

ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT  
WICKLOW COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW TOWN ON  
MONDAY, 4th DAY OF FEBRUARY 2019 AT 2:00 P.M.

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Elaine McCarthy

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Elaine McCarthy

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members take a seat please.

Just before we start votes of sympathy.

MS. GALLAGHER: Yes, for Anne Byrne, former colleague, she looked after us for many years in the canteen and Michael Lennon former supervisor in the FAS scheme in the Tinahely area.

CLLR WALSH: Late Claire Dumphy from Greystones.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Who was that, Claire Dumphy?

CLLR BLAKE: Just to join with the members as well regarding Michael Lennon, he worked for Wicklow County Council for a couple of years and I worked with him in Arklow for a lot of years as well, for a young man enough who passed away, our deepest sympathy.

CLLR O'NEILL: I'd like to offer a vote of sympathy for Eddie Boylan of Blessington, Eddie died fairly sudden last night, and he was an employee for Wicklow County Council for many a year.

CLLR BOURKE: I'd like to add the family of John Hogan, his aunt worked for us in the Arklow district for a while.

CLLR DUNNE: Thank you Chairman, I'd like condolences to Anne Byrne. She worked for a long

number of years, most people around this table would have known her, I know the family very well with, so I'd like to be associate with those remarks, thank you.

CLLR CULLEN: Originally from Wexford, done a huge amount of work Michael Sinnott originally a Wexford man.

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK, will we stand.

(one minute's silence)

Thank you. Members item one on the agenda. Could I have a proposer and seconder?

MS. GALLAGHER: Site was for Ms Geraldine Kelly, 37 Roasanna Close proposer and seconder. Is that agreed, right, fine. Item two. Freehold interest property known as 49 St Peters Place to Mr Paul Costello and Ms Gabriele Shalan, 49 St Peters Place Arklow. Propose and seconder.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Tommy Annesley agreed? OK yeah. Three.

FRANK CURRAN: We were talking at the December meeting around customer relationship management and it is relevant to item number four as well. But CRM is about getting as much as the customer's business as possible dealt with a single point of

contact whereby we get customer's contact, it is audit trail if the customer comes back. So, what I might do, if you don't mind is have a presentation on that, because you really need to see how it would work. This will apply to councillors' queries, and people who ring and go to the front desk, everything is logged on the front desk and we'll have staff working on-line and remotely to close some of the queries off, so we'll get a demonstration on both of those at work. So, I'll hand you over to Emer O'Donavan and Paddy O'Flaherty.

MR O'FLAHERTY: We've released, sorry, I'll have to have interactive touch screen to have in the foyer, it is a portal for the public to use, that provide information from all the different departments, I won't go through every menu, but, it is just information from all our different section, like housing, planning, and also have the website, we got funding from this from the regional innovation programme and it is developed inhouse from our application section. So, member of the public will come in the foyer, come touch the screen, we have live Twitter feed here, they can

go through different sections, as I say, here is our website and on the wall a concept what we're hoping it would look like, so it is nicely seeing as integrated in the foyer, so they can come in, hit planning, if they want do a map search or a G.I.S planning application, so I hope we will take away some traffic perhaps from the counter, come up and start application number, start application name this, is an example of the things that will come up twice. And that will search our database that has applications in the county. You can delve down to christian name or you can actually go and search through the maps, so that's one initiative of the planning.

So, then you can do text search either, say their planning documents, we thought this might be a nice area to display local area plans, here, can you choose any of - I'm choosing, Carnew, they can browse each development plan and get a bit of information for themselves rather than going up to someone on the planning counter they have to go in behind the office, pull the relevant document and come out with them arcs then we have local area plan.

So, it is a simple interface and that's divided up into different categories. We're trying to make it as user friendly as possible and provide, we don't want to bombard with a lot of information, about you simple information that people will find helpful. So again, the difference that going home, we have tourism heritage on it, which we're working on at the moment so we're hoping to have a heritage gallery, pictures from over the years from Wicklow with he was linkage to the heritage website and documents on it, and then probably a popular one will be, news and events, where public will come in, see what the latest news and events are happening around the county. This will be constantly updated, what is up for discussion is one of these, instead of discussing simple A4 happen on the wall, they can come out pull out the plan of the they have the relevant information if they want to make a submission, they can turn it around, size it and pull it up if they want to look at the foyer, they can take it out, we're not just doing this for Part 8s but any documentation that the department feel relevant to the touch screen. So, it is just a nice, simple, easy portal for the

public to access and view, important local information.

And we have pictures here also of we will be discussing later about Dun Laoghaire and Rathdown hub, that's an idea what they have for their customer care hub. A lot of what Emer will talk about next, CRS system is a lot about data collection. And putting in information on that, and a lot of the information is integrated on this as well for the public to see. So that's that, and Emer will come up next and discuss the CRM system for the customer care.

EMER: OK, at the moment we are trialling a Customer Relationship Management System, CRM system in the IT department in Wicklow County Council we've broken in three stages, customer will come to the help desk, or else they will send e-mail or else we will have on-line portal where they can submit a request. We will deal with that, request in stage one of the process, stage two we will process the case, do whatever needs to be done, send out field workers, and send out letters and invite people for interviews and stage three of the process will be close the case. Our CRM system

will replicate this step.

This is an example of our litter business process. We have a lot of different business processes in each department and our task is to identify the litter, business process, the waste management, the housing maintenance and the Housing Needs Assessment, create a business process for each of them and replicate that process on an IT system. Our IT system now I'll demonstrate it the point of is to simplify our business processes, use best practice and automate an awful lot of information where we have customers' information at a touch of the button, we will have your history, we will see what trends are identifying, are there problems occurring with certain house, certain boilers, and we will be able to forecast our workload for the future based on what we have recorded for the last year.

OK, so, when the customer walks into the help desk this is the system that the service customer, the staff will be using, they will create a new case, John Smith will walk into the department and they will have his details, if they don't have his details, we will record his details. He's going

to report a litter waste case. We can change that according to whatever the case is. We will give the case a title. If this was housing maintenance, we have prepopulated fields here. We will take a description of the case and we will identify the team who are responsible for dealing with that case. At the moment, this case is at the help desk in the foyer.

A case number has automatically been created and we will assign this case to the environment department. We won't, we might not be able to able to handle it immediately and that's when we go and allocate to environment housing. Move on to the second stage of the process now and we're in the hands of the environment team. They will look at all the recent cases relating to John Smith. And we will now decide to assign Bill Ryan to a case, room we have a countdown here, he's given 30 days, if he does not reply within that time limit, his line manager will be notified and the case will be escalated and e-mail now has been sent automatically to Bill Ryan, he will receive that on his mobile application and we can change the priority to high, low, medium, whatever we need to.

At this moment, Bill Ryan is off somewhere in the mountains looking for this abandoned car, he is use, G.I.S application, Paddy will come back to you on that in a few minutes. He will then submit the information through via e-mail, and the computer system, CRM system will automatically pick that up, if you see here there's the second e-mail has now been received, and we've changed the status to "in progress." We've seeded, we've got the report back on time, and we see here that the warden has submitted ace report, we have the date he submitted it and we'll have the warden's recommendation, whether we need to invite somebody for interview or not. Somebody in the environment department will review his report, and they will say OK, that's fine, we need to call this person in for further action.

So, we're recording now the alleged offender's details. And we're going to create an appointment for this offender alleged offender. All of this is done through the CRM system and we will have updates reminders every so often to tell us an interview is in progress, a letter will go out to Mr B, telling him he has to attend for interview,

we can set up 30, 45-minutes, whatever, the entire system is tracking everything here, so it is incredibly transparent. We then note when we have actually conducted the interview, we can tick that off. We come down and after the interview, we record OK.

We decided to 'caution' and we can now close the case. Which case we go up into the third stage of the process, and resolve the case. So, problem has been solved.

And the car has been removed. It took 30 minutes, it is going to take a few days, but the system will actually record all that information for us.

And it is closed. The members of the customer care will also have access to a dashboard here which will show the priority cases, it will show us the number of housing maintenance case, environment case and it will have time lines, it will be basically all our key performance indicators, statistics at the touch of a button.

Now, if John Smith decides he does not want to come into the counter he can submit a request through the council's on-line portal which will be available on our website. John Smith will

actually register his own name, he will be in charge of his own details, he can change his information as required, so, John Smith logs in.

And he will be able to view all his cases.

So, he will be able to see all the cases he has previously submitted the status of each case, and he can see there that we've resolved that case, you'll see the outcome of the case.

And customer care unit will communicate with him through the portal. If he's not happy with the outcome he can choose to reopen the case, or he can add a comment. Now he's going to create a new case. There will be a number of predefined choices, but this is how housing maintenance, all other process also go through, he can attach a file or photograph if he needs to, hit submit and then log out. And that will appear on our CRM system at customer care and go through the process that you just saw, drive it there, environment out to the line.

The system will also allow us to allow field workers out. So, our technicians and our housing crew maintenance will all be managed on the system. We'll know what resources will be available so we'll be able to optimise our resources and make

sure the person closest to the area will be able to be sent out to the area and the person being sent out has the relevant skills and we'll be able to map all of that. There's an idea where somebody was sent out to a local authority house and it shows their quickest route. And it will also manage our project service. They're all our project, we'll know who is doing what, how long it took - everything and all our council houses are now GIS tagged and we can look at them on a map and know everything about them. Paddy will show G.I.S where Bill Ryan was sent out with my CRM pass.

PADDY: So, as Emer said, the CRM will automate an e-mail to litter warden to tell them this regular complaint has come in, so they're tasked going out with the inspection on this, currently this is how the environment section deals with record of complaints itself. Very much a paper exercise, so, this is either filled out onsite or back in the office, and then it is retrieved whenever the information is fed. So, it is very much a paper exercise. What we'd like to do is move towards a digital copy, this is a digital version of the paper copy. So, it is sort of a meted-up reporting sites

on devices such as tablets and phones, as mentioned by Emer the warden will get an automated e-mail from the CRM system which will tell them to inspect a certain site. There's no pen or paper required. It allows for digital signatures there and you can take photographs which will be tagged with the inspection. So, the benefits of digital recording are - it is real time captioning towards CRM, as soon as the litter warden is out onsite and hits submit something will come back to the office and actioned straightaway, because the next process can happen because it has the information straightaway. There's no paperwork involved but it is people do still like to have a paper report, there's an automatic paper report creation, so when somebody does an inspection a report can be just automatically created for that inspection. Again, it is location-based so that means, anything that's recorded, location is also recorded with the system. And because it is coming back to a database, that allows us to do is to do easy data analysis of that data which is we wouldn't have been able to do with a paper copy. So, for example, we have a Who to see exactly where

the record of the complaints is happening. I have categorised by areas, or mortgage resources or tackle a specific problem. What, so it gives you what is being recorded, or what people are ringing in about or coming to customer care up about, is it litter, is it noise, is it waste water? We'll allow, Wicklow County Council to perform the relevant action, whatever is the highest, if litter's high, question move resource to tackle that problem. And we can do when, to see exactly when the record of complaints is coming in.

January could be a popular month for dumping because it is straight after Christmas, because people need to get rid of recycling, and whittle down the complaints, we can pull out and see say burning, maybe burning, mainly happens around June, we can analyse and make decisions based on that data. And WHERE, I like to see where this is happening and analyse the data. I would like to have a quick demo.

So, what happens is litter warden will go out, it is all password protected as well. So, there's a map of Wicklow with complaints coming through.

This is one someone on the admin store's side will

see, a warden will go out and have an app where they can go up to an incident and I'm going to use Wicklow Town as an example, they will use phone to capture it and fill out relevant fields, and has categories if it is planning or waste water this. is the environment section going out, say if they go out and see the issue is planning related, when it comes back in the CRM system it will give e-mail to planning section, saying it is not waste water issue, it is planning and that will indicate for the planning section

Hopefully, if it is working probably. I recorded this information. And it is real time information to analyse the data. Once we have the data in the system, we can start analysing that data. So, for example, that's a record of all our complaints, but you can categorise that in different categories now, so to the map. So, now it's seen a lot of red dots. What we do now is we'll see, it might be difficult to see there, but they've been categorised so we'll see where the burning, the waste, the planning is happening or the noise pollution, and what we can do after that is provide a heat map, which it gives indication of where the

record of complaints is mostly happening.

So, it gives a map, maybe there's litters happening in the Wicklow mountains so it will give indication of exactly most of our complaints are coming through. If we want, we can filter out the rather than looking at all complaints, you can filter out that information to give me everything that's concerned to litter.

There's a drop down, I'll choose litter and hit apply, so all the dots will disappear, that's important as well because we've filtered by litter, we can add our own data that Emer has, to the CRM and we can compare like for like, if we wanted to, we can say there's litter going on, we'd like to add a river layer to see has it any impact. On our river system so we can put that into our system, so can compare where all the record of complaints is coming in and compare that to the relevant dataset. We can often use this technology for the public to use as well, so rather than say planning inspector or litter warden coming in to and using the technology to inspect data, question have the public coming in, so it is a concept or example

public G.I.S system where to report a major incident, it is G.I.S based so someone could come across a fallen tree and pick out the phone, because the phone knows their location, they can record an incident. They can take pictures, attach pictures and make a few comments. Once they submit the incident, that then would be pulled into Emer's CRM system that she talked about earlier on.

So, it has a map, so it starts off by giving a map of Wicklow County Council, you can put it on aerial photography so it may be clearer for people.

Person takes out their phone you can put it at their residence, they want to report an issue, they want to report it, and they can literally use GPS or predefined drop down menus like fallen tree, they can click anywhere on the system, they can give their name, few comments, attach photos or take the photo if they have it and report it. What will happen then, it will appear on the system. And then e-mail sent to our relevant CRM staff, and then we can see a list of other incidents that is happening around the country as well. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Any questions?

CLLR WHITMORE: Thank you very much. I don't know how we've been doing this without a system like that in place, just, a couple of comments in relation to the system that's planned for the foyer area, to make sure it is accessible for people, even the height in the demo you showed it was quite ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: If Paddy and Emer take a list of complaints.

CLLR WHITMORE: Make sure it is accessible, the size of the font that everyone can actually use it. Is this system also going to be rolled out in the district offices because it is really, really good and it might add value in the district offices as well and libraries, you know, there's an opportunity to engage with the community there? And then in relation to the CRM system, will there be a portal for councillors for us to access the high-level data, like the dashboards you provide because that information would be valuable as well? Thank you.

CLLR MCLOUGHLIN: It should have been done years ago, the system on the wall it looks very simple to me because, and I could see the way you were using it and being able to move it, but I am anticipate

not so sure it is that simple to something that doesn't know how to use T maybe there's instruction, you know to show, I know this sounds stupid but you need to show people where to go right and left otherwise they won't know. CRM is essential and I'm delighted to see it brought into Wicklow County Council.

CLLR BOURKE: I'd like to welcome this initiative, if it does improve the service, we give to the public it is welcome, considering most of us got a letter last week from a prominent businessman complaining he hadn't been responded for a complaint he made since November about a leaking sewage take tank up in Ashford at Mount Usher. We all got that, but the like of that shouldn't happen if the system works correctly. You'd have to agree.

CLLR WALSH: Thank you, and this initiative is to be welcomed and the importance as Cllr Grainne McLoughlin related to there, the importance it is user-friendly if it is going to be of assistance to the public. It allows the council to optimise

the resources to attend calls, it is a similar system to the system used by the Garda at the moment which allows them to optimise the resources when they're attending to calls and manage their response, and when they get the reports of the incidents that allows them to produce the heat maps which are of major benefit of analysing events and organising reaction to same. And the other point you made there, is the public use in relation to severe weather events and that, so, that, in the future can be that, invaluable and those types of situations. Thank you.

Cllr Shay Cullen we need to improve on our whole area of dealing with public issues and I have to say the concerns I'd have at the moment with our current system should be taken into consideration, and what I'm really getting at there, is at the moment I feel the public you know, there is occasions where people are sending e-mails or making phone calls, and they're not being acknowledged and I've had this on numerous occasions and it is across all department, not only one or two departments. And I think you know, what happens is you get disgruntled public who are

trying to make contact with the council, and it is something that we certainly need to look at, in this day and age when you put through to a department, you know, the phone shouldn't ring out and that's certainly does happen from time to time, if you don't get through to one person on the end of the line that that call should be transferred on to the next administrator to make sure that the public are served. But, as I say, I can't take lightly the fact that there are times where e-mails aren't, not even acknowledged, never mind returned, and calls are not taken, so I think, we need to take that into consideration, when we're putting this system together thank you.

CLLR MATTHEWS: I think Cllr Jennifer Whitmore may have asked the question already, from the manager's report, progress is made in network in the district offices so would a screen like this be available in the Bray Municipal District to view planning files? Can a facility be incorporated where you could print the planning files you require, I know there's a charge for that, but I'm sure that could be incorporated as well and it makes perfect sense, and I really something we should be pushing ahead

with. OK thank you.

CLLR THORNHILL: I would like to Paddy and Emer, thank you for a good presentation and I would like to say as well it is great to see technology and you know, just as Cllr Gerry Walsh said and like myself, going from my experience in the Garda, this is something similar where you have a system now where there will be a tracking ability and countdown where people will go, so often I seen and heard people going and their cases, are of interest, so there would be a good tracking device in relation to that, and that's good because people would like to see a service. Now, also, I would like to ask the question as well about other county councils that have used the system and I'd like to know about the experience from there.

Also, about the data that will be collected who, will analyse this data? And, because I mean, it is great, I mean, especially in the case of litter, I mean, we have to know exactly the hot spots and it will help us for the future. And will there be people, when you go in the bank and use the ATMs, people to help? Because people an awful lot.

Elderly people are not savvy when it comes to this new system. Overall, I think it is brilliant. And I think it is for the future and you know, it is great at least people will see what is happening. Go raibh maith agat.

CLLR MURPHY: I certainly welcome it, it brings us into the modern age, also, my concern would be the height of it, because I know myself that there's some ATMs, I'm not able to reach at the level that they are. Also, what would be the facility for people with visually impaired, you know, what and print and everything else @ visual aspect of it, because I think it is very important. Because it would be interesting to have it, in Municipal Districts everywhere because there's quite a big flow of people, especially now when some of the park lobbies are coming back to the local Municipal Districts, where we have that facility. So, I would say well done.

CLLR BEHAN: I just want to thank Emer and Paddy for their presentation and obviously they put a lot of work into this. Now, it is great as a concept. To come into the Chamber, or the foyer there and

report a complaint or an issue or ring up and report an issue, but in my experience it is not, the difficulty with this council, is not the reporting of the problem, it is getting the problem addressed, and while there might be elite group of people out there sitting throughout at a desk, taking queries or taking them on the phone and we might all have the magic technology, unless the issue is dealt with by the people who have responsibility for dealing with it, this is going to be a complete waste of money. If it is only window dressing, it is absolutely of no benefit to the people. Now I don't expect the two speakers to address the issue, that's for the Chief Executive, are the resources available in the Municipal Districts as well in section, such as housing and roads to deal with the issues that people have? The genuine issues they bring up day after day with us and with the council directly? Are those problems going to be solved quicker because of this system? Because if they're not, I don't see the point in having this window dressing. If they are, fine, it is probably worth investing to say that happens. The other question

for the Chief Executive is what is the role of counsellors in this system, is the idea to keep counsellors at bay, to force counsellors in this elite section out here in the corridors to make their queries or make their representations or ring up or e-mail, and councillors will be denied access to the sections of the council where they need to get their business done, whether it is by phone, e-mail or in person? Because if that is employed in the system, I would be absolutely against that. I think councillors as representatives of the people should have full access to all council departments, and should not be forced into a system out here, because it might suit the Chief Executive or top managers in the council, I would appreciate answers from the Chief Executive on those two points.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Paddy and Emer, if you can address the ones you can address.

PADDY: Regarding insulation of screening, that should be done by the company we're working for, we're working with the accessibility officer about the font and things like that, and see if he's happy what we've developed. It does link to our website

and that's fully compliant with accessibility, so you can make the font bigger or smaller, so we're aware of that. Regarding installing, we have talked to many of the administrators in the district, I've given a demo of it to them, and it is cloud based, everything you see is saved in the cloud, not saved on the TV itself, so, we actually have access if we want it installed in five districts to update it whenever we want, to send a script on it, so if people come in, and say Blessington, or Baltinglass administrator want something specific to their location, we can update it from here. Regarding the planning files, there is a facility at the moment, it is, we kind of have to be careful where is it a planning system or just a general one top for the public. I know I mentioned perhaps printing out applications or documents, there is a planning counter that does that at the moment. Perhaps they're aligned, maybe attach a printer and someone can come along to a planning file and print it out. We can look into it, and instructions as well, yeah, it is a touch screen and a lot of people know how to use touch screens, so our plan is to have set of

instructions lambated to the side of it, and give them a quick of how to use it, and choose this, and keyboard's integrated, things like that, but we'll work on that. .

EMER: When a case is submitted, if someone sends in e-mail or anything like that, you will get a receipt in e-mail to say thank you your case is now opened, you will have a unique case ID number, you can log on to portal and track that system, that case, and see exactly where it is, and what has happened. If you can't get through on the phone, you can send it in on-line and e-mail. Also, that's will it be just window dressing? I doubt that considering we're timing how long it takes now to resolve a case. We know exactly who was dealing with that case. The customer can track it from A to Z. We will know how long to took to fit a window in the house or solve our boiler problem, we will have the entire history on each property and be able to reallocate resources based on the trends that we are picking up from the system, and we'll probably be evolving the way we deal with things such as maintenance, based on the information from

this system. How can you do something if you don't know where the problem lies, and this system will identify our weak areas and identify your strengths so we will build on this. So, I think we actually need a system like this, so that we can provide a service, an adequate, not adequate but a highly functioning service to the customers. And will there be a portal for councillors, we have to discuss that another time. It will be the information will have to be accessible to possibly members of the public with GDPR we'll have to clarify what we provide and who will be looking after statistics and reading statistics, they will be the line managers who will be changing the volume and way practices are done based on the information we have, so we can get back to you. That's it. Chief Executive. You will have E planning down the track, customer care staff will come out in the initial stages and show how to use the touch screen, so we'll have that. And in relation to the as Emer said, it is about efficiency, and analysing what we do, how we do it, and there is time limits set for people to carry out certain tasks so the service does improve, everything is captured, there's a

foot trail and we may change our work processes but having the facts and analysis will assist us in doing that. And certainly not intended to keep councillors away from staff, staff are always available to councillors, but they will be able to use the system, log their reps and ought to trail where it's gone in the system, but they can certainly ring us any time at any stage.

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK.

CLLR MATTHEWS: Thanks for letting me back in on that. I want to stress to the Chief Executive how important it is we incorporate access to planning files because in Bray and other districts we're planning authorities prior an amalgamation you could look in a planning file, it is difficult to look at planning files on-line now or else you need to have to have a trip to Wicklow to do it, E planning coming on-line, but we need to improve access to planning files and if this offers an opportunity to do that, I think we should do that. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: All right OK. We're moving on four.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: We didn't receive a submission when we, as we explained in the December meeting we want a new customer care desk, customer care work stations and work desk, we have a manager and five to six trained staff in all areas of customer service that's familiar with housing and environment, water, roads, et cetera, and there's a new planning public counter space providing range of services, including explaining and I think incorporating new PCs and planning files, there's new customer seating in the foyer and calls to have shielded client discussions, revamp of the existing small meeting rooms providing a dedicated housing meeting room and two additional customer meeting a development of break-out spaces just outside the Seminole Room and reallocation of cash receipting desk to motor tax area and flooring and ceiling. So, it is a modern state-of-the-art customer care centre, using this customer relationship software that we just had zone centralisation on, and it is all about improving the service to the customer. And also, then in relation to the Chamber, again, we had the plans in December, it is about increasing the size of the

Chamber, that's the problem when the numbers went from 28 to 32, it was physically too small so it will go out here and here and there's, it increased, there's a proposed tiered seating area which will allow greater interaction, and remove the 11 seating with feasibility and et cetera, the top table is extended allowing senior management to be available to answer questions, it provides a much improved audio-visual equipment, workplace for stenographer, et cetera, and significantly more space in the press area, and in the public area, and we're also, trying to bring the Chamber up to the standard of other councils in the region, that we have some place we can have civic receptions and meetings that need to take place. The advantage of doing it along with the customer care centre is we get economies of scale. We have looked at the costs as a result of the last meeting, the costs of the Chamber is now 377,000, that's making various changes, in relation to reuse of the panelling, lowering the spec a little bit but down to that, I don't think we can go lower, because you have to increase it in size, and there's no getting away from that. The foyer is around 497,000 so the

two are 875,000 including VAT, there's a description of the works, obviously removal of curved external wall, in you sighting areas and console desk specialist IT equipment, repositioning of the doors, it is wheel care access in terms of the public and front row of seating, and relocation of press and public seating, new location for staff seating area space and space for wheelchair and access from the foyer, areas around the roof lights are repaired and resealed and new movable lecture and podium. So, while we're doing this, it is not part of the Part 8 but we'd like to do something with the member rooms with insulation, roof lighting, heating, and new breakout space and removal and rebuilding of the partition wall between Fina Gael and independence room, so that's it, the funding, as I said we in the current budget but 100,000 towards buildings, it will come from the code so there's no impact on the current account. The thing would be paid for over nine to ten years, and look I think it is as a building, we have to, like, people's houses at home, you have to spend a certain amount of money as years go on and we'll have a state-of-the-art

Chamber, and state-of-the-art foyer/customer care centre. Thank you.

CLLR BEHAN: Thanks Cathaoirleach I did speak on this on the last occasion when we're discussing it and I want to reiterate that, the manager is giving figures there, it is as close as you may say as one million euros by the time everything is done here, and that's a substantial amount of money for a council, that can't fix potholes and footpaths and roads around the county. Particularly Municipal Districts. That's the first point. The second point is many people are paying through a nose for property tax and getting nothing in return and those people will be looking at the expenditure of a million euros and saying is this what my money is going on, whether Capital or current it is coming effectively from property tax.

I do accept that work needs to be done on the foyer, and I don't have a difficulty with that aspect of it, I want to propose we break up the project into two sections. And I want to propose that the work on the foyer goes ahead in conjunction with that system that we've just seen about it so it can be

facilitated but I'm not happy for the proposals for the council Chamber. One of the biggest difficulties I have with it is that it is a complete redesign of what was initially here a circular Chamber and members bear with me, I know the difficulty of the extra eight in the middle here.

But, we are a council who are supposed to deliberate and discuss and make decisions as a body of elective representatives, I think and not enough work was done to see would it be possible to have a full circle of the entire membership of the council, maybe re-orientating the entire Chamber and having the Cathaoirleach and management and staff here, and public right behind, many people who come into this Chamber as members of the public complain they can't see what is happening, they can't hear what is happening, councillors, but particularly some officials do not raise their voice and people cannot hear what they're saying when they're talking about things that are very, very important to them. We've complete disregard for the members of the press. Anybody who goes over there and looks at where the press has to sit, there's a tiny

little disk and their seat is way back, they can't use the facilities that are put there, plus the fact there's a leak in the roof and the rain has been falling in on them for years. I don't think they were consult with the that plan but from what I can see it is not going to be better in the future either.

However the point, the most essential point I want to make is this, what the Chief Executive is proposing is a change from a circular Chamber, where we can speak directly to each other, and make our decisions, accordingly, to a three-rows, three-tiers, almost like a church, and I'm surprised there aren't kneelers put into it, so we can kneel down as we face the Chief Executive and the Chairman.

However, that's just an aside. My point is this - when councillors have speaking, there's going to be raised level of seating the public is going to be stuck behind there, they won't see or hear what councillors are saying and there's probably a good chance they won't see or hear what is said on the top table either.

I'm asking, members, to consider, looking for a new

plan for this Chamber that would make everybody equal, that we'd have a full circular claim per and the work and that be considered by whoever is elected into the new council in May, because they are the people who will affectively have to work this Chamber when that time comes. And that we decide only today to get the foyer done and that's my proposal inquiry.

CLLR WHITMORE: Thank you very much Chair. I would second that proposal for Cllr Joe Behan. I wasn't here at the last meeting, so I just recently had a look at the proposals. And when I looked at it, my primary concern was what is the value add? What additional value are we giving to the communities by making the changes because it is a substantial amount of money and I absolutely agree our foyer needs to be upgraded and it needs to be more open, and inclusive of the community that we are serving, and I think the proposals that you have put forward will do that. When I looked at the proposals for the council Chambers, I cannot actually see what the value-add is. To date I have not felt that I haven't been able to represent my constituents in this Chamber. I know there's

people sitting behind me, but it hasn't really made any impact on me being able to do my work as a councillor, and I don't think the changes that are proposed will actually add any value. And like Cllr Joe Behan they will make it more difficult because you'll have three rows of councillors and I think if you're in the front row you will only be able to see the officials and people beside you and not the 20 councillors that are behind you, so I think it actually disimproves the situation. Do I think we need to upgrade the audio. And make it more inclusive to for members of the public and members of the press, but I just don't see the value of 400,000 Euro in the proposal that has been given to date. So, I would ...

I would second that, I think we should separate the two projects and deal with this one separately.

CLLR SHAY CULLEN: I'd like to pay tribute of the Chief Executive for having the foresight to bringing the change to the Chamber. This building needs renovation on the basis the public are entitled to a modern and progressive facility, and certainly I don't believe we have that at the moment. Customer satisfaction is paramount and

we're here to serve the public in a professional manner, I think it's obvious from my work and looking at other local authorities that we're well behind with regards to the facilities we have here for the public. I think by upgrading first of all the foyer area, people will be able to conduct their business in a more professional manner. It certainly doesn't lend itself at the moment to that situation. With the open plan it is certainly not enticing to the public I would say to come into this building.

And with regards to the Chamber, again I would say the issues that Cllr Joe Behan have raised are dealt with by the upgrading of the this Chamber, the sound the area for the public, the press area and so on, we certainly need improvements in this Chamber, and I believe that with the upgrade that was suggested I think we're having a more modern facility to do our business. And as public representatives we're entitled to have a modern progressive facility here, for not alone ourselves but the public.

And you know, at the end of the day, you know, we're talking about spending money here, on any house

that we live in, we have to make improvements, we're talking about paying this amount of money over ten years which shouldn't impact severely on services that we provide to the public. I think it is, it is a worthwhile project and we should go ahead with it, and I'm willing to propose the complete Part 8 goes forward today. Thank you.

Cllr Grainne McLoughlin thank you Cathaoirleach I would like to second Cllr Cullen's proposal, to do it in piecemeal is bad management and doesn't make financial sense. I don't know people think just because we're councillors we shouldn't have the best facilities, I think we should. The work we have to do is means the environment we work in is important as everything else as part of our job and this Chamber is certainly not fit for purpose. I would like it to go further where when we go through the corridors of this building and I look at my colleagues and consider all the staff that work here colleagues of mine and see some of the conditions they have to work in, I think are equally needs upgrading, the whole place needs to be paint and brought into the 21st century, but to actually do the lobby and say we'll leave this as it is,

doesn't make any financial sense whatsoever. I want to, I won't be here, but I would like people who are here in the future, colleagues and councillors to work in an environment that is 21st century and not something that is just - it is pretty dismal coming in here on a monthly basis so I congratulate CEO for bringing this far and everybody who works on it, I absolutely second it and think it should go ahead.

>>: I welcome this development,

CLLR O'BRIEN: I see the people standing out in the foyer waiting for to be looked after and staff doing their best to do that, there's more seating for customers, that's what we need, I visited other Chambers throughout the country and I have to say we're in the dark age with the Chamber and there has been, and proposed and seconded but I would be giving my, I'll be voting that we take to description and development work or I'll be supporting the refurbishment of the Foy a the works upgrade extension and upgrade works to the Chamber. I've no difficulty doing that.

CLLR MATTHEWS: Just to acknowledge the Chamber

was modified last time to accommodate 32 councillors in a space for 24, and, it served its purpose, but Cllr Joe Behan outlined everything that's wrong where this Chamber and the Chief Executive recognises that as well, so it is welcome to see this plan come to us.

As regards to the tiered seating and circular arrangement it would be preferable, I think to have the circular arrangement but as we discussed at protocol it is just not possible in the space that we have.

And we have to go for that tiered seating, which will work, you see it in other Chambers and areas, so I don't think it will be a huge impediment to business. In terms of splitting the job, I don't think it makes sense in terms of just economies of scale that you do both jobs at the same time, you don't want to have two separate contracts, two work site going on, two tendering processes, it makes sense to do all in one go, the pricing we've gotten for it is reasonable and I'll be supporting this, thank you.

CLLR THORNHILL: I would like to say from the

outset looking at Cllr Joe Behan he's making some good points, one point I would like to make he mentioned the property tax, now, at the end of the day, I mean, this is a great project but with you talking about a million Euro involved. And like, I mean, people, they're looking what are they getting for their property tax but we're in a situation here now, the customer area, definitely has to be done, but, this area has only been refurbished back in 2014, this whole area could be designed in such a way as Cllr Joe Behan that it could be made suitable in a circular area, but, I would just say, is it just a cosmetic exercise? The thing about it is, there's people out there, they're paying all this money and want to see value for money and all of a sudden, they'll say is this where our money is going? I agree, we should modernise and get on with it, but at the same time I'm here, I'm happy here, but I think it should be looked at, the design, to be suitable to all people. I mean, and going forward that's what it is all about. I think my main point is people, money, you only have to have later situation about the children's hospital, two billion and we can't look

after our nurses. But anyway, that's my point anyway. Go raibh maith agat..

CLLR DERMOT CULLEN: Something struck me in Bray and wondering if the funding is available and we're looking at enhancing our customer service provision, I stood there, waiting for a meeting and overheard two full conversations with people had to share their vulnerabilities, tell their life stories and justify why they could be responded to in terms of a need being presented, and I wonder is there scope within the funds that are being made available to look at how we enhance what is happening in the MDs as well it would feel a little bit disingenuous for us to go out and pitch this to our constituents to say we're investing in the county council, but not in our local districts so I think that's something I'd like to bonder to see if there's scope for that.

CLLR SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach, Cllr Stephen Matthews outlined this was discussed a number of times at protocol. And, I suppose everyone's had their say in the Chambers as well as the protocol

committee, but I think it is fair to say protocol endorsed this, in its entirety. And as I take on board what has been said about breaking down the project. I'm delighted to hear that the project is amounting in at 120,000 less than was mentioned here at the last time it was brought up. As I a councillor who was in a venue recently where the ceiling fell council, I did mention here, at last month's meeting in regards to this Chambers, and the ceiling up over the public gallery, and over where the journalists actually sit is in pretty sad condition and I think for us to omit to doing up of this Chambers would be remiss of us as councillors, as full time public representative and someone who uses the meeting rooms more than most, I have to say that the little short of disgraceful.

And it is long overtime that they were renovated and done up to an acceptable standard to the public. Bear in mind this whole project in my opinion is an investment in the public, it is the public who will benefit, we as public representatives will have a proper environment to carry out workload and I'll be endorsing this 100%.

CLLR WINTERS: The space in the foyer is underutilised and the new civic hub is excellent, I went to Dun Laoghaire to see how it worked and I'd love to provide that something of that standard within this county. I think it would be crazy to divide the project and to half it. If you're doing an extension to your house, do the kitchen, finish it off and then start on the utility room, like if you're doing T do it all, it will be more cost effective at the end of the day and I think we do need to improve the services that we do ask, provide to the public. And I think the mention of the Municipal Districts is a good idea as well. I think, in some of the Municipal Districts, there isn't a private room for people to actually discuss and maybe that's something we should be looking at as well. Thank you.

>>: In relation to the foyer, the use for public facility in modernisation for customer services are vital as we've already heard in the last presentation, in relation to the Chamber here, I think this is a great opportunity to increase the size of the Chamber, and promote greater interaction, we spoke about the video and audio

facilities that need upgrading, press facilities that need upgrading this is an opportunity to showcase in the council in the best possible light, bring it up to line, I attended a meeting in relation to the proposed green way project with Wicklow and Greystones, that was IPW, other state bodies and you want to showcase this council in the best possible light and the proposal to do the carry out both projects at the same time makes sense economically and reiterate the point made by councillor Snell in relation to the rooms, they're badly needed and about time they were done.

CLLR KAVANAGH: I agree with what most have to say with the foyer, and rooms and brought into the 21st century, and people should be afforded a bit of privacy when they're discussing their personal business, and I agree that the foyer, probably at this stage does need a bit of a kind of improvement. Cosmetic or whatever, and certainly in terms of audio and visual, but I really do, and I said this at protocol meetings and the last council meeting I have a huge problem with the layout. I know we have limited space and I also know that understand

economies of scale we're trying to get everything done at the same time to keep the cost down, but the idea, I've said this before, the idea of round-table talks comes from the 12th century, it is an idea whereby nobody has an advantage over anybody else. It is that everybody is supposed to be represented here on an equal footing with nobody in charge, nobody in control, and I really do think we have got to have some kind of a facility, I asked at the time, can somebody come back, we've been given one design, only one design, and I mean, just a bit of lateral thinking here and there could be have been another way, we have a huge outside perimeter, there's no reason why the press can't sit in the centre for example. There's no reason why the people operating the audio-visual equipment can't do it from the centre. We still have the same amount of space on the outside, and there's no way we couldn't facilitate 32 members plus a top table with everybody facing inwards, so everybody can see and hear and understand what is going on. I just said this before, one design, three-tiers, I don't agree with it, it is like a foyer, like an auditorium and for that reason, I

would ask that I would support counsellor Behan that the foyer works and the members rooms go ahead to benefit the public and that somebody comes back to us with a design just to incorporate round-table talks for the purpose of equilibrium and equality. Thank you.

CLLR RYAN: I've had meetings and I see a lot of councils and I have to say this is the worst, and my view is if it is good enough for places like Dun Laoghaire it is good enough for Wicklow people to have a good place, they can be proud of coming. And you know, design goes hand-in-hand with productivity, if you get the design right productivity increases and that's the truth of it so, I don't believe is a particularly inspiring workplace and particularly when you look at the members rooms, the place where photocopiers go to die, it is just an absolute graveyard. And I honestly think we should think that has to be a shared space for places people with go in meetings with separate glass rooms, it is the way rooms are designed now but it is essential that we get our act together and do this, and particularly for the customers coming to this council and the CRM system

link with this will move us forward in the 21st century. Thanks.

CLLR OLIVER CULLEN: I probably differ with an awful lot of people, I question the timing of the proposal, if we have a million people to spend, why not building homeless facilities but the leak in the corner, we put a few hundred to that, to patching up there, because I don't know why you have to replace a whole roof and maybe the media would be far more comfortable then. Go raibh maith agat.

CLLR BLAKE: The CEO mentioned money is put aside each year, 100,000 for refurbishments, whether it be here in the County Buildings, which has been done with extensions, anyone here, has seen huge amount of changes and extensions, which have brought all the people that work for the council under the one roof here, a lot of work and welcome work in that regard, some money is put aside, whether it is you in the council or districts and we have over the years improved, particularly in the west Wicklow where we have a new office in the Blessington area, a few years back, but we've been discussing here for a number of years regarding the parking facilities, and there was difficulty looking for

extra parking and so forth and the recently the last few months work has been done out there and it improved things dramatically, 350 extra spaces has been made and apart from the spaces the exterior of the space, taking out of the rubbish and so forth, made a big improvement to look at Wicklow County Council in that record. So, from my point of view, certainly, I think there's a need for upgrade here. We have 24 people originally here in the council, it was probably sufficient at that particular point in time but whoever is here with the 32, and next council there's a need for upgrade as John Ryan said, anybody who has about in other council Chambers, while back in the years, we probably had as good a Chamber as anybody, but in recent past we're falling behind in regards what is being done by other local authorities and providing proper facilities, but for other meetings are held in here, the policing committee meetings are held in here and other occasions where people meet here as well so it is important that whoever is in here, not just us as councillors but whoever is in here in the future, we do have a building here that we are proud of, and that are

available to the people as well. And there is a difficulty with regards to the ceiling on it, and other members have said there, rather than doing it in piecemeal manner, that we do one complete job and one complete job at one point in time can often be an awful lot cheaper than doing two projects divided up, so I would be supporting that.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks Chairman. Just briefly. While I support refurbishment and improving the facilities, especially to members of the public, I absolutely support that, I'm remaining unconvinced the expenditure on the Chamber will make any significant improvement, that's my layman's way of looking at it.

I see what is being done here, I recognise you're trying to improve things, I'm all for improvement, absolutely. I think the maintenance obviously needs to be done, that is a red herring, we're guilty for not asking for that to be done before now, about you for the sake of 377K, I'm not convinced that it is going to improve the claim, maybe refurbish it, spruce it up and improve the maintenance of it, but I have to say my view, not convinced that they're spending the money that the

Chamber will make any difference or improvement, thanks.

Are

CATHAOIRLEACH: From my point of view, it is long past the customer service out there it is not a major refurb, but it has to have this, but rational and truly for people to do their business out in the public is not acceptable in this day and age and certainly to bring it in technology and digital age it has to happen as well. And I think it is a part of parcel of providing services to the public, that a modern, organisation should have. In regard as well to the council Chamber the modern organisation should have a modern Chamber and certainly a Chamber that we can bring people in and be proud of as well, and the easiest thing in the world is we won't look after ourselves, we'll look out there, that's probably the type of situation that is easy for people to say things like that. So, it is also easy for people to talk about property tax and various things like that, particularly when they don't support property tax and never have.

But, the fact of the matter is, the fact of the

matter is from my point of view, I'm not going to be here next year, but I do feel that it is absolutely necessary, this Chamber is not fit for purpose. Like it was, I think it was Cllr John Snell said the ceiling needs a refurb, the sound system is not up to scratch, it is not accessible, disabled accessibility as it should be and it needs a major refurb, and really and truly, it is only a publicity stunt to say we look after the public but we won't look after ourselves and that doesn't go down, the easiest thing to do is take the popular point of view, at this point and go with what one of the proposals are, but I'm not for the simple reason it is not good for this county to have, to split a job that's going to cost an awful lot more, when it is going to have to be done in a couple of years' time. This job is going to have to be done in a couple of years' time and then when we come back, like I can tell you now it will be more than what we're talking about now, so I think, from a cost perspective it is good business to actually get the whole lot done in one contract. I think it is very good business to do that. And certainly, I'll be supporting it. I want the Chief

Executive in.

Chief Executive. One circular seating arrangement, we looked at that from everyone angle and couldn't get it in this room. What we could do for modest figure is increase the size of the room, it is larger, accessible and much more improved meeting space, greater interaction between staff and exec we have the much-improved audio-visual equipment, more space for the press, public, it is making it comparable to the standard that's in other counties. We have something where we can host civic receptions and as Cathaoirleach said.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm going to take Cllr Joe Behan amendment first.

>>: MS. GALLAGHER: Just to say following receipt of the manager's report, by local authority wants to vary or modify the development, otherwise recommended in the managers' report or decides not to proceed with the development. So, proposed by counsellor Behan and seconded by council lower Whitmore. We proceed with the customer care area and not the council Chamber.

MS GALLAGHER: So that's 21 against, and four not

present so. We proceed with the proposal by Shay Cullen seconded which Cllr Grainne McLoughlin, that we proceed with the development as outlined in the Chief Executive's report. So, that's 24, 8 against and four not present.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Just before we move on, I know I'd have support for this, but could I ask the Chief Executive to have a look at the situation, now we've taken the decision to improve the Chamber here to have a look at the my news poll authorities offices with a view to upgrading them, technology and them and make available to the public as quickly as possible, I'm sure I'd have full support from the council members with regard to that. Now we've taken the decision, we should spread that out to provide as good information as we can in the municipal offices.

Chief Executive. What you said on board, the lack of privacy there as well.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We're moving on now. Chief Executive's property executive. Planning permission aim through from An Bord Pleanála from for Ashford studios, it is four 40,000 square-foot studios, it is 9 a million Euro investment, Joe

O'Connell a ready to start instruction ASAP, I'm meeting him this week. Avondale park, again, got planning permission, and Coillte is starting construction, it is 8 million upgrading the house, cafe, underground experience and experience through the trees et cetera. The old hearing for Arklow west for treatment plant concluded, that's old Herlihy and CPO, the tank, it will be about three to four months before we get a decision, and construction period would be three to four years, a very significant construction period. We got our roadworks allocation on Friday, it is 9 - 276 million. Up from 8.78, it included the Calgary scheme, a good increase there. And just next Saturday we will have the finalists in the 2019 all Ireland Community and Council Award for the overall award and significant projects, such as Bray dot IE, Moments in Time, The Best Community Initiative in Arklow, Display in Bray, multiagency response in bay head, Volo Around Ireland Race, Entrepreneurship is in there as well a few projects, I'll take the rest as read

CLLR BEHAN: I just have two questions, first of all in relation to the slip lane at Kilmac, at the

garage there, why has nothing happened? Nothing has happened on the ground there. We passed that Part 8 a number of months ago, we were promised work would start before Christmas, it hasn't started, we're now into February, there's no sign on work on the ground there. Could I ask what the problem is there? I got disturbing information and I hope the Chief Executive will refute it, that the fire service in Bray at the moment is very seriously understaffed, undermanned, underpersoned, whatever the word is, and that in fact, at recent fires in Bray, a number which were serious, other units had to be called out from Greystones and Wicklow because Bray couldn't muster a two full crews which it should have been able to do. And also, equipment that was originally kept, the headquarters in Bray, hydraulic lift, is actually now being kept in Wicklow Town because they're not enough staff in Bray to use that equipment and to manage that situation. Now, is that the case? Is that correct? And if it is, why is that the situation? Because, the Chief Executive I'm sure knows that the history in Bray of tragedies, in relation to regarding fire, has been very, very

serious over the past 20 years. And to think that we can't even manage to have the part-time service fully manned, is a very, very big concern. So, I'd ask the Chief Executive what is the situation will.?

CLLR RYAN: Thank you. I just think the CEO shared the news about Ashford studios, getting the go ahead, that's such a big, big thing for County Wicklow and I think, a lot of credit should go to councillor pat Casey, because he really worked so hard to get that across the line. I think the change made to the development levies and zero rating in the regard to the film industry has borne fruit there, which is fantastic, and the move around Avondale that's going to be a stunning development, and I suppose, just one of the things I'd say, being at the business breakfast during the week and to hear all of the development across Wicklow that are happening, that message is incredibly positive and I think it is really important that we find a way to get that out to the broader public in County Wicklow, because it would give you such confidence that we're going in the

right direction thank you.

CLLR MATTHEWS: Thank you Cathaoirleach in references to the public lighting report, does the Chief Executive have any update on the national upgrade plan for LED lighting? And also, how long is left to run on the contract with Airtricity for the maintenance of our street lighting? I find them very hit and miss to deal with. Sometimes they're great and sometimes they're not the at game at all.

CLLR SHAY CULLEN: Yeah Chairman, I just, a quick question for Chief Executive, you mentioned about An Bord Plenala decisions, is there a mechanism for here, that members within made a way for An Bord Plenala decisions? Because sometimes we find out by mistake or maybe read them in newspapers as we have this week, is there a mechanism there, we can be made aware of An Bord Plenala rulings.

CLLR WALSH: Thank you, for a comprehensive reported outlines what is happening across the county, like Cllr John Ryan Rhine there, I attended the meeting of the strategic enterprise report, and the presentation there by the CEO was again, most positive and it outlined to the group there present

the amount of positive stuff that is happening across the county and talking to people afterwards, there was a huge positive vibe in the room. People weren't aware of what was happening and the stuff happening in Arklow with the treatment plant, the announcement of the Ashford proposal there, the success an An Bord Plenala, the tourism project and funding under the URDF, all that stuff, and more, gave a positive light so we continue that mode going forward, so again, thanks again for comprehensive and informative reported.

CLLR THORNHILL: Thank you. May I just say that to the Chief Executive there, well done, I mean it is a comprehensive report and certainly covers an awful lot of, it really keeps us in the picture. Two items, following on from Cllr Joe Behan talking about, and I suppose this would be slightly in relation to the projects shortlisted for the all Community Awards, but, there is one there, and Cllr Joe Behan alluded to it, about the fire, services in Bray, and I would just like to mention two to the Chief Executive in relation to down there at Greystones, the multiagency and emergency response at Bray Head, just to bear in mind you know, there

was pressure on the fire services but as I said the last two meetings about what could be done to maybe prevent it for the future, like firebreaks, but another question, I would like to ask and I now know it has been mentioned in the past, I'd like to ask the Chief Executive about white stone remediation project and in your report it says Wicklow County Council have employed a company to advise remediation in accordance itself Mr Justice Humphries, I'd like to see progress made on this, because we're known as the garden county, and I would just like to Chief Executive to the cost and further run down on how it is done.

CLLR DUNNE: Thank you Chairman. Like Cllr Stephen Matthews I'm concerned about Airtricity, I find that when people report faults it takes an age for the company to come back and fix them. Personally, it is difficult to find out when the faults will be fixed. The first, item on the agenda today, we discussed how customer relationship, how making things better, there's definitely not that in Airtricity. I also was at the business breakfast on Friday morning, could I compliment the Chief Executive on his report, it

was excellent. The amount of people that came over to me after the presentation that said they couldn't believe what was going on within the county about the data centre in Arklow, wind turbines, and the amount of stuff was unbelievable and I think it is something that should be encouraged, and somebody suggested we should have them in the towns as well, business breakfast in towns so we get a more local look. So, staff of Wicklow County Council should be complimented on that, on Friday morning, thank you.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks Chairman. Page 28 municipal discretionary funds, I'm getting concerned that's building up. There's a lot of money from 2017 that's still not spent so I'd be anxious that money is retained and carried forward and those works are done, rather than getting swallowed up. I know in the Baltinglass there's 38,000 that hasn't been spent yet. I know, I've looked for lights to be done, 18,000 of lights that were ordered a year-and-a-half ago and not done. So, I ask to make sure that money is retained and spent where it was allocated to be spent and agreed by the members of each municipal district. Page

20, the lights, there's a massive amount of lights submitted that are still outstanding and I think we just have to try and push this on. Surely, we have some leverage with whoever it is, Airtricity, or whoever subcontractors we're using to do the cabling to move that on. It is just sitting there every month. Thanks.

CLLR BLAKE: Thanks. I know that Cllr Edward Timmins alluded to the lights and Cllr Gail Dunne here, but I brought that up at the last meeting here, and the same lights I'm talking about a month later they're still not fixed, none are fixed so there's it is ongoing problem with regards that. One item, page 19, regards water framework directive in regard to the sampling has been done in a number of rivers in the county. I want to know, is that report available to us, or has it been completed yet or when can we get that report?

CLLR WALSH: Just this relation to the lights there, the point made by Cllr Edward Timmins we discussed this again at this point in the last meeting if you recall, did I ask this council write to Airtricity and seek an explanation for the

delays, I don't know whether that has been done.  
Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Good news in regard to Mr Murphy was out today and launched the new part of the new development in regard to the Vartry, improvement of water down in the Vartry, 29 million development out of 200 million development that's going to improve the quality of water and obviously the tunnels up there, needed to be replaced after 150 years it was. So that job, part of the job now was signed off this morning and completed and was completed, within time frame and budget which is the main thing which happened and that was launched this morning for people's information.

In regard to lights, like Cllr Stephen Matthews are, I'm very frustrated, it is the one area we're getting no service whatsoever in regard to give people contracts and that. And people are very frustrated out there as well because despite people going time and time again, it is months before lights are being fixed and frustrating from my point of view. In regard to the fire brigade, I know Cllr Joe Behan didn't mean anything like this,

but I wouldn't want to go out from the council that we're unhappy about the fire service in Bray, and the performance, I know you didn't mean that, but I just feel that the fire brigade in Bray. I've had the timing of the times they come out to those fires, we had three fires like on a daily basis and they've done a tremendous job in a very difficult situation in the main street in Bray. I'd like to pay tribute to them for their work in regard to that. They were busy for the next couple of nights as well. And I think, it should be made very clear to people, that's exactly what the situation is. I'll let the Chief Executive in on a number of issues there. Chief Executive. The slip road, my understanding is it is ready to go, the landownership issues, but my understanding is it is resolved. The fire service in Bray, there was people left and retired, there was more on long-term sick, that's all being addressed, there was a competition in terms of recruiting firefighters, so intention to bring numbers back up as quick as possible.

CLLR BEHAN: Is it the case there's not the full complement of our staff in Bray?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: If a number of people retire or go out sick, there's a lag between when you get the compliment back up to stretch in that situation, we're covered with the other fire services in that short space of time.

CLLR BEHAN: You're saying you're completely covered, but what you are saying is you're depending on firemen coming from Greystones or Wicklow Town, that is not good enough. Cllr Vance, I know you didn't imply I was criticising the men who were there, they do a magnificent job, particularly as it is under manned saying, what you're saying is we don't have the full complement of staff and you can't tell us when with you're going to have them is that correct.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: People will go out sick, it happens, similarly, people will retire, they have to be replaced, the recruitment process is ongoing, positions have we been offered, there's training coming up for two or three in the short-term, Michael will have more information, that happens, the fire service is set up in the interim where staff leave and are replaced the other stations can cover, that's the answer.

Just in relation to An Bord Pleanála, if they're relevant to Wicklow, yes, Townhall in Whitestown, there's geophysical tests, and trial holes now, they have a website and consulted all the landowners, there's detailed sight location being done and in that cost in time we'll relay the cost as soon as we have it. In relation to the lighting. There is a consultant appointed in national scheme, that's replacing all lights with LED lights, they're talking about Wicklow, starting early 2020, we'd like to bring that back if we can. Airtricity there's another contract and Michael may fill me up in relation to that. And similarly, the municipal district spends, I agree what we will try and do this year is start some of the jobs early in the year before the main roadworks programme so you ever a not waiting in the later in the year. They are capitalised and brought in the following year, the money doesn't disappear. The water infrastructure corrective we may get a report in the next council meeting in terms of where exactly we're, and can we tell from the sampling so far. Thank you.

MICHAEL: OK, on the parallel road in Kilmac, the tender is due out on by the 18th of February, that's the date I've been given today as Chief Executive, there are issues.

CLLR BEHAN: Do you mean the tenders are going out for advertising?

MICHAEL: For a contractor to come in, so we're sending it out to the market to price the job in order to get a contract.

CLLR BEHAN: When do you think the work will start?

MICHAEL: It would be two months from now would be the earliest time.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I know where...

CLLR BEHAN: Is coming from, we were promised this job, not only would it start before Christmas, but completed before Christmas, that's how I understood it as well. So, I mean.

MICHAEL: That's how I understood it, but we're pushing it as hard as we can there are issues that have been to be resolved before the contractor is onsite.

CLLR MITCHELL: One stage it was talked about being completed in 2018, it is disappointing.

MICHAEL: There was a question asked regarding

hydraulic lift in the fire station, I'll get a report on that, and circulate it to the members. I know that, the locations were changed in order to maximise the benefit of same.

The street lighting in general, the contract for that is being examined at the moment, there are tenders a recommendation will be made for contract and that.

The discretionary of the Chief Executive has covered that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK. Right we're on to six now. John O'Sullivan and Terry Fahey. You're very welcome.

JOHN: Thanks, thank you go raibh maith agat thanks very much for facilitating our presentation this afternoon. I understand a copy of the slides are available through your electronic system as well. My name is John O'Sullivan commissioner evaluation, and my colleague is one a senior manager in the evaluation office, our purpose here today is to provide you with information about our revaluation going on of all the businesses in County Wicklow amongst other counties as well. I was here and I recall meeting some of you, think

it was July 2017 before the process kicked off, that's over 18 months ago now, and we've done a lot of the work, approaching the final stages to see the produce the first fruits of the work.

So, basically, this is very much about an information session for you, I'll explain the process and as well, where we're coming from with all of this, and programme that's under way across the country. I'll talk about the what has happened so far and what you can expect next. Terry will be dealing with some of those slides as well. A bit about the evaluation office, maybe are familiar with us, and the work we do, I suppose the key is that we office that assesses the liability for rates for all the businesses in the country.

There's a figure up there, about 1.46 billion, I think it is more 1.5 billion, we're an independent office under the Department of Housing planning and local government. As commissioner, I have a number of functions under legislation and independence in carrying out those functions. Briefly, in relation to rates and rateable evaluation, I am preaching to the converted here,

you on the systems failing well as I do, there are three figures that are relevant to the whole matter of rates. You as elected members decide in conjunction with the Chief Executive and head of finance, early November what's the overall contribution that is required from rates for annual budget. We will decide the valuations of individual properties then, and you determine also the annual rate and evaluation, multiplier that's set here in November for the following year. And then, one multiplied by the other, gives individual rates liability. In effect, every valuation we're revisiting every property in the county with a view to assessing its modern valuation. Rates are a very important item as you'll appreciate of local government funding, you'll make up one-third of the entire funding of local government comes from commercial rates.

So, it is a very serious stream of income for local authorities and it is essential then there's a modern valuation base there, that will back that up and give that the base significance equitable basis for living rates. To talk about what

revaluation is, many are familiar with individual valuations that we, say extension is added on to a property, this is different, this is where we're going back, the first principles in respect of every rateable property in County Wicklow and other counties, it is assessment from the ground up, reassessment at the same time. And then, I've tried to highlight there in green the important words - it results in a redistribution of the liability for rates across the various rate payers in the county. I'll show you later on, it is not a money-making exercise for the council whatsoever. Wicklow County Council will be allowed to collect the revaluation in the year before, who pays what within the overall rates of paid across the country. Revenue neutral for the local authorities so there's an extra man which, its reckoning, so we'll doing this now and another one no later than ten years and earlier than five years' time. That's set out in legislation and a point of re-evaluation is keep up to speed what is the changes there across the county and country. So what is different from what you will be familiar with already is this is a new valuation list that

will be created before the end of the year, so when you have budgetary meeting I assume November this year, you will look at brand new valuation list and head of innocence and Chief Executive will bring proposals based on that, rather than the one in operation here. So, if we just really look at the why, associated with it, I suppose, everybody would be aware of the fact that over a period of time different sectors of the economy, change their property value goes up and down, but not all at the same rate across the sector. The way to reflect in the rental values, that's what we're talking about here, it is not the Capital value of the property but rental values, the only way to do that over time is conduct revaluation. And, that then allows us to apply local economic factors that would be in operation in different streets, in different towns and towns across the county and villages et cetera, so, it's very much about bringing modern rental levels to bear in temples the assessment for rates.

Also, one of the other objectives we're trying to achieve is to bring improved transparency to the

system, many are familiar now that our valuation is based on nominal values out of kilter with modern rental values and every year you would vote here in respect what the multiplier would be, as I understand, for this year, the multipliers of the order of is it, 72.04, so in if you take, I have an example later on to show you the difference a revaluation makes, you will have a lower, multiemployer and higher value so therefore, one by the other, you will be multiplying one by the other, I'll leave that to an example later on. There's a legal basis for the entire valuation, set out in the valuation 2001, and there's an act that amended the 2001 act to, it picked up on the glitches that were in there from the 2001, act. The important point here is that you will hear us talking and Valuation Office about net annual value, and that is the rental value of a property, what it would be likely to rent on the open market at given date and effectively here, that's what we're trying to assess so, when we come to next October, when we publish a new valuation list for wick welcome it will be based on modern facts done at the same time for all 4,500 business that is

rateable within the county, the important other thing to take from this is there's entire appeals process associated with it. And we are basing our decisions and our methodologies doing the valuation based on decisions, there's an independent tribunal that appeals to the higher court so we're very much doing this in line with best international practice, it is something that has been refined and is very much tried and tested at this stage across other local authorities.

Going back to the point again about revenue neutral for Wicklow County Council, so, it is again, that word "redistribution". It is important to note the councillors overall rates doesn't change the individual amount paid by individual rate payer will or may change depending on their particular circumstances. So, to the extent that it is fixed for the council, there is a small adjustment allowed, essentially there's provision in the valuation act for the minister for housing planning and local government to apply a rates cap in the year after revaluation, in practice the minister's also done so, so all revaluations we've done in the

following year the same amount of rates can be collected than the previous year, there's a small adjustment allowed for inflation or new developments that come on stream in the meantime to improvement in buildings. It is a national programme, so on the map there, you will see all the areas in purple are claret coloured are already done. The ones in blue, including Wicklow are currently under way and due to finish in October this year, and the green counties along the western seaboard we will start in October and finalising in 2021.

That will complete the programme and then it becomes cyclical again in the sense that we will continue to redo valuations every minimum five years and maximum of ten years. So, there are obviously numbered of important steps associated with revaluation, when I was here the last time, presenting to you I would have been dealing with the initial steps the ones in blue, but automatic now I'm here to talk about the oneness green. We have done all the first, activities there in the first four bullet points and the reason we're here

is to explain to you what is happening next, the next major stage in this overall process is when we issue a certificate of a proposed new valuation to every rate payer the in county.

And at the same time, as that, the council officialises here will be making available indicative multiplier to go with that, to assess what their likely rates liability under the new valuation would be. Associate with that, at this stage, and we'll talk about the time lines shortly and Terry will be going into the detail associated with it, but at that stage each rate payer has the opportunity to make what are known in the act as representations, to the Valuation Office, they have 40 days to do so from the date on their certificate. And then we, we consider each of those representations between now and over the summer, or after, not now, but from April, right think to August and September and then, we will issue final certificates to the rate payers, in later on in this year and I'll put up the dates later on. At that stage then I'll publish as commissioner a new valuation list for Wicklow

County Council and the other counties you see up there in blue, on the previous map. At that stage then, at your finance meeting in I presume November, you will be setting the annual rate and valuation, the multiplier for 2020 in November of this year, so, from the first of January next year, the new rates bill for rate payers in County Wicklow will be based on the new valuation rather than the current valuation levels. I'll hand over to ferry now two will talk about the revaluation, how it takes place, what the process is like, and what will be happening next. I appreciate I've covered a lot of stuff in those first few slides, there will be an opportunity to take any questions and answer for you at the end.

TERRY: My part of the presentation will include more of a process or procedural end of things, how it is evidence-based exercise, I'll show you the documentation which most of you will receive a specimen just before the certificates are issued. I'll also go through some of the outcomes that we've had in previous revaluation's other local authorities. And I'll talk you through some of the appeal mechanisms and rate payer support. John

mentioned we're undergoing re-evaluation programme. This revaluation programme in 2019 covers alternative local authorities which is about 26,000 valuations. 4,500 of which are in Wicklow. They're Valuation Office is to produce valuations for those properties which we will issue in March. We collect data, and this slide here shows you the different data we collect to assist us in arriving at valuation so we collect rental information which we apply and use to arrive at valuation for most properties such as shop offices and collect trading data that helps us arrive at valuations for hotels, pubs and service stations and the like and then we collect construction costs.

And the construction costs which would relate to more unique style properties are exceptional like pharmaceutical property or one-off stadium. In the end, that's what we will arrive at, arrive at evaluations for 4,500 properties to derive that data. Where do we get this evidence? Well, the most important thing is, it is evidence-based exercise and local evidence, if we're collecting it in Bray,

we apply the rents we collected in Bray, in essence there's a hierarchy of values across any county. Bray will not be valued the same as Blessington, nor Blessington the same as Bray.

So, we issued what we call valuation forms seeking the rental evidence from the 4,500 rate payers, across the eight local authorities and we saw trading data, and rental information and cost of construction, so again, we feed that into the valuations we produce.

We also have activities to the particulars delivered and it is contemporary and modern rental evidence and stamped lease, we get a data, that supports the evidence, or the schemes we create. And we also have access to the PSRA, data, so what I'll show you here is example of before and after situation. It is worth noting that the valuations are nominal valuations, existing valuations, on property so they're highlighted this, they're 30 euros, and it is difficult for somebody to understand what that actually means or how it translates to the actual value of a property.

Following a re-evaluation, it will be presented in a form they'll be able to understand is your building worth 5,000 as we supposed to rateable value is €30. The example shows three properties, AB and C, and at the moment, those properties at 1988 values, it is 1988 values, applied, multi-pride by the rate in the pound, ARV, throws up rates liability for the three properties at 2,161, so in other words, 1988, those properties were deemed to be of equal value. Following a revaluation, the net annual value as John mentioned after valuation, those properties are no longer deemed of equal value for a variety of reasons that may be, there's no town in Ireland, certainly not in Wicklow remained the same, in the last 30 years, some areas would have improved, some would have disimproved and what we're trying to do is to reflect those changes.

So, I'm applying a notional ARV, post-revalue.

So, in previous very rationalisations, it tends to lean between 23,24-25, we've chosen 0.25, to see some of the examples, that shows rate liability, volume revalue, example A there's no change, he's paying the same rates. Example B he had increase

liability of 339 and C is reduction. That's a typical outcome and that's what revaluation is to produce, an actual, redistribution of rates liability paced on the value of the property.

Now what you can see on your screen next is example of a proposed valuation certificate. This is what I was talking about earlier, 4,500 rate payers will receive this.

And you can see, it will contain the valuation, it will contain the property description, the category of property that it is, and its use, and - category and valuation grid so you can see the breakdown and how it was arrived at. It is important for rate payers that they study this form. Because, there's an appeal mechanism, representation stage as well as an appeal to the tribunal but where rate payers can highlight any differences that they see or any issues they have with the certificate. But we will make a specimen copy of these available prior to issuing those certificates.

So, we intend on issuing them in March, the first issue will be the 15th of March, OK, for the vast majority of property.

There will be three tranches of issue of valuations, around about 90% of valuations will be issued on the 15th of March, you'll have nine or ten percentiles, issued on the 2 March, and small number of properties issued in early May, the reason the small amount of properties are more exceptional items, but the vast majority of items will be issued in March.

Now the rate payer themselves should as I stated already, should pay attention to the data on those forms. Whether it is the property details orbing pyre floor levels or floor areas. The valuation itself in order for them to understand the rates liability they will need ARV, indicative ARV, they will provide the Wicklow County Council to estimate the ARV, we will do that in early March, and the rate payer will be able to use that indicative ARV and apply at evaluation to arrive at their liability. So, to give example of some of the revaluation outcomes we've had in other local authorities, you can see that a revaluation is positive for the vast, majority of rate payers, that you can see in Carlow, Kilkenny, Leitrim and Longford there's reduced liability and over half

and up to 60% of rate payers, and consequently reduced rate liability for 40, so you have 60/40 outcome across local authorities.

And again, can you see the outcome in Offaly, Roscommon, Laois and Leitrim and Laois. It is important, each rate payer once they receive the certificate they look and see valuation on their property. They reflect on the rent they're paying themselves, and they should familiarise themselves if they know what their neighbours are paying in rent or use the website themselves, PRSA website or if they're a pub or hotel to look at the income streams versus the financial streams of evaluation office has used at arriving at their valuation.

And it is a mechanism, and I'll talk about it later on in the slides, there's plenty of support to enable rate payers to make contact with us, to actually ask any questions they have regarding making an appeal throughout the process. But what is key here, they should ask themselves to have they provided the correct rental information to us when we requested it, we would have requested it last, in 2017, towards the end of 2017 and requested it

mid-year for the trading data in 2018.

It is imperative they submit the correct data to us

So, the appeal mechanisms: The Valuation Office sees this as an important part of the whole revaluation process, it is about improving the quality of the list and improving the quality of the valuation schemes. And each rate payer has 40 days, to respond to the, once the valuation certificate is issued and there's no fee at this stage. We much prefer to see people partaking in this stage, it is informal. We will also run, clinics throughout this process, which I'll talk about later. The appeals to the valuation tribunal. This is an area we don't want to arrive at. We believe we should iron out issues or correct items that need to be dealt with, prior to this stage. How far, if we feel a valuation needs to be defended, we will defend it at this stage. This is no need to arrive here at this stage if all the data has been submitted and shared. This somebody else it will cost a rate payer to appeal, if they may need to engage with an agent or so on to assist them do T but it is not, it is obviously

a more formal quasi-judicial process here. And you have three possible outcomes, you may have no change, valuation may decrease, or valuation may increase, but we would much prefer, I can't stress it enough to deal with any issues rate payers have at the representation stage. And you can also appeal a case, to the higher courts and point of law.

To go through some of the rate payers supports we provide through each rate payer through every revaluation we have conducted. We have a website, upon which they're frequently asked questions, and on-line forms, rate payers can go on-line and view their application on-line, and submitted representation on-line, they can request hard copy forms and instructional videos explaining what a revaluation is and how we arrive at the valuation. There's e-mail helpline for queries they may have. And we provide stakeholder briefings and so on, so we engage extensively with trade bodies in explaining the process, explaining the appeal process and how we arrived.

Key two to success to a lot of the valuations are

the walk-in clinics so we'll going to provide walk-in clinics across five municipalities in Wicklow, where the valuer who is responsible for the valuations in their area can meet or rather constituents have the opportunity to meet the valuers. So, and they will be conducted at various stages, one the proposed certificates are issued in March, we will conduct these clinics, they will be advertised on our website and radio, and we will notify the Chamber here off the times and scheduling of the dates. Also, no appointment necessary, and if we find there is an excess of demand, we will come back, if we're here on a Monday, we will back on Tuesday and Wednesday. If there's somebody here on Monday, and we can't facilitate, they will arrange an appointment on the Tuesday, I cannot stress the importance of the clinics, it is an opportunity for the rate payer to discuss with the valuer who has been involved with that valuation.

They may not like the outcome but they will get a human face-to-face interaction with something who will explain in detail the process how we arrived

at the valuation and help the rate payer, if they feel they need to fill out the representations form and appeal t again, we see this part, this representation stage as key part of the process, the valuations are not final yet until we issue the final certificates in September. So, I'm going to slightly repeat what I've already said here. Again, what does the valuation officer provide for the rate pair? There're the proposed certificates, final valuation certificates, we will extensive media campaign, newspaper and radio, notifying people of the clinics and so on. We are here today, we briefed the elected representatives and we will be back again if required and provide sample documentations to the Chamber. We will have the walk-in clinics and we will, as I said already, we will discuss, meet with the trade bodies and so on, and website and e-mail. But I cannot stress enough the Valuation Office, sees and has shown in previous revaluations, it is key that the rate payer come and engage with us, and we will engage with them, our representations and appeals rate has fallen in previous revaluation and shown a positive outcome. So, some of the key

dates, the order was met in 2017, October, and that's the valuation date I should say is September '17, so valuation, all the valuations in Wicklow is based on September 2017. We at that time we sent out a rent return form requesting rate payers to submit their rent, 2018 we issued notices those trading properties like pubs and hotels, requesting them to submit their trading data. And again, in March and April, we're going to issue circumstance, 4,500 valuation certificates on the 15th of March. We will have a second issue on the 29th of March. And, from those periods each rate payer has 40 days which to make representation and we will have the clinics within those 40 days. On 17th of September, we will publish the valuation list, at that time we will again conduct more clinics, and again, if people have questions again, they want to raise with us to discuss why there wasn't a change, and to issue associated them again if they wish to make an appeal to the valuation tribunals which an independent body is. So again, we will be ever present throughout the process and very much willing to engage with the rate payers. And then in 2020, January 2020, the valuations

become effective for rates.

JOHN: Thank you just to re-empathise. Now these are proposal valuations so they're not cast in stone or anything like it, and there's informal process to address any issues which might come to light. So, if new information comes to light through the representation stage we will take that on board and apply it to any properties, for example, if we get two additional rents on a street that leads us to believe that our valuations were too high there, we will adjust all the properties on that street for those properties similarly circumstance, so it is very much a work in progress at this stage. Once it gets to the final certificates being published, in later on this year, then the only way to change those then are think the valuation tribunal or through reaching agreement with us through that stage. So, it is better, we interact now and address any issues for additional information associated with it. So, I want to emphasise the key points that are up there, and that we will have a presentation in each of the five Municipal Districts both now shortly after the

proposals go out, and also in the Autumn of the year when the final valuations are determined. To summarise then, this is really not about additional rates for the local authority. And the valuations we come up with is based on local evidence, and based predominantly on the information which rate payers providing to us. With the best will, there some rate payers haven't engaged with us, and they will do so, because it becomes more formal and expensive to do so later on down the line so we encourage people to make representation to us if they're dissatisfied with the valuation and provide additional evidence that would support their alternative valuation, because what we're about here is produced valuation list that's fair and Equitable and works for the local authority and rate payers as well and all set out in legislation and also there's a very well defined independent appeal process conducted through the valuation tribunal. Thanks very much.

CATHAOIRLEACH: This is a question and answer, no long speeches now. There's a number of issues we have to clear up on the agenda, one left over from

last month.

CLLR BOURKE: I just wanted to ask you there, if the possibility of solar farms being installed in parts of the county, what way will they be treated as rates? And secondly, wind turbines, how are you going to get valuations on those, considering the values they've been trading recently? VAT increase on hotels that have imposed on them since January 1 will have big effect on hotels, pubs, small businesses engaged in that activity and will make a big hole in their profitability, how will you factor that into the revaluation, and will they get a fair crack of the white horse woods on that one? And similarly, my constituents are small businesses and have been complaining to me for many years of being charged excessively for rate bills. There as petrol station out the road doing a reasonable trade until the bypass went by, and their trade crashed, but they were still stuck with big rate bills they couldn't afford to pay, how will they be treated, they need a massive reduction in rates to be sustainable, otherwise the business can't operate. And, I think that small retailers will be delighted with this, because they've seen

more and more business eroded by the big supermarkets, Aldi, Tesco, the big ones have sucked all the business away from small independent grocers and traders, and I think they will be delighted to see this, because it will give them a big reduction, and your figures there, have proved it there in the more rural counties. There's been 60ers% of them had reduction on average so it is good news. I think it will be good news for small business and people who are struggle I'll. Thank you.

CLLR BLAKE: Thanks for the presentation and a couple of questions I had in mind as well. A couple of aspects, particularly in regard to the exempted properties at the moment, there's a lot of properties that haven't been paying rates for a number of years, why have where he continuing to rate those properties and is will a proposal to exempt them long-term, into the future? Secondly the rental value for properties, can change an awful lot from as you said there yourself from town to town and village to village and where you could have a large premise that could have, quite

substantial value in rental value, being charged substantial rates where you get a very small property who has a good business and charging far less rates in that regard. Particularly so your example you gave, three examples, one where increase of some €300 and another reduction of 700 but the end of the day, you said there, the outset, that there can be no reduction in the overall income from the rates in the county so that probably maybe misleading to an extent. In that regard, so secondly, the last point I'll make, at the moment when you're value waiting the properties are people allow today appeal to you in the consultation, they're having with you, or do they have to wait until the October when you issue them with the fall rates.

CLLR MATTHEWS: I'll be brief. Currently we give 100% rebate on vacant commercial properties is that normal practice in all local authorities? And in relation to that, often these properties are employee the Threshold for vacant site levy and there's no financial incentive to do anything with these buildings, and this applies in urban centres

than rural community so would it be feasible to say, offer a 50% rebate? And would the legislation allow us to use the 50% rate collected towards some works to those buildings, would that come under rateable legislation? Thank you, Chairman.

CLLR MURPHY: The question I was going to ask was asked, will this information be put up on our county website in and what is the success of the walk-in clinics in other areas that has been held? And you know, because it is very good to see a person to person and open discussion, so, you know, I welcome it.

CLLR WHITMORE: Thank you very much for the presentation, it was really comprehensive. I think communication of this will be key, so I'm delighted to see you're having the walk-in clinics. I'm wondering if there's potential for a member of the Wicklow County Council because obviously the ARV, is an important part of the Jigsaw as well and it is not just going to be your results, it will be how the two will combine and impact on businesses. I'm wondering with the ARV, I can't remember when that is going to be indicative one will be released because, if they only have 40 days

after the issue of the PVC and ARC isn't done prior to that, it may not give them the full picture and realise what it means for them. And whether, when you put out the letter and the PVC to commercial properties, whether you can include the location and dates of the walk-in clinics because that's going to give people a sense of peace. But the issue of the traits is a really, really important one for us as a council, and all councils across the country. And in some regard, I think there may need to be a review, because we need to recognise a lot of commercial premises, the demographics of them are changing in light of on-line shopping and the move to the bigger shopping centres, so I think at some stage there needs to be a complete reanalysis of how we do rates and how it funds our council activities. Thank you very much.

CLLR BEHAN: There's no doubt many, particularly small retailers and business holders are very concerned about this process, and very concerned about the impact it will have on business and ability to employ people. So, I certainly wouldn't underestimate the worry that people have about this. And I accept that the gentleman here

representing the office are going by their legal required role here but there's a huge amount of anxiety about the process. Specifically, four questions, first of all you say you'll get an indicative indication of the ARV, presumably from the Chief Executive? But the setting of rate is actually a function, reserved function of the members of this council. So, how can you accept something, when effectively then you are tying our hands, or Chief Executive is tying our hands potentially when it comes to making the budget at the end of the year, and I just wonder whether that's legally sustainable. That's these that's the first point, has a representative of the office visited, personally every one of the 4,000 properties you mentioned? Or have you visited some of them? If you only visited some of them, how did you decide which ones to visit and which ones not? Thirdly, are you now a taking which I think is an unprecedented step, including small preschools and Montessori schools that are often based in people's private house and playing a huge part in childcare arrangements for pane people in this country, are you no now attempting to include

them in the revaluation or valuation system?

Because I think that's very unfair if you. And fourth, connected what with what Cllr Sylvester Bourke asked about competing with the big shops and so on, the huge elephant in the room for many of the small shops in this county is on-line retail. On on-line retail wasn't an issue in the '80s, what steps are you going to take to give an across the Board reduction, particularly for small retailers because of the competition of huge on-line retailers such as Amazon who, are not paying rates in this county but selling good in this county and taking business from the shawl shops. Thank you.

CLLR KAVANAGH: I was going to ask along similar lines. Rates is an extra tax on small businesses, and it is completely unrelated to profitability. In other words, if the businesses are losing money hand over fist, they still have to pay the rates. Given the amount of shops that are closing down in small it Ireland if there's any consideration been given a rates holiday, to try and generate business in towns, because, we've seen a mass exodus to shopping centres often on the periphery of towns

and it is the death now for town centres. And I have spoken to a lot of small business owners who say the same thing, we don't know what we're getting for your rates. In other words, we still have to pay water bills and electricity, we still have to pay our staff wages, electricity, rent, whatever, and so we're paying this enormous amount of money, and we don't really know what it is for. I know it is a tax, that's what it is, in not to put too fine a point on it. But just want to repeat my question, has there been any consideration given to either introducing a reduced rate for a number of years, sped period, or, a rates holiday for new business to encourage investment in towns.

JOHN: Thank you very much, I'll do my best to cover the range of questions. First of all, in relation, the various types of property that are rateable, solar farms, wind turbines, they're all rateable. Normally if something a new development like a new solar farm comes on stream the officials here in the council would list them to come and visit and come out, so they're rateable the same way as any other property. The I think you also raised the issue of VAT increases on hotels, and what we're

analysing would be, if we see any change in the rental values of properties like hotels or any majority changes in turnovers associate with the it they would be reflected in the valuation, so you're back to first principles, really, so you're looking at September 2017 is the valuation date there, so we will see operators making to he is points to us, when we get to representations back in.

I think you mentioned about an example of a petrol station that was by passed and that's exactly what a revaluation is designed for, to allow us to revisit and take into account, in often cases drastically change circumstances. Without a revaluation, there's no other process to pick up on those changes in economic factors, so those are the bread and butter examples of what we mean there, about I that point about changes in economic circumstances. So as things stand right now the businesses in Wicklow, and that are being assessed for rates really on the market conditions that prevailed 30 years ago, and a revaluation will change that, bring them to 2017 and thereafter we'll repeat the exercise ever river five and ten

years, so that's the nub of the process. Cllr Vincent Blake raised the point of exempted properties why are they rated? Essentially, if they're already exempt, they've revaluation doesn't change anything this that, if they're currently rateable, there's properties on the valuation list that are no longer rateable, like domestic properties, they're now removed from the list. So, the list is cleaned up so to speak to take account what the current circumstances are, associate with the it.

So, rental values do change, you make the point very well there. And very much what the revaluation is to do is to see where the changes have occurred. We'd all be aware of a street that was doing well 30 years ago and not doing well anymore and vice versa as well, just to give an example from Dublin, when we revalued Dublin City Council, George's Street used to be the most valuable street, then it is Henry Street and now it is Grafton Street and valuation that has picked that up, so it reflects the relevant rates commanded in each of those. We're aware of a street in a town where the market is now outside the town and the street suffered as

a result of it. The key point is it is a charge on the occupation of property so therefore, it is not designed to pick up on just purely on turnover associated with it, it is meant to reflect what the premises would rent for on the open market. I think you also made the point about how this, how the reductions work out when the fact the council are allowed to collect the same amount of rates. There are people who will receive increases, and people who achieve decreases, in the rates as a result of this. But overall the entire cake is the same. Because you will be voting on that here next November. So, therefore the proposals brought to you will include very much the same amount of rates to be collected in 2020, as in 2019 with minor adjustments for new buildings that have come on stream. I think, importantly you raise the point about appeals now and in October. What you can do now when you get your proposed certificate is make representations, that's a form of appeal in a way, it is informal appeal, and gives us scope to change thing. The rate payers will have 40 days to contact us about that, we encourage them and talk them through it, in the clinics. But, there's an

on-line form it makes it very easy for them and us. We appreciate not everyone is comfortable to do it on-line so it is possible to have a hard copy, we don't leave any stone unturned do that. What happens this October if you're appealing then, that's a formal appeal to this valuation tribunal which is all intents and purposes like a court. It is much more formal, there's a fee associated with the it, and we, at that stage, will be defended the valuation on behalf of all the other rate payers in Wicklow who haven't appealed.

If somebody secures a reduction in the rates from the tribunal the tab for that has to be picked up by everybody else because the size of the cake remains the same, we defend the valuations once they go to tribunal the. There's a small number of cases about the dispute of the floor areas and we resurvey it and agree that at the time.

Counsellor Murphy raised the point the success from the clinics. The clinics have been I think it is fair to say unqualified success. We're very happy with them. We're expanding them all the time. They are the means, let's face it, this is technical

exercise, it is not something, business people get their rates bill of whatever the arrangements would be, but the actual mechanics of how the rates have come about, aren't that clearly understood by people, some people do understand it. Our job is to communicate and make it as transparent as possible to people. We can't, unfortunately you know, our role isn't to explain how the rates are spent in the local authority, that's very much the local authority's business, it is really how we've assessed them and how we have come up with this the first instance proposed valuation and factors we've taken into at. We would encourage people to take up the opportunity to come out and we will have a presence, in all five of your Municipal Districts, not necessarily at the same time, we will have to stagger them in a certain way. But, look, we appreciate that is part, very important for people to understand what is going on, associate with the it.

Counsellor Whitmore about the indicative ARV, it is only indicative that is produced in just in March, now, and that will be produced at the same

time. We will be in touch obviously with the staff and officials here in the council briefing them well in advance. And, typically what would happen is it would be prominent on the Wicklow County Council website. In some instances, it may be possible to put together a calculator with t you put in the net annual value multiplied by point whatever it is that's there and you hit a button and it gives you. It is just very important to pick up I suppose, and you raised this point, this is only an indication. It is only to help people come up with a punitive rates bill, you will legally and formerly vote next November as you do, on what ARV will be next year, it is giving people a figure to make calculation what their rates are likely to look like from now on. So, it is temporaneous, we will co-ordinate that with the council officials here. The dates and locations of the clinics, I'm not sure, because they change and depending what, we will advertise them in the media and have put this on the website and the council website here. I can't guarantee they will be in the letter going out with all the other information that's in there, but this works very well, and we'll make it work

well.

Counsellor Behan raised a number of concerns about the small retailers. We appreciate that. And that is why we have the walk-in clinics because they are the means through which we allay some of their fears and concerns, associated with it. You asked do we visit all 4,500 properties in Wicklow, no we don't, we already have a valuation for every local authority in Wicklow. We visit the ones that maybe have a modern rental, fairly recent rent on so we apply some of the principles to similar properties. We will also visit any property that comes to appeal or that would, we were there would be a dispute over areas et cetera associate with the it. The issue of preschools and creches, et cetera, the revaluation doesn't change anything as regards property is rateable or not. If it was rateable before, it will be rateable afterwards, exempt before and afterwards, so revaluation doesn't change the categories of properties that are rateable. Councillor brought up profitability, to how it is taken into account and the issue of rates holidays, and possibly reduction in

realities, the rates holidays reduction rates would be policy matters for the Department of House planning and local government. They, our legislation is purely a based on assessing what the rateable value of the property would be. The actual collection of rates, and the application of any special provisions for rates, is entirely outside of our control, policy matters for the department. So, now, all we would do in that regard then really is assess the property base and all we're trying to come up with, is how much would that property rent for if it was on the open market in September of 2017. That's ultimately what we're trying to do. There's all kinds of valuation mean, and methodologies approved by the courts and tribunals how you arrive at that. Profitability, because it's deemed to be character on the occupation of property, the profitability is in some sectors, is relevant only to the extent it might drive the rental value of the property. That's ultimately what we're trying do, and that's in a way, one of the key things we'll explain to people who will visit our clinics because it is a very God question, how do we, what is the link

between profitability and the value we put on the property. And when we have the actual particular instance there, before us, we will explain it to them. Shoo

CATHAOIRLEACH: Could I have freedom for agreement for fifteen minutes?

JOHN: I hope I've covered those.

CLLR BEHAN: Can I just ask, how many properties did you visit?

JOHN: 20-25% of properties during a revaluation.

CLLR BEHAN: About a thousand.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I was one of those properties,

CLLR BEHAN: Once you make representation ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: I couldn't ask for anyone better in fact.

CLLR MATTHEWS: Question of rebates. In Wicklow, we give 100 rebates.

JOHN: Thank you. Yeah. I don't know in the answer, I think it varies, and some counties do 100%, some do 50, 75 % perspective, that's outside our area and in local government law. You asked me it was feasible to offer that, all I can say is to address that question, to the department. All policy on local government funding will come from

there. Our role is confined to assessing what the value of the properties, we've no role in either the collection or applying rebates associated with that. Apologies for overlooking it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. We're going on to seven now.

CLLR BEHAN: I had spoken to the finance, I won't delay. I'm turning to focus on for a second, is it on page nine and ten. Page nine and ten at the bottom of the page. First one is statement in relation to reconciliation. What I get from that, is we don't know how many houses we own in the county. Is that the case? And if we don't know, why don't we know, and when are we going to find out how many houses we known. Secondly, it is serious statement made on the page ten on River Dargle defence team, the completion of works, flood defence scheme was procured in 2014 of fees of 1.2 million excluding VAT in October 2017, these fees increased to two million, excluding VAT, and no contract should be extended beyond this initial contract amount, where that amount exceeds procurement rules. So, what we have here is, a contract was agreed, it was increased, and the

auditors pointing out that  
Shouldn't have happened, I would like an  
explanation why it happened.

BRIAN: Thank you. I'll take the River Dargle  
question first, in relation to that, we do have  
procurement policy in place in relation to contract  
extensions and this was fully adhered to. In that,  
there was a director's order signed in relation to  
that, and as I say the policy was adhered to, I'd  
make the point that, this particular project was  
examined under the public spending code and found  
to provide substantial assurance it was in  
compliance with the code's requirements.

CLLR BEHAN: That's not really the answer. What  
the finance officer said the director approved t  
I'm asking, was that not, is the auditor saying that  
should not have happened. Who was the director,  
who approved it please.

BRIAN: The point I'm making in this particular  
case it wouldn't be financially viable to go back  
out to retender and made more financial sense, the  
cost additional costs were justified, and with that  
point, being take noon account, a director's order

was signed which complies with the procurement procedures we currently have in place, and are published. For Wicklow County Council.

Everything was adhered to, I suppose, the auditor, has to flag the issue. As he is done in his job auditing the report, but he doesn't have a particular major issue with it. He's happy, there are procedures in there, they were complied with it, and understands the act it doesn't make financial or sense to retender, he has to put it in the report. We're satisfied that as I say, everything was in order.

CLLR LAWLESS: Thanks, I had, mine were two similar questions to Cllr Joe Behan, I read the report and there is obviously a few bits and pieces that jumped out. Under development contribution income, like, the absence of controls and recording development contribution incomes, the council mistakenly miscalculated 1.4, instead of 1.7, and this reduced in different programmes groups by 3.6 million. There're little bits of pieces, the council recording of the development recording led to difficulties in agreeing a balanced statement

in Irish Water and the Irish Water, I suppose, my concern, Brian over this is just, do you actually have a risk management kind of list on these kinds of things? Because we only see this once a year. I know the Chief Executive have answers, never regards to this reported, but, and I know it is to do with the Capital account and not revenue account. But ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that it?

CLLR LAWLESS: The stuff highlighted by the auditor it is being looked at and there is a proper risk management assessment being done by your department and we could have proper reassurances in the Chamber.

CLLR MATTHEWS: Just again in development contribution. When somebody pays their development contribution, how the system it goes through before it's invested in various projects under different directorates.

BRIAN: I'll take Cllr Behan's first question, fixed assets, it is not the fact we don't know, we do know how many social houses we have, but the order was pointing out there isn't a reconciliation, between the I house and aggressive

financial system. So, in the Chief Executive's report, it states how many social houses we do have, but the practical process, that has to be done, it is quite I suppose labour intensive and we have 95% of it done, where they're linked up together. So, it is the crossover between the two systems That's been flagged in that case. In relation to the development levies, the change from 4.1, to 7.7, that relates to interpretation and application to accounting treatment rather than error, it is identifying short-term developed debtors, the methodology used here was using invoice states as the criteria, the auditor, has a preference for using commencement date, so we have adjusted the 2017 figures to comply with that question and going forward we will use mention dates to have the short-term debtors.

The other point - risk register. Actually, that's one of the issues that's flagged in the actual audit report under, let me see - the last one, 113.4, we are looking "at risk" register and develop ago new risk register policy and bringing in training on risk management four senior managers within the organisation this year. That's in our workforce

plan, work plan for 2019.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That's it. Moving on. To eight.

Just for noting. Yeah.

We need to propose and second it then. Gerry Walsh and ...

MS. GALLAGHER: OK, members have been circulated with a draft policy for municipal district and county receptions and official openings, it is considered at protocol meetings, its purpose is to set out the various types of receptions that can be held by the Municipal Districts and agree a protocol to be observed. It is important to say the policy reflect and captures what is happening on the ground or what is the policy. And have protocol written down is helpful to any new administrator or the Cathaoirleach of Municipal Districts. The Plenary Council and District under reserved functions of both the County Council and MD have power to hold receptions or Cathaoirleach policies, so what we're trying to capture in terms of civic is what is seldom is wonderful, so for example, if MD want to host a civic it should be unique of a great achievement, other than that, there's the provision where Cathaoirleach's

receptions, less formal than civic and more appropriate where groups or individuals or teams, et cetera, you want to mark the success of that. So, page nine, paragraph nine, page ten, covers protocol for official openings and launching unveilings, in terms of proceed calf attendance, the Cathaoirleach takes precedent of all overs followed by the Cathaoirleach of MD as appropriate, and this is in appearance of Government minister. The only thing new, on page eight in terms of putting down a process for votes of congratulations.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Most people have this. Because propose and second to propose is that agreed. OK. Thank you

Second was Irene Winters. OK, we're on to nine... Update on the Housing Capital Programme.

BREACH: Five pillars of the Action Plan.

One is addressing homelessness, accelerate social housing and build more homes and four is improve the rental sector and provide housing, our social housing is based around this national policy document. The Capital programme falls two and three, which is accelerating social housing and

building more homes. That's what I'm concentrating, pillars two and three. As you know, we put forward and you voted on it, as to what would be our priority list based on the original housing strategy that came under the First Minister Anne Kelly and that was the first strategy. With that, then, we looked at under the areas of greatest need and new build schemes.

Priority two list that we brought to you over the last couple of years is comes under rebuilding Ireland and this is where we concentrate on getting the highest yield and low impediments, that's more units faster and up and running in the districts. So, under that, we have 23, number of new build schemes and total yield of 430 units so. Total new build coming from Wicklow, is 623, that takes from 2015 up to 2021, that's our plan. And then, we plus and have other methods, we're going into details and that's given this figure we're working towards is 137 units, our target is 1225, if we get projects up and running, we will exceed Government targets by - that's 36 new schemes, that's a huge amount of activity over a number of years, so awes know, we were slow to get off the tracks. But we did

actually deliver in 2018, got three schemes over the line. And 28 units and O'Byrne Road was one sitting there for a long time. Avondale Heights, some of you were down to see, and there's 20 families got in the units were really thankful there before Christmas time and Old Library in Arklow, I think everybody was particularly proud of those schemes. Unfortunately, our original target was for 45 units, we delivered 28 because of the development Delaney Park in Arklow, we're having difficulty with the contractors, we're still having difficulties, wasn't able to deliver before Christmas and we're going down serious routes currently to get those units delivered to us. The quality is not good.

And I'm not going to be in a situation dealing, we're not accepting more quality workmanship so this will role on, they didn't deliver this 2018 but we have this year to get them over the line. The Bride Lane we have difficulties with that, contractors when the into examinership, we got the scheme back up and running again, so those top six sites are everything that's actually on the site

at the moment. So, as I say, you have Kilbride Lane, the early part of 2020, FCA Hall, started off well, contractor decided he didn't want to do the job anymore, so, at the moment, we're trying to expedite the retendering of both two jobs, we already have a framework in place. That's hopefully very suitable for the Bray one in particular, it is only four units. That particular framework is not suitable for SEA Hall because it is valued, that's based over a million so the framework for Bray work is less than that. But we're still hoping to, expedite that as quickly as possible. The other two aunts currently on side is Kilcoole and Drew's Brook, and Blessington, so they're current site. Farrankelly. Phase two, started onsite this morning. Everybody was notified with that, and level drop, that was beginning, Whitehall in Baltinglass, that was due to start in March and that's our first rapid build project and we're hoping to get delivery on that, by the end of the year, so that's seven months contract and then we, bringing together all the aspects of rapid build and bringing to site and operating quickly. So, we do a lot of work in the

background associate with the that. PPP Convent Lands, I'm going to a meeting tomorrow, as I understand it, that's going to site in March and give you confidence in relation to that, the contractor has been on to us, consortium and involves the construction, and core as the approved housing body which will manage these units but they will be coming from our list, as I said to you before, you will be having a Section 85 that is passed before the documentation, frank will sign, basically it will be led by Dublin city council because this is one of five local authorities, as part of the, they will be leading authority and we're just one aspect of that, in order for the contract to go ahead, it will be signed Dublin city council on our behalf. With all of the conditions that was attached as part of the Section 85.

Sugarloaf in Kilmac, we have two contracts, there was issues with the documentation, because it has been retendered and hopefully offering that soon. So, I expect it should begin before summer. That's our projects that is onsite 2019 and then, we will also have these coming towards the later send, O'Sullivan Lands in Rathnew. They gave the

Soldiers Bench in Carnew that part aid is going to going to the district. It was due to go on Wednesday, but I understand it is deterred until next week. On Monday.

So the back group to speed things up like we were doing, we're doing the works behind the scenes so as soon as the Part 8 happens we can get out and try and get thank those units tendered, Delaney Park, phase two and three, there's dependency on phase one, obviously won't have a contractor going in, when a guy hasn't fully finished, so he is that is probably towards the later end of the year, that's the way it is looking at the moment. But it should complete in 2020. So, that's a number of schemes we have on board, so 327, no small fete. 13 schemes onsite by the end of the year. So, completion for this year, at the moment, is looking at the 66 units, this is what we've given to the department as our target. So already at risk is FCA Hall and Kilmantin Place. So, we hope that is tendered as quickly as place, that is due to be finished around October so allow two months, we're hopeful to get it over the line before December,

so I'm hanging on to that, so we have 66 units for this year.

And then commencing in 2020, so apart from all of those, we have another twelve schemes coming on board. Some of these, we have brought to use as municipal distributes before we go for Part 8, this is what we're doing before we approach the department. Because we're making an effort all the time to keep you involved, in what we're progressing with. So, Ashtown Lane Wicklow Town, we did preliminary discussions on that, so, that is going in for stage one for the department before the end of the month. The same with Greenhills road, above the convent land site, lapped we know we'd hopefully get in quickly. The only real issue is storm water that we'll probably do ourselves. Avondale phase two, that again, brought to the Arklow Municipal District. That particular one, we were going for stage one approval on that. We done work behind the scenes, there was fill on that site, we would be hopeful to get approval quickly from the department.

Ard na Greine Bray, that will go through Part 8 but got it to the stage we'll be summiting for stage

one as well with pre-consultations with the department officials. Moneycarroll Close to mountain view, that will be split, 26 units, ten will be traditional build and six scheme under the rapid build, so, we will apply for Part 8, as a full scheme, apply to the whole scheme, when it goes to site, we'll split it, for the ones at one end of the park is on the front and open space end of it, it is fairly level, so the other there's no modifications, so in order to knock that, we'll split it in two complex. Cedar Court in Bray. We're going to have stage one to the department, all of this, most will go in, in March. Three Trouts Greystones there, 34 units, we will have that to the department on that. The old fire station in Arklow, those of you doing demolition work at the moment, handling as best toes and preparing that site for consideration. We looked at it in a preliminary point of view, six or seven units. Burnaby Mills, we brought that to municipal district, and we want to bring Part 8 in the next week or so. And that's is to allow feedback from yourselves. Associate with the it. Those are two sites hoping to go for competitive

dialogue, that's and to secure the planning of this point is continue advantage to order for us to get the best value out of the two sites. So, we're, we will run the two Part 8s together. There will two separate Part 8s, but once we have planning security it is so much easier to get the value for those sites. As indicated to you, district level, so that there's a 30%, split between affordable, private and public. It may come under bundle 3, it would come in and look at developing that as a part of the PPP, but that is dependent on whether the department accepts it as a site. Again, this is just another string to our bow. If it is accepted as BPP, it is meanings we're not putting our energies into developing the design and everything else that goes with it, that's handled by be is else and will deliver 234 units for County Wicklow. Last one is Shillelagh, but we have that site over there, that's one that is Irish Water dependent, we are summiting it for stage one, and basically in order to put pressure on Irish Water to put infrastructure that's required there. At the moment, that's the one thing that's holding that backs, we don't have sufficient waste water

disposal associate with the that site. It is not on their agenda, it is too small, Shillelagh doesn't feature on national plans but if social housing is delayed because Irish Water is not paying attention, and Counsellor Blake was saying there's facility for accessing money under the rural development that may allow for this to happen, but unless we have something in place, we lose clout on that. So that's from 2020, on words, now even though I say it is 2020, all the work we have to do, we have the 359-week process, we're doing the work on this this year.

So, what I'm saying is, that we're doing the work this year, and loads on the twelve schemes to commence next year to be finished in 2020. And, so just then summary, Wicklow social housing supply strategy, rinse from 2015 to 2021, New builds priority one and two, gives 623 units and other mechanisms, 704, so you can see a 50/50% split what we're doing and others. I'll allow Joe to go, but I brought this up, because unless anybody can get here, I'm still involved in lending and it is going on, I'm there, nearly nine years, but, what I would

say, is department, have given us approval to complete works, so where we're at again, following procurement, we had to secure the consultant and now they're in place now to secure contractors to finish out that job, three more phases associate with the it and again, because we're in mediation and people are living there, we can't do it quickly, it takes time, that's why wither' not accepting poor quality workman slap because we don't want to be in this position further council the line.

For the councillors in Wicklow, the Hillview Estate, of which we haven't, it hasn't been funded, but yet we still have everybody up there, the roof works which were an issue, it is completed, there's a small number of units that need issues addressed in terms of leakages but basically that work is now done and as far as we're hearing on the ground is that all that work has been very well received. And the reason why I put it in there in terms of other supply mechanism is that, when these re-mandated works are repeated, it will release 28 units back in the council, in numbers, for people who are on the housing list, because we're using

them, and the biggest number is in Glending: On that note then, I just wanted to mention, to some of the challenges, we're dealing with, one about the contractor, and having proper oversight, so people think all the jobs run by themselves, the councils once they're allocated, they have nothing more to do with it. But we end up cases like Glending, so that aspect of the works is important, and Frank has supported us in, seeking temporary works so they're running at the moment, so we have people to actually look after our interests on the ground. Management consultants is another huge aspect of my work is trying to get consultants what they're supposed to do in a timely manner, when our programme is going beyond what it should do, it is because consultants are waiting to get more information back, so management of consultants is a huge priority what we have to do on top of our own work. Public procurement is an issue, only as far as we have to be open and transparent. All work has to be advertised in its appropriate manner, these are some of the delays we deal with. But they're tied into the process, that's why it takes so long, procurement is a big issue, we had to pull

one contract and re-advertise because documents provided by the consultants were not correct. And then, there is always the threat of legal challenge, if you don't operate the process properly.

Skill shortage is issue in terms of professional and trades. And everybody in the country, every local authority in the country, is trying to meet targets and then you have that and the private sector, so what we're seeing now is an example with one contractor pulling out, it is easier for him to leave and get another job rather than finish out our work. So, there's that, and all the professionals, architects, engineers, country doesn't have enough of them at the moment so. What we try do is tap into people as early as possible, that we say, there's challenges out there, coming from the left field we may not know about yet. And ourselves, staff retention is an issue, we had three architects and we have three more, and now we're losing a QS, and we're going to be losing excellent - so trying to keep people here is difficult. All the rest of us love it in here, it

is great, but ...

But again, in terms of, so in terms of professional

...

You can't have people moving on, and another example that there aren't enough skills around because everybody needs and good people, move on.

CLLR FITZGERALD: Delaney Park started in 2007, 17 units. They were to be finished in November, as I remember, now we're talking, I was shocked by that date of September. I don't think the members were aware of that.

I've been up there early times. We have 820 on the council housing list in the area. We've built one house from 2007 to 2018 and I want to compliment the staff of the work done on the library and different projects, we've people on the housing list since 2003, that's 16 years, we've people on the list waiting on them house whose are now possibly going to be homeless, because the staff are obviously working with them people. I'm amazed at September, I go up there, I live in that area, how that will take to September. I know all the issues, I've been talking about the issue up

there, workmanship and everything else, how can it take 21 months to finish 17 houses? I don't build, but I'd do it quicker myself with a few lads off the street. It is amazing you have September up there and that's what you've been told obviously.

BREACH: If you were to look the a del tail to finish the job on the 21st of September.

CLLR FITZGERALD: It is disgraceful, I'm amazed a company like that, can take from November 2017, and like that, I mean until September 2019 and if that's the date they're given you can put it back into 2020, because some of the stuff that's happened up there, you wouldn't see it in Mongolia.

>>: They haven't given that date, I'm saying in terms of the delays maybe coming down the line. So, these things take a long time.

>>: I sincerely hope they don't get any other contracts off Wicklow County Council, they will be entitled to go for the next contract. For that news to come out to people on the housing list, people at notice in houses to get out of them and Wicklow County Council have worked to keep them people in the houses that's a bloody disgrace and that company should never be brought into this

county again. We were frustrated, we thought it was going to be February or March looking at it the other day, it is going backwards, it is dreadful. Itch

CATHAOIRLEACH: We will get a further update.

CLLR WINTERS: Part fives, I know that there's housing going on in the market in February and Ashford and stuff like that, I'm wondering do part fives seem to be delivered in 2021, have we no part fives coming in before 2019? And second question is in lots of different issues today we talked about procurement and difficulties. I would actually love if we could get a list of if you had your wish list of how you could fix procurement so we can go to the department and say, this is what needs to happen to quicken up the process.

That's it thanks.

CLLR DERMOT CULLEN: We look one house for completion, and we know down the line Irish Water have been granted upgrade of the sewage, there's an appeal to that to the Board, we hope to get something back within the next couple of months from An Bord Pleanála and hopefully it is good. In

west Wicklow it is desperate, it is continuous day and night where the amount of people going homeless, then of people, there's no private accommodation to rent, there's no, we're wasting our time talking about that, there's absolutely nothing there for people.

But what I want to know really is what guarantee do we have in the long run, from Irish Water who they will give their connections to? If it is a case, they give the go ahead to up to 800 houses which are in Kildare, that's not worth a fiddlers to the people of Blessington and Wicklow.

If those 800 houses get the go ahead, what guarantee do we have, even the 10% of the social element.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We know about that.

>>: What guarantee do we have councillor have that the connections will be given to Wicklow. I see we have 50 houses in line but what guarantee have we got.

>>: The last of the query had dealt with some of yours regarding part five, they were in excess of 30 this year and more to continue on, we're coming to in about 30er this year, but 50 every year, a

bit light depending, so they're coming in there, they'll ramp up a bit as the private sector. As regards the first of all, regards the Baltinglass area, remember with sewage at the moment, Blessington, whereas we can't develop in Blessington short-term, there was Whitehall and Carnew in the schemes going forward, we will deal with any developer, that again to ensure or work with capacity within the industry, any developer who has developments and sewage or planning permission, we will purchase units and advertising for that in the very short-term.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Moving on.

Ten. Sorry Jenny for keeping you so long there.

JENNY: I won't keep you long. But just this is the good news you've had bad news, so I'll give you good news. Creative Ireland is one of the around wellbeing, one is healthy Ireland and one creative Ireland, you may know about creative Ireland what it is, it is a programme maligned across Government local authorities and state agencies and organisations, in order that the creative industries and artists and arts and culture are promoted as parts of Ireland's offering in what

they have to offer, but also, in the development of greater supports for it so in the country, the brand continues to grow and creates employment, but also, for particularly for children and young people they get a chance to be creative as young as possible, scientifically the research shows that it is very beneficial for everything, for a whole range of things like social development, for mathematics, reasoning and reading and everything, so basically, creative Ireland the national programme has five pillars. You can see them there. So, the five pillars, so, they're the five work programmes that creative Ireland has, the one in grown is pillar two, enabling creativity in the community. That's what local authorities have tasked with.

We've been asked to create a strategic plan around that, and going forward in 2019 we have a service level agreement with creative Ireland to deliver that programme for them. You can see a significant investment by the Government, 4.23 million in 2018 was the spend, across three areas, the first a children and young people's programme, they had a

grinding which went across a broad range of measures from film, creative and promoting us abroad and then the decade of commemorations, so, that's every year, until 2022, as a commemorations come up, we will have specific funding to commemorate so this year is wharf remembrance for example, so local authorities were invested in by Government to the tune of 4.32 million, numbers of engagement were, they gave us last week but today, the numbers of people who engage with those programmes was 1.85 million people. So, in terms of where we are, this is just an indication in 2018, we received that amount. They try to give the same local authority the same money, we got extra money in 2018, but not '19, our numbers of engagement, were above and we will more than double that. We have all have culture and creativity strategy, we have a culture team, principally one through me and administrated in our arts office, and then it is made up of the range of personnel you can see on the executive with council members. I'm not going to if think every programme with you, so just for example, we have a literature programme, for libraries, it is the first time in a very long time

since well before the recession, we have a cross-trade thing on the library, what the creative Ireland wants to do is to get libraries, film commission acts office and archives, culture services and culture team to work together in local authorities, previously, that wouldn't have happened except for ad hoc basis, so this is really to allow that to happen.

So, every local authority is different. We all deal with the and try and build what we have already, about think is for new activity with communities that we wouldn't have previously. Last year, in the region of 815 people, this year we'll have 1200 capacity for a range of events in Arklow and Blessington libraries, some of them there, the one is a travel writer and he's presenting in Blessington and we have John Banvil. And 'There's a Bear on My Chair' an author from Scotland coming over, wide variety and appealing in every age group and wellbeing as well. We had a grant programme, 38,000 was given out to 38 organisations, we're doing that for 2019 and the closing date is on the first of March this year.

We've a choral programme so we specifically developed a four-year strategy for development of community singing to help choirs who are existing but try to seek new choirs and recognising the like the operation transformation exercise choral has similar benefits so we're supporting choirs that exist and training people who have it as a job so trying to create additional opportunities for work as well for people in the county. It has one stop on-line very source, website developed, we'll commission new songs and work on aspects of nuts and bottles like enterprise so running events, project management, and insures, and all those general things as well as developing them artistically.

So, we anticipated there will be about 2,000 people involved in that programme. We also have heritage projects, who videos are on-line, and we have the archive project, this is a development of new heritage and archive app to developing it, to the public of Wicklow. We have 38,041 children in Wicklow, so we want to engage a plan for young children, so rather than ad hoc move from project

to project every year, I wanted to create the programme to look at that number and see what would it take to reach as many as those we can, in addition to those we already run, this will be launched in April, and run for four years and enable us to work strategically in four areas, people with complex needs which we haven't worked before, west Wicklow development programme and that programme. We'll do residencies, readings, performances, create creative clubs. This is a culture night for children, every local authority has to do it. That's just general information, we'll have key centres, the latest consultations with children in the county asked for more play outdoors, they said they'd rather do things unstructured and outdoors so we'll respond to a work with the park lands and our libraries, and have heritage venues and have unstructured programme of events that will be free for the day.

There will be about 5,000 people catered for on that day. They roll out programmes nationally on children and young people particularly, they have their own creative Youth Strategy, so every child has the rights to participate in the country,

that's their mandate under that plan. We have five creative schools in Wicklow, there was a pilot project where they'll reach 4,000 schools in the country, five schools were close from Wicklow. And they are throughout the county the majority of them are on the East Coast and quite a few in the north. We have sop in Tinahely as well. The other programme is around creative clusters so each creative cluster school there's three of those and receive €2,500 to help, and this will roll out more for this pilot year in 2019. So, that's it. Just a quick update, and if anybody has questions, they're more than welcome to come and ask or check out the programme which will be on-line shortly. OK.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Any questions?

I'm tired looking at that, all that activity, would you wouldn't believe all that activity is happening in Wicklow this year.

CLLR THORNHILL: Thanks very much and Jenny, great work you know this creative Ireland I think it is great to get youngsters and everyone involved with creativity. And I just see that you had mentioned about different groups like literature and so

forth, but the Irish language itself, maybe you might tell me is there something there for the promotion of the Irish language?

CLLR BOURKE: Conference great plans on that initiative, I notice you've included choirs, I'm delighted to see that, because my wife is in a choir and she's dedicated but has complained bitterly about the lack of support from the county council in the past, they were denied grants.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Would you not sponsor it yourself?

CLLR BOURKE: I have been. But they've been doing great work, they've linked up with a choir in Milan, from El Scala, who have visited last October and stayed, we hosted those in my own house, and they're going on a visit shortly but trying to broaden it out as much as possible and expand their numbers and any help, they' be delighted, it is costly, because they have to pay for twigs and it doesn't happen for nothing but it is a wonderful experience for them.

CLLR OLIVER CULLEN: Fantastic idea, but what is probably needed to be asked for a lot more funding, and I'd also, listening to Cllr Thornhill will, if you mention 200 years ago in the language and was

for dipping to the well, it was Irish culture dipping into, so it is something I notice and I've brought it up several times and nothing is done, I'm putting it forward as proposal the logo you put up is Wicklow, 'Land of opportunities', when I get documentation, that's all I get, nothing is done, it is passed off, I had suggested and proposed that the logo is, Wicklow, and underneath in a thin line, bring in a Irish language because it is brushed aside as if it is not our language, we are a bilingual, that the logo be looked at. We need the logo to have, Wicklow, and Cill Maintain.

MISS GALLAGHER: We do have a logo in issue, and we will make an equal effort.

>>: That wouldn't kill anyone to do that, and the all the times they're looking at Wicklow, they're looking at Cill Maintain. Underneath.

I'm proposing to change the logo and make it centre stage. And there's to problems. I'm seeing it all the time.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm not taking a proposal at this hour of the night.

CATHAOIRLEACH: It is gone past the time, this is a presentation, I'm not going to take it, put it

down as notice of motion and I'll take it then. Put it down as notice of motion.

JENNY: Sorry about that, so, yeah:

CATHAOIRLEACH: I gave people latitude today and we ran over time because of it, and I won't do that anymore. And then we'll get to the notice of motion and then you can, I'll guarantee you then that it will, but it will be harder than it was today on people today because I let them go on a bit. That won't happen again.

JENNY: As regards to the Irish language we have policy documents print in both languages, and, similarly, they will be reflected on the website when they're put up there, in both languages, and stitched into the children's activities and the literature programme. There are events in Irish, and in English, as we go through for the children's programme days.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Jenny, I am all sure on behalf of us all that's a great programme, well done. Congratulations on it and I'm sorry that it came in this late in the evening. It certainly a lot of other members could have benefited from it as well.

END OF MEETING