

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



Wicklow County Council
COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL MHANTAIN

Transcript of the County Council Meeting Held on 13 June 2016 In the County Council Chamber, Wicklow



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



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7 Wicklow County Council meeting 13th June 2016:

8
9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay members good morning everybody, thanks a million for being here
10 for the early start of 11.30. Let's just start with sympathies please.

11 MS GALLAGHER: Yes Cathaoirleach, the repose of the soul of Bridie Culkin mother of Tom
12 recently retired general services supervisor in Tinahely area, grandmother to Emma Culkin, also
13 Kathleen Leeson and Gerry O'Carroll brother-in-law of Liam Fitzpatrick.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay other sympathies now, people indicated a few things? Cllr
15 Matthews?

16 Cllr MATTHEWS: Chairman just a vote of sympathy for Liam Doyle of Greystones who
17 passed away late last week, and our sympathies to his son and daughter, Declan and Lisa.
18 Thanks Chairman.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllrs Walsh, Nolan or Lawless, any sympathies in those?

20 Cllr LAWLESS: Just on behalf of the Sinn Fein party, just to send our condolences to the
21 people in Orlando with the tragedy that happened yesterday with killing of 50 people and also
22 the 50 victims, 53 victims that were injured as well, I think maybe we should send our
23 condolences over to them on behalf of the county.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Walsh? All sympathy?

25 Cllr WALSH: It is indeed. Just to express sympathies to the family of David Nolan who died,
26 David Noble who died tragically, from Greystones, David ran the Henry and Rose fast food
27 outlet in Kilcoole with his dad John, well known family from Greystones, his grandmother Kitty
28 is a neighbour of mine, just his funeral mass takes place this morning. Also the family of, since
29 it's our last meeting here, the family of John Glynn former chairperson of the GAA club, his
30 grandson Gavin died tragically two years ago thank you.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Nolan?

32 Cllr NOLAN: Yes, I've been requested by several people to express sympathies again to the 50
33 people who perished in Orlando Florida and I've been asked that this county send a letter of
34 sympathy to the Embassy of the USA and set up a book of condolences at the county buildings

1 and municipal offices if that was possible?

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm happy to do that is that agreed? Okay fine.

3 Cllr RUTTLE: I'd like to propose a vote of sympathy for Bootman family in Blessington, for the
4 repose of soul of Jack, a larger than life figure, he contributed hugely to raising the level of
5 awareness of Wicklow and also at all levels, it's hard to believe himself and Peter Keogh passed
6 away within weeks of each other. So our sympathy to Nuala and all the family. Thank you.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay members, we'll stand.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: I think it was good news that we got the blue flag back for south beach in
9 Wicklow, so well done to all involved in that.

10

11 Item number 1 on the agenda is confirm and sign -- sorry Cllr O'Connor?

12 Cllr O'CONNOR: Thank you very much I'd like to ask for standing orders to be suspended
13 today to discuss the ongoing homeless situation in Bray. I think there was two men originally
14 involved in this protest outside the Council offices, and a number of tents have been set up.

15

16 One of the men has secured temporary accommodation thankfully, the other man unfortunately,
17 Tom Donnelly, is still there. He is a homeless man who suffers from depression, and I think the
18 situation has been going on for almost 40 days and nights at this stage. It's not good for
19 Mr Donnelly, not good for Bray Town or for the Council, so I'd ask that we have a proper
20 discussion of the issue today and try to bring it to a head and sort the situation out.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Do you have a seconder for that?

22 Cllr LAWLESS: I second it.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Obviously you know my position in terms of suspension of standing
24 orders, it's not allowing Council gets its business done, every meeting there seem to be
25 suspensions of standing orders, I ask the members to be cognisant of that, if we want to get the
26 work done.

27 Cllr O'CONNOR: I appreciate that very much Cathaoirleach, I did try to have standing orders
28 suspended a month ago to discuss this.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sure but it seemed to resolve itself. Cllr Snell?

30 Cllr SNELL: Thanks Cathaoirleach, again I appreciate what you are trying to do in regards to
31 starting the meeting early and get through the backlog that's from, maybe if it was any help to the
32 chambers we do have a special housing SPC meeting tomorrow at half past two. And as
33 Cathaoirleach, I suppose I would offer an invitation to any member here, if they want to come to
34 that meeting tomorrow afternoon, and there is a presentation on homelessness, it's on the agenda

1 and that might, rather than have it here, in an open forum, all members can come to that if they
2 want, I'll send that invitation out.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Vance?

4 Cllr VANCE: Chairman I think that's a better idea from Cllr Snell, that's where it should be
5 discussed as well, because it is an issue out there. But what is an issue out there is the general
6 housing situation, and the people who are on the housing list 10 and 12 years, that they're
7 waiting 10 and 12 years for accommodation, in the homeless situation, these are people that
8 seem to be forgotten by a lot of people in regard to it, because of the position of the homeless. I
9 think maybe Cllr Snell will have a full discussion on that as well, I think it's something that crops
10 up with me all the time, it crops up with other members, I'm sure as well, that people that are on
11 the housing list for a long period of time feel that they are not being discussed, and their issues
12 certainly respect being seriously considered as well in the whole homeless issue.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Blake?

14 Cllr BLAKE: I certainly agree with Cllr Vance in regard to the issue of homelessness in the
15 county, not just Wicklow, but probably the greater Dublin area and probably north Wicklow
16 suffers more than any part of County Wicklow in that regard, and the issues in regard to Bray in
17 numerous occasions but I compliment Cllr Snell on his commitment and the work he has done in
18 the housing SPC as chair of that particular committee, and his efforts to address the whole issue.
19 So I would agree with Cllr Snell on this.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Fitzgerald?

21 Cllr FITZGERALD: I agree with what the other two councillors said I would be delighted to
22 attend the housing SPC meeting tomorrow, I don't know what time it's at, half two. I think that's
23 where we should discuss the matter, because there is a general issue of homelessness throughout
24 the county and Cllr O'Connor indicated an issue in Bray, there are other issues elsewhere, and
25 maybe that's where we should discuss it tomorrow. I welcome that invitation from the Chairman
26 of the housing SPC.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr O'Connor, are you okay with that?

28 Cllr O'CONNOR: Well as long as I would be offered a chance to speak at the meeting and that
29 we actually address this particular issue, if that was the case certainly?

30 Cllr SNELL: Thanks Cathaoirleach, the agenda was sent out, it is an item on the agenda, we
31 also have a presentation from Vicky Harris from the Dublin Simon Community, at that SPC
32 tomorrow, so it is, and everyone is entitled to speak, and will be allowed speak.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: All right great thank you very much for that. Okay item 1 on the agenda
34 confirm and sign minutes of the Special Meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday

1 14th March 2016 proposer? Seconder.

2

3 Item 2 to confirm and sign minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Wicklow County Council held on
4 4th April 2016? Cllr Snell, Cllr Kavanagh -- did you come up there?

5 Cllr KAVANAGH: Sorry I see my name is recorded as "P Kavanagh" in the minutes, if it could
6 be amended.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Absolutely. Sorry about that. Item number 3 to consider the disposing of
8 350 square metres or thereabouts of land at Castle Avenue transfers to William and Philis
9 Kavanagh, can I have a proposer? Seconder -- sorry you have a question?

10 Cllr SNELL: Just a question in regards Cathaoirleach, there was a special committee set up here
11 to look at all these disposal orders, I'm wondering did they meet and what is the
12 recommendations in regards to these disposal orders?

13 MS GALLAGHER: Do you want to say anything? Myself, Cllr Fortune, Cllr Whitmore, Cllr
14 Winters met and we looked at all different aspects -- apologies, Cllr Michael O'Connor and Pat
15 Doran, so -- oh I didn't see you there, do you want to, go ahead I didn't see you there.

16 Cllr WHITMORE: Thanks.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: She's hiding right in front of you!

18 Cllr WHITMORE: We met two weeks ago and we essentially just had a look through, I suppose
19 had a think about what our concerns were about previous disposal notices maybe that we weren't
20 100% au fait with, any gaps we saw in the current process was, things like were we getting
21 enough information, what type of information were we getting, is there anyway to expand it,
22 reviews of the current process and we came up with a list of recommendations that Lorraine has
23 sent around and we just touch base with the other members to make sure everyone is okay with
24 those recommendations, then the plan is that it will actually go, if it was to go to SPC for full
25 Council? To the full Council on that.

26

27 So we have met, and a lot of it is just very basic stuff, we'll make sure there is a map included,
28 that there's rationale for the disposal, that that's given the history, because I think probably what's
29 happened, even though that internally that information is all there, it just wasn't being expressed
30 or translated to the councillors and to be honest that's where most of it sits. There was a few
31 specific things about contracts and how we deal with disposal notices when contracts are being
32 formed and commercial leases, and we're going to look further into that, but the
33 recommendations will go to the full Council hopefully next month.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Blake?

1 Cllr BLAKE: Can I just ask is there any recommendations that might conflict with our disposal
2 of any projects in front of us today? Any conflict of interest in us disposing of anything in front
3 of us today, to any recommendations you are making, could it cause a difficulty with disposal of
4 any?

5 Cllr WHITMORE: Not from my reading, I think since the whole issue of disposal notices has
6 come up, there is a lot more information being given out now, I think we are already applying a
7 lot of those.

8 MS GALLAGHER: The disposal resolutions won't go before the committee, disposal --
9 disposal resolutions, the notices will go as before to the elected members, so for today they are in
10 accordance with section 183 of the Local Government Act and all of the information that's
11 required under that statutory notice is there.

12 Cllr WHITMORE: Just on that, one of the things that was raised, a concern that was raised
13 when this initial, the idea of the committee being set up, it was when people did not want it to
14 impact on disposals that were already in process, so it was two parallel processes, so this group
15 is meeting and it was not to impact on anything that's going through at the moment, but more of
16 a forward looking recommendation.

17 Cllr BLAKE: That's fine.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. So that disposal is proposed by Cllr Dunne, can I have a seconder
19 please? Cllr Shay Cullen, thank you for that.

20
21 Number five, consider the disposal of free hold interest in the land of Ballylusk, Ashford to
22 transfer to James Walker -- have I skipped one? Sorry, my apologies. Consider the disposal of
23 freehold interest at 11 Connolly Street, Arklow, to James Greene proposed by Pat Fitzgerald,
24 seconded by Mary.

25
26 Now to consider the disposal of freehold interest in Ballylusk, Ashford to James Walker.
27 Proposed and seconded.

28
29 Item number 6 to consider the disposal of freehold interest at 9 Rockfield Park, Kilmacanogue,
30 to Seamus Brady? Proposed by Cllr Fox and seconded by Cllr Vance.

31
32 Number 7 to consider the disposal of land at Greystones Harbour Property designated activity
33 company, care of Wicklow County Council proposed by Cllr Walsh seconded by -- I'll second it.

1 Are they all agreed? Thank you. Number 8, so this is finally getting to the Notice of Motions I
2 know Nicola will be delighted. Let's start with the Notice of Motions. Number 1 is in the names
3 -- let's hold that on the half chance that he makes it here while we're doing this.

4
5 Notice of Motion in the names of Arklow Municipal District members that members of Arklow
6 Municipal District are "Request the Chief Executive Officer retain the premises..." I won't read
7 the whole thing is there a response?

8 Cllr FITZGERALD: I wish to withdraw that motion, we're quite happy with matters.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: You can do that on behalf of everybody, everybody is agreed? Yeah,
10 okay.

11
12 Notice of Motion 3 in the Wicklow Municipal members -- have everybody read that? Is
13 everybody happy with the response that was circulated?

14 MS GALLAGHER: There is no response, because it's a resolution of support from a proposal,
15 against a proposed merger, so there's no response for Wicklow County Council as such, it's to
16 the movers really.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Does anybody want to speak on that? Cllr Behan?

18 Cllr BEHAN: I would definitely think we should support Cork City Council, not because of the
19 specific issue there, but because it was another aspect of this ridiculous reform programme,
20 which has really messed up the entire local government system in this country. What they are
21 proposing there is merging even bigger Councils into an even greater, super, mega Council.

22
23 I know there is a new government in place; hopefully some sanity will prevail with regard to this
24 whole local government management system anyway. But I think on that basis, that I'd certainly
25 support what Cork City Council are asking.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Anybody from Wicklow Municipal District want to speak on it?

27 Cllr SNELL: Thanks Cathaoirleach, again I think it's widely known that almost all public
28 representatives from Cork have sent out an SOS to most Municipal Districts and County
29 Councils throughout Ireland to get them to support on this, they are all up in arms against this
30 merger.

31
32 We have seen it on our own doorstep in regards to when the Town Councils were submerged
33 into the County Council, this is the same thing, only on a bigger scale. So I suppose it's really,
34 they are looking for support from the members of Wicklow and this be forwarded throughout the

1 country. I know there is numerous other local authorities put this motion through their chambers
2 as well, it's really just to show support and solidarity.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, great. Is that agreed by all members? Agreed, okay, grand.
4

5 Let's go on to Notice of Motion in the names of Cllrs Fox, Ruttle and Nolan, I don't know if Cllr
6 Fox wants to speak to it?

7 MS GALLAGHER: There was a lengthy response circulated. Cathaoirleach.

8 Cllr FOX: Chairman we're satisfied with the written response to that Notice of Motion, thank
9 you.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Great, thank you for that. You're up again, number five, are you happy
11 with this response?

12 Cllr FOX: No.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: That was asking too much.

14 Cllr RUTTLE: Horses yes, this no!

15 Cllr FOX: Actually this motion warrants discussion from the full chamber, I think there's
16 probably broad agreement that during the last budget process one of the things that I suppose
17 irked most members was the fact that 20% of the local property tax that was collected in County
18 Wicklow was then under the equalisation order handed over to other local authority areas. I
19 think it goes against the spirit of local property tax legislation, not that it has a whole lot of spirit
20 in the first place, but for Wicklow residents to pay their local property tax and then for one fifth
21 of it to be taken away, when it has been sold as a tax that provides local services and local
22 infrastructure, and then for 20% it have to be taken and not spent locally, to be given to another
23 local authority, I think is wrong. I think it's an injustice in the system and actually I think the
24 20% figure is a blunt instrument, there are probably counties that could pay more than 20% and
25 probably counties like Wicklow that shouldn't be paying any of the 20% at all, because figures
26 during our budget process were extremely tight. I think we've been very prudent with our
27 finances, so I suppose to cut a long story short, Chairman, I would hope that this Council would
28 engage with the department and the Minister involved, to take and get some clarity and maybe
29 get some concession on it.
30

31 It comes to nearly three and a quarter million euro, well it did last year, and to get some
32 concession on it, because I don't think Wicklow from a budget point of view is in a position to
33 handover that amount of money and I would hope, given that we didn't reduce the property tax
34 last year, that we are in a strong negotiating position with the Minister to try and get some

1 leverage on that 20% figure, and I think we should put together a delegation with the relevant
2 issues and send them to the Department, thank you Chairman.

3 Cllr BLAKE: Thanks Chairman, I certainly support the members in this particular motion. I
4 think three and a quarter million mentioned here would do an awful lot of repair works to local
5 roads in the county, to our housing stock certainly in need of repairs as well, the whole problem
6 is probably inherited an old system of Local Government Fund, of which probably was down
7 through the years of totally inadequate in terms of the funding we got here in County Wicklow,
8 it was based on an old system that never took into consideration the fact of the population of
9 Wicklow increased from probably 60,000 back in the early 70s when the whole system came
10 into process, to 135,000 today in the county, so the whole system that is there at the moment, the
11 Department is ignoring the history of the problems in regards to the Local Government Fund,
12 and I think this 20% that we're having to pay back to the equalisation fund is totally
13 inappropriate and I certainly support Cllr Fox and the other members with regards to this
14 particular resolution.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Mitchell?

16 Cllr MITCHELL: Thank you Cathaoirleach, I certainly support this motion very strongly. And
17 we can't afford this 20%. There are other issues as well though, which if the officials are
18 discussing with the Department, one of which is there's a capital equalisation fund which about
19 10 counties which receive more from Local Government Funding than the local property tax that
20 they received under the old grant system, they have to spend half of that amount on capital
21 projects, which are no longer granted from the government. So essentially it's the same thing,
22 this money is taken from us and amounts to a couple of million a year, and in addition, one of
23 the problems about these negotiating this, each of these applies to the whole country, so it's quite
24 difficult therefore to make an exception for one county, which the Minister will have a problem
25 with.

26
27 The other issue which is unique to Wicklow and which the officials of this Department, of this
28 county should be dealing with, with the Department, is the fact that 2015 was the first year in
29 which Wicklow County Council received no money and no benefit for the supplying all of
30 Dublin's water. And we agreed a paper on that, which was sent to the Minister and sent to the
31 Department. I certainly would like to know what their response has been. And this should be
32 put in as part of the discussions with the Department by the officials, because that is a unique
33 thing and is easier to make an exception to get more money than something which applies to the
34 whole country, thank you.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Ruttle?

2 Cllr RUTTLE: Yes Cathaoirleach, certainly our concerns of the four of us here are outlined by
3 Cllr Fox. It goes back, a lot of this historical stuff the Local Government Fund as outlined by
4 Cllr Blake is a very poor instrument in that regard, I remember a councillor here in the 80s Cllr
5 John Lacey described it as getting fewer raisins out of a smaller cake, that's what it's like looking
6 for a few bob here and there, we should definitely get together a delegation to put pressure on to
7 get some money out of this, because what we could do with three and a quarter million would be
8 huge. Even if we can get a portion of that, so we should proceed along those lines, take it from
9 here.

10

11 I think we have the unanimous support of the chamber for our motion here today. And we
12 should proceed along those lines and move on. I formally second the motion.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Gerry O'Neill?

14 Cllr O'NEILL: Yeah again there will be huge concern within the Sinn Fein party here that 20%
15 of property tax would be taken out of the county. If it was a case I think it should be made very
16 clear to the people of Wicklow that 20%, €20 in every 100 goes elsewhere, a lot of people don't
17 realise that, and certainly from the year before last, where 12 of the 16 million which was
18 collected in property tax went to Irish Water, again the people of Wicklow weren't aware of that.
19 And it's day in day out we meet people who have problems in their areas and their estates and we
20 don't have the funding there to repair footpaths or whatever, now we have to tell them that 20%
21 of that money goes elsewhere.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Cllr Behan?

23 Cllr BEHAN: Cathaoirleach, I obviously support the motion, but I think we should reflect for a
24 minute, in fact it's under stating the problem, because the last government imposed the property
25 tax and effectively people of the county for the first time ever, have been paying two, three, four,
26 €500 allegedly for services in this county. But the government withdrew a huge amount of our
27 rate support grant at the same time. So in fact 100% of this money should actually be given for
28 extra expenditure in the county.

29

30 People are not seeing an improved service because of paying property tax. They are seeing a
31 disimproved service. Yet they are paying out of their pockets every month, or every year for the
32 privilege of keeping a system going that actually wasn't properly funded in the first place.

33

34 So I think the whole concept needs to be challenged, it's very foundation needs to be challenged,

1 all that happened was people didn't get less of a tax bill, they got their normal PAYE tax bill and
2 a property tax bill, we didn't really get any extra money, not alone have we got the insult of
3 having to hand 20% off, but in fact we didn't get the benefit of the property tax full stop, it's not
4 20% at stake here it's 100%, that's the con that was more or less played on the Irish people over
5 the last few years, certainly people are just as agreed about the property tax as they are about the
6 water charges, particularly as they don't see any benefit whatsoever for what they're paying.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Two more on this, it is just a Notice of Motion. Cllr Walsh.

8 Cllr WALSH: To agree with the motion Cathaoirleach, at our April meeting our five newly
9 represented TDs were here in the chamber, this was an issue brought to their attention, I think it
10 received unanimous support on the day, again going back at election time our constituents were
11 of the opinion with the introduction of the LPT that services would be increased and improved,
12 in fact the opposite has been the case, as outlined by Cllr Behan, the Minister at the time
13 Minister Kelly made a statement that Wicklow was one of the counties that could reduce their
14 LPT, so in the meantime his county, Tipperary, were benefiting from this 20% equalisation fund,
15 so just I think that needs to be addressed.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Finally Cllr Shay Cullen.

17 Cllr Shay CULLEN: Thanks Chairman. We are all agreed it's completely unpalatable tax to
18 start off with, but having an extra 3 million euro in our coffers in Wicklow over 600,000 per
19 district, there's no question that we can do a huge amount more with this money, so I would like
20 to just support the motion. As Council Mitchell has said we are already giving away our water
21 source, feeding Dublin free of charge, something that I know Cllr Mitchell has highlighted, but
22 certainly I think it's important that we would follow through on this and I would certainly
23 support the motion. Thank you.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay so the motion is looking for a delegation, will we -- is that the
25 general feelings of the Council that we should send all delegation? Okay. We'll look after that
26 then. We might just send it to protocol to decide who will go in that delegation. Okay. Great,
27 thank you members.

28
29 Notice of Motion number 6 in the names of Cllr Nolan and Shay Cullen, so proposed to make
30 Glendalough cemetery wheelchair accessible, provision of ramps at the entrance within the
31 cemetery Cllr Cullen?

32 Cllr Shay CULLEN: An overview first of all, Glendalough is obviously our most visited area in
33 the county, second most visited tourism area in Ireland, we've recently had quite a lot of
34 problems with parking in the area with the influx of visitors, which thankfully has been resolved

1 at the moment or in the process of being resolved, car parks are being opened up to address the
2 problem with traffic in the area, but accessibility remains to be a major issue.

3
4 We have situations where not only tourism but certainly family members visiting their own
5 graves are finding it hard to access the cemetery. There is no provision for wheelchair
6 accessibility whatsoever, and it's something that I think we should certainly look favourably on.

7
8 Sometimes I feel that we take Glendalough for granted, it's such an important amenity, both from
9 tourism but also from historic point of view in our county, and I think it's massively important
10 that we look at providing accessibility, and I know we had an accessibility fund put aside in our
11 budget last year, so I don't know what the position is with that money, but it's certainly
12 something we should certainly look at, thank you.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Nolan?

14 Cllr NOLAN: Just to echo everything that Cllr Cullen has said, it's not just from the tourism, but
15 a lot of relatives of people who are buried in Glendalough have come to me and said as they are
16 getting increasingly old and infirm it's getting very difficult to access the cemetery, and also
17 anyone that's driven on the M50 or M11 recently will see that signs for Ireland's Ancient East
18 have gone up everywhere, obviously Wicklow's biggest attraction for Ireland's Ancient East will
19 be Glendalough and it has been one of the key tourism focus points in Wicklow for many, many
20 years. I think it would be almost a requirement of this authority, we have a duty of care to the
21 people of Wicklow, I would believe as well into that we would have a duty of care of anyone
22 visiting this county, that would include anyone that may have disabilities or accessibility issues,
23 I think this is something that should be definitely done by this authority, in order to make
24 Glendalough an amenity that can be used by everyone. Thank you.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay thanks, maybe it would be useful, sorry John Snell you came in
26 there?

27 Cllr SNELL: Yeah thanks Cathaoirleach, again I would perhaps just say with a word of caution,
28 in regards to the wording of the motion, I fully support 90% of the motion and I think so will
29 everyone in the chambers, unfortunately we have to be very mindful that Glendalough goes back
30 to the 6th century, it's a huge importance from a heritage point of view, not just to this country,
31 but to world heritage.

32
33 The wording of this motion says that with provision of ramps at the entrance, the entrance to the
34 monastic site in Glendalough is almost as important as the actual tower itself, it's a round headed

1 arch, granite archway and the steps themselves go back many, many years, hundreds of years I
2 suppose, and I just feel that with the wording of this motion we're saying that the ramps at the
3 entrance, and within the cemetery, through talks I've had with people up there, I believe that they
4 are already looking to put in wheelchair accessibility through the car park at the Glendalough
5 Hotel from the back entrance to this, and while I say that the motion should go forward, I would
6 ask that they just delete the words "Ramps at the entrance to the cemetery" because I don't think
7 we'll be able to see this out to fruition, because we'll be stopped by OPW and obviously as well
8 as historical point of view, we wouldn't be allowed touch it.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks it's useful to read out the response to it.

10 MS GALLAGHER: Yes Cathaoirleach the elected members were circulated the 18th May with
11 this response. The matter was previously raised by a number of Wicklow Dail Deputies and
12 reported in November 2013, report from the Wicklow area engineer November 2013 advised as
13 follows, "There are two graveyards in question, the old and the new cemetery located adjacent to
14 each other, the area where the two graveyards are located is listed national monument under joint
15 control of OPW and National Parks and Wildlife Service, graveyards are located on the elevated
16 plot of land which forms the Glendalough monastic site, the average ground level is
17 approximately 10 metres above the level of the access roads, and footpaths surrounding them.

18
19 In addition there are numerous stone access steps and on all approaches to the graveyards.
20 Based on the above it is not feasible for provision of disabled access to the graveyards from the
21 public road."

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is it best to send that through to the SPC just to deal with some of the
23 issues that were raised with that, would that be okay? Happy enough to do that? Okay. All
24 right great, we'll do that, thank you.

25
26 Number 7, Notice of Motion of Bray Municipal District members, they have serious concerns
27 regarding staffing levels in Bray district, the Cathaoirleach isn't here to speak into this. Cllr
28 O'Connor do you want to?

29 Cllr O'CONNOR: Thanks Cathaoirleach, according to the response that we've been given, the
30 Council is unaware of the negative impact on residents referred to by members of the Bray
31 Municipal District. I can point out some negative impacts, John Brady explained to me the other
32 day that he has sent in housing queries to the Municipal District in Bray to the housing section,
33 he sent these queries in three months ago, he just got answers to them now. That's a very
34 unsatisfactory state of affairs. And I don't think it can be explained away by saying that the

1 particular issue he sent in was a complicated one or required further advice or anything like that,
2 the fact is this happened with a number of queries that he sent in, he's still waiting three months
3 to get a reply, this is families with housing difficulties sitting around waiting for a reply and
4 children in those families who can't move on with their lives because they are waiting for a reply
5 from the Municipal District in Bray. The situation is ridiculous.

6
7 Another negative impact is the situation that concerns the estate development officer, I think that
8 situation is also unsatisfactory in the estate development officer is in a situation where they are
9 tied to a desk and not out doing the work that should be done. While I think the response says
10 that the Municipal District has tried to employ another person, they haven't done so far, I don't
11 know how much difference one person would make, but I should point out that the Municipal
12 District in Bray has had no difficulty whatsoever in hiring any number of security guards to keep
13 homeless protesters out of the building there. So I don't know what the excuse is for not hiring
14 more people, thanks.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Behan?

16 Cllr BEHAN: Cathaoirleach, I'm sure members from the five districts would probably like to
17 see additional staff in each of the offices, and I think it's a huge problem for the entire county.
18 The reduction in outdoor staff and indoor staff, particularly in the Municipal District offices, the
19 former Town Councils, and that's where this motion really arose from, the fact that we in Bray
20 and I'm sure in Wicklow and in Arklow as well, and possibly also in Greystones, we saw 50% at
21 least reduction in staff in those offices, and we've also seen a major reduction in outdoor staff in
22 the operations of Bray, what was Bray Town Council.

23
24 The idea of this motion really, as I recall it, wasn't to voice the concerns of any particular person
25 who may or may not be a member of the Council, but in fact to deal with the overall situation
26 that we need further staffing in those Municipal District offices.

27
28 Now I don't recall seeing the reply, I'm not sure what it said; I'm wondering is the reply that we
29 can hear it now please.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Absolutely.

31 MS GALLAGHER: Again the response was circulated to all members on 18th of May.

32 "Response, the following sets out the level of staffing for Bray Municipal District as at the 31st
33 January 2016. Two administrative officers, one senior staff officer, two staff officers, one
34 assistant, 7 clerical, 1 senior executive engineer, 1 executive engineer, 1 roads engineer.

1 Currently a vacancy for a roads..." (Quoted).

2 Cllr BEHAN: Can I continue now just having heard the reply? What Lorraine said there was we
3 basically have to make do with less, do more with less. Now that's not Lorraine's fault or the
4 County Manager's fault, that's the fault of central government, that is more or less telling us that
5 you're going to - people are going to pay the property tax, but you are going to have to do more
6 with less. So we can't even have the additional staff we need, not only in Bray, this isn't only an
7 issue for Bray, it's for the entire county. There was no mention made in the reply of outdoor
8 staff.

9
10 We have a situation at the moment where I think we are down to our very last traffic warden and
11 rent collection service I think is practically nearly non-existent now, I think the person who does
12 estate management officer is doubling as rent collector, that's another example. The whole
13 service has been reduced to a skeleton staff, the motor tax department is down I think to
14 three-days a week and limited hours. It's just not good enough for the people of the town. While
15 the report might say they are not aware that people are not happy, people are not happy. I'm sure
16 they are not happy in other parts of the county either, it's not the fault of the staff, no-one is
17 blaming the people there, we are saying there aren't enough staff to fulfil the functions of what
18 were vibrant, particularly in Arklow, Wicklow and Bray, vibrant local authority offices, on that
19 basis the motion is worth considering and supporting, it's not something that's a problem
20 in-house, it's a national problem I think, that's the only difference I have with Cllr O'Connor.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Matthews?

22 Cllr MATTHEWS: Cllr Behan covered most of what I was going to say, but just to say the staff
23 that are there at the moment, the really depleted staff are working flat out to try and provide
24 services that we as councillors demand to be provided for people we represent, it's not the staff's
25 fault at all, but something we have seen across the country and it's to do with the break up of the
26 Town Councils and that's the core problem here of this, that's something we need to address.
27 Thank you Chairman.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Mitchell?

29 Cllr MITCHELL: Just to say it's not just a Bray problem, not just the old Town Councils,
30 certainly in the Greystones area I understand we're supposed to have a compliment of two
31 qualified engineers we only have one, who is heavily overloaded, this is affecting the service
32 which the Council is providing, and we need to change that situation and get the person recruited
33 who I understand is supposed to be on the force and isn't, it's not just a question of the old Town
34 Councils thank you.

1 Cllr FOX: Thank you Chairman. I make it that that's 16 staff, I'm not sure that doesn't include
2 the outdoor staff in Bray, how does that compare, staff wise, to the previous town council, what
3 was the staffing levels at Bray Town Council? I would like to get the County Manager's opinion
4 on the motion as well, thank you Chairman.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Vance?

6 Cllr VANCE: Chairman I go up there regularly I can tell you now the staffing levels are
7 unbelievable. If you have a situation that, for various reasons if somebody is out at a meeting in
8 certain areas or somebody is sick, there is sometimes that there is nobody in some of the areas.
9 In the area of housing for instance there have been times where nobody has actually been there.
10 This is a fact. It's gone down by half, there's 50%, there's probably 50% less staff in Bray area
11 than what there was. This is a Municipal Area remember, it's supposed to be bigger and we have
12 less than half the staff. It's absolutely scandalous what's happening, and with regard to better
13 local government and various, and bringing the decision-making closer to the people, it's actually
14 gone further and whereas there's a problem with car parking down here, so obviously all the staff
15 are down here, it's full very early in the morning. So I really don't know when we're talking
16 about giving people a better service and property tax and various other things. This has been an
17 absolute disaster from a public point of view and from a public reps point of view as well.
18 Because it's very difficult to operate at the type of level, and I had experience of operating at the
19 other level, I can tell you one thing, it was a much better experience dealing, having people there
20 to deal with.

21
22 And to be fair, the staff that are there are doing the best they possibly can in the type of
23 pressurised situation there, so really and truly this has to be sorted out one way or the other, and
24 the one way of course is to certainly -- I can't see why we cannot offer a full service in all the
25 municipal authorities and maybe diversify some of the staff in county buildings here in regard to
26 the local areas to provide the type of services, surely to God that would save an awful lot of time
27 and effort of people having to come down to Wicklow here on various items that they have to
28 discuss rather than have them in a local authority area, this is, remember that Bray did have a
29 planning function, it had a rates function, it had all these facilities there that now have been taken
30 away, it's one of the biggest urban areas in the country, and really to provide the service that they
31 are providing to the public is very difficult.

32
33 As I say I compliment the staff that are there and they are providing a service in very difficult
34 situation, thank you.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Kavanagh?

2 Cllr KAVANAGH: Thanks Cathaoirleach I want to reiterate what the other councillors here
3 have said in particular in relation to the outdoor, places like green areas and in particular the
4 cemetery, for two years running we've had people complaining about the state of the cemetery in
5 Wicklow/Rathnew and I've been contacted by people from housing estates to say that the weeds
6 along the pathways are knee high and they can't understand why, in an era when we're paying
7 property tax the place has never looked so dilapidated and scruffy, we're trying to encourage
8 visitors into the town and all the green areas are just knee high in grass, so I definitely, we
9 should be trying to do something to get everything back on track, especially given the amount of
10 money that people are now paying through property tax.

11 Cllr FORTUNE: I would agree with everything that's been said, but the elephant in the room is
12 that it's all about local government reform and while we had this rolled out in a big fancy slogan
13 of putting people first, in practice we're putting people last. And we've had no reform, you take
14 Greystones and Cllr Mitchell mentioned the engineer, the other side of that too is the staff levels,
15 we've got very good staff in Greystones, but that staff number should have been increased, it
16 hasn't been, the way the whole thing operates is a little bit, it's like a trick was pulled whereby
17 there was things said that was going to be done and there was a kind of principle behind what
18 was done, but in fact it was used as a way to cut back on everything, we have already heard in
19 earlier motions the cut backs in money.

20
21 But we can talk about this forever and ever and we'll have our TDs here this afternoon, hopefully
22 all of them, I think while we have them here we should grab ten or 15 minutes and raise this
23 particular issue, if not we'll talk about it forever and ever and nothing will happen. So we have
24 to ask them, we need to get to a stage, I said this at a previous meeting, where we can have
25 issues, that we can formally ask our five TDs to address and come back to us on it, so we know
26 where we're going and not just keep talking about it and talking about it, the whole system is in a
27 mess in my view, and the local government is being destroyed because I think the principle of
28 the way local government is going to be set up is good but it hasn't been set up that way, it was
29 all words and fancy slogans but no substance put behind it, the end result is pressure on the
30 system, pressure on staff in the local authority, the whole thing is just a joke.

31 Cllr LAWLESS: Thanks Cathaoirleach, I'll be brief, I won't go back over what some of the other
32 councillors have to say, but it is a knock on affect on everybody's work with shortage of staff
33 even in the county building here itself, like that, staff are working under a lot of pressure, they
34 are doing a very good job under the circumstances they are in, I really do feel as a councillor we

1 really should be putting pressure on the government to increase the staffing. Housing is a fine
2 example of how under staffed and how under pressure that staff are, and the amount of work that
3 they are doing, so I think as a Council we should be contacting the government, we should be
4 lobbying our TDs and saying we need more staff in the county to do better work for the people
5 we're representing here. Thank you.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay do you want to say something?

7 CE: Thank you Cathaoirleach. I agree with the members. Just to put it mildly. I get a lot of
8 pressure from all sections of the Council looking for extra staff. But even last September,
9 October when we were dealing with the budget you might recall that there was a relaxation on
10 staff numbers if we could pay for them, and I think it is tied into the discussion we had earlier
11 with regard to the funding model.

12
13 It is difficult at the moment and you've touched on it all. Water, planning, environment and
14 housing for a major part have been centralised, but anyone that's working or works through and
15 with the housing section will feel they are under pressure, you mention it had there. They are
16 looking for more staff. We have engaged staff in the construction programme, that was subject
17 to the Department giving us funding under capital programme to fund them, but the principle
18 issue for us at the moment is our workforce plan is agreed both indoor and outdoor with the
19 Department of the Environment, we're practically to those numbers at the moment. I would say
20 that we are trying to get through the applications to be received for general operatives, I think it's
21 650 applications we received for general operatives, we know the number we should have, and
22 hopefully we'll be employing across the county in the very near future.

23
24 The executive engineer in Greystones is a position that we have approval for, we hope to have
25 that position filled shortly. It is a matter of funding unfortunately, we have the balance of having
26 staff and then very little money to spend, so it's a Catch 22 situation, but certainly would be
27 helped if we could get some of the funding that's been taken away from us, from the local
28 property tax. I think the members, we had a long hard discussion on the budget last year, I can
29 assure you at management team meetings I am getting it in the neck with regard to staff, but my
30 hands are firmly tied to our financial position.

31
32 I can make business cases, but I have no funding.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. I think my view is clearly known that I think it was a disaster
34 doing away with the Town Councils, actually, during the negotiations for government I was

1 actually quite hopeful that the other parties would make it like a red line issue or big issue, but I
2 didn't hear anybody talk about it, so we have a problem with maybe all the parties in the Dáil not
3 raising this as a big enough issue. Anyway, the next two, there's nobody here to move those
4 motions so we'll go on to motion No. 10. That's the Bray elected, the members of the Bray
5 Municipal District, "the Council acts to prevent further flooding of the houses on the upper
6 Dargle Road", do you want to just read the answer?

7 MS GALLAGHER: Sure. "There's no public storm sewer in the vicinity of this junction, the
8 sewer is in the charge of Irish Water who investigated the problem and determined that there is
9 sufficient capacity in the existing sewer network for heavy rainfall events, according to protocol
10 Irish Water does not engage with the Council at Municipal District level, if agreed it will be
11 referred to the first available meeting of Wicklow County Council, it was agreed to send this
12 Notice of Motion to Wicklow County Council."

13 Cllr O'CONNOR: It would appear that the difficulty is the lack of storm sewer, Irish Water
14 determined there is insufficient capacity in the sewer network, that's one level, that's a technical
15 answer and that's all well and good.

16
17 But what is really astonishing about this is answer is that Irish Water will not engage with the
18 Council at Municipal District level, this is absolutely hard to believe that Irish Water are digging
19 another hole for themselves.

20
21 We should agree, despite the fact that that's a ridiculous situation and there seems to be some
22 protocol there that Irish Water have decided on, we should agree that the Council refer this
23 matter to the Irish Water, if they won't listen to us anyway, it's a public health hazard and has to
24 be addressed.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Behan?

26 Cllr BEHAN: I would agree that we should refer it to Irish Water, I couldn't quite hear Lorraine
27 there, are Irish Water saying there is sufficient capacity in the main at the moment, just from a
28 point of information or there isn't?

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: I think they said there is?

30 MS GALLAGHER: Yeah, it's saying that "There is no public storm sewer in the vicinity of this
31 junction, the sewer overfall that occurs here is from the combined sewer from Fassaroe and this
32 is in the charge of Irish Water who investigated the problem and determined that there is
33 insufficient capacity in the existing..."

34 Cllr BEHAN: There is insufficient? So therefore we're saying and Irish Water are saying we do

1 need to do something about this. Sorry Irish Water needs to do something about it.

2 MS GALLAGHER: Irish Water were written to following a previous meeting and invited to
3 come to the Council, they have said they will engage in clinics, like before, if that was
4 something that the elected members wanted to progress.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Lawless is next.

6 Cllr LAWLESS: Thanks Cathaoirleach, just in regard to the response to the motion, just in
7 around the protocol for Irish Water, they won't deal with us at a Municipal District level, is not
8 really satisfactory, that we have to bring our motions forward on a county level, that is
9 something that maybe needs to be dealt with on a local level. There could be people here across
10 the county, other councillors that don't know the area well enough to make that decision, and I
11 feel maybe we should be doing something about that. It's just not satisfactory that as a collective
12 group in a local area that we cannot put a proposal forward to Irish Water, they are not going to
13 deal with it.

14
15 I make a proposal to write to the Minister and ask Irish Water deal with the local issues that
16 collectively arise from the local Municipal Districts and Irish Water step up and do what they are
17 supposed to be doing. Thank you.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Matthews?

19 Cllr MATTHEWS: Just to clarify, is this surface water issue or foul water overflow? Surface
20 water? If it is it's a responsibility of the Council not Irish Water, that's my understanding of it.
21 Thank you Chairman.

22 Cllr BEHAN: The problem through the chair is it's a combined sewer and surface water pipe
23 and when there is heavy rain there's a particular house that's way below the level of the road and
24 always in danger of flooding when there is a heavy flash of rain. They need a separate storm
25 water pipe that hasn't been done, that's really the problem to try and get that done.

26
27 Now we brought this up at Bray Municipal District level, the procedure is we're suppose to refer
28 it on to here, then it's to be referred to Irish Water because Irish Water won't deal with us in
29 Bray, which is as you said ridiculous. But I think it should be referred back to Irish Water now
30 again if councillors agree something should be done to rectify this problem, that's the purpose of
31 the motion originally.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Walsh

33 Cllr WALSH: Just for the record the same situation arose on bank holiday Monday in
34 Greystones in the harbour after heavy rain there was severe flooding, again at local level we're

1 experiencing the same issues dealing with Irish Water, I think it's practically the exact same
2 situation with surface and foul water coming together, but it's happening now over a period, over
3 too long a period. It needs to be addressed.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay are councillors happy to send it forward to Irish Water in totality.
5 Nicola you put a proposal there forward?

6 Cllr LAWLESS: I think it needs to be highlighted that, I don't know whether it would be of any
7 use maybe we should be writing to the Minister asking him to request Irish Water actual deal
8 with councillors collectively at Municipal District level. As I say -- I have it written...

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Do you have a seconder?

10 Cllr BEHAN: I'll second it.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed? For all the good it will do! You know yourself.

12 Cllr LAWLESS: I know, but we have to keep working.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Absolutely.

14
15 On to Notice of Motion 11 again it's another surface and foul water flooding at Boghall,
16 Wheatfield, so do you want to read the response please?

17 MS GALLAGHER: "Foul water is a matter for Irish Water. Apart from occasional ponding,
18 there has been no information provided of ongoing surface water flooding the Council can act
19 on. According to protocol Irish Water does not engage with..." (Quoted).

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Cllr O'Connor?

21 Cllr O'CONNOR: That's a very similar situation Cathaoirleach, again Irish Water absolutely
22 refusing to deal with the Municipal District, so I ask the Council to forward this to Irish Water,
23 thanks.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Number 12 -- is that agreed by the way? Yeah. This is Cllr Joe
25 Behan, maybe rather than read that do you want to read the response?

26 MS GALLAGHER: Okay. "TII is currently undertaking a study on the M11/N11 corridor to
27 cover a 22 kilometre section from the M50/M11 merge to Coyne's Cross, north of Ashford. This
28 study will incorporate previous reports and studies carried out by NRA, Wicklow County
29 Council, Bray Town Council and Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council. A briefing on the
30 progress was provided by TII and their consultants in September 2015 at which the objectives of
31 the study were set out as follows. Identification of the improvements needed to M11/N11 main
32 line and junctions to bring the section of the corridor up to appropriate standards motorway or
33 express road in design year 2030, regional..." (Quoted).

34 Cllr BEHAN: Can I get a copy of that report Cathaoirleach?

1 MS GALLAGHER: It was circulate to everyone on the 18th May.

2 Cllr BEHAN: I don't remember getting it now. But anyway.

3 MS GALLAGHER: Everyone got it.

4 Cllr BEHAN: Just to, without dragging the thing out, we all know how important this whole
5 issue is, it will obviously arise today in terms of the discussion on the Development Plan, it will
6 arise in the discussion with whatever they are called, transport authority, so I don't want to delay
7 matters except that it is a vital issue and we should continue to come back to it on a regular basis.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah. One of the things will...

9 Cllr BEHAN: Maybe an update on the agenda would be a good way of doing it.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: One of the things Minister Harris, he can't come here today, but he did
11 communicate with the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Transport has agreed to have a
12 delegation, accept a delegation from Wicklow County Council and that will be a perfect time to
13 include that in it. Cllr Mitchell?

14 Cllr MITCHELL: The NRA has been studying this for at least six years having walked off in a
15 huff after the first study when people didn't agree with the solutions, and never discussed it or
16 what solutions might apply.

17

18 Twice the NRA has agreed to do a study to Minister Varadkar, never completed those studies,
19 we now have a study we know, but we have no end date for that study so far as I can tell from
20 the letter read out.

21

22 Also it's -- unsatisfactory access to Wicklow engineers has been granted to that study, they are
23 not being allowed in to what's going on in this study. Wicklow County Council is the road
24 authority and it's essential that Wicklow's engineers are properly involved in a liaising group
25 with the study, they have been permitted one or two meetings on a concession basis with those
26 doing the study, but there will be difficult decisions to take, there will be issues as to what the
27 right solution is, we want our engineer, somebody from the engineering section in there, in the
28 team, looking at the alternatives which this study group -- we do not want a fait accomplis
29 presented to us,

30

31 I think we should be demanding that our engineers are granted adequate access to this study.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Nolan?

33 Cllr NOLAN: Yes Cathaoirleach, just as Cllr Mitchell is the chair of the environment, roads and
34 water services SPC, I'm on that SPC as well, I think every other member of the SPC would agree

1 that this, the N11/M50 issue is brought up at almost every meeting, I don't know about anyone
2 else, but it's one of the biggest issues that I am confronted with from constituents, they are
3 commuting to Dublin and having to leave their homes at half past six in the morning not getting
4 home till half past nine in the evening, it's incredible to think that probably one of the main
5 arteries in the country is so impacted and so bad, I thankfully don't have to commute on it very
6 often, but the days I do, it's an absolute nightmare, it can take hours to get to a destination that
7 should realistically be within an hour away, we're talking about all these studies and studies, I
8 don't think the Leaving Cert students have studied as much as these guys allegedly have studied.
9 Something more needs to be done, it needs to be looked at with a greater degree of seriousness,
10 because I think Wicklow County Council has been fobbed off by the national authorities and I
11 think something more serious and far more objective needs to be done, perhaps now that the
12 Minister for Transport resides within this county, hopefully that will mean there will be a serious
13 move on it, thank you.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. So just in terms of that then, I think it would be useful to
15 bring it up when hopefully we accept, if the councillors accept to go in and meet with the
16 Minister for Transport, that's the only chance we have of moving this forward.

17
18 Okay Notice of Motion number 13 is in the name of John Snell, do you want to read the answer
19 to that?

20 MS GALLAGHER: I don't have an answer to that.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry my apologies. Do you want to speak on it John?

22 Cllr SNELL: Thanks Cathaoirleach, again there was a worrying development over the last
23 number of weeks there in regards to the public relations between the Tesco employees and Tesco
24 senior management and I'm sure everyone in the chamber is aware and probably know people
25 who are caught up in the, what turned out to be a fiasco to a certain degree.

26
27 Tesco, it's a worrying, major concern, because Tesco is one of the largest private sector
28 employers in the State, and they have 14,000 workers working across 140 stores throughout the
29 Republic of Ireland. For a certain period of time it seemed there was a reluctance, or they were
30 jeopardising the goodwill of their workers and the mandate trade union in their stalling tactics
31 and we all know that in Ireland here, certainly we have a lot of mechanisms for the likes of
32 Tesco or any other major employer who has differences with employees, to interact through the
33 Workplace Relations Commission or even the Labour Court if necessary.

1 Really the concern of this was that voluntary redundancy was offered to people on pre-96
2 contracts. But it was more or less take it or leave it. We've had a situation where 700 staff who
3 are still young enough to be still in employment had to, felt they had no other option but to take
4 that voluntary redundancy, and some possibly will find it very difficult to get further
5 employment and won't be able to live off the redundancy that they received, and hopefully others
6 will go on to other meaningful employment.

7
8 But I just feel that with the good working relationship you yourself Cathaoirleach would be
9 aware of that in the workplace, it's so important that there is no breakdown in communication,
10 we owe it to our constituents, I'd say every member here knows at least 12 or 14 direct
11 employees of Tesco, would be more than familiar with some of the people caught up in this. It's
12 come too late unfortunately for some, but there is still over 300 employees who are offered that
13 voluntary redundancy and didn't take it, unfortunately they are at a financial loss, and I believe if
14 Tesco don't interact and use the proper procedures that we have in this country, it will be a sad
15 day unfortunately for the goodwill of constituents, employees, customers and I wouldn't like to
16 see it come to that.

17
18 As I say there was a vote and there was an all out vote taken on strike action, thankfully that was
19 postponed, but unfortunately that threat still hangs there.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, Cllr Snell, do you mind, I've just recognised that the company I
21 lead does business with Tesco Ireland, so for that reason could I ask the vice chair to take over
22 for this part please.

23 Cllr SNELL: If I want Cathaoirleach I'm finished now anyway and unfortunately...

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: But I suppose if a decision is made, I just want to be above reproach.

25 Cllr SNELL: I appreciate the chair standing down, unfortunately I wasn't aware of the scenario,
26 I don't think he was himself. So having said that members can accept or reject it, I hope people
27 would support it.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed? Yes? We're okay then. Are we. That's a brief interlude!

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Cllr Bourke is here now, so the first Notice of Motion was in the
30 name of Cllr Bourke and Cllr Winters that Wicklow County Council make arrangements to
31 install signage at Barndarrig for new M11 motorway. If you just read the response please.

32 MS GALLAGHER: Yes the response is, "This is a matter for the National Roads Authority.
33 Wicklow County Council has previously brought this to the attention of Transport Infrastructure
34 Ireland, TII. And have been advised by them that the design of the signage was agreed..."

1 (Quoted).

2 Cllr BOURKE: I understand those signs are in place, thank you very much for resolving that,
3 thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, great. And Cllr O'Brien number 8 relates to you, this Council
5 initiates the process of applying for blue flag status for Bray beach.

6 MS GALLAGHER: "Application is made to an Taisce each year..." (Quoted).

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr O'Brien?

8 Cllr O'BRIEN: Quite honestly I didn't hear what Lorraine said. I was looking up there to read
9 your response and I couldn't see it.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Matthews.

11 Cllr MATTHEWS: Chairman I fully support the motion it's something we should do for Bray,
12 but we are doing a little bit of work on that at the moment, it might be slightly premature to
13 apply for it, and I'd ask that the members might defer it till we have a little bit more information
14 back and then we can start the application process which is an executive function not a reserve
15 function, so I'd ask if we can do that? We're actually doing quite a bit of work there at the
16 minute.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm good with that. Cllr O'Connor? Happy with that too? Great.

18

19 Okay members, that completes Notice of Motions, finally. So let's move on to item number 9,
20 which is to receive a presentation on the second Chief Executive's report on the County
21 Development Plan.

22 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Thank you Cathaoirleach, this is really about the process of the plan.
23 You actually recently got the chief executive's report on the public consultation, and as you
24 would have seen that's a very weighty document, there is over 1800 submissions, I think to print
25 the names out comes to 53 pages, and is taking quite a long time, in fact the time that we allocate
26 to it ourselves we have actually gone over, such was the volume of work to be done.

27

28 As you can see up there, there are 88 amendments proposed by the Chief Executive as a result of
29 these public submissions, 75% of those are just slight wording improvements, clarifications or
30 technical changes which I don't think there will be an awful lot of disagreement with, a lot of
31 those would have come from statutory consultees or some are small minor improvements that
32 members of the public suggested.

33

34 So even though 88 amendments seems like an awful lot, probably the meat, it will be down to

1 around 15 or 20 amendments. Some of those, if I can dare predict the members will not be
2 taking advice of the Chief Executive and it could be quite a short debate on those as well.

3
4 So I think it's within the capacity to deal with these in maybe one extended meeting like today's
5 meeting, if possible. The members do have 12 weeks to consider the Chief Executive's report
6 and that would bring us up, technically to the 15th of August. I would still suggest that we do it
7 at the next meeting if possible, on the 4th of July. There are three meetings after that to consider
8 it, if we feel there's more than one meeting needed, I think hopefully we'll get through it in one
9 meeting.

10
11 I know one member has said that members needed 12 weeks to consider the report and it is very
12 long, there's 800 pages altogether, what I would say is that there are some risks on that, we were
13 meant to have the plan in place by October and if we go out, having a special meeting in August
14 it will bring us up to Christmas, so we'll be two months without a plan, and there could be risks
15 there that developers might be able to make a case part 5 wouldn't apply in that period, so there
16 are some risks in not having a plan in place.

17
18 I think that with the Municipal District briefings we are doing and we've done Greystones and
19 Wicklow already, I was at the Greystones one, it was a very good meeting. We're doing
20 Baltinglass tomorrow morning; Bray tomorrow afternoon and I think Arklow on Friday. So it
21 does give the members a good chance to tease things through.

22
23 The team are available if any member wants to come in and do a one-to-one briefing, they are
24 available, if any Municipal District wants a second meeting we are available for that as well. So
25 I think we can tease out any of the issue that is are there, to enable us to have a meeting on the,
26 or to deal with this on the 4th July and try and get back on to our timetable again.

27
28 Just on the process, I think most of you know the process at this stage and those of you who have
29 been at the Municipal District meetings in Wicklow and Greystones would definitely know, but
30 the members may agree or disagree, or modify any of the chief executive's amendments, plus
31 they can make their own amendments as well, but just on the amendments that are out there, if
32 any amendment is turned down that's the end of it, that part then can't be revisited so what's in
33 the draft plan is actually passed at that stage.

1 The only things that will go on further public display are amendments passed. So any
2 amendments passed the public can comment on those, but they can't comment on anything that's
3 not amended. So anything at this stage not amended is basically passed. It won't be part of the
4 new plan until the plan is adopted, but we can't revisit any of those items again.

5
6 Members may make further amendments; the SPC meeting discussed this at the meeting this
7 morning. What we would suggest, what the meeting suggested, was that any amendments that
8 members have if they can lodge them with the planning section on the Wednesday before
9 whatever meeting you decide to discuss the plan and that's really so that these can be printed out,
10 we can get the maps done properly, if there are maps involved, we can get the, just present it so
11 the changes to any policies are in red, we can actually have it in a booklet, it makes it very easy
12 for the members to go through at the meeting.

13
14 Amendments tabled from the floor can be very messy, a lot of members don't know what they
15 are about, we're trying to do it verbally, what exactly the changes are, and it also means members
16 don't have time to actually consider them. So we've done it at the last couple of plans, that there
17 was a protocol that any amendments would be lodged Wednesday evening beforehand.

18
19 The planning team are available if any members want to word it and in some cases you actually
20 have to give reasons for why you are doing amendments and the team are quite happy to help
21 you draft those and draft them up beforehand, but I would ask, and I think Cllr Blake might
22 reiterate what the SPC passed this morning, that we do have a protocol that no other amendments
23 can be taken after that, because it just makes it very difficult to process them, it's more confusing
24 and members then don't have the stuff in front of them as clearly as they should have.

25
26 Just to give you an idea of the times, if we do do it at the next Council meeting on the 4th July,
27 we have to have these on display within three weeks so the latest they can be on display is 25th
28 July, they have to be on display for four weeks, so that has to be then until the 22nd August. The
29 Chief Executive's report has to be done within four weeks, that will be the 19th September. Now
30 the Act is actually silent on how long the members have to consider it, apart from the fact that
31 the process is meant to be done within two years, but allowing, be reasonable about allowing
32 four weeks, it means the members could be the middle of October, and again so that means if
33 you take less than that, the report can either be on the first meeting in October or the meeting in
34 November, at that stage the plan will be passed.

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The amendment stage should generally be simpler because there will be less of them to go through at that stage and the public consultation is that much narrower, should be a smaller task. So I think that's most of the issues that I want to bring up but I am available for any questions.

Cllr BLAKE: Thanks Chairman, can I take the opportunity as chair of the SPC to thank the staff, also thank the members here in the Council Chamber for all the engagement they have had with the staff over the last 18 months or so, October 2014 we started this whole process, so there has been a lot of engagement and lot of consultation between the general public and the staff initially and certainly between the public representatives here from the different districts and here in the chamber as well. There has been a huge amount of work done with regards to it, we're probably now getting down to what might be termed nitty-gritty of finalising the County Development Plan, and obviously it's very important that the Chief Executive said in terms of engaging with the staff, in terms of any amendments that they may have, I think it's only fair to the staff as well, that they do engage to give the staff an opportunity to assess any amendments that people may have, or members may have here with regards the proposals out there at the moment.

All you said in the SPC there this morning we had an hour and a half discussion on the County Development Plan and an update as regards process from here on in and how members should actually conduct themselves in that regard. Probably one small proposal came from the SPC this morning, it was an item we had in the agenda with regards vacant site levy, there is already a proposal there in the County Development Plan with regards to how vacant sites levy and the actual law that has been enacted with a small levy on vacant sites, but there's a small amendment proposed as well, just maybe to actually specify where those vacant sites may be, particularly in town centres in the probably larger towns in the county as well, but something that will come before the Council members in the various districts over the next few days in that regard.

So again can I thank the members and the staff for the work that has been done over the last 18 months and hopefully that over the next few weeks that we can have the same level of co-operation and that we can actually complete the County Development Plan in the next few months. Thank you Chairman.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'll echo those comments too about the staff. Cllr Fortune?

Cllr FORTUNE: Thanks Cathaoirleach, and thanks to Des and the team for giving us an overview, we had a good meeting, as Des said, in Greystones, but there was a view as well that

1 perhaps we could maybe slow things down a little bit, to give people more time to go through the
2 whole thing. And we had a meeting this morning of the independent group, basically they can
3 speak for themselves, but the consensus of people there was basically that maybe we should
4 consider moving July maybe to back-end of August or first meeting in September to give people
5 more time to go through it, but again one or two of the group were happy to proceed as is, but
6 there is a feel that perhaps there's a bit more time needed on it.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Behan?

8 Cllr BEHAN: Cathaoirleach I would certainly agree with that, if that's a proposal I would
9 support it. But on a more general point initially, we had a presentation here at our last meeting,
10 which indicated that government policy was going to blow a major hole in the entire core
11 strategy of the Development Plan, we had a full discussion where we were told the population
12 figures, the figures for employment, everything, was going to be put at risk by the transportation
13 authority's proposals, so maybe I'm innocent, but I actually thought that would mean we would
14 have to discuss the implications of that for the entire Development Plan process?

15
16 Then suddenly we're told everything is ready, we're going ahead, we're going to have our
17 meetings in Municipal District, now have our final decision-making on 4th July. These people
18 are coming to the Council this afternoon I believe to discuss this thing, but the presentation we
19 were getting from the officials was that this was a major crisis in the drawing up of the
20 Development Plan and in particular the core strategy, and there hasn't been a mention of it in the
21 presentation here so far today. I don't understand that. I'd certainly like clarification about the
22 thinking of the officials, because I certainly thought we all agreed with the officials on the last
23 day, that proceeding with the Development Plan, as it was with the core strategy where the
24 transportation authority were seemingly saying that for example the Luas would not be brought
25 to Fassaroe, that was a huge foundation of the Development Plan for north Wicklow.

26
27 So I'd certainly like to hear more about that. I would also say to members having been through a
28 few of these processes, members should not forget this document will be the Bible of the
29 planners for the next five years or more. So we have once in a five or six year, once a term
30 opportunity to decide what goes into the plan. The officials advise, we decide. And to say that
31 we should make a decision on the 4th July when in fact we actually could have till the 15th
32 August means we're cutting off six weeks of consideration from the 72 pages of submissions that
33 Des has mentioned, to me just does not seem fair or just to the people who made those
34 presentations and made those submissions. So I just don't see as Cllr Fortune said, what the rush

1 is here.

2

3 I think we should take our time and ensure that we are happy as far as possible with the plan
4 when it's finally adopted. We won't get this chance for a long time again. So that's all I want to
5 say at the moment.

6 Cllr WHITMORE: Thanks chair, I agree with the two previous councillors I think if we do have
7 time, if time is available to us we should make the most it have and actually make sure we are
8 100% okay with what's going in.

9

10 I would also have concerns that if it's a legal requirement that this has to go back out to the
11 public within three weeks of it being signed off by this body, that that will actually, it will
12 happen in August when people are on holidays they are not thinking about this, so the level of
13 public consultation we are going to get might be more limited than it would if it was held off
14 until September. People will be more in a frame of mind to actually address it and to take part in
15 the consultation, so my preference would be to actually take the time available to us and not try
16 go through it quickly.

17

18 If we need to have an extra meeting that that might be something that we can think about in
19 September to meet whatever deadlines that will be put on us.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, so that's a proposal from Cllr Fortune and seconded by Cllr Behan
21 to just, is it to slow down the process or have you got a specific date in mind that you are talking
22 about having that rather than the 4th July, having it on the end of August is it?

23 Cllr FORTUNE: I explained what the feel was, it was on a point Cllr Behan made about the
24 NDA -- I think all things considered I think the view this morning was kicking it around, was
25 that if the meeting was held in September rather than July it might give us a better chance to
26 have everything thought through and bottomed out, all questions answered and hopefully it will
27 fit in the programme.

28 Cllr VANCE: Chairman, just in this regard I think we should go ahead with the meeting on the
29 4th, we should go early in the morning and we should then decide as we're getting through it,
30 what we want to do because there's going to be meetings. There has been meetings taking place
31 in the municipal authorities, there is a few more to be completed by then, a lot of the issues that
32 will come up on the 4th should have been discussed at the municipal meetings in regard to that,
33 there will be feedback on that as well, a lot of the submissions that came in were multiple type
34 submissions I have seen anyway, I think it's possible to do it on the 4th, but I wouldn't rush it on

1 the 4th if that's the case that it's going to take a lot longer on the 4th than what we envisage.

2
3 But rather than be saying let's put it back until September today, let's not see, why don't we see
4 what happens on the 4th? Regard to proper discussion of various items on it? Because I suspect
5 in most Development Plans you will have only three or four items that will be contentious, that
6 the rest of them will be, generally speaking, fairly well agreed by members on it, so rather than
7 saying put it back until September now, when we don't even know what are the issues that are
8 going to arise on the 4th, I think we should go ahead with the meeting on the 4th and decide
9 during that meeting if it's necessary to push it out a little bit later, but I'm conscious of the fact
10 that what the director said there, if it's pushed out that far, there could be a problem down the
11 line in regard to part 5s and stuff like that, there could be, I don't know what it is, I'd like
12 clarification on that, so really I think we have a Development Plan before us, it is possible, if
13 people put in a little extra time and effort in the next few weeks that we can get this done within
14 the framework and give people plenty of time to have a look at it and go through the type of
15 statutory timetable that has been there for the last 18 months in this regard.

16
17 So rather than take a decision now on it, I would say that let's go through it on the 4th July and
18 see what transpires from that meeting.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that a formal proposal?

20 Cllr VANCE: I'll propose that.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by Cllr Fox.

22 Cllr WHITMORE: Just on that, can I get clarification if that was to happen and the meeting was
23 to go ahead on the 4th, and it was agreed that everyone was okay with it, the consultation, public
24 consultation would have to happen within three weeks of that date? So it would actually be over
25 August? So I think that's my main concern, August is not a good time to ask people to comment
26 on something like this, it's hard enough to get people involved and engaged in consultations on
27 these things, but doing it in a time period when they are on holidays or kids are on holidays is
28 not optimal, if there was a way things could be manoeuvred so public consultation happened in
29 September, or early October, I think that would be much preferable.

30 Cllr BEHAN: I take Cllr Vance's point, but we've been told that we're going to get one
31 opportunity to put in amendments, one opportunity. That would be the Wednesday before the
32 meeting of the 4th July, so the only time we can really formulate amendments to the plan, based
33 on public submissions will be in the next two weeks, that's the only time we've got, because once
34 that Wednesday -- these are not legal requirements at all of course, these are being put forward

1 by the officials, but even if we go along with it, we only get one opportunity, after that then we
2 have to basically only discuss what is proposed on the 4th or what the manager has proposed.

3
4 So our room for manoeuvre is grossly reduced once we agree that we're going to set the 4th July
5 as the meeting where we're going to make decisions on this. I think a lot of what has been said
6 by Cllr Whitmore and Cllr Fortune makes far more sense. I don't accept for one minute that any
7 developer could suddenly decide to take advantage of national guidelines in terms of social
8 housing provision, because we're in the middle of making our Development Plan. What's going
9 to happen every other authority in the country? They are not all in a stage of having a brand new
10 plan ready for a new policy. It's just a fate of timing but won't make a difference to what will be
11 a national policy.

12
13 Again I think it would be far better, we could have discussions, I have no problem with us and
14 we need to have time to discuss the amendments, discuss what people have proposed as
15 members of the public, because it is the people's plan at the end of the day, and then we should
16 have September -- a meeting in September as the date for actually coming to making decisions
17 and then as Cllr Whitmore said, quite reasonably public consultation could come after that when
18 people are back and they are aware of what's happening, I just think that's far more...

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay I just want the director to clarify the date, because September isn't a
20 runner, my understanding is the 15th August is officially, is that correct?

21 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: The law is very clear, the members have up to 12 weeks to discuss it
22 and then at that stage anything that has been passed shall be included, anything that hasn't been
23 dealt with the Chief Executive will make the decision.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: So just in terms of that then, the date, the last date that we can possibly
25 have that meeting, if we want to push it out to the furthest extreme would be when?

26 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: The 15th of August. I might have a day or two wrong there, I did the
27 calculation of 12 weeks after the 23rd of May, I think 15th of August is right, that's the last day.
28 After that then the Chief Executive can decide anything that hasn't been decided by the
29 councillors.

30 Cllr FOX: I would agree with Cllr Vance, this process actually started in 2014, it's been out on
31 public display twice. I think the time for new amendments or new submissions shouldn't go on
32 much longer, they should come sooner rather than later to allow everybody to make an informed
33 decision on this, but I would agree with Cllr Vance that if we start in July, we have a fall back
34 position, that if we can't agree on contentious issues we can then have a further meeting, a

1 special meeting in August if needs be.

2
3 So rather than come to a meeting where you have to make the decision, and maybe some
4 decisions are rushed at the end, if we come on the 4th of July and there is still contentious issues
5 that we can adjourn the meeting and come back, have further discussions and come back in
6 August, so pushing the meeting back to August or September if that's possible, it pushes
7 everybody to a sort of 11th hour type of scenario, and I think that's when bad decisions are made,
8 when we're against the clock. So I certainly, I'm in favour of what Cllr Vance has suggested.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just from my own point of view I remember I think one of my first
10 Council meetings that the councillors from the previous five year stint decided to leave all
11 decisions to the new councillors coming in, which was a wonderful gift, but what it meant was
12 the first day in the first Council you were handed this huge document and that meeting went on
13 until I think half 2 in the morning, and it was chaos, so just from that point of view taking into
14 consideration what everybody is saying, I know people are trying to get the best decision here,
15 on balance I think I'd also be a fan of saying let's have the meeting on the 4th July, start the
16 process and get through the 90, probably 90% will be agreed and if there are contentious
17 decisions it leaves us the time to take it up until the 15th August if we want to have a second
18 meeting, that would allow us also mean that a bit of September would be a period for the public
19 hopefully to be back from holidays then and be able to consider it. But we need to make a
20 decision on this, Joe you want to come back in?

21 Cllr BEHAN: The Chief Executive is sitting beside the director, he could simply say I'm not
22 going to in the last two weeks of August enforce decisions that haven't been considered by the
23 members, in a spirit of co-operation that could be said here and we could proceed to September.
24 We're imposing rules on ourselves that aren't actually necessary. As I said before, we're going to
25 get one shot at this.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay so it's up to us.

27 Cllr BEHAN: Can I hear what he says?

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: To be fair he is an acting chief executive -- I don't mean to be rude, but
29 you know what I mean.

30 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Just a few things that were brought up there. No mention was made in
31 this presentation about the NTA strategy, it wasn't about that, this was actually about the process,
32 but I'm happy to answer it.

33
34 We were obviously very concerned that the figures the NTA based their strategy on were not in

1 accordance with the figures that we see being out there in the regional strategies, however in the
2 interim we've talked to the NTA, we've talked to the regional authority and I've talked to the
3 principle planning advisor in the Department. I think we may be able to do this by a form of
4 letters, and what the NTA will tell you today I'm sure, I don't want to steal their thunder, their
5 plan is basically an infrastructure provision plan and they have to use figures and projections
6 based on what a reasonable cost benefit analysis would be and get it through the Department of
7 Public Expenditure and Reform. They don't see that their figures are actually the planning
8 figures at all.

9
10 The difficulty we have is the law is very clear, regional strategies shall be consistent with the
11 NTA strategy. So I was talking to the principal advisor in the Department last week, there was a
12 seminar on the new national planning framework, and I think there probably is a way out of this
13 by a form of letters and the like, I'm to e-mail him and have just a bit more discussion on it.
14 That's the first thing.

15
16 The other thing about Cllr Behan there is only one opportunity, no there's plenty of opportunities
17 to put in amendments, what we're saying is if we can have them on the Wednesday before the
18 meeting. Now if members decide they don't get it done on the 4th July and want to have a
19 meeting in two weeks time, they can put in more amendments, but just to have them a few days
20 before the meeting, so they can be processed and put into a booklet so members are going
21 through the amendments they have something in front of them that they have read already, rather
22 than something coming off the floor and splicing everyone and no-one understanding what it is,
23 you can have as many opportunities as you like, all we are saying is if we can get it two working
24 days before the meeting, so we can get the stuff out to the members before the meeting.

25
26 On the...

27 Cllr BEHAN: Can amendments be on anything in particular, they don't have to be mentioned on
28 the 4th they can be put in separate...

29 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Exactly yeah.

30 Cllr BEHAN: There won't be a restriction?

31 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: No it's purely practical councillor, not to restrict anything.

32
33 Finally on part 5, that's a real risk, because part 5 is based on the housing strategy that's within
34 this plan. The current housing strategy will lapse in October, and if we have a meeting in

1 September that means that the plan won't be probably operational till the new year and there is a
2 risk, because if a developer has to give out a fair portion of houses in a development it might be
3 worth a trip to the High Court, because things like this, you actually can win on.

4
5 We've had challenges in part 5 before on valuations and all sorts of things. This is a real risk,
6 not just something pulled out of a hat. I'm just wanting to let the members know. The law says
7 it should be adopted within two years and it won't be. I don't think there's any penalty within the
8 law on that like there is on default planning permissions, but there is risks attached when you
9 don't have a plan in place and a lot of the policies we have are based on having a plan in place.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Cllr Cullen, Tommy?

11 Cllr WHITMORE: Just in relation to the public consultation, is there an opportunity for it to
12 begin within three weeks of that meeting but actually be extended, so that -- because I think the
13 previous public consultations from my recollection happened over the Christmas period. When
14 again it's not particularly good, I know there was extra time given at Christmas, so if there was
15 an opportunity to extend this consultation so it extended into September, then that would be a
16 good thing to do.

17 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: I think the last plan was adopted, the final display period was the last
18 plan, secondly the only, the consultation will only be on amendments themselves and not
19 anything else, so it is a more limited thing, but I think we can let it out another couple of weeks.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Cllr Cullen did you want to come in?

21 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Yes Chairman, I don't think this should be rushed, the last time I seen
22 this being so rushed it ended up into a disaster, controversy, half two in the morning, ended up in
23 the Supreme Court, which the Council lost. So I would be cautious that this should be given
24 proper time. If there is a meeting in July, there should be no binding votes taken in July, the
25 only binding votes should be taken at the meeting in August.

26
27 But if you are going to go into a situation that's somewhat rushed, I'd like to know will there be
28 binding votes taken in July? From my view it needs two meetings, whether they are in
29 September or August, it does need two meetings, it's too big a project to deal with in one
30 meeting and that meeting should not be allowed to be any more than a specific time limit, it
31 shouldn't be allowed, I think there has been a direction or a judgement about the length of these
32 zoning meetings should take place, that it would not be appropriate to have zoning meeting
33 starting at 10 o'clock in the morning ending up at half two like we had in 2004 when councillors
34 were falling asleep in the place and couldn't think properly, if there's a meeting in July it should

1 start a specific time, should be for a limited it time and not rushed where everybody is wore out,
2 mentally or not fully there. I'd like to know is there going to be a time limit on the meeting in
3 July, on the meeting in August so councillors can have their full wits about them, is there going
4 to be binding votes taken in July? If there's binding votes taken in July it takes away from the
5 second meeting in August, so can we have those clarifications?

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, do you want to clarify that? My view would be that both meetings
7 have binding votes taken at them, that's just the way they run.

8 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: Any time a plan is adopted every amendment is taken separately and
9 they are passed, you work through the work, they are binding, yeah.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Is there any legal framework around the length of time of meeting to
11 take?

12 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: No. It's just the time when the meeting has to be held.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sure, but the physical length of the meeting as Cllr Cullen said starting at
14 10 in the morning and finishing at half two at night, is that precluded by EU legislation?

15 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: No.

16 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, this type of conduct was condemned, it might have been
17 condemned even in the Supreme Court, the High Court. But that type of carry on, councillors
18 basically sitting in a chamber for ten, 12 hours trying to create a plan was unfair and
19 unreasonable.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: To my mimed that would play into the idea of having the meeting on the
21 4th, so you are not having one hit wonder meeting that has to be completed right up against the
22 deadline. So just -- anyway listen, we've discussed it.

23 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I just want it on record that I do not agree with this being rushed like it
24 was in 2004, which ended up in the Supreme Court. This was unfair to the councillors sitting
25 here from 10 in the morning till half two and then motions were being passed with councillors
26 half asleep.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm not sure, I want to clarify, does that mean you're in favour of having it
28 on the 4th, so we don't have a rushed deadline?

29 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I think it should be put back to mid July and then a second meeting in
30 early August or something like that, maybe that.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: The other factor just to take into consideration is holidays and people on
32 holidays in August. Anyway I think it's time to take a vote, we have had a good discussion on it,
33 thanks for that.

1 So the proposals, the first one, to push it out, that was Cllr Fortune. Seconded by Cllr Behan, to
2 push it out. What was the date you gave, obviously legally we're told the latest it can possibly go
3 out is the 15th August, so are you saying to have it?

4 Cllr FORTUNE: I said the first meeting in September, yeah.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: So that would be illegal.

6 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: No just to be technical we can have a meeting in September, but the
7 Chief Executive will have adopted the plan before that, as the law allows.

8 Cllr FORTUNE: No, no, hold on. What you have actually said is interesting, you might have
9 said is what the law allows, that doesn't mean, if the law allows it doesn't mean that you have to
10 do it. So I think Cllr Behan's question was relevant that the Chief Executive could say fine
11 members, what we'll do is rather than rushing to the 15th August, we'll wait until the first
12 meeting in September.

13 DIRECTOR O'BRIEN: The Oireachtas passed a law for good reasons, giving 12 weeks to do
14 the -- the whole idea is a plan is adopted in two years, I told you about some of the risks about
15 going out, obviously the Chief Executive would in the first line be guided by the law. There's
16 plenty of time.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

18 Cllr VANCE: Hold on, I'm proposing that we have a meeting on the 4th July, we start at 10 in
19 the morning, we see how -- I'm not saying what time we should finish or anything like that, we
20 see how we get on that day and we can make the arrangements after that, it depends on what
21 happens on that particular day, we could get through it very quick, we could get through it very
22 slow, we might have to come back the next week, which I would certainly be able to do, I was
23 one of the few councillors by the way when people started talking and shouting and screaming
24 about councillors being 2 in the morning and 12 o'clock, I was one of the few councillors, I
25 know the councillors that do a lot of talking about that type of thing and half two in the morning,
26 weren't there, they weren't there, didn't see that process through. I'm just saying, I have no
27 intention of -- I don't think it's going to happen like that. But all I am saying, I think it's
28 reasonable to suggest we go on the 4th July, we see how things go on that particular day, as a
29 Council we decide what further meetings we need on that particular day.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Cllr Kavanagh?

31 Cllr KAVANAGH: Thanks Cathaoirleach, just one thing that I was told when I started was that
32 there were never any meetings held in August, so I would have assumed that most councillors
33 would make their holiday plans for August, that would be an absolute disaster to try and plan --
34 we'd only have half the chamber here, that could be a disaster.

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The other thing I would be nervous about is the fact that in the event that it's pushed out beyond the 15th August and the Chairman has the, can then make decisions, he has that facility to make decisions in the absence of a meeting, then the whole thing could turn into a kind of a legal dispute over when the decisions could or couldn't be made.

So I actually think in retrospect that if we start the process in July, we still have time not to rush anything, to then take advantage of any time that we have left, I just think that if we start the process in July, at the July meeting, without having to be bound to anything, we give ourselves time. If we wait till September it's too late apparently, if we try and have it in August we could have half the councillors not here, so that's just my opinion on it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Just finally on this one Tommy, you want to come back do you?

Cllr FORTUNE: Just quickly, just for the record Cllr Vance mentioned half two, I was here that morning till half two myself.

Cllr VANCE: I wasn't talking about you.

Cllr FORTUNE: That's fair enough.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Let's not get into that.

Cllr FORTUNE: Therefore when you talk about somebody, say who you are talking about. My point is we had a meeting chair, this morning as a group, there was a view came out of it, which I put to the meeting, and if we're changing that, one or two of our members were kind of easy on it, do we need to break and have a meeting just to have a consensus, we are a bit all over the shop. I'm picking up from what Mr O'Brien is saying that the law or the regulation, whatever it is allows the County Manager or Chief Executive to make his decision, I'm just saying if that's the terminology and that's accurate, allows, it means he could make a decision and say hang on members I'll give you an extra two weeks and that's all I'm asking.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Sure, Cllr Blake and Cllr Walsh and we'll have a vote.

Cllr BLAKE: Cllr Kavanagh made a fair point, it is fair to continue the process, we had a good process over the last 18 months, it's fair, we're going through a process at the moment of talking to various different districts, it's fair to keep it going and come to the 4th July if we need a follow on meeting or meeting next day or following week as well, it's important we keep it going and don't drag it into August, as Cllr Kavanagh said people are on holidays and end up with half a chamber.

Cllr WALSH: Same point to concur with Cllr Kavanagh's sentiments.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay great. Let's have a vote.

1 MS GALLAGHER: Proposal by Cllr Fortune, seconded by Cllr Behan for first meeting in
2 September?

3
4 (Vote taken)

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6 MS GALLAGHER: That's five for, 18 against and nine not present.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: All right members. We'll take a break -- sorry I thought by virtue of that
8 actually passing that the other one -- no, okay let's go for the other one.

9 MS GALLAGHER: Okay meeting of 5th July -- 4th July proposed by Cllr Pat Vance and
10 seconded by Cllr Fox.

11
12 (Vote taken)

13
14 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Sorry I want to propose an amendment.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: We've had our time.

16 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I want to propose an amendment, it's in standing orders. Chairman...

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor, I am the Chairman. I'm absolutely clear about it, what I have
18 said is we're right in the middle of the voting process. So I'm not going to allow amendments at
19 this stage. We're right in the middle. I can talk louder than you if you want me to, so please
20 when I speak will you respect the fact that I have made a decision, we are in the middle of the
21 process, we've done the first vote, this is a second vote. No amendments, thank you.

22 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: Chairman, I want to propose an amendment regarding the time, the
23 length of time of the meeting, you are not allowing that.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Afterwards if you want to talk about that, that's fine.

25 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: We've had enough of developer led development plans in this county.

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Joe Behan will you please answer the question that you have been
27 asked.

28 Cllr Tommy CULLEN: I'm proposing the meeting on the 4th July not be -- last more than eight
29 hours.

30 MS GALLAGHER: That's not an amendment, that's a new motion.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Joe Behan, please respect me enough to answer the question.

32 Cllr BEHAN: Against.

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34 (Vote continues)

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MS GALLAGHER: Same as last, that is 18 for, five against and nine not present.

Cllr CULLEN: Now Chairman, will you take my proposal?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Absolutely go for it.

Cllr CULLEN: I propose that the meeting 4th July commence at 10am and finish no later than 6pm in the evening. That's an eight-hour meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Would anybody like to...

Cllr BEHAN: I'll second it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay it's seconded, would anybody like to discuss that? Agreed? Fine. It's now 25 to, so back at 20 past two. Thank you.

Luncheon adjournment

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay members I think we're ready to go again. Members I'd like to, one of the members suspect here today unfortunately he is in hospital at the moment, that's Cllr Tommy Ainsley, I'd like to send my best wishes and yours too for a speedy recovery for him.

The next presentation we're on to item 10 in the agenda, to receive a presentation for the introduction of pay by weight for waste collections and Joanna Dowd is going to give that presentation.

MS DOWD: Good afternoon. What I want to talk about is the national changes in the way we handle waste and charges for waste more specifically, from 1st of July. To summarise after the 1st of July it will be a new way of charging for waste. Households from that date on, the only way that waste collectors are allow to charge is by weight and what's collected, this is called pay by weight. There will be two elements to charges.

Everyone is going to pay a fixed service charge for provision of the service, as well as weight charge, which is based on the waste type, so different charge for different types.

The objective is to encourage behavioural change to incentivise householders to reduce waste and segregate it into different types. Benefits will be more resources recycled or recovered from household waste, at the moment we're about 46%, we have a target to get to 50% in this country and less precious resources consigned to landfill, that should be the absolute last resort, or incineration.

1
2 So why are we doing it all? As I said this is of the national initiative, there's legislation on it, so
3 it started back in 2012 when there was a national policy document called "A Resource
4 Opportunity", in that they talk about incentivised charging structures. The EPA published a
5 report in 2013 talking about per kilogramme as the effective way of waste reduction, it's about
6 changing our behaviour and changing people's behaviour. This how they do things, the best way
7 they find is to hit them in the pocket, so the penalty are financial or benefits are financial.

8
9 And we've legislation, SI 24 of 2016 brought in that every waste collector has to charge a fee for
10 each kilogramme of waste collected or transported.

11
12 So it's to encourage waste prevention and resource efficient behaviour to assist in the
13 achievement of EU and regional waste targets and recycling targets, currently we are under a
14 regional waste recycling plan, which runs from 2015 until 2021 and as part that have we have a
15 target to get to 50% recycling and that we'll reduce the waste produced by each householders by
16 1% per annum. So big enough targets to meet, we are at about 46% recycling for the last
17 number of years, but believe it plateaued, so it will take an initiative like this to get it up to the
18 50%.

19
20 It's considered to be the best method to encourage the segregation. So how will it all work?
21 Customers will present their waste, anyone who currently has a wheelie bin collection won't
22 notice a huge change, they'll present their waste in general, recycling and food waste. Then each
23 bin has a microchip or barcode on it and all of these, all of your bins should have already been
24 microchipped or barcoded, that corresponds to your household. The waste collectors will weigh
25 your bin with weighing equipment that is on the back of the bin lorry and that will assign a
26 charge to bill you on the weight of that bin. They are obliged to collect recyclable and food
27 waste at least fortnightly and general waste fortnightly as well will be the norm.

28
29 Typically there's two elements to the household waste charges, a fixed charge and weight charge.
30 The fixed charge covers things like cost of vehicles, labour and overhead, basically the cost of
31 running the bin lorry past your house. And the new one is weight charge, some places already
32 pay a per lift charge, there will no longer be a per lift charge, some collectors charge 10 euro
33 when they lift the bin. Now if you have a light bin you might pay 5 euro, a heavy bin you might
34 pay 15, so it's all a percent, there's different charges now. A lot of the collectors have not

1 released charges yet, which is unfortunate. But charges will be determined by waste collectors.

2
3 So each bin will be weighed and recorded against the household address. We'll have two types
4 of charges. Non-kerbside customers, some people don't have a waste collection, they are still
5 going to be required to manage waste properly, another part of the new legislation is local
6 authority will have powers to actually get people to prove how they are managing their waste, so
7 probably we're not going to visit every household in the county, but if we suspect somebody is
8 dumping illegally we'll be able to oblige them to actually provide us with evidence of their
9 managing waste possibly, so receipts of some form for how they are disposing of waste, people
10 will be obliged to give us this information.

11
12 Who will be impacted? All households really, some more than others, those of us who already
13 have wheelie bin collections will only notice a difference in the amount we're paying.
14 Households, if you don't avail of kerbside you still have to manage waste in an environmentally
15 responsible manner and will be required to prove that.

16
17 In a lot of counties around the country they don't allow collection by plastic bags for a number of
18 years, in Wicklow there is still a lot of areas where waste is collected in bags, under the new
19 legislation collection in bags won't be allowed, except in specific circumstances.

20
21 So basically there will be criteria applied, generally the policy is that waste cannot be collected
22 in plastic bags only in a wheelie bin or an approved receptacle; wheelie bin is what it will be.

23
24 Criteria set for exemptions, if you have no space on your property at all to store bins you can
25 apply for an exemption, if there is physical features of the property such as very steep slopes or
26 some reason why you can't move a bin to the front of the property you can apply for an
27 exemption. In this county this will be the biggest reason, if the property is not on a waste
28 collection route or is greater than 100 metres from the waste collection route, so very rural areas,
29 narrow roads where at the moment a bin lorry does not travel up and down those roads, they will
30 be able to apply for an exemption to continue to use bags and bring them to the nearest location a
31 waste collector does pass.

32
33 In order to do this, from the 1st of July you will no longer be able to buy bags in Wicklow.
34 Unless you have an exemption, so householders will be required to apply to Wicklow County

1 Council for an exemption and we'll assess their criteria as to whether they have need or whether
2 they should change to wheelie bins. Bags will only be purchased by the exempted households
3 and directly from the waste collectors.

4
5 So that is the biggest change, we have a lot of information that's going live on the website today
6 and we've also started advertising this today, there's adverts starting in newspapers to advise
7 people of this and we're putting adverts on the radio as well. So existing kerbside customers not
8 a huge change for them, they are going to be billed according to weight thereafter, it will be a
9 bigger incentive to recycle, it is amazing, there is a lot of conversation amongst us all as to how
10 to make the bills cheaper, there will be ways to make the bills cheaper. Bag customers subject to
11 designation by Wicklow County Council.

12
13 So some ways to make your, that you can make the collection cheaper is shop around, very
14 important to try the different waste collectors and see where you get the best value. One of the
15 advantages of the new system is charges will be very comparable in everyone will have fixed
16 charge and then a per kilo charge, it will be easier to compare than it was in the past. And the
17 other thing is to get a brown bin or feed bin, any area after the 1st of July, any area with a
18 population greater than 500 your collector is obliged to provide you with a food bin. About a
19 third of the normal black bin weight tends to be food, that's what research showed, it will
20 definitely be in people's best interest, there will be a lower charge on the food bin.

21
22 There's lots of other things people can do to try and keep costs down, that's the purpose of all of
23 this, they reuse, give to charity shops, rather than just always dispose or give to someone else
24 who might use something, use brown bin, shop cleverly so you don't have food waste, shop
25 cleverly so you don't take home loads of packaging, bring your electricals to proper recycling
26 centres or places that take WEEE, dispose of batteries properly and things like that.

27
28 Just to think before you put things in the bin. When we're paying for something by how much
29 we put in, we'll certainly think about it more. Make sure your bins are clearly marked, the
30 general waste bin will cost the most, the green bin is going to be free or cost the least, the
31 regulations say that it doesn't have a minimum charge, but that doesn't mean waste collectors
32 won't necessarily put a charge on it. Food waste bins, again not all households are obliged to
33 have them, if you live in an area above 500 people your collector has to give you one.

34 Composting is alternative and various things you can do in the garden can allow that. The big

1 thing to get across is we have a very good environmental awareness office here, Maire Byrne
2 hoped to be here with me but she's sick, if people are interested in ways to find out about waste
3 minimisation, they are happy to go and give talks or workshops with community groups or
4 anybody interested in the area to show them how to minimise the waste and cost.

5
6 So we are after setting up a link on the website and we'll have all the information on that and
7 also a form where people can register for an exemption from the plastic bag criteria. We have
8 also set up an e-mail address to deal with queries. That's it.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Great. Thank you very much Joanne. Cllr O'Connor?

10 Cllr O'CONNOR: Thanks Cathaoirleach, I read the pay by weight briefing note, and it looks all
11 very nice, touchy-feely, environmentally concerned and that's all very nice. But when it really
12 comes down to what this is, is another attempt by the State to get working people to pay more
13 for less services.

14
15 I have a couple of questions about it, I wanted to know if the fixed charge will be fixed, and who
16 is going to decide on the price kilo? What will undoubtedly happen though, once the prices
17 started off at a certain level, like with the charges brought in when bin charges were first brought
18 in, the price will keep on going up and up and up. Hard pressed working families, currently
19 paying through the nose to the pin of their collar, paying for the gambling debts of property
20 developers and stockbrokers will reach a situation where they can't afford any more, yet another
21 bill into the house, what's going to happen is illegal dumping will go on, then we'll have
22 prosecutions through the courts for that illegal dumping. But it won't stop it, it hasn't stopped it
23 up to this date.

24
25 What I'd like to ask further to that is what is the State doing to try to force producers of
26 commodities to address the amount of packaging that they put out into the market? They
27 produce box of pears or oranges with a whole load of packaging that's involved, that's expected,
28 that the householder gets rid of this, that is unfair, we saw a few years ago what happened when
29 the State tried to force the chewing gum companies to try and clean up their act with the damage
30 that that does to the environment, it didn't go through.

31
32 So as usual, we have a situation where the Irish State goes and takes the easiest target, ordinary
33 families who are going to have to pay more and more and more to fix something that should be
34 fixed more in a centralised basis and should be fixed more by an attack upon the people who

1 produce this rubbish that people have to get rid of.

2 Cllr LAWLESS: Cllr O'Connor more or less said what I was going to say, my concerns would
3 be the pay by weight there that's nothing set down that this is the fixed weight, it means
4 companies can charge more or less what they like, that will be the fear again, that it will go up
5 and up. As well as the fixed service charge, we have already heard rumours that a certain waste
6 management is going to charge from 50 up to 150 for fixed service charge, I don't know how
7 true that is, this is just rumours. So already there's speculation and increase is creeping in before
8 this came in -- I'm all for recycling, I would recycle absolutely everything, nothing to do with
9 recycling, more to do with the charge and cost and how it will hit larger families.

10
11 But also we have to remember we have public recycling centres around the county as well,
12 which hopefully we should be encouraging people to use, I would also hope it wouldn't be a
13 precedence that maybe we start charging in our own centres which I think would be completely
14 wrong, and I would like to have maybe some clarification on that, because if we want people to
15 recycle we need to encourage them as best we possibly can.

16
17 So I'm all for recycling, but I just have a fear because of privatisation that these companies will, I
18 know they will charge what they want and we are going to see the costs increasing, thanks.

19 Cllr BEHAN: You might recall I mentioned this on another occasion at one of our previous
20 meetings. This was a decision that was brought in under the radar by the outgoing government.
21 I would fully agree with Cllr O'Connor and Cllr Lawless, it actually will allow waste companies
22 to charge even more for the service that they currently provide. Although Simon Coveney the
23 new Minister made a big deal out of the fact that he wasn't putting a minimum charge on
24 recycling, he actually left it open to the waste companies to charge for recycling anyway, and my
25 understanding is that some of them may actually be going to do that. I think that would be a
26 really retrograde step, particularly given the fact that many people like Cllr Lawless want to
27 recycle, you only have to look at the centres this Council operates to see how successful the
28 recycling project is in this country.

29
30 But to begin in anyway to start charging for weight of recycling will be automatically a
31 disincentive for people. I would also say many older people are very, very worried and
32 concerned about the loss of the refuse bags, and the compulsion to actually get a wheelie bin.
33 Many older people, particularly in Bray, have contacted me I'm sure they contacted other
34 councillors because they live in areas where there are terraced houses only, they don't have the

1 ability or the space to have wheelie bins, and they are in a complete state of confusion about
2 what their rights are with regard to this, and certainly the waste companies in my view are not
3 actually doing very much to help them with regard to this worry and concern, this is supposed to
4 be implemented in a fortnight's time.

5
6 I welcome the fact that the Council set up a dedicated website and e-mail address, my
7 understanding is the waste companies are telling these elderly people sorry the Council haven't
8 told us that you can't have a wheelie bin. So effectively the waste companies are already
9 operating a closed door to many older people, certainly in Bray. I'm sure it's the same in other
10 towns in this county.

11
12 There is a serious onus on us, as a local authority to assist older people wherever they need help,
13 to ensure that they are not going to be disadvantaged by the system. Many of them are afraid
14 they will end up having to pay the management fee or the, whatever it's called, annual charge,
15 plus charge for weight, they are very concerned about that, they are also being told that if they do
16 have bags the bags will have to be brought to a central location, that they won't be collected from
17 outside their houses, and again we can all see the obvious outcome if that happens, where bags
18 are dumped in one particular section of a road or whatever the case might be.

19
20 So I think it's very unsatisfactory, I would certainly welcome clarification from the chief
21 executive about any plans this Council might have now or in the future to start charging at the
22 recycling centres, one worry I have about this new system is that it might give local authority
23 managers a kind of green light to start putting a charge on recycling centres, and I think we as a
24 Council should stand firmly against any such proposal, and hopefully Mr Doyle will rule that out
25 definitively here today, because I think many people would be absolutely disgusted if we try to
26 make it harder for them to recycle throughout the county in our own facilities, thank you.

27 Cllr FITZGERALD: Just on recycling centres I did seek clarification on that, I was told because
28 we are not waste operators or collectors of waste that there would not be charges at the recycling
29 centres that was only six weeks ago, I presume that situation hasn't changed. We have a huge
30 problem in this county with illegal dumping; I suggest we'll have a bigger problem. The people
31 are going to be affected here are people who pay everything, the people like elderly people, the
32 people who put out their waste responsibly, speaking to some people recently, they haven't a clue
33 what's going on. This was the most ill conceived, ill thought out and ill reported plan I have ever
34 seen, there is no doubt about it, this is bonanza time for some of these operators not putting it

1 any other way. I think we have only two in our area, but they must be rubbing their hands with
2 glee.

3
4 To go around to houses and suggest there's a fixed charge that's mooted at 7.50 per month and if
5 you are only putting out six bins a year, like a lot of people do, maybe seven or eight, people
6 who recycle or whatever, that works out at 90 euro, that's 15 a bin, as well as the charge for the
7 bin, which some are touting at 10 euro, I know there could be a reduction for weight, but the
8 countryside is blotted with illegal dumping, I suggest because there is no bags a lot of elderly
9 people and other people put out bags they will not be collected unless you are living maybe on
10 the top of a mountain or somewhere, that you can't get it, but this is hugely, this hasn't been
11 thought out.

12
13 As Cllr Behan said, this was put in slight of hand, brought in, there will be huge, huge problems,
14 particularly in rural areas where people are seen as going out and dump in all sorts of locations,
15 but as I say, I wouldn't say 10% of the population know this is coming in on the 1st of July
16 talking to people in my own town, a lot of them don't know anything about it, it's only in the last
17 few weeks the government decided it was coming in and sent a little one page to every house in
18 the country. So I fear for the future with illegal dumping.

19 Cllr FORTUNE: I think everyone accepts and recognises that recycling is very, very important.
20 But I think what's going on here is just totally unfair and hasn't been thought through, it's a bit
21 like some conversations this morning the way local government has been approached, this whole
22 area of cost, uncertainty around it for most people is frightening, are people going to be paying
23 standard service charge 100 or 120 or 140 on top of that, has any thought been given about
24 ability for people to pay this? Really as our councillors said I would agree, it's putting
25 everybody or most vulnerable people at the mercy of a number of commercial companies. I
26 wonder was it considered at any stage in this, my comment in fairness answers my question, was
27 it considered to give this whole operation back to the local authority?

28
29 I think there's a need for a whole re-think on this, the local authority could handle an operation
30 such as this, it would create employment, it would -- I think it would be probably more efficient.
31 There's a limited amount of people that do, I know the numbers are growing, but I would be like
32 a Doubting Thomas, I'd like to see the detail of some of the numbers, but the whole way, because
33 it's misunderstood and the way it's been put across, people are -- it's a disincentive, so you'll end
34 up with more illegal dumping I believe. Also it's interesting too, I wasn't expecting it or didn't

1 think it was happening like this, the Council's involvement, what is the Council's involvement?
2 How exactly is the County Council going to be assisting in this operation on the basis that the
3 whole mechanics of the operation is privatised? So I'm interested to see how the interaction will
4 be between the local authority and it.

5
6 I suppose the more I think about it, to me it's just another mismanagement of how local
7 government is going operated, not by the people here in the County Council but coming from the
8 Department of the Environment and various sections of the government that are supposed to be
9 coming up with various plans that should be done. Again I think this smacks of just seat of the
10 pants stuff, a cute thing to do, and as someone said it was tried to be put through under the radar,
11 I think it should be stopped in my opinion. The whole thing should be re thought through, you
12 are going to frighten the lives out of people out there, it's okay for people into recycling and
13 understand it, but that's not the majority of people.

14 Cllr KAVANAGH: Thanks Cathaoirleach. We all know recycling is to be commended and
15 something that everybody is being encouraged to do and it's wonderful, we have great facilities
16 here in the town, but this is going to be an absolute disaster for a lot of people because number
17 one, there's been very little lead in time to this, I'm sure I agree with some of the other
18 councillors a lot of people haven't even heard about it. To think from the 1st of July some of
19 them may not be able to buy bags, bags are what they depend on for getting rid of their rubbish.
20 Not everybody can afford wheelie bins, sometimes they can barely cobble together the money to
21 buy a bag, but I can guarantee if they can't afford to buy a wheelie bin there will be a lot of
22 rubbish burned in gardens, a lot of rubbish dumped late at night out around God knows where. It
23 will lead to all kinds of vermin control; I think it will be an absolute disaster. I think there
24 should be a lead in time, much longer lead in time of even a year to let people get used to the
25 idea of cutting down on the amount of waste they generate, using the recycling centres more and
26 trying to educate them about how to best manage their waste disposal, including the absence of
27 bags, how to get used to operating without them. I think this is going to be a disaster for a lot of
28 households.

29 Cllr BOURKE: I think that there could be a Special Meeting here in August about bin charges
30 yet! It will be all right if it doesn't cost any more, basically people will try it for a while and see
31 how it goes, I just calculated my own costs at 178 per annum between recycle bin lifts and
32 regular lifts, but I will watch it carefully, if it costs more than that I will be out there protesting
33 like others.

34 Cllr MATTHEWS: Thanks Chairman, a couple of questions on it, as we're the licensing

1 authority for waste collectors for the county, did we have any input into how much waste
2 collectors charged per lift or was that? Had we any input into that at all, in line with that, if it's
3 to be paid by weight will we still have the influence? I doubt we had any because it will be
4 market driven, but I don't think, as a County Council we will be able to influence how much
5 waste collectors will charge by weight.

6
7 I would be opposed to charge on the green bin because over the past ten or 15 years Irish people
8 got very good at recycling, we wouldn't want to discourage that, but what would be far better
9 would be to create more industry around recycled waste product that we collect. A lot of the
10 time all we do is segregate, collect and export that product. There's no huge indigenous industry
11 around a product that has a lot of embedded energy and value in it. I think that will be a far
12 better route to go and maintain kerbside recycling as being free, because there would be an
13 industry that would be served by that and home-grown indigenous industry.

14
15 Thirdly, the weight of the brown bin is far likely to exceed -- if this goes to plan the brown bin
16 will be far heavier than the black bin, if everybody is doing this, as its meant to be by design,
17 have we any idea of the charges that will be charged per kilo for brown bins? And the last point
18 on illegal dumping, I think if we were to half or to quarter the price of waste collection in this
19 county for everybody, the type of people that illegally dump will still continue to dump illegally,
20 thanks just a point on that. Thank you Chairman.

21 Cllr WALSH: Just to say that the objective of this initiative would appear to be to encourage
22 waste prevention and waste reduction and encourage new behavioural changes in relation to
23 waste with the resulting positive impact on the environment, but from what we've heard so far, I
24 think the opposite could be the outcome, unless charges are addressed. Thank you.

25 Cllr O'BRIEN: And I'd say a number of councillors grew up in the 60s when there was no such
26 thing as waste disposal companies, I would say it would be no harm to look back at the
27 techniques they used particularly in relation to packaging, there wasn't nearly as much packaging
28 in the 60s as there is today. I'd have to concur with Cllr O'Connor, surely to talk about
29 improving waste disposal methods there should be something on the part of the government to
30 stop packaging, a lot of the packaging I consider totally illegal where you have to open things
31 three or four times, there's way too much all the time, I remember in the village I grew up there
32 was a waste place called the dump, the local people burned anything that wasn't used, it was
33 burned there and then and we moved that, it was burned, no problem, it was the cleanest village I
34 was ever in, they had ways of doing things, I think we need to go back to the old ways and have

1 a look back and see, it's incredible, if you want to open a packet of biscuits now, you nearly need
2 a machine to rip it off, I sometimes feel for old people, with all the packaging they have to pull
3 their way through, I think we need to get more practical about things, stop planning and look
4 back to see what people before did and how they handle their waste.

5 Cllr VANCE: Chairman just two questions for Joanne there, in regard to the bags there are a
6 number of households that won't be able for various reasons to have the other method, so they
7 have to go for bags, are bags going to be charged per bag or is there a weight issue with the bag
8 as well? And also in regard to some businesses don't have the facility for anything other than
9 bags as well, I just wonder do businesses get a derogation or do they have to apply like the
10 households do? Because in your presentation you said nothing about businesses that use bags as
11 well, that have no facilities to use any other methods, if you answer them please.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: No other members, but from my own point of view, if somebody used the
13 exact same amount of waste as the week after this comes in to the week before, should they be
14 paying the same? And is it as an incentive to reduce, is there a test to be put in place to ensure
15 that happens? You can start with the questions at the start!

16 MS DOWD: Okay, I'll do my best to try and cover them all, just to start off and say that this is
17 actually being brought in in Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown and Sligo in the last couple of years, and
18 Wicklow are a little unusual in that we have quite a lot of bags, whereas other counties actually
19 have taken them away a long time ago and I think it was the local Councils that had issued
20 by-laws to remove bags with the reasons that bags cause litter, they can be disturbed by animals
21 or whatever and they are also a waste in themselves obviously.

22
23 So the pricing is totally set independently by the waste collectors, we have no role in it, we have
24 no input in it unfortunately. Other than that there has to be a fixed charge and there has to be a
25 weight based charge, which is what is set down in legislation and legislation sets minimum
26 prices for recycle, for different types of bins, for brown and black, it doesn't set maximum
27 charges and doesn't set any guidance on what the fixed charge should be.

28
29 Producers were mentioned, producers of commodities, they sign up to Repak on the basis that
30 they pay by the amount of packaging they put on the market, that then is recycling, it means
31 packaging should be able to be recycled for free. That's not to comment on, I would agree that
32 there is too much packaging on the market.

33
34 Wicklow County Council we have no plans to charge for recycling centres at all. Under the new

1 relations civic amenity sites that take residual waste, black bin waste are obliged to charge, but
2 civic amenity sites that don't are not, so we are exempt and have no plans to charge. It would be
3 difficult for to us start charging we'd need extra staff, administration staff and that alone is
4 reason not to charge, never mind anything else!

5
6 The criteria for the exemptions only came very recently hence the reason that we are only
7 starting our advertising campaign now. We'll, there will be some discretion in the first months
8 that follow, there will be a lead in, with people so I will say that, to help people, tell people not
9 to panic. I would urge you to tell people to contact the Council if they feel that they have issues
10 with whatever, for whatever reason that they are going to have difficulties having bins. There
11 will be a form online and we'll also have a paper form available at all the recycling centres, in
12 the libraries and all the Council offices, those went out this morning and the website is to be live
13 today. So urge people to contact us, fill in their details on that, if there is a genuine reason they
14 can't use bins we'll certainly look at it.

15
16 Illegal dumping, we have a good enforcement team, we do follow up all cases of illegal
17 dumping, again if you report to the Council, report to the waste management office directly it's
18 logged, assigned a warden, we generally arrange a clean up or find the owner and try to get them
19 to clean it up, we follow every case as far as we can, to court if necessary, or litter fines or
20 whatever.

21
22 The Council's involvement from the point of view of waste collection permits, so the waste
23 operators apply to the National Waste Control Permit Office, which is in Offaly County Council.
24 They grant the permit and put conditions on it, it is our job to enforce those conditions. It's our
25 job to make sure they chipped the bins they are charging by weight, we've no role whatsoever in
26 the pricing or anything like that.

27
28 Somebody asked about charge per kilo, brown bins I have seen the charges of three different
29 waste companies, only one relates to Wicklow, there seems to be about 15 cent in a difference
30 between brown and black bin. 20 cent per kilo and 35 per black, all collectors will be different,
31 so I can't really comment on it.

32
33 Weight charge, there's no plans at the moment to bring in pay by weight for bags. There's no
34 indication that there will be, and that is one of the reasons that they are trying very hard not to

1 have bag -- to have bags discontinued, it's much easier for a weighing mechanism on the truck to
2 pick up the bin and do it, but there's no plans for charging there.

3
4 And businesses were mentioned; commercial customers are not dealt with at all in this.

5 Commercial customers pay by weight, at the moment it is not coming for commercial customers,
6 it literally only applies to domestic waste. And Cathaoirleach, what was your question John?

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Before the new charging process came in, if I use the exact same weight
8 and after, is it going to be the same charge?

9 MS DOWD: I can't say, honestly. I don't know.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: But is that the concept?

11 MS DOWD: Not necessarily. The concept is that, at the moment you should all, anyone who
12 has a waste collection at the moment should see the weights on their bill. Even though they are
13 only charged by lift, it should still show you the weight, so you can go back and look at the last
14 few bills and then when you see the prices work out whether it will go up or down. We'll be
15 hopeful that the waste collectors will issue pricing probably this week, some of them have
16 already as I said, but it's not something we have any control over. I think that's it.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: All right members, thank you very much for that. While we have the
18 environment section here, obviously we were notified ourselves of an issue in Ballinclare quarry
19 with asbestos, people may have read about that in the paper, so Michael Boland is with us to
20 give us an update. Sorry, and Sylvester also put in a question on this very item.

21 MR BOLAND: Good afternoon members, we were informed recently of the occurrence of some
22 naturally occurring asbestos in the Ballinclare quarry, now the Ballinclare quarry was run by SM
23 Morris for many decades and produced large quantity of rock from that quarry. It closed in
24 about 2009 or 2010.

25
26 Kilsaran acquired it in 2014 and re-opened it. What came to light is within the rock, the rock in
27 the quarry is an igneous rock, dark green in colour to you, and as opposed to light grey or white
28 granite that would be associated with the granite in the Leinster mountains, but this package
29 when they did a recent blast in an area where previously there had been site infrastructure, so no
30 blasting in the eastern side of the quarry for quite a large number of years, and on inspecting the
31 material after it was blasted, one of the members of staff noticed these crystals of material within
32 it, which he suspected to be asbestos and they took samples and got confirmation that it was
33 asbestos.

1 Now the asbestos does not normally occur in this part of the Leinster mountains, it's the first
2 known occurrence of bedrock asbestos in the Leinster granite. It's by all accounts a crosscutting
3 structure, narrow crosscutting structure that cuts across the eastern side of the quarry, so it's very
4 limited in volume, it's not as if it's disseminated through the rock and every bit of rock you pick
5 up has a bit of asbestos, it will only be along the little fracture or fault across the quarry that the
6 asbestos is in.

7
8 Towards the end of April they did a standard blast, in a quarry like that would be about 20 or
9 25,000 tonnes and it's only when they start to process that material, because that material when
10 it's blasted just breaks and sits in situ, then they go in and extract the rock and start to process it,
11 so it was only very small percentage of the material that was blasted has actually been removed
12 from the site.

13
14 Once they identified that there was some asbestos in it they immediately closed the quarry, they
15 contacted Wicklow County Council, they contacted EPA, HSA, HSE, they informed their staff
16 and contacted their residents. Thereafter they appointed consultants to do an environmental
17 inspection of the quarry and start to trace where the material that was taken from that one blasted
18 area had gone.

19
20 They identified there was about two and a half thousand tonnes only had left the site and they
21 identified from their records it had gone to about 20 sites, two in Dublin, the rest in north
22 Wicklow. They inspected all the sites with the HSA. In nine of the sites the material is just on
23 the surface, was unconsolidated, in other words it hadn't been covered by concrete or tarmac.
24 And they immediately in conjunction with HSA covered those in hard plastic and covered them
25 with soil just to protect in the short-term from the elements.

26
27 Since then they have started to work on the methodology to return the material to the site where
28 it's come from. The two sites in Dublin have been cleaned up. One of the sites in Wicklow was
29 started last week, at each stage, because each site is different, they have to agree specific
30 methodology with the HSA before they touch any of the material, there are three more sites
31 being cleaned up in Wicklow this week, and all this material will be returned to the site and
32 thereupon it will be consolidated within the site under a licence from EPA in due course, and
33 that part of the quarry will be sterilised into the future.

1 So that's essentially where we are in the short-term with that situation. It's a naturally occurring
2 material. Essentially defective product came out of the quarry, everything has been done to
3 identify where it went and measures are in place to return it safely to where it came from.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay Michael, thank you very much for that, any questions from any
5 members? Happy enough?

6 Cllr FORTUNE: Just obviously that's a very comprehensive report, but there's a lot of media
7 coverage on it, obviously some of us have got contact, there was an article in the Irish Times, I
8 don't know whether it's accurate or not?

9 MR BOLAND: No, it wasn't.

10 Cllr FORTUNE: But it's concerning people, it mentioned a school in Greystones.

11 MR BOLAND: It's not in a school, I'm not sure of the exact details, I think it's construction on a
12 site leading up to a site of a new school.

13 Cllr FORTUNE: I am only saying. But the point is the article is in the public domain, people
14 are conscious and I'm wondering how accurate is it? Is it accurate?

15 MR BOLAND: As you can see, there's 25,000 tonnes of material in the article to go back to the
16 site, there was a blast of about 25,000 tonnes, there was never that amount of material moved
17 from the site.

18 Cllr FORTUNE: But maybe you can't answer this. Maybe it's an unfair question, but if I'm
19 asked by somebody in Greystones.

20 MR BOLAND: I will find out exactly about that for you.

21 Cllr FORTUNE: We need to know, if the article is right or it's wrong.

22 MR BOLAND: I'll find out the details of each of the sites for you.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Great, Michael, thank you very much for that. Okay.

24
25 Item No. 10, sorry 11 to note the annual financial statement 2015, any comments on that or any
26 questions or are we okay to note it? Okay.

27
28 Item number 12 to note draft annual report 2015, no questions on that. Okay.

29
30 Item number 13, to note the monthly management report of Wicklow County Council, May
31 2016, previously circulated. Noted? Fantastic. Nothing to do with the match being on tonight is
32 there? This is the easiest I've ever seen an agenda going through.

33
34 Okay item number 14, as members will remember there was a motion put before the Council

1 previously and I'll read it to remind members, "The members of Wicklow County Council call
2 on the Department for Health to reverse the decision to locate the National Children's Hospital at
3 St. James's Hospital and locate the new children's hospital for all of the children of Ireland at
4 Connolly hospital in Blanchardstown. The Connolly site offers 145 acres of vast space for
5 expansion, easier access for children of Wicklow and extensive parking, co-location with
6 Connolly hospital and new Rotunda maternity hospital will result in better clinical outcomes,
7 cheaper and faster build than on the St. James site."
8

9 Obviously when that was discussed a number of members obviously said we don't have enough
10 information to actually have a vote on that particular motion. So it was proposed that we'd get
11 people from the group proposing the Connolly hospital site and then also have people in for the
12 new children's hospital site. So we're going to have a short presentation from each group, of ten
13 minutes long, and then we're just going to ask a member of each group to, one from each group
14 to come up and answer any questions that people have, I think that's the simplest way to do it.
15 So I think we'll kick off with the children's -- Connolly For Kids group, and we're welcoming
16 Dr Finn Breathnach, is David Hall going to present with you? He is just with you, okay great.
17 Welcome. Please feel free to start your presentation.

18 DR BREATHNACH: Thank you. I'm grateful for the opportunity of being able to highlight our
19 concerns in relation to the proposed site at St. James', briefly I was Ireland's first resident
20 children's cancer specialist. I worked for almost 30 years in Crumlin and Temple Street looking
21 after the sickest kids in the country, they don't get any sicker than childhood cancer, particularly
22 given what we have to give the children to make them better.
23

24 Briefly the history of where we have got to now from the past going back to 2005 when
25 McKinsey were commissioned to prepare a report to advise in relation to the tertiary care of
26 kids. They are the sickest kids in the country, the ones with serious blood disorders, cancers, bad
27 burns, congenital heart disease, they are the ones that come back to the hospital again and again
28 and they will be the sickest kids, and they will be the most inconvenienced, more often than
29 anyone else, if the wrong site is chosen.
30

31 McKinsey came up with a number of criteria; first of all they said three existing children's
32 hospitals should come together to form one single hospital and everyone is agreed on that. The
33 first and most important criteria was space, without space you cannot grow. Crumlin was the
34 last of the three children's hospitals to be developed, 85 years after Temple Street and very

1 quickly became the dominant force in looking after the sickest kids, why? Because it had space.

2
3 The other thing they said was the children's hospital should have all of these specialities here,
4 these specialities exist in the children's hospital at the moment, there isn't a single adult hospital
5 with all of these specialities.

6
7 McKinsey said the preferred option would be co-location with an adult hospital, but they said it's
8 important looking at international experience to show that we have to weigh the decision to
9 co-locate against pragmatic considerations including space once more, quality of access to
10 potential sites, culture and managerial fit, etcetera, but space and quality of access, the two
11 important things.

12
13 Access of course, hugely important, we know that 90% of sick children arrive at hospital by car.
14 You don't bring your sick child on public transport. Hotel facilities, very important to
15 accommodate the parents of the sickest kids, the tertiary ones in particular. Good public
16 transport and road links, parking for families and staff. Recommended by McKinsey.

17
18 In fact looking into the future McKinsey predicted, bottom line, standalone paediatric centres
19 will be feasible. They are saying that's the next stage of development of paediatrics.

20
21 Now we have a location task group coming in, this is where I became very excited because they
22 changed the rules. They said co-location with an adult hospital is absolutely essential. Were 12
23 civil servants who never looked after a sick child in their life, the minute you made adult
24 co-location absolutely essential you were stuck with existing sites of adult hospitals in Dublin,
25 none of whom had space. The only one now has space is Connolly because Leo Varadkar
26 offered 90 additional acres to the Connolly site, which is why it's my and our preferred option.

27
28 This insistence on adult co-location meant that nobody looked at a green field site, nobody
29 looked at the possibility of a standalone children's hospital and of course the same group looked
30 at the literature to see whether the literature supported adult co-location, they couldn't find a
31 single paper to support it.

32
33 Who recommended St. James? No-one did. No university, no medical school, no report, no
34 organisation, medical or otherwise. Nobody recommended St. James.

1
2 The Reilly Expert International Review Group of 2011, Fine Gael obviously questioned the
3 selection of the Mater site by Fianna Fáil, so Reilly had these experts from Australia, North
4 America, the UK and Europe and under freedom of information we got a quote in the sideline of
5 one of their final documents saying that the only other site that you could consider was
6 St. James', but in fact it presents similar if not more constraints to those identified at the Mater,
7 not what you call a ringing endorsement of St. James' is it?

8
9 So who is the hospital for? Tertiary care for all of Ireland, the island of Ireland, children with
10 congenital heart disease in Northern Ireland come to Dublin at the moment for surgery, I'm
11 certain children that require bone marrow transplants from the north of Ireland will also come to
12 the hospital.

13
14 The Dolphin Report advised, while global figures of population within the M50 to be stated at
15 80,000, they recommended the site investigation should take into account the location of
16 children, if the focus is to be on what's best to serve the needs of children.

17
18 When you look at the paediatric hospital development board, who will be presenting after me,
19 they look at the population, show low paediatric population in central and eastern sectors
20 compared with western and peripheral areas and expansion of suburbs west and northwards
21 beyond the M50. Now it hasn't become a perimeter route, it's the central spine of the greater
22 Dublin area. Greater Dublin area, Dublin City, Fingal, South Dublin, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown,
23 Kildare, Meath and Wicklow. The population of that area is 1.8 million in 2011 and there's over
24 a million of that population living outside the M50 in the secondary care catchment area, so most
25 of the secondary care kids live outside the M50, we know 75% of the tertiary care, sickest of the
26 kids, live outside the M50.

27
28 Who chose St. James? I'll tell you in a moment. The three children's hospitals? No. Staff? No
29 surprisingly not. The parents and children? Why ask them, they didn't either. Was there public
30 consultation? No there wasn't. In fact the only group that chose it was the last government, this
31 is not working very well, I might wander down and press -- the previous coalition of government
32 of Fine Gael and Labour.

33
34 Why did they choose St. James'? According to Minister for Health, Simon Harris, he has the

1 same letter writer as the previous Minister, Leo Varadkar, who wrote the same letters for James
2 Reilly -- this is frustrating, I'm sorry, will I go down -- he says the previous government's
3 decision to locate the new children's hospital on the St. James' campus was based on the
4 overriding priority of best clinical outcomes for our children and in particular our sickest
5 children. Now if that were true I wouldn't be sitting here today.

6
7 So what evidence is there? We're in an era of evidence-based medicine, whatever you do you
8 must have evidence for. What evidence is there for improved clinical outcomes for the children?
9 There isn't actually any. The location task group reviewed the literature; they couldn't find any
10 document to support it. I wrote to Leo Varadkar about 21 months ago and I wrote him an eight
11 page letter and I got one line back, thank you for your letter, he couldn't respond. I rubbished the
12 argument for adult co-location.

13
14 At the oral hearing I asked again for evidence from anybody, they had two senior counsel funded
15 by you and I, solicitor and lots of runners, nothing produced, why? It doesn't exist.

16
17 How many children are currently admitted to James' Hospital? None. How many children with
18 cancer did I refer to James' in the last 30 years? None. So if a ten-year-old child with burns
19 goes to the national adult burns centre in James', what do they do? Pick up a phone, call an
20 ambulance and send them to Crumlin where the national burn centre is for children.

21
22 Our biggest concern about space, we've concerns about access and parking, concerns about lots
23 of things, the biggest concern is maternity co-location, you can build a new hospital, it will
24 benefit all the kids except for newborns, there are babies dying every single year, it might be one
25 one-year or two or three the next year, every single year when you don't have a maternity
26 hospital literally attached to your children's hospital. And the possibility of building this
27 maternity hospital in the near future is remote in the extreme. Minister Harris says it's intended
28 the Coombe will move there in time.

29
30 Will it be built? He says by way of reassurance that in submitting the planning application for
31 the children's hospital at the St. James' campus as a matter of good planning practice provided
32 full information on all known future developments for St. James', including the intention to build
33 a maternity hospital there, so we should be reassured.

1 Well if you read the An Bord Pleanala report they specifically excluded that, there may be an
2 application for a maternity hospital, there may not, if one is made it will be subsequently
3 assessed, the national children's hospital can proceed without a maternity hospital, these are not
4 interdependent projects. In terms of building you can build a children's hospital and maternity,
5 not interdependent in terms of building, but in terms of clinical dependency, they are hugely so.
6 To the point where now international standard has become to build maternity and children's
7 hospital as one building and the babies are not delivered in maternity, they are delivered in the
8 children's hospital, because of every hundred transfers out of maternity hospitals, five or six
9 mothers are sick mothers, 95 are babies.

10
11 The inspector went on to say it would be unreasonable in the circumstances to refuse permission
12 for the current proposal based on concern for possible future developments. And goes on to say
13 that it's not a matter for the board to determine whether the applicant's brief is sufficient to meet
14 medical and clinical demands now, let alone into the future, that's not the function of the board.
15 In other words the board isn't interested in medical matters, they are interested in planning issues
16 related to a children's hospital.

17
18 Is there space for maternity? Here's the site. I don't know if you can see the site. There's a site
19 up here, site B, the place where the current, quite new, outpatient department is for adults and
20 site C is here this area, they're the two areas identified as possible locations for the maternity
21 hospital by the development board, if you look at site B, it can be redeveloped once outpatient
22 area is re located, so first of all you have to knock down this quite new outpatient department for
23 adults and build it somewhere else, where will they built it? There isn't enough room on the
24 James' site at all, they will build it a mile up the road in Davitt Road where they'll store the
25 material to build the hospital.

26
27 The other thing they say is it's a most important redevelopment. This is all about St. James'. It
28 says if maternity is to be built on the site it has to be co-located with at least a new adult
29 emergency department, a new adult intensive care unit and management. So we want to rebuild
30 James' on the back of the children's hospital, that's what it's all about.

31
32 Site C below it can only be redeveloped once the adult emergency department, adult intensive
33 care, adult cardiac day and in-patient wards are provided, so rebuild these, its close proximity to
34 the children's hospital also makes it a good site for a maternity hospital, albeit deliverable at a

1 later date due to stringent decant requirements. Sounds like we're focusing on the needs of kids.

2
3 So there's no planning application, this comes from the paediatric hospital development board
4 application to An Bord Pleanala, no planning application made, no plan in place for the future
5 other than just that, but should maternity not proceed for any reason newborn children will be
6 transferred to the new children's hospital by ambulance for transfer, this is the current
7 operational procedure within the existing children's hospitals. Unfortunately that's current
8 operation procedure results in babies with severe congenital heart disease and other potentially
9 curable conditions dying every year, principally because of the need for ambulance transfer.
10 You ask for an ambulance how long does it take? 10 minutes, 15 minutes, a baby died in a five
11 minutes journey from Coombe to Crumlin a year and a half ago, 25% transfers carry a problem
12 from maternity to children's hospital.

13
14 Where is co-location important? It's one location that will result in lives being saved. The new
15 children's hospital -- that's jeopardised by this blind perseverance with this deeply flawed
16 concept and site, the concept of adult co-location, we believe the likelihood of the maternity
17 hospital ever being built on this site is uncertain, if it isn't built it's inevitable that babies will die
18 every year. In fact the only people that operate on these kids in this whole country are based in
19 Crumlin and Temple Street, they wrote to An Bord Pleanala, a waste of time of course, but they
20 wrote and said, "We whose daily practice involves caring for critically ill neonates, unreservedly
21 support the need for a single national children's hospital and are willing to compromise on many
22 fronts to achieve this goal, acknowledging that no site is ideal. Co-location with a physically
23 linked maternity hospital is in our expert opinion, non-negotiable. We are unwilling to endorse a
24 national children's hospital on a site that cannot accommodate that, to do so would be to fail
25 those infants who we are entrusted to protect, to proceed with such a project will result in
26 avoidable death or disability of many newborn babies for years to come."

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Can I let you know I said ten, we are one minute away from 15.

28 DR BREATHNACH: Wicklow children, what's important for you, Crumlin, Temple Street and
29 Tallaght are closing, your children will have one accident and emergency department available
30 that will be in the city centre, at 7.30 in the morning, 8 o'clock rush hour. It takes an average 20
31 minutes longer to get to James' compared to Connolly and a lot can happen in 20 minutes, that's
32 average, you can be a lot longer than that if there is an event in the city to delay everything.

33
34 Parking; they tell us there are more parking spaces available, the new hospital than there are

1 currently available, that's easy, Temple Street doesn't have a car park, most of them park on the
2 street. Lowest number of parking spaces of any recently built children's hospital, I won't go
3 through the cost.

4
5 There's the entrance to the new car park from Mount Brown, that's before the 10,000 arrivals
6 every day associated with this children's hospital, on that road.

7
8 There's Crumlin when it was built in the 1960s, look at all the green space, that's a Google shot, I
9 can see one patch of green down the bottom and that's in 60 years, this children's hospital was
10 supposed to last 100 years. There's St. James', it looks as built up as Crumlin. The only green
11 space is on the left-hand side, that's the space for future expansion.

12
13 There's Melbourne, that's what it could look like. There's Alder Hey the most recently built
14 children's hospital in Liverpool, no adult hospital in site by the way. And parkland is obviously
15 very important for the well-being of children, not just beings, they are places to foster healing
16 and well-being, all our kids will have is rooftop views. 4.4 parking spaces per bed, 2.1 for
17 James' site.

18
19 The Reilly group said the ideal location would be located on green space providing unfettered
20 access, accommodate research and educational activity. They are describing Connolly in my
21 view. There's the Connolly site marked in red, Connolly hospital is to the left-hand side, there's
22 James' in comparison, that's the same scale. And there's the proposal that was put in from
23 Connolly for the children's hospital, the children's hospital, plenty of room for co-located
24 maternity hospital.

25
26 Delay, I don't build hospitals, but Jimmy Sheehan built three, he says you can have everything
27 ready in three years time on Connolly site, no constraints in terms of building, 7 days a week,
28 24-hours a day, there are major constraints in James' site, cost? Two reports said 25% less to
29 build on the Connolly site. I think I ran over time. Thank you very much.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you very much. So now if I could ask Eilish Hardiman, just
31 yourself coming up is it? And Phelim Devine is as well. Again you're both welcome, 15
32 minutes will be the maximum time.

33 MS HARDIMAN: Thank you Cathaoirleach, we appreciate the opportunity to come here and
34 present some facts on the children's hospital services and also on the build itself.

1
2 Maybe for everybody's sake just to introduce ourselves, I'm Eilish Hardiman and I represent the
3 services, I'm chief executive of the children's hospital group consisting of Our Lady's Children's
4 Hospital in Crumlin, Temple Street and the National Children's Hospital at Tallaght, I represent
5 the service side, this is the build board, full of engineers, architects and builders which Phelim
6 will speak about, my past has been with the children's hospital, I have been CEO of one of the
7 children's hospitals for three years and with this project since 2006.

8
9 So what I'll start off, if I may, is what's best for children? And working with that to identify in
10 particular the national model of care, to say that this is just about the children in Dublin is a fair
11 statement, but this is about how we are going to deliver services across the island of Ireland,
12 there's been extensive 3 or 4 years -- to map out how it is we're going to deliver services, they all
13 agree we need to keep as much services as local as possible. That means currently as you can
14 see on the presentation here that the vast majority of children using the children's hospital in
15 Dublin are the local children, those are the children from Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare and
16 obviously Meath.

17
18 The rest of the children who come from outside the greater Dublin area come from all over the
19 island, we have actually measured where they come from and I picked some samples there to
20 show it's representative of whereby the children who require high end tertiary highly specialist
21 services do have to travel to Dublin, only 2% of the children in the children's hospitals come
22 from Cork and about 1.3 from Donegal, the reason being there is more children in Cork than
23 Donegal and rightfully they are attended to.

24
25 The vast majority of paediatric services can and should be delivered on the day, as outpatient,
26 either through emergency care or daycare with the least amount trying to be hospitalised, that's a
27 key objective of what we are trying to do in keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of
28 the Child.

29
30 Hence when we look at our services and how we want to deliver them. We take an all island
31 view and work with our colleagues around Ireland on mapping out where children's hospitals,
32 children's services are to be delivered. The vast majority will be delivered locally in these
33 hospitals, our requirement as children's hospital group is to increasingly support our colleagues
34 out around the country to develop services as locally as possible. That means we are working to

1 continuously send out consultants and nurses out to those hospitals to do joint clinics with
2 paediatric colleagues in those services all over Ireland.

3
4 Moving on to the other end of the spectrum, which are the sickest children and we would have
5 proven, there is evidence to demonstrate that this is about making a difference to the sickest
6 children. That's predominantly around two issues of -- two sides of one coin, about having a
7 consolidation where all the services are done. At present in Dublin we have duplication and
8 triplicate of services, with families going between the hospitals, doctors going between hospitals,
9 files going between hospitals, X-rays going between hospitals in a rather inefficient way, we
10 need to bring them all under one roof and base with an adult hospital who is best to support us,
11 the reason for that is again the evidence internationally has demonstrated you need to have more
12 than 32 specialities to provide this high-end work, the children's hospitals have 39 specialities,
13 even with 39 we do not have every single speciality that paediatrics need, the reason being that
14 for a population of 5 million, there are sometimes only a small number of cases that actually
15 require our adult consultants to support us in delivering.

16
17 We have heard evidence before to a ten-day oral hearing -- I'm trying to condense into ten
18 minutes, why it is necessary that some of these children will still go to UK and will not be
19 supported in Ireland. So for us the Holy Grail is about being beside an adult hospital that can
20 equally match and support the amount of specialities we need, that has got a breadth and depth of
21 adult specialities that need to support paediatrics where they can not provide paediatric only
22 services, and in particular has the capacity to take on a maternity hospital. For us we strongly
23 advocate the tri-location between maternity, adult and paediatrics is what we are aiming for and
24 is in our plans.

25
26 What we are saying is three children's hospitals, we want to become recognised that children's
27 healthcare is different to adult, no more than maternity is, we want to become our own group
28 within the acute hospital system to advocate for children, we want to look broader than just the
29 hospital system, internationally we are aiming successfully to move appropriate services out
30 either into community, to GP or into their home, we have some of the highest uptake already
31 with technology in niche areas within children's health on young people able to take care of their
32 own services, in particular like haemophilia to test their bloods on the phone and send it to
33 consultant and get results back.

1 We want to configure services, we have too many children being admitted at the moment, we
2 have some children in the regions that need to come to Dublin and some children coming up that
3 need to go back to the regions appropriately managed and supported near the home.
4

5 Our last point is one of the key success rates, we know the sickest children need to come to
6 Dublin as fast as possible, we have actually in the last two years managed to roll-out 24-hour
7 neonatal retrieval services, whereby there was 100% increase in high risk babies transferred to
8 either children's hospital or with significant benefits to survival rates because of that. We are
9 starting to do the same with paediatrics, whereby if you have a really critically ill sick or highly
10 injured they can go to the hospital, and be stabilised, we'll retrieve them, that means we'll fly
11 down or drive them, stabilise them and back. That's what happens internationally.
12

13 Take somewhere like Australia, that's how they do this and also in the UK, with excellent
14 outcomes in relation to children's health.
15

16 Our view is that we clearly want to become, the real hard bit, it's about successfully merging the
17 three hospitals and as ex-CEO of Tallaght Hospital I can tell you this is where the real work
18 needs to be done. We now have a planning application and are proceeding to work with the
19 development board to build this year a hospital over the next four years, so we'll be ready to
20 move in, at the end of 2020, we do see that that is actually necessary to have the Coombe
21 co-located, it should go to Connolly and Rotunda, Rotunda is no further on in relation to
22 planning or design than actually the Coombe is.
23

24 In relation to satellite centres these are outpatient and urgent care centres that are to be located
25 outside the M50, this is highly relevant for your children. We'll continue to provide that actually
26 at Tallaght and the last thing is we're linked with all the universities, that's key to us, because
27 today's research is tomorrow's treatment and we are working collectively with all the universities
28 to do that and they have agreed and are working with us at this site.
29

30 What's different between us and St. James', I would refute some of the comments made earlier,
31 the actual 2011, just to clarify, the review was not about James' hospital, it actually was about
32 greenfield site versus inner city site, so the issue of James' was not part of that review, but it did
33 still come down to say inner city hospital is better place because 45% of the children who need
34 the care live within the city.

1
2 International reports, again I know I can share with you quite gladly from Scotland, UK and
3 Australia where Queensland, Glasgow, Manchester have all demonstrated co-location with adult
4 hospitals is actually the policy position to make it better for clinical outcomes. There are also
5 excellent studies; again I can share papers with you in relation to this, that demonstrates how we
6 can improve clinical outcomes. I think you understand with cancer services where we
7 consolidated services the outcomes are better.

8
9 Also the thing about, refute the issue about dying babies in relation to getting to the children's
10 hospital, some of these babies, I can tell you I spend a lot of my time dealing with congenital
11 heart disease at the moment, there is as high as 50% mortality rate, no matter how near you bring
12 them to the services, they are really, really, really sick babies. But any issue that happens in
13 relation to an unexpected death has a full review and there has been no full reviews in relation to
14 babies transfer to three hospitals.

15
16 Going back to James', it has the greatest number of specialities and widest number of sub
17 specialities that can support the children's hospital. 25% of the consultants in the three children's
18 hospitals already have an adult commitment. They are predominantly with James' and the
19 Mater, none with Connolly. We see very much a joint management around some of the cases
20 that children provided outcomes.

21
22 In particular burns, all the burns consultants in Our Lady's in Crumlin are also the ones related to
23 James', at the moment we have really good outcomes for children with cancer and leukaemia.
24 Where we have a weakness in this country is young adolescents, you'll see that in the new cancer
25 report to come out, the recommendation is, policy position is to locate the hospital with an adult
26 cancer hospital, Connolly does not have cancer, it's not a cancer hospital, if we really want
27 adolescents who have the poorest outcomes at the moment to make a difference.

28
29 These other specialists I list there, none of these are actually in Connolly. If we want to have
30 that complexity put into Connolly we cannot have all these services in different hospitals, it will
31 mean reconfiguring James' or the Mater or other hospitals to do it, I question the resources to
32 make it happen.

33
34 Finally about Connolly, the scale, there is only so many equipments we require, highly specialist

1 equipments, one radiation oncology, at the moment all the children in Crumlin that need full
2 body radiation go into taxis and go to St. Luke's, all of that is moving to St. James', if that goes
3 somewhere else they'll still have to go into taxis.

4
5 The last thing I'll say the lost tribe in paediatrics are the young people, young and adolescent, we
6 have a dearth of how to transfer to adult services, by combining with James', who has most of
7 the specialities we need to perfect the model of care, so we can roll it out and really truly serve
8 these patients as well. Now I'll hand you over to Phelim.

9 MR DEVINE: This is the integrated project that went in the planning application, Connolly and
10 Tallaght Hospitals both have a satellite centre, which is for urgent care and outpatients, general
11 outpatients, we talked about how much secondary care is provided by the existing children's
12 hospital, anybody from Wicklow who wants to get secondary care will go to the satellite centre
13 of Tallaght.

14
15 In terms of accommodation I won't dwell on this, that's accommodation, we are talking about
16 473 beds, fundamentally the accommodation provided in the new children's hospital is 50,000
17 square metres larger than accommodated in existing children's hospitals, there will be advanced
18 diagnostics, a huge amount of play areas, open space, 14 courtyards in the building, the fourth
19 floor roof of the building is a garden, I will show you this in an image. There is third-level
20 education embedded in the school, there is a huge amount of students to attend, up to 1500
21 students. There is a thousand space car park, I'll get back to that.

22
23 This is where we are in terms of the programme, so development board were appointed in 2013
24 after the government review, so after the Mater failure it took year and a half before the
25 government decided that they were going to proceed with St. James', it's taken nearly three years
26 to get to this point, where we are at the present moment we have evaluated the contract, we are
27 about to appoint a contractor, we are going to tender and the main contractor, literally in the next
28 week or two, that's where we are, we're ready to go on the project.

29
30 In terms of the site capacity, as part of the planning application, we carried out a very detailed
31 site capacity plan, the children's hospital in yellow is 12 acres, the whole site capacity is 50
32 acres, so what's 50 acres? If you are a GAA fan, that's 20 Croke Park pitches side by side, if you
33 are a soccer fan it's 25 soccer pitches side by side, it's an enormous site in the middle of the city
34 centre, it's enormous.

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In terms of the maternity site that's a three-acre site, contrary to what Mr Breathnach said, yes there is an outpatient building that needs to be decanted to allow that future maternity hospital to go on the location, we are not demolishing the ED department or ICU, we are demolishing a 1970s building, one storey in height, not fit for purpose and needs to be refreshed.

CATHAOIRLEACH: One minute left.

MR DEVINE: In terms of site capacity, as part of the application to An Bord Pleanala we considered how the children's hospital would expand in the future, already we have projected out what the child population growth will be over the next 25 to 30 years, it is already built into the design of the hospital, as I said 50,000 square metres bigger than existing hospital, we have built in soft space for expansion, future MRI scanners, we have green spaces throughout the hospital and soft space as well, where we have admin areas taken out of the core hospital and departments can expand, on top of that again we've allowed for 20% expansion on the site with future for that to grow, and we have build a grey box in the basement to allow that to happen.

In terms of the adult hospital we considered how if it was rebuilt to current standards we have allowed for all known future expansion, such as cancer centre, theatre expansion, on top of that we've ruled for another 20% expansion and again the maternity hospital, we've allowed equivalent to the design for Holles Street moving, we've allowed another 20% on that when you take that into account on this 50 acre site, it is still all in line, treble the area on the site, but still in line with the existing County Development Plan, this site is enormous.

Just to re-emphasise the maternity hospital that Eilis talked about before, at the moment the only maternity hospital that has funding and has a timeline in place is Holles Street, neither Rotunda or Coombe have a timeline or funding in place, even though there is a commitment by the government. Of course we have been prudent, we have designed...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay I think we've come to the end of that, to be fair to both parties.

MR DEVINE: Can I have two minutes?

CATHAOIRLEACH: It was supposed to be ten minutes to both sides.

MR DEVINE: Just in terms of access, it's important to note access, because it was mentioned James' Hospital is the best campus in the country for public transport access, it's really important for staff, 3,000 staff, 1,500 students every day, within the greater Dublin area, 79 percent of people own a car, students don't, staff might own a car. I want to read this quote, I recommend anyone who reads the inspectors report, all this was debated at length, I want to read this quote.

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"There is a flaw in my opinion in the argument put forward by some of those who advocate a greenfield site adjacent to the M50. They appear to assume the unfettered access to the national and primary route and unfettered access to onsite car parking can be accommodated. The same national, regional and local transport policies are equally amicable at the location, as they are on the application site, and do not support such a strategy."

I calculated how long it will take to get there, it takes 61 minutes in James and Connolly can he up to 55 minutes. At half eight, 59 minutes and 51 -- it's not 20 minutes, we have done these surveys they are all within the planning application. Sorry I ran over.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you very much. Dr Breathnach would you like to come up. Members if you have any questions?

Cllr WHITMORE: Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the presenters, very informative presentations, it's a very complex issue, it has a very long history and it was a lot to fit in, in ten, or 15 minutes, so thank you very much for that.

My understanding of this project, I'm not a medical professional, I don't think anyone else in this chamber can claim to have a large grasp of the medical and technical issues associated with this, but I am a parent. I'm a parent of four young children and coming at it from those very basic, that very basic fact, I would hate to think that I could be sitting in traffic with my sick child on the way in to James' trying to get them into hospital. And that's probably one of the reasons that this has really taken my attention and that I have put effort into it and put it forward as a motion at the last Council meeting.

But not only am I a parent, I'm also a public representative and I know that a lot of my constituents here in Wicklow are really very concerned about the fact that the new children's hospital will be located in the centre of our capital city.

Eilish mentioned during her presentation that the aims was to keep services as local as possible, when you look at the map you can see how for children with special needs that are travelling up, there was a sort of, a good distribution across the country. However for children in Wicklow and I don't think this has really gotten as much attention as it probably should and probably will, but for children in Wicklow, if your child is in Arklow and suffers an asthma attack, you will have to drive past Loughlinstown, you will drive past Vincent's Hospital, you will be not take the exit to

1 Tallaght as you would now, now you will have to bring your child into the centre of the city.
2 Now if your child is in an ambulance for whatever reason that ambulance will be told to bypass
3 the urgent care centre at Tallaght because if you are in an ambulance they will not take you, my
4 understanding is they will not take you at Tallaght, Eilish if you can could, if I get it wrong feel
5 free to pull me up on it.

6
7 The urgent care centre in Tallaght, at the moment all our emergency, if you have a sick child you
8 go to Tallaght. The urgent care centre that is there instead, as far as I am aware, it will be open
9 from 8 till 8, maybe 8 to 10. It is not an overnight? So my child has asthma and any time I bring
10 my child there's usually a four or five hour period where they are observed, if it looks like my
11 child will -- this is just my experience, but it would be something that I think would apply to a
12 lot of parents of children. If it looks like your child needs a four or five hour observation and
13 you go in at 9 o'clock at night, your child will be sent to St. James' is my understanding.

14
15 So the actual things that the urgent care centre in Tallaght will treat and will deal with are quite
16 limited, if your child is in an ambulance they will not go to the urgent care centre in Tallaght. I
17 do not want to sit in traffic in the city with my child getting them into hospital, and I know that
18 you've calculated that there's a six-minute difference, however if you're on the M50 and there's a
19 traffic jam you can use the hard shoulder. That facility is not available in James'. If you get
20 stuck in traffic you get stuck in traffic and you need people to physically move out of your way.
21 That is -- it's a very, very serious issue that I just think it has to be taken into account in this
22 decision.

23
24 The other thing that may not also be as obvious to people is this new hospital will not take
25 coastguard helicopters, so if your child falls in Arklow, hits their head off a rock and is
26 transported by coastguard helicopter, it will be sent to Kilmainham and will have to be
27 transferred further to James', I do not understand how we can be spending 750 billion on a
28 building -- or 750 million, up to a billion euro, on a new children's hospital and we're not
29 facilitating coastguard helicopters.

30
31 The key thing that's been put forward is the reason it has to go to James' is because it has to be
32 co-located with an adult hospital. Now I'm not a medical person, I had a look through the
33 documents, I cannot see anywhere where that is explicitly laid out as to why. It said this is the
34 ideal, this is what we want. However when you look through previous documents, the Crumlin's

1 children hospital put in a submission in 2006 where they said that ideally the children's hospital
2 and maternity hospital will be aligned with an adult teaching hospital, tri-location is the desirable
3 objective, which must be balanced against a variety of considerations, such as the suitability and
4 flexibility of available sites. Where obstetrics and neonatal colleagues believe co-location of
5 paediatrics and maternities remains first priority and essential goal. So even Crumlin Children's
6 Hospital, the experts from there are saying actually maternity is the key thing. That's the thing
7 we should be striving for. And we're not getting that in James' and it may not happen.

8
9 I know the promise is there and the intent is there, but it's still not a guarantee, I think that we
10 also need to take that into consideration.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Jennifer, just as the mover of the motion I've given you more time, but if
12 you could, just 30 seconds.

13 Cllr WHITMORE: No problem. I haven't seen a one-page or two-page that says this is the
14 evidence of why we'll get better outcomes in James', 50 million has been spent on consultants in
15 this project to date, if I was a consultant the first thing I would do if that's the key argument for
16 placing it in the city centre, I would sit down and do a report specifically outlining all those
17 things.

18
19 I don't think this has been debated at Dáil level, it's a 1 billion euro project, I don't think it's
20 gotten the debate and the level of interaction it should have. Can I just finish; I have a very
21 small paragraph that I'd like to read out, this was a constituent of mine who has a sick child.

22
23 Her child suffered a cardiac arrest and they had to get him into Tallaght at the time. "We
24 performed CPR on our son for 12 minutes before the first responder arrived, who was then
25 followed by an ambulance. After an hour trying to stabilise our son we went by ambulance to
26 Crumlin, traffic was heavy but we were able to use the hard shoulder on the M50. That changed
27 when we took the exit for Crumlin, traffic was at a standstill, with nowhere for cars to go we sat
28 stationery many times. I faced the prospect of my child dying in traffic. I hated our country for
29 that. Those minutes determine life or death, the site at St. James' is further into the city on roads
30 even more congested. Not even a helicopter will get a child there quicker, as they too will not be
31 able to access the site."

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Jennifer, can I ask everybody to keep it as tight a time as you
33 possibly can. Cllr Matthews.

34 Cllr MATTHEWS: Thanks for the presentation, they are persuasive and as somebody with that

1 knowledge that you have it's hard to make the decision, you both seem to have the perfect
2 location, that's what troubles me about this. But just a couple of questions on it. The Melbourne
3 site, you said four spaces per bed, is what they had and the James' site will be 2.1 spaces per
4 bed?

5 DR BREATHNACH: That was the Alder Hey in Liverpool has 4.4, Melbourne is 6.8.

6 Cllr MATTHEWS: And James' will have 2.1, what would Connolly have and what's the
7 European norm for that?

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just ask the questions, we'll come back to you.

9 Cllr MATTHEWS: James' with 3,000 staff, how many parking spaces of your capacity would
10 be reserved for staff? Obviously James' is a lot easier to get to by public transport for staff, I
11 imagine Connolly is a lot more difficult for staff to get to by public transport, therefore you have
12 to have larger parking allowance for staff to get to, but in terms of James', how many parking
13 spaces will be available for parents with children, non-staff that have to attend the hospital?

14
15 The expansion for future growth based on population growth, James' is allowing for 20%
16 growth, I think was present figure you said? Connolly is relatively unlimited from what I'm
17 getting from the presentation; I am wondering have you built in a growth prediction capacity?

18
19 And then am I to take it that Tallaght and Connolly would be satellites and then transfer to
20 James' site and how long are those transfer times? Because they are your M50 access satellites,
21 so how long would it be to transfer somebody from that satellite to James' for further treatment?
22 Thank you Chairman.

23 Cllr WINTERS: Thanks Cathaoirleach, and thanks to both sides for the presentations. I agree
24 with Cllr Whitmore, it's a very complex issue and distilling it down into 15 or 17 minutes a side
25 is better than nothing, but still not truly informative. I suppose we're 16 years talking about
26 building a children's hospital, we finally got the go ahead and are ready to roll and as one of the
27 contributors said shovel ready on a site, and we're still arguing about it.

28
29 As they say doctors differ and patients die, and while we've argued about where best to situate it
30 over the last 16 years, you do kind of wonder about how many bad outcomes we've had for
31 children while that row went on.

32
33 I don't know which is the right answer, but I think to have a children's hospital is better than to
34 be fighting about having a children's hospital. I can't imagine why somebody would deliberately

1 set out to choose the wrong site. After 16 years I don't know why anybody would want to do
2 that. So I find it hard to believe that the best clinical outcomes wasn't the determining factor.

3
4 We don't have the population of the UK to have the volume of children that would be required to
5 have everything as standalone, maybe that's, I don't know, that's just my thoughts on it, maybe
6 that's one of the reasons that we need an adult co-location more so than in other places who
7 would have much larger densely populated areas. The need to be beside a maternity hospital is
8 fantastic for the people who have benefit of using that, but in a country the size of ours, it's not
9 going to become the only maternity hospital, so what happens all of the babies, unlucky enough
10 to be born in a maternity hospital not attached to the new children's hospital?

11
12 There's just so many unanswered questions, every presentation we get from everybody will raise
13 yet another argument. I still think about the 16 years of inaction that has left us with extremely
14 poor clinical outcomes for a lot of children as a result of that. I would urge members to just
15 build the hospital, we're ready to go, let's do it, thank you.

16 Cllr LAWLESS: Thanks Cathaoirleach. Thank you for both parties for the presentation today, it
17 was very interesting, I welcome that we'll be getting a children's hospital and I think we're not
18 ever going to get it right, regardless of what location we do pick, but in saying that, I am actually
19 a parent that has a child who has a chronic illness and have actually been in the back of an
20 ambulance trying to get through traffic and wondering whether my child's last breath is her last
21 breath.

22
23 The argument of six minutes to get to a hospital, the difference, six minutes could determine
24 whether my child lives or dies. I would be more in favour of Connolly Hospital, but I would
25 only be in favour if the hospital could be built quickly and as swiftly as James' could be built,
26 because I really feel we shouldn't wait any longer for a children's hospital. As I said there's
27 expansion there in Connolly, which I think is great, but we need a children's hospital, but I
28 would be more in favour of Connolly, if it could be built in the same time as James', thank you.

29 Cllr KAVANAGH: Thanks to both parties for their presentation today, they put a lot of work
30 into it, so it's appreciated. I don't know if anybody read yesterday's Sunday Independent, there
31 was an article from a Dr Eamon Falor who was himself at age 14 a cancer sufferer and who had
32 to rely on being driven to hospital in a very, very sick state. He now works in James' hospital,
33 but he is supporting Connolly as the venue of the site for the new hospital.

1 I won't read the article, but I will just read a quote that he puts in towards the end. He says, "As
2 a doctor I would not be writing this if there was any evidence to suggest that a single child's life
3 would be saved by co-location with St. James'. As a staff member in St. James I wouldn't be
4 writing this if I thought the cramped inner city site's suitability even approached that of the
5 accessible and unencumbered Connolly site."
6

7 I also have just very briefly, it's a document produced by Connolly for a children's hospital, they
8 quote 8 reasons why Connolly is a far preferred option as a site, we have one opportunity to get
9 this hospital right, it's going to cost a billion euro to build, if not more, there's more space, so it
10 could be co-located with a maternity hospital, there is space to expand the hospital, it will be
11 quicker to build, cheaper to build, there will be road access, there will be -- ambulances can take
12 the route on the hard shoulder in the event of traffic jams, there's helicopter access, which is
13 really important, there's unlimited parking and the thing about co-location, already it isn't in
14 existence, but according to the Connolly for children's hospital, it says that it is widely claimed
15 that the new children's hospital will benefit from being co-located with adult St. James', the
16 current mix of adult specialities available does not offer any further benefit to the proposed
17 children's hospital. So as I said, we have one chance to get this right, I'd hate to think that in ten,
18 15 years time we'll look back and say 50 acres wasn't a lot of ground to begin with. I really
19 would just ask people to think and give some real consideration to this decision to build in
20 St. James'.

21 Cllr BEHAN: Just to thank both groups for their presentations, and when I proposed that we
22 have representatives from the two groups here I felt it was important that we hear the arguments
23 in a fair context, and the reality is we are not going to make a decision on the location of this
24 hospital anyway, but a motion was proposed on the last occasion to more or less encourage us to
25 object to the location that had been decided by the government, without hearing the facts on the
26 other side. But in reality, An Bord Pleanála made a planning decision and the government made
27 a political decision to proceed with it.
28

29 I would imagine for parents of children who are sick, all over this country, remember it's a
30 national hospital for children all over the country, not just in Wicklow, but throughout the
31 country, that the treatment that they get when they do go to hospital is the best possible treatment
32 available. And I think from what I've heard today and what I've read in the past, I think the
33 solution that is being proposed by the national children's hospital group is the best solution and
34 the government's decision is the correct decision.

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If we had a blank page and go back 50 years we might have done it differently, we can't do that. But I think for the sake of the many, many children who will be sick in the future it's important this project breathes. I would also contend there is no point having a vote, because in reality the decision has been made by the government, we shouldn't do anything to obstruct it at this point in time.

Cllr O'CONNOR: All I would say on this issue is that like Nicola here I also have a child who suffers from a severe medical disorder; he has to attend Crumlin on a very regular basis. What really sticks in my mind about this whole debate, technical and all as it is, there were some really excellent points made by both sides, so is the horror of sitting in traffic, trying to get into Crumlin every day, it's a disaster zone. James', I know the area well, that would also be an absolute disaster zone, I know the road to Blanch, you get traffic jams on it sometimes, but by and large it is more or less clear, and as I think Jennifer said earlier, you can always use the hard shoulder if you are in a bit of a rush.

I just can't see all these parents from all over the country, from all 32 counties trying to get into James', I just can't see it. However having said all that, if it would delay things on a massive level to try and move the whole thing to Connolly, where is that going to get us? I don't know. But I think the traffic is a major issue.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr O'Neill, Mitchell, Vance and then we'll get responses.

Cllr O'NEILL: Thanks to both parties, again I have had a child, she's grown into a young woman now for the last 30 year, and we had Temple Street, we had St. James', we had Tallaght, the whole lot, and there was great care in every hospital. But I was a member of the Tallaght action group for four-year with my Sinn Fein colleague Sean Crowe and we argued at the time that there should be a greenfield site, it was a greenfield that was a site requirement.

I just wonder what is the position now as regards the greenfield site? There was talk at the time of City West and how near it was to Baldonnell Aerodrome for children that will have to go abroad for organ transplant, I just wonder where that went, did it go out the window altogether? Because if this is the proper site, if St. James' is the proper site, why was there 42 million spent on looking at the Mater site? I see Stephen Donnelly our TD here today, Stephen was consultant with McKinsey, so I just wonder why was there so much money spent on looking at the site in the Mater if St. James' was the proper site in the heel of the hunt?

Cllr MITCHELL: Thank you Cathaoirleach, Wicklow is unusual in that for a large county it's

1 one of the few or possibly the only one without a hospital in it, so we all have to travel when we
2 need a hospital, so it's particularly important, the travel issue for people in Wicklow.

3
4 I certainly, if ten years ago or 16 years ago I was certainly in favour of the A&E unit, if it had to
5 be moved from Loughlinstown, to be put along the M50 and I would also have thought a large
6 campus for all those specialities which focus on, which Wicklow uses, including maternity and
7 children's should have been at that stage put on the M50, and then make it easier to get to it.
8 However that decision wasn't made then, and we've gone on at least ten years, some say 16
9 years, we spent a pile of money, we still have not a stone turn to produce this children's hospital,
10 and I think if a decision is changed at this late stage it will produce more years of delay and I
11 think we should stick with the present plan, though I think it wasn't visionary enough in terms of
12 location when it started.

13
14 One thing that would concern me and we should make representations to Dublin City Council or
15 whoever was responsible, the suggestion there should be a 30 kph zone all over Dublin area is
16 going to hinder access to this hospital unnecessarily and for any access directions to this hospital
17 we should make sure that 30 kph is not in place. Thank you.

18 Cllr VANCE: I'd like to agree with Cllr Winters and Cllr Behan for the simple reason, what our
19 function is here on this is very little, the decision has been made, I would find like Cllr Winters,
20 I'd find it very hard to believe any expert group would actually pick a site for their own reasons
21 or political reasons anyway I would imagine, certainly the criteria was it would be the best
22 service provided for people that are going to use it, and whereas from my point of view, like
23 James' is in the middle of the city, it is a difficult area, there's no doubt, for traffic and parking
24 and that, one would get the impression listening to some people that Connolly had no problems
25 with traffic at all and if anyone goes along the M50 at busy times at the moment, particularly
26 now, it's building up again, a number of years ago as well, you have major problems with traffic
27 on the M50 at certain times during the day as well.

28
29 The problem with this is from my point of view, that it's ready to go at the moment, and I feel
30 any decision to delay it, certainly if I was a parent and had a sick child, my whole feeling on it
31 would be the sooner the better this hospital is up and running and whether it's five minutes or 10
32 minutes difference, really it's all about providing the best services to the people who are going to
33 use it as well and not delaying it. I fear if there was any delay in this at all it could be ten or 15
34 years down the road, I don't think really the children of this country deserve it, and people are

1 talking about five or six minutes and what it could do to a child's life, what could five or six
2 years or ten years do to a child's life if you don't have up-to-date facilities that I think everyone
3 deserves. In that sense I think, it may not be the ideal site, but it's the site that's there and ready
4 to go, I do feel it's necessary that it moves on, we don't have a vote on this anyway, I welcome
5 the discussion on it as well, we've read plenty over the years in regard to that, it's ready to go and
6 as far as I'm concerned let's built it.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Great, thank you members. So we'll just return to speakers, we'll start
8 with Dr Breathnach just to respond to some of the questions.

9 DR BREATHNACH: I've tried to keep notes. Somebody said if we had a blank page, we
10 actually had a blank page, and we could have started from scratch and built something perfect
11 and wonderful. The problem is and people ask why might people pick the wrong place twice?
12 Well the law was that you had to pick a site, which was co-located with an adult hospital. You
13 weren't given the option of a greenfield site, you were stuck and the two, as the letter in the
14 Independent said yesterday, you were stuck with the most powerful lobby group, which was
15 UCD at the time because they staffed the Mater, they lost out because An Bord Pleanala said no,
16 then you had the second most powerful university, which was Trinity and they won it for James',
17 it's pretty obvious -- you don't have time and the match is coming up, it's pretty obvious that
18 there are far too many adult hospitals in Dublin City, and pretty sure there will be a
19 reorganisation and rationalisation, you might end up with two, one mega hospital which will
20 have all of the specialities, James', two reports say if you are going to have to co-locate with
21 James' it should have neurosurgery and organ transplantation, it has none, so where's the logic of
22 putting the children's hospital next to it?

23
24 But there will be two adults hospitals in the city, maybe one -- one which might have 12 or 1,400
25 beds, but every single speciality for the adults that would be the ideal hospital with which to
26 co-locate your children's hospitals, but that won't fit on the James' site, the only way an existing
27 hospital can hope to survive is by winning the prize of the children's hospital, if you have the
28 children's hospital as part of your campus then it's pretty hard to close you down. So they fought
29 tooth and nail to win this for Trinity, this has very little if anything to do with sick children.

30
31 Why compromise? We're compromising in so many areas in relation to this location, access is
32 appalling, it doesn't matter what anybody says, you go to Mount Brown at half past 7 in the
33 morning or three or four or five in the afternoon, chocka block before the 10,000 acknowledged
34 extra arrivals and departures every single day of the year, 10,000 people. We have nurses, we

1 have a shortage of nurses in James', we have a shortage of nurses in Crumlin, we're supposed to
2 respect nurses and we're supposed to -- what's the word I had down for it -- we have to respect
3 the wishes of nurses, nurse's salaries do not allow you to buy a house in Dublin, so where do
4 they buy a house? They buy a house in a satellite centre, Naas, Leixlip, Kildare, Newbridge,
5 Ashbourne etcetera, that's just for the south. And nurses at the moment working in Dublin are
6 working in three different locations, Crumlin, Tallaght and Temple Street. None of them are
7 involved in choosing the site, and their place of living at the moment may be inappropriate in
8 relation to the proposed site.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: I have to rush you, but we've very little time, can you just, any of the
10 questions if you can just give the answers.

11 DR BREATHNACH: I don't think it will be easy to recruit nurses when you can't even allow
12 them park when they live in satellite towns. Room for future expansion? 20%. Crumlin has
13 expanded by 75% in the last 15 years, we built operating theatres ten years ago which were
14 supposed to last a few decades, ten years ago with the help of the Department of Health, all the
15 calculations they did, the theatre space has been increased by 25% in the recent past. There is no
16 -- Toronto sick kids doubled in size every ten years, if you don't have space, McKinsey's number
17 one requirement, you cannot thrive and survive.

18
19 Maternity, prenatal diagnosis is hugely effective in picking up the vast majority now of
20 abnormalities in babies while they are in the womb, the safest way to transfer these babies is
21 while they are in the womb. Not after they are born. If you are not diagnosed prenatal and you
22 have a problem and delivered in Wicklow, Cork, Kildare, wherever, that may prove to be a
23 problem, but there are umpteen papers that have shown if you can handover the newborn baby
24 directly into the children's hospital, the outcomes are better. There will be a lower mortality rate
25 and lower long-term side effect, injuries to the brain, etcetera, no such paper to support adult
26 co-location, I keep asking for anyone to produce a single study which shows the outcomes will
27 be better if you build a children's hospital next to an adult hospital, they come up with waffley
28 stuff, it doesn't make a difference.

29
30 Morris Nelligan, our first cardiac surgeon said building the children's hospital next to an adult
31 hospital benefits the surgeon rather than the patients, the plastic surgeon who look after the burns
32 patients in the children's hospital also work in James', but the nursing staff will be in the
33 children's hospital, so it's convenient for the surgeon to be in the adult hospital right next door.
34 No traffic lights on the M50 by the way and the hard shoulder is always available in an

1 emergency.

2

3 The Reilly group, interestingly the experts from Australia, North America, England and Europe
4 when given the option of co-locating with an adult hospital they chose the Mater over James', so
5 despite all the wonderful specialities they still chose the Mater.

6

7 The power of the universities and power of the HSE...

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: I don't think that was a question.

9 DR BREATHNACH: No, why was the wrong place, why would somebody choose a particular
10 place okay, and why is there lack of support? Laura Lynn have come out in favour.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll wrap up on this one.

12 DR BREATHNACH: Are coming out in favour of the children's hospital on James' site, CEO of
13 the Laura Lynn hospice worked in James' and also worked for the HSE, the founder of Laura
14 Lynn is against the children's hospital being at the James' site.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much for that.

16 MS HARDIMAN: If I may, I have combined some of the questions for Cllrs Whitmore,
17 O'Connor, Lawless and O'Neill in relation to services, I am acutely aware, as somebody who is
18 supplying the services to the family in your particular area, we do have a duty of care to actually
19 inform them how they are going to -- the services are going to work, so I want to give an
20 assurance that this is about making it better, about keeping local services local, there will still be
21 services at Tallaght Hospital.

22

23 The vast majority of children's services can be delivered by pediatrician, who is a specialist and
24 urgent care by ED doctors, paediatric emergency doctors who will be there and staffing these
25 units, 8% of our children in the best emergency departments in Dublin, not all of them, but the
26 best ones are admitted, which means 92% of the attendees go home. What we are doing, and
27 have started to do in Tallaght since February of this year, is we have put observation beds, Cllr
28 Whitmore as you mentioned, into the paediatric emergency department at Tallaght Hospital, and
29 already in three months we have had a 2% reduction in our admission rate. Heretofore those
30 children would have been admitted and have to stay in overnight, very disruptive to the child and
31 family and as we all know, we go in with the kids, I have been in the same position, four hours
32 later they are bouncing and you are wondering why were you so worried. This is what we are
33 trying to do, changing the model whereby in the urgent care centre there will be six beds in each
34 of the satellite centres, observation beds, where children can wait up to eight hours for

1 observation and then be discharged under the care of an ED consultant, and return to a general
2 paediatric clinic, rapid access clinic, much better than they are getting at the moment.

3
4 We also plan chronic disease management in these units, which will be delivered by health and
5 social care professionals, that's Advanced Nurse Practitioners or physiotherapists and other staff.
6 And other objective is to make it safer and better.

7
8 At the moment on an average eight children turn up after 12 o'clock to ED at Tallaght Hospital,
9 we have analysed why they are turning up and we have talked and assessed patients, we believe
10 we can make that a lot better and safer and much better by reconfiguring having the services
11 rightfully available which we need on an outpatient basis and urgent care in those facilities up
12 until 12 o'clock.

13
14 I will commit to doing a one pager on the co-location benefits of James' Hospital and sharing it
15 with you, I can demonstrate from my 20 years of working in that hospital, how we've
16 demonstrated and proven how we can make lives better by saving lives. I also think that the
17 hospital of the future, we are talking about something that's going to be here for the next 60 to 70
18 years it's hard to predict that far into the future, if you do ask the futurists to do it, it is all around
19 how can we empower or families and particularly our children and young people to care for
20 themselves as much as possible at home.

21
22 We are doing it in small pockets using information technology, we have very strong ambitions
23 that are being supported by the government and by the HSE and Department in relation to
24 electronic healthcare records whereby we'll be able to communicate with families and GPs to
25 support chronic disease children better than we are doing at the moment, so we're expecting
26 people to come to us when we should work with how can we go out and support those children.

27
28 In relation to the issues of access traffic and expansion, Phelim has some facts and figures that I
29 think will be worthwhile hearing, that I hope answer all the rest of your questions combined.

30 MR DEVINE: Just a few things, one of the councillors asked in terms of 20% expansion, we've
31 already future proved the existing hospital for the next 25/30 years and the 20% expansion is on
32 top of that again, that's 50,000 square metres larger than the existing space and we have built in
33 grey spaces. Another issue that came up was the amount of parking spaces, there are a thousand
34 going into the hospital, 675 of those are dedicated for families, those spaces are designed in a

1 certain way, some are larger than normal spaces like parent and child for off-loading, for
2 families who have a lot of equipment depending on the acuity of the child.

3
4 Also we propose to have a car park booking system where people can advance book their car
5 parking space and that will be linked to an out-patient appointment, an in-patient or day case. In
6 terms of the analysis we did for the planning submission to test the 675 spaces were adequate,
7 this was all discussed at the oral hearing and obviously Mr Breathnach made an objection on that
8 as well, that 100% of people that come to the hospital in emergency will have a car parking
9 space, those are allocated right outside the door. 100% of in-patient families have access to a
10 parking space, 100% of day cases will have access to a parking space. The only area of clinic,
11 which is out-patients, that won't have 100% access to a parking space is out-patients. To go back
12 on the figures, within the GDA area, 79% of people have access to a car, own a car. Within the
13 M50 69.9% have a car, so they use other means. I think it's been presented here that Connolly
14 has unlimited access to car parking, this is not true. That's why I read that quote from the
15 inspector's report, the same sustainability, mobility management and local and regional and
16 national transportation policy applies to Connolly as St. James' with restricted numbers of car
17 parking, the existing link off the M50 is not large enough or big enough to deal with the hospital
18 in Connolly and I think the amount of parking that is required will be a significant planning risk.

19
20 In terms of delay we think it could be four years, in terms of inflation costs that's 60 to 80
21 million additional. In terms of the helipad, yes search and rescue helicopters can't land, they
22 don't have a licence to in this country, all air ambulance transport is coordinated through the
23 national ambulance and aero-medical section, it uses the Air Corps to provide all its air
24 ambulance. They are AW139s and they can land on helipad. Search and rescue, you can count
25 the number of search and rescue, in a year it might be less than ten, they will land in the Royal
26 Hospital Kilmainham, as they do for St. James' at the moment and there will be an ambulance
27 transfer.

28
29 In terms of ambulance transfers, a lot of evidence was given about the safety of ambulance
30 transfers, as one of the councillors pointed out, whilst it might be a co-located maternity
31 hospitals, what about the other maternity hospitals, in the 15 years of the national retrieval
32 system thankfully they have had no case of anybody passed or died, the person that leads that
33 gave evidence at the oral hearing.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Great, thank you both and yourself Dr Breathnach, it's been really

1 insightful and hopefully the members have enjoyed that, so thank you all very much.

2
3 Jennifer that's the question for you, if you want that taken as a vote we can do that, or maybe
4 what Cllr Behan was saying, that as we don't have any formal role in this, maybe that is...

5 Cllr WHITMORE: With respect to what Cllr Behan said, we didn't have a formal role, then he
6 said we shouldn't vote because we may obstruct it, I would like to go ahead with a vote on a
7 motion rather than revisit it in a month or two months time. We can finish up on it now and go
8 ahead with the vote. We have a lot of constituents concerned about this issue and they will want
9 to feel that their voice was heard.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: The seconder for that is?

11 Cllr KAVANAGH: I'll second it.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay great, let's have a vote on it. Everybody's clear on the motion are
13 they? You want it read again? Okay.

14 MS GALLAGHER: "The members of Wicklow County Council call on the Minister for Health
15 to reverse the decision to locate the National Children's Hospital at St. James' hospital and locate
16 the new children's hospital for all the children of Ireland at Connolly Hospital in
17 Blanchardstown, the Connolly site offers 145 acres vast space for expansion, easier access for
18 the children of Wicklow and extensive parking, the co-location with Connolly Hospital and the
19 new Rotunda Maternity Hospital will result in better clinical outcomes, it will be cheaper and
20 faster to build than on the St. James' site." That came down from the Greystones Municipal
21 District members.

22 Cllr FORTUNE: Can I get a clarification on the vote, I want to be clear in my own brain. Why
23 are we voting?

24 Cllr RUTTLE: Good question.

25 Cllr FORTUNE: No, I asked for a reason. You see I listened very intently to the debate on both
26 sides, I have been watching this for a long time, listening on TV and various things, this whole
27 thing is very, very political. And I think today was very good and very interesting and very
28 informative, but...

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: I accept your point.

30 Cllr FORTUNE: I think a vote is being political.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: But unfortunately it's been called, it's been seconded, so I have no other
32 role here but to fulfil that with a vote. So go ahead.

33
34 (Vote taken)

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MS GALLAGHER: Nine for, nine against, 7 not present and 7 abstaining.

CATHAOIRLEACH: So I'll be consistent and say against.

MS GALLAGHER: That's the casting vote.

Cllr VANCE: You don't have to use a casting vote, it has no material...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Exactly it makes no difference, we can leave the vote stand as it is. And just let that be, I'm happy to do that, that's the view of the Council, that's fair enough.

Okay, thank you very much. Now we have the national transport party. So we're welcoming Hugh Creegan, the Deputy CEO of the NTA, obviously this follows up the presentation we had at our last meeting, and we invited the NTA to come in and give us an understanding of the strategy that's been put in place and how it might affect Wicklow and we also invited the TDs here today, so I think we've got all TDs, except Minister Harris, who gave his apologies. So maybe you'd give us the presentation, thank you very much.

MR CREEGAN: Good afternoon everybody. I haven't given a full presentation on the strategy because I realised you got one at the last meeting, but I understand that number of issues were raised at that meeting and the information I have is that the two most significant concerns raised were firstly the issue of providing a Luas link to Fassaroe and secondly the restrictions that the transport strategy might place on employment growth in Wicklow. I thought that rather than try and cover the whole strategy again I'd focus on those two, and any other issues that might exist I'll deal with by way of questions, I only have a couple of slides you'll be delighted to know.

Issue number one, Luas link to Fassaroe. The existing green line runs from Bride's Glen to St. Stephen's Green, later this year Luas cross city will open at the north end of that route, extending through the city centre, currently 18 trams operate inbound in the morning peak hour, all of them are full and a lot of them are operating really over their design capacity at this stage. Because the green line is not segregated from traffic, particularly through the city centre, the max number of trams that the overall line can accommodate is about 20 to 21 trams per hour, the two to three extra trams that are available will have to deal with passenger growth on the existing line and the conclusion then has to be that there is no capacity to extend the line southwards until it is upgraded to a segregated metro, which is called the metro south project.

First of all metro north will not be complete until about 2026 or 2027, that was in the capital plan that was published last year and it would be sometime after that that metro south will be

1 completed, it needs to run into metro north, one has to come before the other. While the capacity
2 to extend the green line further southwards is not available at present, this doesn't mean that
3 development at Fassaroe can't proceed, and I do want to emphasise that nothing in the transport
4 strategy says that development cannot proceed at Fassaroe.

5
6 But in the absence of the capacity to extend the Luas out to Fassaroe, public transport serving
7 that development will have to be bus based, presumably with strong linkages to Bray centre and
8 the DART line. From our perspective we very much welcome collaboration with the Council in
9 developing an optimal transport solution to allow development to proceed at Fassaroe.

10
11 Just going on to employment, keeping it brief, touching on the key points. Three key points,
12 there are no targets or limits stated in the transport strategy in relation to future employment in
13 any of the GDA counties, including Wicklow. Indeed there are no employment numbers of any
14 type stated in the transport strategy. There is nothing in the transport strategy therefore that
15 seeks to limit Wicklow from growing its employment levels.

16
17 But there is separate from the strategy a transport model, that's a computer simulation model
18 which has been developed by NTA to forecast likely transport patterns in the future. The
19 primary purpose of this transport model is to evaluate the benefits of all significant transport
20 projects in the region, from medium sized road schemes to large rail projects, and enable cost
21 benefit analysis to be undertaken for each project. That transport model was used in the
22 preparation of the transport strategy to evaluate the potential benefits including calculating the
23 cost to benefit ratio. Because the tool is being used to evaluate the economic benefits of
24 projects, which will be subject to detailed scrutiny and review, it has to be robust in its
25 assumptions and methodology, it can't be either too conservative or too optimistic.

26
27 It uses the CSO population projections for the region and maintains the county's proportions of
28 the region's employment, unchanged from census 2011 proportions. What that means is it
29 translates into 38% growth for the purpose of model simulation, 38% growth in employment in
30 County Wicklow over the period of the transport strategy. However, this is probably the key
31 point in relation to it, this model is only used for appraisal purposes and doesn't form part of the
32 transport strategy itself, therefore since it doesn't form part of the strategy it doesn't limit County
33 Wicklow in any way from achieving whatever employment targets it wishes to set for itself.

1 And that was my understanding of the two key points, I realise there may be other ones I'm
2 happy to answer, I thought I'd face up to the two big ones first, I understood were those two.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. Cllr Mitchell?

4 Cllr MITCHELL: Thank you and thanks for that explanation. I suppose in relation to the
5 employment targets, it's certainly essential to get more industry here and stop people having to
6 commute along the N11, which is what the problem is, the NRA and NTA has been lobbying An
7 Bord Pleanala against building employment zones at motorway exits and whereas in Dublin
8 every single M50 junction, with the exception of one at Firhouse, has a very major employment
9 centre next to it. This is sucking everybody from Wicklow in and that needs to be changed.

10
11 The Luas, I'm concerned that certainly the plan for the Luas seems to have gone, a key point in
12 building Fassaroe was to use the Luas and maybe help other areas of Wicklow, people could
13 interchange there.

14
15 There are other points which are relevant, I think Wicklow has been very badly served, some 20
16 years ago the Dublin transportation initiative produced a report which concentrated on the centre
17 of Dublin instead of the whole area, interest groups and councillors were on it and managed to
18 get outside County Dublin, as far as I can see it seems this should really be County Dublin only
19 strategy, but the key to get more people onto the train service south of Bray is to provide more
20 trains around Bray Head, and while there are some very vague statements there about it, the
21 contrast with the very detailed statements made about the service north of there every ten or
22 every six minutes, it seems to me it has not been thought through. I provided a detailed
23 suggestion that would double track the line out of Bray station to the first cutting and put in
24 faster signalling and some other things which would increase the capacity to 15 or 20 minute
25 services, but that doesn't seem to have been considered.

26
27 The present proposals from NTA and CIE to increase the journey time by 12%, 5.6 minutes,
28 doesn't really give confidence that this has been thought through. South of Greystones there is
29 an existing rush hour four carriage diesel train which should be increased to 8. Irish Rail say it
30 can't be done, but most other overseas railways don't open the doors of the extra carriages when
31 they come to short platforms, you regularly hear announcements to that effect, that could easily
32 be done by CIE and that would increase the capacity there, people are standing from Wicklow
33 Town.

1 Another direct diesel is needed at rush hour, that's ignored. There is talk of a shuttle, that's easy
2 to talk about, but we had a shuttle before from Greystones to Bray and it was a disaster, it wasn't
3 run properly and to do it properly it needs reorganisation physically of the station in Greystones
4 and re-signalling and a proper management plan, which did not exist before and the thing
5 collapsed. And indeed I have a photograph of the present Minister for Transport marching down
6 from Pearse Station against the service provider by the shuttle and the need for a DART.

7
8 So the bus services seem to me to be very little improved here. I counted the number of people
9 using these and the trains at peak hour and the numbers, which I counted were greater than the
10 strategy in 2035 projects, and I can't understand what it is, and the reply to my submission
11 doesn't illuminate it.

12
13 The N11 improvement is welcome, it's one of the first times a proper public document has said
14 so and that's good. It's important that Wicklow's engineers are included in the study, which they
15 are currently excluded from.

16
17 Finally the outer orbital route, as I understand it, the plan ends in Naas, that isn't an orbital route.
18 The mid east regional plan continues this to the coast, this doesn't accord with that, it should be
19 if we are to have proper transport in Wicklow. Thank you.

20 Cllr WINTERS: I'd like to agree with the points raised by Cllr Mitchell and due to the pressures
21 of time I won't go over those, I'd raise the other aspects of the presentation to us, which would
22 have dealt more with what seemed to be the undermining of the democratic process and the place
23 that elected representatives and members of the public have in actually forming their own
24 transport plan and strategy and how they want to live as a community.

25
26 Noel Dempsey, not of my party, but currently in his role as Chairman of the Temple Bar
27 Company recently criticised the awarding of the contract for design within a week of the closing
28 date of the public consultation on the proposed pedestrianisation of College Green. That's a
29 scheme that was proposed by the NTA and Dublin City Council, the Council received 2,000
30 submissions, but they proceeded with the tender for design before they ever reviewed or
31 responded to those submissions, so there was and I suppose it's an example of what happens
32 when there is no statutory public consultation, and there was no statutory public consultation in
33 relation to that pedestrianisation project. Basically 2,000 people wrote in and a week later DCC
34 and the NTA went to design.

1
2 In relation to the funding and promoting of schemes, and I realise you won't have all of the
3 answers today, I would appreciate if we can get them back, could the NTA specify the statutory
4 processes that apply to schemes that are sponsored, promoted and funded through grants
5 administered by the NTA? Could the NTA explain how funding is awarded to the schemes?
6 And should it not be the schemes that are awarded funding or that are proposed by the NTA are
7 subject to funding review by a different agency rather than you proposing your schemes and
8 awarding funding to yourselves? Because at the moment it would seem entirely possible that the
9 NTA could drive forward proposals for transport projects without any involvement or agreement
10 with democratically elected members and thereafter award funding to their own schemes, I
11 suppose I question that from a governance point of view, is that good governance?
12

13 What appeal mechanism is in place with regard to the schemes proposed by the NTA,
14 particularly ones where we no longer have to have part 8 for some of the NTA schemes? So
15 what appeal mechanism is in place in regard to those? Then the County Development Plan
16 progresses through a lengthy consultation process and we take account of all the submissions,
17 I'm wondering what checks and balances are in place when it comes to the NTA strategy, which
18 takes precedence over the County Development Plan, and who has oversight of the NTA? Are
19 decisions of the NTA reviewable by An Bord Pleanala, Department of the Environment or
20 Transport, or the Minister, like really who gets the final say?
21

22 Just a couple more questions I had done out here, are the decisions of the NTA judicially
23 reviewable? Would the NTA support a change to the legislation to allow a more democratic
24 approach to the development of the NTA transport strategy? Then from a completely local
25 perspective there's a single trackway into Wicklow and it is in danger of falling into the sea,
26 where in the strategy for the Greater Dublin Area do the NTA see their role in that?

27 Cllr VANCE: Chairman, thank you, could I welcome Hugh to the meeting, it comes with a
28 different attitude than the last NTA representative that you would remember, Chairman, that
29 arrived in Bray with an arrogance that I never experienced in regard to dealing with any group of
30 people, and they were sent back to Dublin, rightly so, in regard to the proposals that they felt that
31 the Bray people could take at that particular -- they proposed a fait accomplis and were promptly
32 told what to do with themselves. Could I welcome you here Hugh, all the contact we've had
33 with the NRA and I've had some individual contact over the years, had not been great, so I just
34 thank you for coming down here.

1
2 Also that your comments there as well, would indicate to me that there is a sea change at least
3 the NTA are prepared to listen to the people in Wicklow, and obviously with that type of
4 co-operation, that maybe we can get down to do the business of what we do best and what you
5 do best as well, is providing the type of services and us providing the future planning in the
6 particular area.

7
8 I'm Chairman of the Mid-east Regional Assembly as well, I'm well aware of what's going on in
9 the Regional Assembly and what's going to happen in the planning strategies that are going to
10 happen in the next few years, and I understand the importance that NTA have to play in that,
11 they have a cog in the wheel, but like every other organisation there are a number of
12 organisations that have cogs in the wheel as well, unless we all come together and get it right the
13 plan will be right as well.

14
15 I'm just a bit perturbed by the Luas situation, because when we were zoning Fassaroe, there was
16 all sorts of contact with NTA in regard to Fassaroe and various things like that, they had agreed
17 to go in there and particularly a park and ride, which effectively would mean that the whole of
18 north Wicklow would be able to go in on a park and ride, I just cannot understand why they may
19 be proposing Woodbrook, which seems strange that cars would have to go over the N11 and
20 various things like that, particularly when I believe Cherrywood, there may be a planning
21 application coming in very shortly in regard to Old Fassaroe and not Cherrywood I would
22 imagine.

23
24 Certainly the attitude of a lot of people in Wicklow would feel that the NTA have certainly been
25 more supportive of Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown, Cherrywood and Carrickmines, of the big
26 developments there, and their opposition to Fassaroe, which is a vital cog, an absolute vital cog
27 to meet the population, strategic population that we need in the north of the county, and also for
28 employment growth as well, this is absolutely essential and it's built into our plan. I'm glad to
29 hear that the NTA will co-operate in bringing that to fruition. The N11, Cllr Mitchell mentioned
30 as well, is a major problem as you are well aware, it's really come down to what we feel is the
31 right method that is used there, because traffic in the morning and traffic in the evening, as you
32 are well aware, there's a major problem there. They are just a few of the issues, but thanks again
33 and I'm sure you'll find, with the new attitude in the NTA, you will find reciprocated in Wicklow
34 County Council, thank you.

1 Cllr BLAKE: Thanks for your presence here today, I'm not going to repeat some of the
2 questions that people have asked, I know you are short of time here. But two points you did
3 raise, that was in regards to the employment in County Wicklow, you said there was no
4 restrictions whatsoever and no plans in any shape or form that you are talking about, yet we are
5 talking about figures of -- being bandied around of just 7,000 being allocated to County
6 Wicklow, yet we were talking of a potential growth of 22,000 jobs over the next number of
7 years; there seems to be a bit of a conflict in that regard.

8
9 Equally so in terms of development, employment zoning, is there anything of that nature,
10 apparently had to be within 2 kilometres of public transport, and we talked about the difficulty
11 with the train service here in this county. I don't know how that will impact on future growth of
12 Wicklow and Arklow. Equally so the outer orbital route, there was talk about that going through
13 Louth, Meath, Kildare, but no mention of County Wicklow with regard to that outer orbital
14 route.

15 Cllr MATTHEWS: Just to clarify what you said about Luas to Bray, you complete metro north
16 first hopefully in 2026, then metro south before a Luas to Bray, so we'll talk at least ten, that's
17 optimistic, possibly 20 years before there's a Luas in Bray? Okay, thanks Chairman.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's it. That's it. Finally Cllr Behan.

19 Cllr BEHAN: So many questions so little time, the only thing I would ask is that, had you any
20 involvement in the submission to this Council on the Development Plan? Are you aware of what
21 you as a body are saying to us in terms of our Development Plan? Because I am a little bit
22 confused in what you have said and what I thought I read from the NTA in their submission,
23 third party submission. So perhaps you might clarify that.

24 MR CREEGAN: Okay there was a lot of questions floating through there. Maybe if I start off
25 first with just the perception appears to exist that the NTA have some extra powers to allow us to
26 proceed with projects outside the normal planning process, that isn't the case at all. So I think
27 Cllr Winters in particular brought up the issue about us being able to proceed with projects
28 without going through democratic process, we just can't, if we want to do a road scheme, a cycle
29 scheme, a bus lane scheme, we're subject to the same legislation as the Council here is subject to.
30 I think what may be reflected in that position is there is a piece of legislation, not to do with
31 NTA that came in a number of years ago that did exempt certain bus lane and cycle projects
32 from a part 8 planning process, that came in five or six years ago, I don't know the origins for it,
33 but it's in a piece of legislation, that certain projects are exempt from part 8, it's not NTA
34 specific, that's every Council has that power, nothing to do with us particularly.

1
2 Perhaps on the same theme, College Green, yes we are involved with Dublin City Council, I
3 know it's quite a distance away from here, that process has a long way to go, the information that
4 you were given that there was a contract awarded in relation to it is absolutely untrue, the City
5 Council did initiate a tender, pre-qualification process that they could appoint a design team if
6 the outcome by the councillors and the submissions that came in, which are in the region of
7 2,000, is positive, so they were just kicking off a process rather than finishing a process.

8
9 Going back to Cllr Mitchell who had a number of items there, the first was about the NTA and
10 NRA opposing development at motorway junctions and effectively there is a legacy there of it
11 having been carried out already all over the M50 in particular, that is true, there's been a big
12 investment in the motorway network, the last thing that we would actually want to see happen if
13 we thought about it, was that the capacity of that motorway network is prematurely eroded just
14 to facilitate a certain amount of development that perhaps could be located in another place,
15 there's plenty of mistakes made in the past in planning terms, particularly with the M50 that we
16 all had to live with for years and decades indeed.

17
18 Other items, south of Greystones only four carriages with trains -- I'm aware of that, my view is
19 if there is enough passenger need there's no -- our remit only extends to edge of the GDA, south
20 of Arklow it would have to be picked up by Department of Transport and Irish Rail, I don't think
21 that's an insurmountable problem, the point you're getting at is more train services on the line
22 south of Bray is absolutely valid, we'd like to see that as well, we're not convinced that it's going
23 to be possible to put in a twin track line there with environmental issues that will arise, ten years
24 ago yes you could, environmental legislation has much become more subscribed or
25 circumscribed since then, there was a court case to do with Galway outer bypass, a real game
26 changer in the European Court of Justice, which made developing infrastructure through
27 designated areas really difficult and can only be done in certain cases.

28
29 But our view is yes we believe we can get more services through there and I'm not going to give
30 you a date by which it will happen, but certainly we're committed over the next 12 months to do
31 a review of what additional services we can manage on that particular line and we are interested
32 even though it may not gain full universal support with the idea of stopping diesel services
33 potentially at Greystones, and using DART services only from Greystones northwards, we just
34 want to explore that further and consult with people and see is there merit in that, but we can see

1 how you could accommodate more services just by going that kind of a route, every time you try
2 and bring a diesel service to Connolly you have to create a window in the timetable of the DART
3 service to get it through because it goes at a different speed, as we go to more frequent DARTs,
4 ten minutes in particular, getting the window for a diesel service is becoming much more
5 difficult.

6
7 Outer orbital route ending in Naas, that was subject to a major study by the NRA back five years
8 ago, I was involved in it myself at the time, the link over to the N11 was proving very difficult
9 geographically, and very expensive for the volume of traffic on it, as a result it wasn't included in
10 the proposal for outer orbital at that point in time, in any event it has a price tag in the billions
11 and all that's included in the transport strategy in relation to it reserving, whatever corridor has
12 been identified.

13
14 NTA taking precedence over Development Plans, to touch on that. That is not the case. It came
15 up at your last meeting, the decision on land use rests with councillors in respect of the
16 Development Plans and local area plans, and with the regional authorities at the regional level
17 and with the Minister for the Environment or whatever the correct title is now at the national
18 level. We have a role in transport, we are responsible for the strategic plans of transport across
19 the Greater Dublin Area, the two have to be integrated so there is a connection between two, but
20 categorically we are not responsible for land use planning or not seeking to be responsible for
21 land use planning, but do need to work with the Councils and regional authority to integrate the
22 two, because land use without transport simply doesn't work.

23
24 Park and ride at Woodbrook was mentioned by Cllr Vance, that's something we've down as we
25 think it's worth exploring, it may require significant linkages to do it correctly and we haven't
26 bottomed that out, but we see that there will be a DART station in Woodbrook in the future and
27 therefore this is the potential to put a park and ride there in our view.

28
29 I think Cllr Blake raised the issue of employment numbers we did, I think I said in the slides we
30 were including in the transport model that we have 38% increase in employment, which is a
31 growth of 10 and a half thousand, something around that, we realise you have ambition to grow
32 larger, as I said earlier, there is nothing in the strategy that prevents that from happening, simply
33 we had to put some numbers into the model that balanced across the region, if we were to bring
34 yours up to 22,000 some other Council would have to come down and I can tell you, as you can

1 imagine yourself, no Council out there will say give us less employment in the transport model,
2 so we kept proportions the same and leave it to wiser people to distribute that across the region
3 in a different way.

4
5 As regards the submissions on the Development Plan, yes I am familiar with them, in fact I
6 signed the one that went to Wicklow and drafted part of it, I don't think it's inconsistent with
7 what we are saying in the strategy, we're commenting on specific features of the Draft
8 Development Plan, but I don't think it's inconsistent with anything in the strategy or what I said
9 today. I think unless you tell me otherwise I covered most of the points.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: I think the most important thing is that a dialogue between Wicklow
11 County Council and the NTA is really important, so we don't leave it down to just a submission
12 at a draft plan time, and I think critical is that relationship between the two, while you don't have
13 any role in land zoning and the like, we know that you have the ability if you don't provide in
14 your plan the transport infrastructure that our plan will be dead in the water, that's the piece we
15 don't want to happen, so let's work together closely, I know Minister Harris has arranged a
16 deputation from the Council can go in and see the Minister for Transport, we'll continue doing
17 that and hopefully working together to achieve our aims.

18
19 Gentlemen, ladies, that's the end today. Enjoy the match. Protocol 5 o'clock. Annual meeting
20 next Monday. Butterflies out in reception and obviously community grants 6 o'clock in Arklow.
21 Thank you.

22
23 Meeting concluded at 5pm

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