when you were doing development
14 plans, local area plans and only recently what Cllr Casey was saying there, we had a problem
15 with windmill strategy that came up at Christmas, and that committee worked extremely hard at
16 that to bring a recommendation of a variation before this Council to solve in May. And it was
17 very successful and it was adopted I think almost unanimously by members. So SPCs can
18 respond. Some SPCs may have not operated at that same type of level but the fact of the matter
19 is that they can respond very quickly and you can get back with recommendations on policy to
20 the Council, it's just a matter of communication. I wouldn't like people to think that you have
21 four meetings a year. It's not right. It's not true. It varies from one SPC to another, and it varies
22 on the particular work that they have to do at that particular time, because there are occasions
23 when you could have a meeting every single month. And there are occasions as well that the
24 Chairman of, or chairperson Cathaoirleach, of that particular SPC would be meeting on a regular
25 basis with the officials outside of that as well. So it's not fair to say like that it's a doddle at four
26 meetings a month. That just doesn't happen in my experience.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Matthews.

28 Cllr MATTHEWS: Thanks Chairman, it's about the number of meetings and I hear what Cllr
29 Vance has said there, but maybe the members would consider that normally six times a year,
30 better wording for that draft, we have lost the SPCs at our Town Council level so I think more
31 work is going to fall on the SPCs, then you have your development plans coming up over the
32 next 18 months, we will be looking at that as well, so I do think increasing the number of SPC
33 meetings will be necessary, so I would just like to change the wording from normally held four
34 times a year and the members will consider a more suitable number would be maybe six times a

1 year.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you. Cllr Murphy again.

3 Cllr MURPHY: No, I never --

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen.

5 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I just want to say my preference is the planning SPC, and I am going to
6 insist on that. I am just putting down a marker here now.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: You will be given your opportunity.

8 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I am just putting down a marker here now.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just on the actual frequency of the meetings, I don't have any problems
10 with six meetings a year. What the CPG committee has recommended is that the chairperson of
11 each committee will sit down with the Director, relevant Director of Services and they'll come
12 one a schedule of works. Some SPCs will have a bigger workload than others, obviously
13 planning has the County Development Plan, the economic development one is a large brief and
14 housing is obviously a huge issue at the moment. So once the chairpersons of the SPCs come up
15 with a schedule of works for the directors, then we can have a better understanding of how
16 frequent the meetings should be, but I can say now they've no issue with six meetings a year.
17 The pillars, we have gone through that, they're set down by legislation really aren't they?

18 MS GALLAGHER: The pillars are outlined in the guidelines and the example trade union
19 sector, they choose the trade union sector nominee, the environmental conservation pillar, they
20 choose their nominee.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. And the balance of women on committees, it's obviously an issue
22 and there has been an improvement in the numbers of women on the Council which is positive.
23 My preference is that people would get on to the SPCs of their choice so hopefully that will
24 address that to some degree. In relation to committees making decisions, the committees will
25 not be making decisions, they'll be making recommendations as Cllr Vance has said. This is the
26 final decision making forum here, this Chamber. All items and issues that come from either
27 CPGs or SPCs or any other committees are recommendations, they can be overturned around
28 this table here. So there will be no decisions made at committee level okay.

29 Cllr FORTUNE: On clarification of that, what I was asking was if the CPG are going to be
30 making suggestions on what SPCs should cover, I was asking that particular section, can
31 whatever is suggested from CPG, can that come back here to the chamber first?

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's the way it's been done.

33 Cllr FORTUNE: I am just making sure. We are in a new - we saw how it worked at the AGM,
34 we need to be sure.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Cullen.

2 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Just Chairman could I ask that Councillors who have been previously
3 sitting on SPCs for a number of terms should on this time move over and give a bit of a change
4 on this, because it's not right and it's not healthy to have the same Councillors sitting on the
5 planning SPCs for 10, 15, 20 years, the same Councillors sitting on the Housing SPCs, the same
6 Councillors on the roads, that's not healthy, I think there should be change on the various
7 committees. There should be a rotation of the members of the various committees to give people
8 more experience, but also to bring about change. It's not good in any organisation for the same
9 people to dominate the same committees all the time, it's not healthy.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, we will see where people's preferences are first and then we will
11 have a better understanding, hopefully it will work out nice and even that people get on different
12 committees that they want to get on. This is a draft --

13 Cllr BRADY: Cathaoirleach? Just very briefly there Cathaoirleach, and you touched on it there
14 when you were summing up, just in terms of the gender make-up of the committees. I think that
15 misses the point, that was rightly pointed out there under point number 7. It says the allocation
16 of the SPC chairs shall also reflect equitably the spread of elected representation of the County
17 Council. It's not the make-up. It's the chairs. Just to point that out. It is a male dominated --

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: The chairs have been decided on now.

19 Cllr BRADY: I am just saying look it's all well and good in terms of the broad make-up of the
20 committees when we are going against what we are actually setting out to agree here. It's one of
21 the key points and when we touch on one of the items here, the five representatives to the
22 Wicklow Kildare educational training board, it sets out clearly 40% female participation. If we
23 can't even set our own standards here in which we are going to adhere to and abide by, you
24 know, really, it says a lot.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Point taken.

26 Cllr KAVANAGH: Chair just to point out there is no woman on the CPG either.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

28 Cllr KAVANAGH: Just to point that out.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, this is a draft, we need a proposer.

30 MS GALLAGHER: We have a proposer from Councillor Ryan. We need a seconder to put the
31 draft on display.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Fitzgerald is going to second it. To go out on public display.

33 Cllr FORTUNE: Is it taking into account the changes we suggested from the floor.

34 MS GALLAGHER: When it comes back in September --

- 1 Cllr FORTUNE: Just through the Chair, some of us made suggestions on it.
- 2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Give me a formal proposal.
- 3 Cllr FORTUNE: I did. The point I made, I am proposing that whatever recommendations the
4 CPG makes that it comes back here to the Chamber before it goes to the SPCs.
- 5 CATHAOIRLEACH: I will do that anyway. Yeah.
- 6 Cllr FORTUNE: Can we take that as agreed?
- 7 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's agreed.
- 8 Cllr FORTUNE: There is no point in us spending an hour here talking about it.
- 9 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's agreed that all economy decisions will be - committee decisions will
10 be recommendations to this Chamber. That's agreed. That's the way it has been.
- 11 Cllr FORTUNE: Well I am not so sure.
- 12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by Councillor Ryan, seconded by Cllr Casey to go out on public
13 display. We need a roll copy or just agreement.
- 14 MS GALLAGHER: No, that's agreed.
- 15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Agreed? Thank you. Okay item 13, to fix the payment an annual
16 allowance for A, the Cathaoirleach of the County Council, B, the Leas Cathaoirleach of the
17 County Council and C, the Cathaoirleach designate of the five SPCs. Cllr Cullen.
- 18 Cllr Shay CULLEN: I would just like to propose that whatever the recommendations are from
19 the Department on the remuneration packages for all three positions be agreed?
- 20 Cllr BRADY: What are they?
- 21 MS GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, allowances for chairpersons are provided for under the
22 Local Government Act expenses regulations 2014, maximum allowance payable to a
23 Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach are set down on the table on page 16 and they were
24 circulated to all of the elected members when they came down. Local authorities with 30 to 40
25 members for a Cathaoirleach, €30,000 per annum. This is €10,000 lower than last year in
26 respect of the Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach, 6,000. And then a Local Authority may
27 pay an annual allowance of 6,000 to a chairperson of an SPC.
- 28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, that's proposed, is that seconded.
- 29 Cllr VANCE: I will second that.
- 30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed? Cllr Brady.
- 31 Cllr BRADY: I am going to propose that all of those would be 15% less than that Cathaoirleach
32 and the reason why I say 15%, we as a group Sinn Fein, are going to be bringing forward
33 proposals around the local property tax to try and cut that back by 15%, so there is going to be
34 savings needed all around and I think this is an area that should be looked at first and foremost.

1 Certainly I would like to propose that each of those, the 30,000, the 6,000 for the Leas
2 Cathaoirleach, and the 6,000 for the chairs of the SPC, we take 15% off of each of those.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, anyone else, Cllr Kavanagh?

4 Cllr KAVANAGH: I just wanted to ask about the allowances, I mean what the allowances
5 actually cover, does that include expenses, and if so are they vouched expenses, maybe
6 somebody might just clarify for me?

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: They're not vouched are they?

8 MS GALLAGHER: No, it includes all expenses, attending meetings, etcetera, etcetera.

9 Cllr KAVANAGH: Are they vouched?

10 MS GALLAGHER: No.

11 Cllr KAVANAGH: Could I propose they would be vouched expenses that we look at just
12 covering vouched expenses rather than a general overall allowance?

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. I don't know how quite you do that.

14 Cllr Vance, hold on.

15 Cllr VANCE: Could I just come in on this, these are the recommendations, we had a similar
16 situation in Bray last week. Cllr Brady is Cathaoirleach in Bray, he will be well aware of that as
17 well, there was no proposal at that meeting to cut his salary by 15% in regard to property taxes
18 or anything like that. So I mean the recommendation - that's a fact, that's a matter --

19 Cllr BRADY: You know what I am doing with my allowance, 50% is going back into the
20 community, I am getting 50% of it.

21 Cllr VANCE: There was no proposal there from anybody to cut the salary of Cllr Brady who is
22 Chair of Bray municipal and it's 12,000 which is much more significant.

23 Cllr BRADY: 50% going straight back into the community.

24 Cllr VANCE: These are the recommendations, they're exactly the same, the SPC chairs of what
25 they have been previously, so I mean as far as I am concerned I am happy enough to second that.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Cullen.

27 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Yes Chairman, is the Chairman allowances taxable? And so I mean that
28 would mean that you would be paying about 52% income tax, so your real allowance probably
29 would be, you would probably be getting around 13,000 a year out of it and you would have a
30 huge amount of travelling and all to do for that. It doesn't seem to me too exorbitant to be
31 getting 13,000 a year for all the work and travel at your own expense that you have to do as
32 Chairman after paying 52% of that in number tax.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thanks Councillor, Cllr Timmins.

34 Cllr TIMMINS: I think on the 6,000 and that for the chairperson of the SPC, I don't think it's

1 anything to do with expenses, it's purely an extra allowance, like a salary, so I don't think it's a
2 question of vouched expenses would arise.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Behan.

4 Cllr BEHAN: Chairman, I have been privileged like a number of people have in this Chamber
5 to be Chairman of this authority and I can certainly speak from experience that it is a full-time
6 job, and no matter who takes it on, they're going to have a lot of expense during the year if they
7 have to get somebody to replace them at work, or take time off and so on. And without getting
8 into people's personal circumstances, it's quite clear to me that that allowance is the very
9 minimum that a chairperson of an authority of 32 members with all of their remit that goes with
10 that job is entitled to have. And they will spend and you will spend Chairman a hell of a lot
11 more than that, and I know you know that, in the course of your duties for the year. And as
12 public representatives, we need to be clear there is a full-time management working Monday to
13 Friday, or Monday to Sunday, nine to seven or nine to eight or whatever. The chairperson is our
14 representative and the representative of the people as well. And I think it's very important that
15 the chairperson is able to devote as much time as possible to ensure that they do their job as first
16 citizen of the county and as our representative as leader of this Council. And on that basis, I
17 would fully support the provision of what the Department has recommended for the chairperson
18 of the Council. And I would also fully support the proposal with regard to the chairpersons of
19 the SPCs, because although they won't be as busy as a chairperson of the full Council, they will
20 definitely be very, very busy and will also have to spend a lot of time and it will probably cost
21 them as well. So I think myself Chairman, it's quite reasonable what has been proposed and we
22 should get on with it, but I want to deal with Cllr Brady's proposal as well because if that's an
23 indication of what Cllr Brady is going to be saying with regard the property tax, Sinn Fein are
24 making a very, very big mistake. Because what you are suggesting for 15% of property tax
25 introduction next year, you are going to have to cut the services by 15%. That's what you said,
26 you have put your foot in it.

27 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Chair, that's not what I said, sorry Chair, if you are going to allow this type
28 of spin --

29 Cllr BEHAN: 15% of cut in services instead of insisting that the Government ensure that the --

30 Cllr VANCE: It's your money.

31 Cllr BEHAN: Sorry Cllr Brady, I didn't interrupt you, you don't want to hear it, but you better
32 get used to it --

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: We are moving on, Cllr McLoughlin.

34 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Cathaoirleach, can I respond to that.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: There is a queuing system. You have already spoken Councillor. Cllr
2 McLoughlin.

3 Cllr BRADY: You allowed total lies to be stated here within the Chamber. I never said
4 anything about cutting --

5 Cllr BEHAN: What?

6 Cllr BRADY: Total lies, I never said anything about cutting frontline services.

7 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Can I say what I want to say please, I didn't interrupt you.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Through the Chair please.

9 Cllr BRADY: On multiple pensions and that, someone on 56,000, that's what we are talking
10 about the Chairman of this Council will be on.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor, through the Chair. Councillor, come on. Cllr McLoughlin.

12 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Thank you Cathaoirleach. I actually agree with Cllr Cullen. I don't think
13 we should cut these allowances, the very fact that they're going down to 30,000 I think is just
14 okay. I have never been Cathaoirleach and I would probably say I probably never will be the
15 way things are, but anybody who has been Cathaoirleach, I have seen them working day and
16 night for this Council for the year and there is absolutely no way can you continue doing a
17 full-time job and try to be Cathaoirleach of this Council, so I wouldn't agree with that.

18
19 With regards to what Cllr Brady said that we are going to cut, Sinn Fein are going to cut back by
20 15%, Cllr Brady, you know, by saving €7,000, I don't think that would even be a point, 20% of
21 nothing. It's not going to go anywhere towards what you are proposing, it's no point using
22 people getting less money for allowances that they actually do need to do the job properly and
23 use it as something in the front page of the North Wicklow Times next weekend that Cllr Brady
24 is hoping to reduce the 15%.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor. Okay, Cllr Bourke.

26 Cllr BOURKE: Cathaoirleach, I am all in favour of economies and saving money up to a point,
27 I don't see why we should have a race to the bottom, being a Cathaoirleach is a very, very time
28 consuming job, I have had the honour of doing it myself and there were many occasions where I
29 had to employ some contractors to do my work for me. I don't think I made a profit out of it, at
30 the end of the day. So I really don't see why for the sake of political grandstanding, as I would
31 suggest Cllr Brady might be for the Sinn Fein camp, I don't see why we should be racing to the
32 bottom when you consider that the allowances for attending of conferences has been cut by
33 4,000 per member, which should go a fair bit towards achieving some of the savings that Cllr
34 Brady is going to be suggesting he is going to be looking for in the budget if he wants to reduce

1 property tax by 15%. I feel that it's reasonable to propose the allowances that have been
2 proposed here today.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, will - we have a proposal.

4 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Cathaoirleach.

5 Cllr CASEY: Take a vote on it.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: We are going straight for a vote.

7 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Cathaoirleach, I made a proposal there, what I stated there was a 15% cut in
8 the salaries to these three areas, the Chair, the Leas Cathaoirleach, and the chairs of the SPC. I
9 mentioned nothing about frontline services. And can I just state, the Chair's position, I am not
10 taking from you Cathaoirleach, this is going forward and I know the work that the Cathaoirleach
11 does, you know, is very time consuming, you are out there representing the county, but it cannot
12 be taken in isolation. It's €30,000 on top of your representational allowance that you will get
13 ordinarily. So we are talking about a position here in excess of 55,000, that's what we are talking
14 about. A 15% cut in relation to that is minor in comparison, Cathaoirleach, the Leas
15 Cathaoirleach and the Chair of the SPCs, those figures have been the same over many, many
16 years, many working families throughout this State have had their salaries cut substantially, so a
17 15% cut in those positions is not a huge amount Cathaoirleach and I think it's a fair proposal. It's
18 nothing to do with frontline services. I will deal with that later on. I will deal with that later on.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: If Cllr Cullen's proposal is defeated, I will take your proposal.

20 Cllr BRADY: There is a proposal there.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: The proposal was in there. I am taking Cllr Cullen's proposal.

22 MS GALLAGHER: Seconded by Cllr Vance, to pay the allowances in accordance with the
23 guidelines of the Department.

24
25 (A vote was taken)

26
27 SPEAKER: I would have to ask that that be repeated, I got caught up in the debate there. Cllr
28 Cullen, would you mind repeating it?

29 Cllr WINTERS: It was Shay Cullen.

30 SPEAKER: I am looking over there believe it or not, I can't see him.

31 Cllr Shay CULLEN: I propose that the recommendations set down from the department on the
32 remuneration packages on all three jobs, the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, what is
33 Cathaoirleach of Wicklow and Cathaoirleach designate of the five SPCs be agreed as set down
34 by the Department.

1 MS GALLAGHER: That's seconded by Cllr Vance.

2 Cllr ANNESLEY: Thank you, I would be for that, yes.

3

4 (A vote was taken)

5

6 MS GALLAGHER: That's 23 for, seven against, one not present and one abstaining.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, item number 14, in the Audit Committee of Wicklow County
8 Council. The Audit Committee has been made up of five people - Tom do you want to?

9 MR MURPHY: Cathaoirleach, the members will be aware that we have had an Audit
10 Committee in place since around 2007. You will also be aware of the membership of that
11 committee, of the outgoing committee, Mr Tom Craigan who has been the Chair and Noel
12 Geraghty who runs a successful county practice, Ms Mary Savage, an accountant from Bray and
13 Councillor Pat Casey and Councillor Edward Timmins. The Committee has been very active
14 over the last number of years, and has met between five and six times each year. Each April it
15 presents an Annual Report to the members setting out the activities in the previous 12 months
16 and setting out its work programme for the coming months as well. Over that time, the
17 Committee has made quite a number of recommendations which have been fully implemented,
18 including the recruitment of a procurement officer from within our existing workforce, the
19 setting up of a Revenue Collection Unit and a number of other strong recommendations. In the
20 last two to three weeks local authorities have been circulated with the Local Government Audit
21 Committee regulations, and they provide that the Audit Committee shall consist of five members
22 and shall include not less than three external members, not more than two serving or retired
23 elected members, and two or more persons having knowledge or experience in finance, audit or
24 accounting.

25

26 It also provides, the regulations also provide that the nominations for appointments to an Audit
27 Committee shall be made by the Corporate Policy Group to the Local Authority following
28 consultation with the Chief Executive, and the appointment of members of an Audit Committee
29 shall be the reserved function of the Local Authority. In anticipation of this item coming up
30 today, Cathaoirleach, I made discreet inquiries from the five outgoing members of the
31 Committee who all meet with the criteria, and have the skillset as set out in the regulations. All
32 five have indicated they're preparedness to serve on the next committee. This item came up this
33 morning at the Corporate Policy Group as per the regulations, and at the Corporate Policy Group
34 meeting, it was recommended that the five outgoing members would be asked to sit on the new

1 committee. Thank you Cathaoirleach.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you. Okay, so the five outgoing members are prepared to
3 put themselves forward again, so have I a proposer, proposed by Cllr Vance, seconded by Cllr
4 Blake. Is there any other proposal? Okay. Is that agreed then that the five members will come
5 back in again? Agreed? Okay, thank you. Okay, item 15 to consider the taking in charge of
6 Cherry Lane nurseries in Delgany. Director?

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by Cllr Mitchell, seconded by Cllr Fortune. Okay, is that
8 agreed? Okay. Item 17, to nominate five representatives to the Kildare and Wicklow Education
9 Training Board. This is gender balance and requires 40% female, minimum 40%, so a minimum
10 of two. Cllr Fitzgerald?

11 Cllr FITZGERALD: I just want to nominate Councillor Tony Annesley.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Can I have a seconder for Cllr Annesley. Cllr Vance. Cllr Cullen yes.

13 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I would like to propose Cllr Fortune.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded? Cllr Kavanagh.

15 Cllr SNELL: I would like to propose Councillor Lawless please.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed Councillor Lawless, seconded by Cllr McDonald.

17 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: I propose Councillor Edward Timmins.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by Cllr Blake. I would propose Cllr Ruttle. Seconded by Cllr
19 Nolan.

20 Cllr MITCHELL: I propose Cllr McLoughlin.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Mitchell proposes Cllr McLoughlin.

22 Cllr WINTERS: I will second that.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Any further proposals. Okay, we have...

24 Cllr KAVANAGH: I would like to propose Councillor Jennifer Whitmore.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by Cllr Kavanagh and seconded by Cllr Matthews. Okay, any
26 further proposals. Okay, that's seven proposals for five positions. Will we take it in --

27 MS GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, the regulations are quite clear in relation to gender balance
28 and it outlines there in section seven where the panel of female candidates ... it's quite specific in
29 relation to two female.

30 Cllr RYAN: Could they all be female?

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: The regulation --

32 MS GALLAGHER: No it has to be 40% male, 40% female and 20% mix!

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay what I propose to do then is we have to fill the two 40s first.

34 Cllr CASEY: The male or the female 40%?

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Everybody then is open to the last seat. There could be three male or
2 three female, but it needs a minimum of two female and two male. We vote on the 40% male
3 first, okay so we need two of the --

4 Cllr CASEY: Is this a grouping now or ... are we grouping here?

5 MS GALLAGHER: Where the panel of female candidates includes two or less than two
6 members deem all of the members on that panel to be elected to the Education Training Board
7 concerned. Where the panel of female candidates includes more than two members, elect at least
8 two members on the panel for the Education Training Board.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will take the male members first and we need to elect two, okay. So
10 two names, put down two names. We will call out the male nominations.

11 Cllr WINTERS: Sorry Chairman...

12 Cllr CASEY: Chairman, can this not be done on a grouping system like all the appointments
13 were done here?

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: I think we have too many nominations.

15 Cllr CASEY: Let's just sort it out then.

16 Cllr WINTERS: I would say at the municipal district last week when we had an
17 oversubscription for a position, what each person did was they voted for, in this case it would be
18 for the five people out of the seven that they wanted, all the votes were recorded and in this
19 instance it would be obviously the top two guys, the top two females and then it would be the
20 person who had the next highest amount of votes. It would be that male or female.

21 MS GALLAGHER: I am not so sure about that.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: What I am going to propose is we fill the two male panel, two female
23 positions first and that the fifth position and everybody who hasn't got a position, will be up for
24 the last position, because you can't put in - the last position it states in the legislation could be
25 either male or female. We can't just elect three males or three females. We have to leave the last
26 position.

27 Cllr VANCE: I think Cllr Winters there was making a proposal that we pick five out of the
28 seven, I mean I think that's a better way to do it, five out of the seven. Two of them would have
29 to be women, irrespective of the votes, two of them have to be women, so I just think that if we
30 put down on a list the five...

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: The problem is Councillor we have four male nominations and if all four
32 male are elected --

33 Cllr VANCE: No, sorry, what I am saying Chairman is the maximum amount that anyone -
34 male is three.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, so you want to go with one vote.

2 Cllr VANCE: It has to be a minimum amount of female two people.

3 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: What's the difference?

4 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, it sounds like we are trying to fill the Ark here. Chairman,
5 could we not ask Councillors to maybe share - two members to share 50-50 like we did on the
6 other committees.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Say that again.

8 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Say two of the members agree to a 50-50 Chair.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: They're fairly stringent.

10 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: There is nothing to stop people having a gentleman's agreement. Or
11 ladies agreement. Something like that would solve it.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: No, I am going to proceed, right.

13 Cllr TIMMINS: Should it not be done on a grouping basis?

14 Cllr BRADY: I agree with that, a grouping basis, otherwise we are going to have the same old
15 same old, that the bigger groupings will dominate and I think there is five positions there that
16 could be equally shared out among all groups across the Chamber here. I think that's the fairest
17 way. Look I think that should be looked at as opposed to a head count.

18 Cllr WALSH: Is it clear that everyone nominated is willing to go forward?

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Everyone is willing to go forward I think yeah. Then on a group of 32
20 divided by five, that's a group of seven, six and a half.

21 Cllr FORTUNE: In our group here, we have agreed.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: You are one short of a group. A group of seven required to nominate, on
23 five positions,

24 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: What you have suggested is simple, let's just get it done.

25 Cllr RYAN: I will second your proposal Chairman.

26 Cllr SNELL: Cathaoirleach, there is a proposal there in regards to, there is two nominated from
27 Fine Gael, and two nominated from the independent group, could they not just share the - and
28 then everyone is happy and we could move forward.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Say that again.

30 Cllr SNELL: The two independents from the independent group, they've expressed an interest in
31 sharing the term on this board and if we got the same consensus from the Fine Gael group,
32 because there is two being nominated from their grouping, if they'd share their term as well, we
33 could all move forward. We have one from Fianna Fail, one from Sinn Fein and I don't know
34 who else was nominated but sure.

- 1 CATHAOIRLEACH: What do you think of that Fine Gael, Councillor?
- 2 Cllr BLAKE: What's the ruling in relation to the legal grouping system?
- 3 Cllr RYAN: I don't think you can share on this.
- 4 Cllr WINTERS: After two and a half years, I am sure you can resign and somebody else will be
- 5 appointed.
- 6 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: You can do that.
- 7 Cllr FORTUNE: We were able to share SPCs.
- 8 Cllr TIMMINS: Cllr Snell there is three in the independents going forward, not two.
- 9 Cllr SNELL: Two have expressed an interest in sharing the position and then Cllr Ruttle would
- 10 have the position for the full term, along with Councillor Lawless and Cllr Annesley. I don't see
- 11 an issue with that if the two Fine Gael would share and Cllr Fortune has expressed an interest
- 12 with Cllr Whitmore.
- 13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you prepared to share with Cllr Whitmore?
- 14 Cllr FORTUNE: Absolutely, I think it's a sensible idea.
- 15 Cllr WINTERS: In order for it to work, say if Cllr Timmins is in first, it would have to be with
- 16 Whitmore and then Cllr Fortune with Cllr McLoughlin.
- 17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you prepared Cllr Timmins to share with Cllr McLoughlin?
- 18 Cllr TIMMINS: I don't think that's very fair to be honest.
- 19 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Why isn't it --
- 20 CATHAOIRLEACH: On the grouping you will only get one position, won't you?
- 21 Cllr VANCE: There is only two groups that can nominate a person and right that's the Fine Gael
- 22 group and the Fianna Fail group. As simple as that, if not it's a straight vote then. Five
- 23 members, five members on a straight vote, that's what it is.
- 24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Timmins on the grouping, you only get one position.
- 25 Cllr TIMMINS: I know that Chair.
- 26 Cllr FORTUNE: How come we were able to -- Chair, how come we were able to share out the
- 27 SPCs, a very senior position within the Local Authority? And here we are on the committee and
- 28 we are saying we can't share them out.
- 29 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's just this legislation is coming from an outside --
- 30 Cllr FORTUNE: I think it's interpretation.
- 31 MS GALLAGHER: I am just saying --
- 32 Cllr FORTUNE: There is a proposal by Cllr Snell and I second it.
- 33 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: In fairness Cllr McLoughlin and Cllr Winters are prepared to share
- 34 50-50.

- 1 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's Cllr McLoughlin and Cllr Timmins.
- 2 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: And if Cllr Fortune is prepared to share with somebody else.
- 3 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's up to Fine Gael, are they prepared to share the position.
- 4 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: To make it a little easier, I am going to withdraw my name, there is
5 enough females going forward and I am happy that Jennifer is on it, so that's fine by me.
- 6 Cllr MURPHY: I don't think you should have to do that.
- 7 CATHAOIRLEACH: I am not that comfortable with that, would you rather share the position?
- 8 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: I don't think there is any necessity to share it, I think it's not such a --
- 9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Simon says -- okay, Cllr Fortune is sharing with Cllr Whitmore, and --
- 10 MS GALLAGHER: Councillor Lawless and Cllr Whitmore are the two female representatives
11 basically. If Cllr McLoughlin has withdrawn hers and then you have Cllr Fitzgerald, Fortune
12 and Timmins and Ruttle for the three positions.
- 13 Cllr BEHAN: The same could apply to two male members. Two males have to be guaranteed
14 then as well.
- 15 CATHAOIRLEACH: That won't work. That won't work.
- 16 Cllr SNELL: Cathaoirleach, going back to the basis that you have now solved the balance with
17 the females, you have two females, we still go back to the independent grouping on how they
18 were elected and Tom has expressed an interest in sharing half of the term and if Jim would meet
19 him halfway, we can go forward. Cllr Annesley --
- 20 Cllr BEHAN: I don't think it's fair to put individual Councillors on the spot. I am very
21 uncomfortable with it, no matter who it is. To put them on the spot here in a public forum like
22 this and say will you share, it's very unfair. I think we should get clarification on exactly
23 whether a group system can operate, how it would operate, who would volunteer to be part of a
24 group, and we should make a decision at the next meeting if we are going to have another
25 meeting in July. Rather than this kind of putting individuals in a very awkward position.
- 26 Cllr FITZGERALD: I think we should get clarification from the VEC because they're waiting
27 for the nominations.
- 28 CATHAOIRLEACH: I am proposing that there will be a Special Meeting on 21st on housing,
29 it's the first available date that the Director of Services is available, so we have a Special
30 Meeting on 21st of July, we could maybe put that item on the agenda and seek the clarification
31 for that date if that's agreeable. Okay. Is that agreed?
- 32 Cllr NOLAN: Sorry Chairman, what time of the day would that meeting on the 21st be at?
- 33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Two o'clock.
- 34 Cllr TIMMINS: I know a number of our group are not here on that day, so we need --

- 1 Cllr CASEY: Take a straight vote.
- 2 Cllr BRADY: It's after half four, I am conscious there is a couple of suspensions of standing
3 orders there as well.
- 4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you withdrawing Cllr McLoughlin?
- 5 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Yes I am.
- 6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Then the two female representatives are duly elected because it's
7 Councillor Lawless and Cllr Whitmore, and then what we have to decide is the other three
8 positions from all the other male --
- 9 Cllr VANCE: Wait there now Chairman. Wait there now for a second. We use a grouping
10 system that would mean that Sinn Fein have got their person elected with only six, Cllr
11 Whitmore is elected with six. Does that mean then that those 12 Councillors that are aligned to
12 these groups then do not have a vote in the three further nominations?
- 13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Under the grouping systems they wouldn't have a further vote.
- 14 Cllr VANCE: This is a grouping system, so certainly there is no way that I could agree to this
15 now, because that effectively gives the independent group automatically one in, the Sinn Fein
16 group automatic in, and then the 12 of them have a free vote then on whoever else gets in.
- 17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah.
- 18 Cllr VANCE: That's ridiculous.
- 19 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: It gets worse.
- 20 Cllr TIMMINS: The solution is there.
- 21 Cllr FORTUNE: We had a solution and you wouldn't go with it.
- 22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Then can I have a group to nominate Councillor Lawless?
- 23 Cllr SNELL: I will.
- 24 CATHAOIRLEACH: I need a group of seven. So we have six Sinn Fein and one other, we
25 need one other to nominate Councillor Lawless. Okay, Cllr Kavanagh. Okay. We need a group
26 of seven then to nominate Cllr Whitmore.
- 27 Cllr KAVANAGH: Sorry, we have two nominations from that technical group.
- 28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah, and you can only vote for one. We need seven for Cllr Whitmore,
29 okay.
- 30 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: You can only vote for one person?
- 31 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's the grouping.
- 32 Cllr FORTUNE: I think this is crazy, and it's heading in the direction to suit a certain situation,
33 why don't we go with what Cllr Snell proposed. It's fair as well.
- 34 Cllr WHITMORE: Myself and Catherine Lawless have been deemed elected and now the rules

1 have changed to a certain...

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: No, no, if somebody proposes you, they can't then vote in the grouping
3 system.

4 Cllr BRADY: In fairness, you made the proposal that those two were elected and then Cllr
5 Vance speaks out, he is chairing the meeting from down there, he speaks out and suddenly it's
6 not on the table then.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: On the grouping system, you only get to vote once. You don't get to vote
8 on somebody and vote a second time.

9 Cllr FORTUNE: Chair, there was a proposal made by Cllr Snell that I seconded. That proposal,
10 I have heard no other proposals.

11 Cllr RYAN: There wasn't an official proposal made at the start.

12 Cllr FORTUNE: I have the floor Councillor Ryan, if it's okay with you.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Through the Chair.

14 Cllr FORTUNE: He is the one talking over me. There was a proposal made earlier on like other
15 proposals, there is a proposal made by Cllr Snell, seconded by myself, that should be put to the
16 meeting.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Ruttle should not be put in a position where he has to share a
18 position. He can stand for a position, he can be deemed elected or defeated. He doesn't have to
19 accept a shared position if he doesn't want to.

20 Cllr TIMMINS: Chairman, I can make a proposal here that may solve it, the two females that
21 have put their names forward, they're deemed elected and then three other groups come on the
22 other three.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's what I am suggesting, but we need a group of seven per female
24 elected. They cannot have a further vote on the other three positions. Under the grouping
25 system, you cannot vote twice.

26 Cllr SNELL: Chairman, would it not be better for you to start with the group that has the highest
27 number, which is Fine Gael, and ask them who are they nominating and to get either seven votes
28 or eight votes and then go to Fianna Fail and ask them and then the other members that are left
29 can decide, and you will also get the gender imbalance right then. Because technically Fianna
30 Fail cannot support a female candidate.

31 Cllr TIMMINS: That makes sense. Start with the highest group and work down.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, do you want to do it that way? I need seven members from Fine
33 Gael.

34 Cllr WINTERS: There is seven of us here, so the seven of us are going to propose Edward

- 1 Timmins.
- 2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Winters?
- 3 Cllr BOURKE: I will second that.
- 4 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Oh Jesus will you come on until we get home.
- 5 CATHAOIRLEACH: There is one Fine Gael member that doesn't. Which one is not - okay,
- 6 Fianna Fail.
- 7 Cllr SNELL: Is he abstaining?
- 8 CATHAOIRLEACH: No he still has a vote, because they only need seven.
- 9 Cllr SNELL: I know yeah, I am just thinking ahead!
- 10 Cllr SNELL: When I seen him getting a few digs from his left-and side I knew there was
- 11 something amiss.
- 12 CATHAOIRLEACH: The Fianna Fail group.
- 13 Cllr VANCE: Councillor Tommy Annesley.
- 14 MS GALLAGHER: Proposed by Cllr Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr Vance.
- 15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sinn Fein?
- 16 Cllr SNELL: I am proposing Councillor Nicola Lawless.
- 17 Cllr McDONALD: I will second it.
- 18 CATHAOIRLEACH: You need seven.
- 19 CATHAOIRLEACH: You need a seventh.
- 20 Cllr CASEY: There is a spare Green somewhere.
- 21 CATHAOIRLEACH: I need a seventh member if we are going with the grouping system.
- 22 Okay, look --
- 23 Cllr WINTERS: Do you want to come back --
- 24 CATHAOIRLEACH: We are deferring this. This is --
- 25 Cllr MITCHELL: Your proposal was seconded by Councillor Ryan.
- 26 CATHAOIRLEACH: This is not getting thought through, I am deferring this until the 21st. I
- 27 don't care if you are not here. If you are not here, you are not here, I am going to get
- 28 clarification on the best way to proceed, and we will use best practice to elect the five members
- 29 okay, whether it be the grouping system or individually voting. We are not proceeding on an ad
- 30 hoc basis here.
- 31 Cllr RYAN: Chairman, it's on the agenda today, it's up to the Council officials to know what the
- 32 story is and how it should work.
- 33 MS GALLAGHER: The grouping system is a matter for the elected members.
- 34 Cllr WHITMORE: Sorry, Chair.

- 1 Cllr BRADY: Cathaoirleach, Cathaoirleach.
- 2 Cllr WHITMORE: There is only two females have actually been put forward at this stage so
3 regardless of what everything else that happens.
- 4 Cllr MURPHY: People are speaking without their mics and other people cannot hear.
- 5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just indicate there.
- 6 Cllr WHITMORE: There is only two females have been nominated so far with Cllr McLoughlin
7 stepping - so technically those two females have to actually be --
- 8 CATHAOIRLEACH: If I could attach the grouping to the two females, we could then have a
9 vote on the three males, okay.
- 10 Cllr RYAN: Cathaoirleach, could I just suggest, at the very start you made a proposal of a
11 straight vote, I backed that as a seconder. If we go for that and if it then deems to give us what
12 we are required to by law to have, is that not okay?
- 13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Are the members happy, if they're not happy we are deferring this, we
14 elect the two female members first, then two male members and then the last position is open to
15 everybody.
- 16 Cllr BRADY: I propose that you - in fairness, there was two suspension of standing orders here
17 for half past four.
- 18 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, Chairman --
- 19 Cllr BRADY: Deal with those, so ...
- 20 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman I think there is a solution with this if people will get outside
21 the whips and agree the solution with people. That's what needs to be done. It's common sense.
22 No-one talked about this before this meeting and they should have talked about it, maybe
23 Chairman you will use your good offices and get the whips together in the various groups to
24 come to a solution before the 21st.
- 25 Cllr TIMMINS: I will make a proposal, maybe I will get full agreement here and maybe I won't.
26 I propose the two females that have put their name forward and myself and Cllr Ruttle and Cllr
27 Annesley and that's the five.
- 28 Cllr FORTUNE: And what about me?
- 29 Cllr CASEY: He is not proposing you.
- 30 Cllr FORTUNE: Are you not proposing me, is that it? Is that the strategy, is it? That must be a
31 strategy.
- 32 Cllr TIMMINS: Is that agreed?
- 33 Cllr FORTUNE: No, it's not.
- 34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Fortune, your technical group, can you propose Cllr Whitmore, Sinn

- 1 Fein's group propose Councillor Lawless, Fianna Fail Cllr Annesley, Fine Gael Cllr Timmins,
2 and the second independent group Cllr Ruttle. There is the five.
- 3 Cllr KAVANAGH: There isn't seven in that group.
- 4 Cllr FORTUNE: No, I think you should put it off and think it through.
- 5 Cllr RYAN: No, it's on the agenda.
- 6 Cllr VANCE: Everyone is here, let's deal with it now.
- 7 Cllr FORTUNE: We won't deal with it now, we will put it off like suggested.
- 8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, I am going with my original proposal that we have -- will elect two
9 females, two males, that's what I am doing, so you write the two females are duly elected,
10 because there is only two nominations, okay.
- 11 Cllr WINTERS: Now we vote for three, now we each vote for three of the five men and the top
12 three get it.
- 13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah, we put down three names of the male nominations, okay.
- 14 Cllr CASEY: We write them down.
- 15 MS GALLAGHER: I have four nominations.
- 16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Put down three of the four.
- 17 Cllr BEHAN: We all write down? Everybody.
- 18 Cllr WINTERS: Just call them out.
- 19 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will call them out. Okay, you call out three names, the two females
20 are duly elected, okay, we are deciding on the three male positions, there is Cllrs Annesley,
21 Fortune, Timmins and Ruttle have been nominated. We need three of the four. You call out
22 three names. Your preference for three names.
- 23 Cllr BEHAN: Call them out?
- 24 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will do this carefully.
- 25 Cllr NOLAN: Or on a piece of paper?
- 26 Cllr FORTUNE: This is very irregular I have to say.
- 27 MS GALLAGHER: You need to call out your name and indicate three names.
- 28 Cllr ANNESLEY: Annesley, Ruttle and Timmins.
- 29 Cllr BEHAN: Fortune, Annesley and Ruttle.
- 30 Cllr BLAKE: Timmins, Annesley and Ruttle.
- 31 Cllr BOURKE: Timmins, Annesley, Ruttle.
- 32 Cllr BRADY: Fortune, Annesley and Timmins.
- 33 Cllr CASEY: Timmins, Annesley, Ruttle.
- 34 Cllr Shay CULLEN: Timmins, Annesley, Ruttle.

- 1 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Fortune and Ruttle.
- 2 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Sorry I have to give three, Fortune, Ruttle and Annesley.
- 3 Cllr DORAN: Annesley, Timmins, and Ruttle.
- 4 Cllr FITZGERALD: Annesley, Timmins and Ruttle.
- 5 Cllr FORTUNE: Fortune, Annesley and Ruttle.
- 6 Cllr FOX: Annesley, Timmins, Ruttle.
- 7 Cllr KAVANAGH: Fortune, abstain and abstain.
- 8 Cllr KENNEDY: Cllr Annesley, Timmins and Ruttle.
- 9 Cllr LAWLESS: Fortune, Annesley and Timmins.
- 10 Cllr MATTHEWS: Fortune Annesley and Timmins.
- 11 Cllr McDONALD: Fortune, Annesley and Timmins.
- 12 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Timmins, Annesley, Ruttle.
- 13 Cllr MITCHELL: Timmins, Annesley, Ruttle.
- 14 Cllr MURPHY: Annesley, Timmins and Ruttle.
- 15 Cllr NOLAN: Ruttle, Timmins and Annesley.
- 16 Cllr O'BRIEN: Annesley, Fortune and Timmins.
- 17 Cllr O'NEILL: Annesley, Timmins, abstain.
- 18 Cllr RUTTLE: Annesley, Timmins and Ruttle.
- 19 Cllr RYAN: Annesley, Timmins and Ruttle.
- 20 Cllr SNELL: Fortune, Annesley and Timmins.
- 21 Cllr THORNHILL: Fortune, Timmins and Ruttle.
- 22 Cllr TIMMINS: Annesley, Ruttle, Timmins.
- 23 Cllr VANCE: Annesley, Timmins, Ruttle.
- 24 Cllr WALSH: Annesley, Timmins, Ruttle
- 25 Cllr WHITMORE: Fortune, Ruttle, Annesley.
- 26 Cllr WINTERS: Annesley, Timmins, Ruttle.
- 27 MS GALLAGHER: That's 30 votes for Cllr Annesley, 12 votes for Cllr Fortune, 27 votes for
- 28 Cllr Timmins and 24 votes for Cllr Ruttle.
- 29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, we are moving on to the suspension of standing orders, okay. I
- 30 deem them appointed, okay.
- 31 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman when are you going to deal with issue number 23, the
- 32 standing orders next month?
- 33 CATHAOIRLEACH: We have to defer that.
- 34 Cllr McLOUGHLIN: Just before, with regards to the standing orders, the standing orders that

1 were sent out to us cannot be considered because they're part of the previous regime, we haven't
2 got up-to-date standing orders.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's up to us to amend them Councillor.

4 Cllr BRADY: Can I propose they go to protocol, there is substantial changes needed. Still have
5 to come back here, maybe if we have a look at it there first.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Protocol, not this evening, not today.

7 Cllr BRADY: No, no.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, the first suspension was Cllr Behan.

9 Cllr BRADY: Can I ask my suspension just so this isn't rushed because it's an important issue,
10 can I ask that that may be deferred to the 21st, I know it's an important meeting, I don't want to
11 detract from it.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will place it on the agenda.

13 Cllr BRADY: I do have two written questions if we have time at the end.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: I do want to launch the newsletter very quickly as well. Cllr Behan.

15 Cllr BEHAN: Chairman, I won't delay the meeting, just to say I am sure every Councillor has
16 representations from people who use the local studies service in the Ballywaltrim library, which
17 is a countywide service and which has cease today exist as and from about a fortnight ago. You
18 might remember at the first meeting I mentioned how the library service had been cut to shreds
19 over the last five years. We seen a staff member retired in Greystones, the person who was
20 doing the local studies is just transferred to Greystones and the service stops. I certainly felt
21 there was a very genuine cause for concern from the people who use that service, and I think it's
22 really unacceptable. I am not necessarily blaming the management here, I know it's a question
23 of getting permission for staff. But I would like to express my own concern and support for
24 those people who feel very badly done by the services, and I would like to ask what has
25 happened in the last week, has there been any efforts to improve it or any success from the
26 department in terms of appointing a replacement member of staff?

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, manager do you want to respond to that? I don't want to go around
28 the house on this now, Cllr Behan has made the point, it's just a suspension.

29 Cllr MITCHELL: And also Greystones is shut on Fridays, that's what I want to bring into this.

30 Mr SHEEHY: We have made a submission to the Department of the Environment. I know that
31 they're examining it at the moment. The library Council will need to be involved in that
32 consideration, and I understand that will happen. And we will follow it up vigorously with the
33 Department, we have no indication yet of what the likely response is. But the filling of all
34 vacancies has to be approved in advance by the Department before we can proceed.

1 Cllr BEHAN: Could I suggest that we contact the TDs and ask them for their support in this
2 matter as it appears to be a national decision, which is depriving the county of a have I important
3 service?

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah, it's greed we contact the TDs for support on this, because it is a big
5 issue.

6 Cllr MURPHY: Just through the Chair, can I just say I actually contacted three of them and one
7 only replied back to me and it was TD Andrew Doyle, and he put a question in the night before,
8 and he is waiting on an answer to that, but I do feel we really need to lobby our TDs.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Brady, that item is going on the 21st, the other one was - who
10 was the third suspension. Cllr Bourke.

11 Cllr BOURKE: It's in relation to the leak at Templarainey yesterday, the water mains bursting
12 and the fact that Irish Water said they couldn't fix it for another 24 hours basically. We are lucky
13 we got Cllr Fitzgerald to get some of the staff from the old Town Council out to fix it, but we
14 need clarity on what way this is going to be handled in the future, because it's going to affect
15 every Councillor from now on when we have burst water mains out of hours. It's unacceptable
16 that Irish Water still don't have an emergency call out service for Co Wicklow, and four other
17 counties. I think the Council should be taking a very strong stance on this issue.

18 Cllr FITZGERALD: This is the fourth time in the last two weeks we have had serious water
19 leaks in Arklow. Yesterday morning's leak would have equated to 700 cubic metres of water
20 which is 150,000 gallons, had it not be corrected yesterday, we would have a factory closed this
21 morning with almost 100 employees because of the water levels. And if - only for the work
22 yesterday morning of a Council official who came out and seen the seriousness of the situation,
23 but for someone to say to you on the phone, I don't know what the word is, but no service until
24 tomorrow, and oh but we have got a service in Tipperary, so there is only five left. I understood
25 when we were meeting Irish Water last week, the Chief Executive and there would have been
26 some discussions on that, because it's not good enough at 9.30 or 9 o'clock on a Sunday morning
27 that thousands of gallons flowing down the main road and to be told by Irish Water, sorry leave
28 it until tomorrow. Ring newspaper the morning and we will come back to you. In the meantime,
29 they're there to conserve water, this is the story, improve the system. And they're prepared to let
30 roughly 700 cubic metres of water, or 150,000 gallons. This has happened four times in the past
31 few weeks. It's not good enough. The system is not working after hours. In every our county
32 with the exception of five at this stage, there is an after hours number. It needs to be sorted out
33 quickly.

34 Cllr FORTUNE: Sorry Chair, can we talk about this on 21st again please and have it on the

1 agenda?

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: We actually need a discussion on Irish Water?

3 Cllr BRADY: We need Irish Water here in fairness.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: The Manager has met with senior officials, so we will have it placed on
5 the agenda and see if we can get somebody here. Go ahead Michael.

6 MICHAEL: Caretakers work on a seven day basis, any issues with supply, etcetera, that are
7 evident during inspections on the seven days are dealt with and any of these that are evident
8 from checking reservoir levels and so on, they're always dealt with. And there have been
9 numerous issues over the years, where if extra help is needed, our Council staff always come out
10 and I have often been here in the chamber thanking staff for coming out to solve any issues that
11 arise.

12

13 Now as such, we don't have an emergency number at the weekend. If you ring up Irish Water at
14 the weekend, you are told that - if the thing is urgent, which I always consider if people ring up
15 about water, it's normally urgent anyway, that's just to contact, as you did before, you can
16 contact the Local Authority and you contact the caretaker and the caretaker will solve the
17 problem. No change has happened from there. That's basically what's happening at the moment.
18 That's what would have happened. I wasn't aware of the Arklow situation yesterday. That was
19 dealt with --

20 Cllr FITZGERALD: Maybe that should be relayed to the staff because I contacted people and
21 there was no movement, so maybe it should be relayed to the staff on the ground, and there was
22 a staff member on the ground that came out eventually and did a good job and they were there
23 for eight hours. It's not happening, there is a breakdown in communication.

24 Cllr BOURKE: I would be concerned about that, if that staff member had been on holidays
25 yesterday, that water would still be flowing.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: We are going to have a lengthier discussion on this Pat, I need your
27 indulgence very quick.

28 COUNCILLOR: Cathaoirleach, a small village in rural South Wicklow, Annacurra has been
29 without water for five weekends out of six. When I contacted Irish Water, I was told they'd deal
30 with it on the next working day. Five weekends out of six is a bit much.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: This warrants a discussion, we can't just whizz through this in the last
32 five or ten minutes of a meeting, so we will have a better discussion on Irish Water in general.
33 Just very quickly, number 18, can we get the municipal area of Bray to nominate the three
34 members.

1 Cllr BRADY: In fairness Cathaoirleach, I have two written questions there that I think should
2 have been taken yes.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: If you agree to the three members being nominated.

4 Cllr BRADY: Yeah, yeah.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: And we need the Baltinglass municipal area to nominate somebody for
6 the drugs task force, can they do that at the Baltinglass - Cllr Doran, the bought glasses
7 municipal -- okay, thanks. The answers to the two written questions.

8 MS GALLAGHER: Can I get a proposer and seconder to ratify item 20?

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by Cllr Snell. I will second that.

10 Cllr RYAN: I think one of those people, Cllr Thornhill shouldn't be - can he step down from
11 that position.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Thornhill are you withdrawing from Bray tourism?

13 Cllr THORNHILL: That's correct.

14 MS GALLAGHER: We go back to the municipal district. And the Annual Report, just quickly
15 the Annual Report, proposer and seconder, just to move on.

16 Cllr BRADY: Sorry Cathaoirleach, just briefly on that, the Annual Report, my details -- phone
17 number and details are wrong on that, it won't have any impact now, but maybe if it could be
18 checked.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by Cllr Blake and seconded by myself.

20 MS GALLAGHER: And the Annual Financial Statement.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Last item, Annual Financial Statement. Proposed.

22 Cllr BEHAN: Hold on Chairman, there is a lot needs to be discussed about that.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, that's deferred. I will let in Michael then on the newsletter.

24 MICHAEL: Some of the members may recall years ago we had a newsletter and printed roughly
25 four times a year with the seasons. We haven't had one since 2009, so the team has been
26 reconfigured and we are going to produce four a year, we have the first one distribute today you
27 there, focused on the elections and the new municipal districts and the brief history of the Town
28 Councils. A few very small words, there is no voting required in this, so it will be very quick. I
29 am chairing the committee of the newsletter, Karen Doyle, Jackie, Lisa O'Brien, we see this as a
30 welcome opportunity for us to get a good message out, and not all the things you normally hear
31 about. It's done through partnership, so again partnership asks us to relaunch and we have
32 agreed to do that, we are going to distribute it to 35,000 households in the county, we are also
33 going to make it available in our offices, etcetera. All designed in-house by our IT section, we
34 are going to spread the funding across all sections and printed locally by Colm O'Brien of

1 Wicklow Print Solutions. Any ideas that the members have for future editions, just let us know,
2 and we are also going to work on a staff newsletter for the purposes of the staff inside. My
3 apologies to Councillor Pat Fitzgerald, I know we put his phone number down wrong, it looks
4 like Pat Kennedy and Pat Fitzgerald are sharing a phone, they're not, that's a mistake.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Michael. Well done to everybody involved. All right. Jackie
6 and Karen and everybody involved. Just finally the --

7 Cllr MURPHY: Just through the Chair, can I say it's absolutely a tribute to the team that has
8 done it and I think all our mottos, through the election and through the first meeting here in the
9 chamber was communication, and to see it coming through the front door of every household, I
10 think it's a new sign of hope.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks.

12 Cllr BRADY: Chairman, I have a written question down.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: We will circulate the answers to you Councillor, we have run out of time.
14 We will send the answers to you.

15 Cllr BRADY: Circulate them, but if they can be read into the minutes of the meeting on 21st as
16 well.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Fair enough.

18 Cllr BRADY: Circulate them in the meantime.

19 MS GALLAGHER: Do you want me to carry them forward?

20 Cllr BRADY: I would like to know the answers as well.

21

22 Meeting concluded

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