

ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY
COUNCIL HELD AT SHORELINE LEISURE
CENTRE, GREYSTONES, CO WICKLOW
ON
MONDAY 7th SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 14:00 P.M.

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Elaine McCarthy

(Bell rings)

CATHAOIRLEACH: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Members ...

Good afternoon everybody and thank you for being with us this evening. Just before I get into the agenda proper, just a couple of things I'd like to mention, one is that just to mention that all of the mics and desks have been sanitised and there's earpieces there for anybody who can't hear, and thanks to everybody for setting that up and organising that for us.

And something else I'd like to say is congratulate all of the leaving certificate students who received their results this morning, I'd like to congratulate their parents, guardians and students, I wish the very best for them in whatever they want to go forward. Second thing I'd like to

congratulate Cllr Derek Mitchell who became a grandad this morning to twins! Congratulations Derek. We'll move to votes of sympathy. Lorraine if you have them.

MS GALLAGHER: Yes, for Walter Armstrong, brother of our colleague Wesley Armstrong. For Veronica Carroll mother of our colleague Jackie Carroll. Michael Burke brother of Michelle Burke. And Connor Kavanagh, Maureen McAllister mother of our colleague Emer, and Mr Clower father of our colleague Aideen, and also, we're going to close a Book of Condolences that we opened for John Hume.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Does any members have any other condolences?

CLLR BLAKE: I've known the Kavanagh family. We should thank the family as well by a number of families in Canada would have better news this week, the tragic passing of Connor.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Vincent Blake. We'll stand for a moment.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members before I get into the agenda one thing I'd like to propose with your permission, I'd like to deal with items 1-7 and then

13-15 first. So, I'm going to propose that, would someone second that, Cllr Paul O'Brien has seconded that. Thank you very much. Item number one, to confirm and signing of the minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 15th June 2020 (copy attached).

Cllr Irene Winters and Cllr Sylvester Bourke, any matters arising from those? No matters arising. To confirm and sign minutes of annual meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 15th June 2020 (copy attached). Can I have a proposal, Cllr Vincent Blake and Cllr Irene Winters. Proposed and seconded any matters arising? No matters arising.

Item number three, to confirm and sign minutes of special meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Thursday 20th August 2020 (copy attached).

That was meeting held in Wicklow County Council proposed by Cllr Paul O'Brien and Cllr John Mullen. Thank you.

So, we move to disposal notices and the first one I'll hand to Lorraine.

MS GALLAGHER: Disposal notice on for three year lease to Helen and Noel Jacob, so with permission

we'll remove that notice from the agenda because there are plans there to develop a roadway in the near future so we'll deal with Mr Jacob's request in terms of a license, if that's agreeable and I've been speaking to Mr Jacob.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Everybody agreeable. Five is to consider the disposal of 0.0060 hectares or thereabouts of land in the townland adjacent to 27 Connolly Square, Bray, Co. Wicklow to Mr. Ciaran Connaughton, 27 Connolly Square, Bray, Co. Wicklow (as per notice circulated). Cllr Paul O'Brien and seconded by Cllr Grace McManus.

MS GALLAGHER: Is that agreed.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Agreed? Agreed.

Number six is To consider the disposal of all of the property in the townland of Arklow, Co.

Wicklow, the piece or plot of ground with dwelling house and premises thereon known as 114 Fernhill,

Arklow, Co. Wicklow to Mr Barry O'Neil, 114

Fernhill, Arklow, Co. Wicklow (as per notice

previously circulated). Proposed by Cllr

Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr Tommy Annesley is that agreed?

Agreed thank you.

MS GALLAGHER: Cathaoirleach, that is in relation to the item seven?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Item number seven.

MS GALLAGHER: Before we propose with this, this is in relation to ABEC, and there would be a, I'm the Company Secretary of ABEC, and there will be a number of directors here, Cllr Tommy Annesley is a director of ABEC, as well as Chief Executive Frank Curran, and Colin Lavery is a director of that company, just to declare that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Do they need to leave the meeting?

MS GALLAGHER: If they withdraw that would be fine OK.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Item number seven is to consider the disposal of approximately 239.50m² of office spaces situated in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow - Arklow Courthouse, 1st storey area, by way of a lease for a period of 4 years and 9 months, to Arklow Business Enterprise Centre (ABEC CLG) (as per notice previously circulated). Proposed by Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, and seconded by Cllr Peir Leonard.

MS GALLAGHER: Is that agreed?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Agreed by everybody, thank you. So, I'm going to take item 13 next, to ratify the filling of the vacancy on the Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee by Cllr Erika Doyle, Bray Municipal District, arising from the election of former Councillor Steven Matthews to Dail Eireann. Can I have a proposal for that? Cllr Melanie Corrigan, proposed.

MS GALLAGHER: Seconded by Cllr Anne Ferris.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

MS GALLAGHER: Agreed.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Agreed, yeah. Item number 14, To consider the nomination of a representative from each of the Municipal Districts to the Wicklow County Council Access and Inclusion Committee (report attached). This is a new committee set up by Michael nickel con's department, we can send this to Municipal Districts. Is that proposed, Municipal Districts, yeah.

MS GALLAGHER: Seconded by - item 15 is to amend paragraph 6 of the standing orders: Place of meeting and address of principal offices: to allow

for the Cathairleach in consultation with the Meetings Administrator to determine the place of meeting as a result of Covid 19 crisis and physical distancing requirements for a 6 period of months from the 7th September, 2020.

Proposed by O'Brien, and seconded by Cllr Mary Kavanagh is that agreed.

MS GALLAGHER: I'll take a vote on that if that's OK, because standing order says that ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Derek Mitchell.

CLLR MITCHELL: Is this for the Municipal Districts who may need to meet in different places?

MS GALLAGHER: Yes. Yes, it would Cathaoirleach, yeah, if they need to meet at different places, if you recall we have had a special meeting convened by quorum to designate the shoreline for our June meeting as well as for this meeting here today. So, by attending standing orders for six months it enables Cathaoirleach's meetings with the administrator to identify a venue and that would be the same for the Municipal Districts if moving out of the Municipal District offices.

CLLR MITCHELL: Who would have the authority then to decide where to go? Let's say Greystones.

MS GALLAGHER: You'd have to do a separate resolution at your meeting, this is just for the Wicklow County Council meetings.

CLLR MITCHELL: OK.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Do I have a proposal for that?

CLLR MITCHELL: I propose it had

CATHAOIRLEACH: And seconded by Cllr Derek Mitchell.

MS GALLAGHER: Just taking a vote.

That's great. That's 21, sorry, that is 29 for, and three not present. Thank you, members.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Item eight is considered Chief Executives Monthly Management Report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: We have a number of schemes - housing schemes now such as Farrenkelly and Baltinglass completed and Convent Lands in Wicklow, and Rathnew that scheme is coming to conclusion as well, so I might try and do official openings with social distancing, similarly the N81 realignment, grove ends might do that as well. We received significant funding, from the NTA for cycling and walking routes, a lot are welcome, some schemes we have been looking for years, like Hollywell footpath through meeting of the waters,

it is very welcome and we will be taking on an extra 6GOs and two engineers so that will be done by direct labour and we will have a presentation on it later. In addition, we have 378,000 climate change adaptation grants, more road schemes and footpaths that will be done before the end of the year. And we have avenue Covid-19 grant so Arklow north and Greystones coastal walk and cycle ways, pedestrianisation and improvements in Wicklow Town so a number of good schemes coming through on that, which will be very welcome.

We got the rural regeneration and development fund 400,000, 500,000 for Newtownmountkennedy in terms of designing, traffic management, public places, community Space spaces et cetera, Wicklow Gaol won Trip Advisor award, very impressive, prestigious 2020 Trip Advisor's travellers choice, Best of the Best Award, so that's welcome as well. We would have scored a good bit above average in the national oversight and Audit Commission, Local Authority Satisfaction Survey, over half those surveyed believed the council was doing a good job at 65%, it is higher than the national per cent which is 57%, 57 overall satisfied with Wicklow, we are

higher than how citizens feel informed and higher than average value for money and road safety 62% compared to 59 and similarly on the housing side so that was welcome. But there's stuff there obviously that we'll learn from, and try and improve on. So, I'll leave it at that, and take questions.

CLLR DUNNE. Yeah there you go. Thanks very much for your report, it is always a makes a very interesting reading.

Just on the Trip Advisor award for Wicklow Gaol as member of the enterprise board who run that, it is a great achievement for the Gaol to win such an award, it puts it on the map throughout the world never mind throughout the country and it was a great day for the Gaol and everyone should be complimented who is involved. One other issue for me, no funding for the Wicklow and Greystones Greenway, it is just something we hope to keep the fool to the back of the neck on, because that could be one of the most, that could be such a great walk for people coming either way, and the amount of people in tourism that would run into Greystones Wicklow and Newcastle and Kilcoole et cetera would

be unbelievable.

What worries me a little bit, we're looking at the whole scheme and I know that from Wicklow to Kilcoole, that there doesn't seem to be that many obstacles and I'm wondering should we concentrate on that first and then carry on from Kilcoole to Greystones because even that to get that started alone, would help to tourism industry in that part of the country. And just for somebody who has just been away on a stay case, we all know how important tourism is within the county and I think that would be so bring so much tourism and it is important we keep working on that, thank you Chairman.

CLLR O'BRIEN: Thank you Cathaoirleach and I also want to thank the Chief Executive for his comprehensive report and compliment the staff of Wicklow County Council in reaching the achievement of 60% of satisfactory rate, anyone who dealt with the council over the last few months will concur they deserve that 60% if not more. I want to welcome the over 3.3 million from the NTA for the 25 projects around the county. From my municipal area I want to welcome the funding for the path from Rathnew and Ashford and the junction in Wicklow

Town called the Leg of Mutton, it is unsafe for years and finally good to see the money it deserves. I want to welcome the funding over half a million for Newtown which I believe will transform the main street and I'm delighted to see the new library and Fitzwilliam Square near completion in Wicklow Town. Cathaoirleach these are fantastic announcements and most welcome along with all the other worldly schemes around the county. In my opinion the smaller states should be looked after, including roads around the county as well. Having suffered greatly because of years of neglect. For example, for two years now the residents on the L5602, near Newtown, have been asking for the road to be improved, I drove the road myself two weeks ago and I was shocked by the state it is in, because the hedges have not been cut for some considerable time now, it is impossible for cars to pass each other. There is a school bus that has to use that road, to bring special needs children to school and yet there's several incidents on the road now as well. I also rant to raise the state of the footpaths on roads in Wicklow Town, it means a lot to residents in the town. Over the past number of

weeks I have been inundated from calls from residents in Mount Carmel, as they get washed out it, because the pipes get block, the residents showed me the state of the path in new potholes formed because of the years of neglect. 49, there was actually a spring coming out from under the footpath and on to the road which is going to prove hazardous in the winter should it freeze. I was contacted by a furious residents in St Matton's road telling me how his daughter went to cycle, only to injury herself outside the house because of the potholes, I can go on and on, I won't because it is time I'm asking the Chief Executive to use his considerable influence to work with us, I understand budgets are tight but these can't be neglected for any more.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Keep it short if they can, Cllr Gerry Walsh.

CLLR WALSH: Yeah, thanks Cathaoirleach and thanks to the Chief Executive for yet another excellent report. Just two comments really under the social housing stock, I see the rent arrears is 2.78 million gone over from a million-last year, I want

to know what plan is in place to address that. And on page 41, in the transportation statistics, section, there's references to the N11 junction road improvements, and I know we attended a briefing up in the Glenview Hotel in last November in relation to this, we were presented with a document there, that was seven options online and off line options and I must say at the time that presented a lot of anxiety to residents in the general why, particularly around Delgany and Glen Helen of the downs, I know they're considering the preferred options route but looking at our core strategy document, there's references to it, and the references is, you know, since the M50, N11 merge, that's where the improvements are necessary, why go through this process, and in the meantime people are genuine lie concerned in relation to their properties, as I say some of the routes are going through SAC, some are going through people's properties, golf clubs et cetera, so it has caused anguish, so we'd hope that we're near conclusion with some certainty with that project.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: In relation to the Wicklow

to grain stones Greenway, we did initial feasibility study on that and I concluded there may be a feasible route, that you're going through SPA and SAC, but maybe a route that isn't affecting the qualifying interests going through the sand dunes, but, the reality is that, we need to do a full environmental impact assessment report on the entire project that's the next phase. The cost of that report, route selection et cetera, the finding of the route, doing the full EAR, NIS and presenting a report, the cost is 800,000. We looked for funding recently and we didn't get it, but there's going to be a lot of funding now for cycle ways and walkways, coming down the track, particularly with the green Government et cetera so we'll apply again but we need that significant amount of funding to do the full EAIR, we can't split the project, we need to do it for the full project. The process itself will determine if the project is feasible and if it is deemed to be feasible that goes to An Bord Pleanála, that's a priority for us to do the funding and full environmental assessment report. Cllr Paul O'Brien in relation to food paths and roads, we will take that into account in

the L5065 for the roadworks programme to 2021 and Municipal District works so we will be working with the various Municipal Districts at the end of the year and next year in relation to that. Just in relation to the rent arrears, they're gone up but the actual amount of rent has gone up, there was a rent review so people are paying more, there's issues around Covid-19 but we're following up on each and every one of those, but as I said the amount is gone up but we look at arrears and follow up with people and we are of course sympathetic as we can in relation to various different circumstances. The M11, N121, the outcome of selections report was due one or two months ago, we haven't got it yet. I know there was, they were asked to look at a bus lane as parliament of the process as well so we will have that report on the preferred option and taking into account the possibility of the bus lane but we haven't got it yet, we're expecting it shortly.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Chief Executive, Cllr Vincent Blake.

CLLR BLAKE: Yeah. Thanks. Thanks Chairman, thanks for the presentation.

certainly looking forward to the money for the Greenways and particularly the Greenway from Arklow to Shillelagh, it is an old railway line and a lot of work has gone into it over the last few years and hopefully additionally funding can bring this to fruition. I see the Carnew housing are completion date now of the February, 2021, rather than the back end of this year, I sincerely hope we can stick to that date of February, because there is a grave need for new houses for our applicants in Carnew. I know references has been made to road safety and the amount of work and money made available to food paths and upgrading roads as well, from the rural point of view, one of the biggest things we have in terms of road safety is potholing and rural roads out there, there's a grave need for work to be carried out. I know we won't get restoration work done on them for this year but certainly we're heading now at this stage back in the winter months again and there's a huge amount of work needs to be done out there, in terms of potholing the roads. Secondly the other aspect eluded to as well is hedge cutting and can I ask the Chief Executive who's responsibility at the end

of the day is it to cut the hedges. I know I've seen the adverts in the Wicklow people this week, asking the farmers to cut it, but at the end of the day there's a lot of hedgerows out there, that difficulty as to who's responsibility it actually is. At the end of the day what responsibility have the council got in terms of ensuring that the hedgerows and some ditches out there and dangerous junctions as well that the hedgerows are cut back in that regards. Thanks.

CLLR DERMOT O'BRIEN. Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

Just a quick one for Chief Executive, I suppose first of all thanks for the report, the July one and August, and as well, the team down in the council who have been communicating with us throughout the summer, whether it is offers to seminars and consultations and flow of information has been very welcomed.

Just rebuilding Ireland, I appreciate you might not give an answer today, but it would be great for a follow-up. So just the take up on the rebuilding Ireland loans that there seems to be a high number of declined and a high number of I will eligible. And I know we would get people asking questions

about that and people who find themselves not eligible for housing house, not rich enough to buy on the market and is there anything we can do to mitigate the reason why people are declined, thank you.

CLLR CULLEN: Thanks Chairman.

Just a page 47 of the report, parking income, I suppose first of all I would like to find out what has the impact of Covid-19 been on the figures of parking across the county?

But, I suppose, more importantly for me as a Wicklow Municipal District councillor the figure of 124,520 is incorrect on the basis we have two of the largest revenue sources of car parking in Glendalough and Brittas Bay that are not included in the Wicklow municipal figure and I've been calling on this issue to be resolved for a number of years now, without any success, but, there is no doubt in my mind first of all Wicklow Municipal District needs the revenue but secondly it is totally unfair that the revenue goes to the environment section and not to the Wicklow Municipal District. As far as I'm aware the

Wicklow municipal staff, look after both of these parking facilities and I think it is time that the revenue was correctly put forward to the Wicklow Municipal District.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: The Greenway Arklow to Shillelagh, that's moving in the sense the NTA is funding the environmental assessment report so that's good it is moving along. There will be CPO, and the EIER, natural impact statement will go to An Bord Pleanála at the same time. Carnew housing delays, they lost six weeks but back up and running and seem to be working OK.

The potholes again it will be part of the roadworks programme, the velocity Jet Patcher is there now, which is efficient, one for the east and west, one efficient way of filling potholes that will help. And with the hedge cutting the responsibility is firmly with the landowner, there's no question about that. If there's issues around road safety we will come in and, in some cases, carry out hedge cutting but firmly with the landowner.

And in terms of rebuilding Ireland, the issue is almost always in relation to income, that people, there is a certain level of people need to have for

a loan on the rebuilding Ireland, it is based on the fact that no more than 35% of the household's income should be paid on the mortgage, that's what it is based on and we have to make that assessment and take the views of the housing agency and et cetera on board. In relation to Glendalough and Brittas Bay, they're run by way of franchises and you're right the money does go to environment section who look after the overall maintenance, we'll look at. I know parking general in Wicklow is up now preCovid-19, but I'll ask Brian how much of a hit we had on it, Brian do you have that to hand?

BRIAN: We're looking at a hit 400 to 500,000 on parking, as the Chief Executive said the figures in July was the first month, I suppose that brought us back up to normal preCovid-19 levels. So, we would be hopeful that will continue until the end of the year. However, that 4-500,000 is lost income that will not be recovered, we have as part of an overall report that's been sent in to head of finance association, covering all 31 local authorities, we've made a case to the department and deeper in relation to that. So, we're still

awaiting news on that front.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Brian.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks Chairman and thanks Chief Executive for your report. There's two things, first of all I welcome the funding for roads, the rush funding that went through announced a couple of weeks ago, in particular for Stratford, Hollywood and Dunlavin, at one point I'd like to make about it is, I believe one of the conditions is that the money is spent by the end of November, and I think that's completely impractical. Could we lobby to have that extended to the springtime because, the contractors are all been inundated to contracts and it wouldn't be physical to have that work done, and it would be an absolute shame that bonus money that we received for improving roads in the county and particularly main streets that wasn't, if that wasn't spent it would be a crying shame and I'm sure the intention of Government is not that the money would be lost due to an unrealistic time constraint. Secondly, just on restart grants, I believe there is still further grants with closing dates at the end of September.

I wonder, could they be publicised as much as possible because a lot of businesses are not aware of them, thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Edward Timmins.

CLLR MULLEN: 32 thank you. Thanks, Cathaoirleach for the report as usual.

Just a few quick questions, just the status of the west Wicklow swimming pool project, the site identification process for that. I think hopefully this is some moves identifying the appropriate site for that. And I'd like to thank the staff or the districts in particular and engineers in assisting meeting with some of the schools and attempts to reopen after the Covid-19 lockdown. But, as you may be aware, there's been a difficulty in Baltinglass with the traffic school warden not being able to continue at short notice and therefore we have no traffic warden in Baltinglass where we have two, large primary school and large secondary school and primary road going into the town. I know there their recruitment process has started but there's probably an interim period there that could stretch out so I'm

wondering if we could try and be flexible in achieving the safest possible circumstances for the road crossing to allow the schools to function. Thank you very much Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr John Mullen,

CLLR FORTUNE: Thanks, thanks Chief Executive for your report. As usual it is very, very detailed. Can I first of all say well done to all of the staff in the council for all the great work they've done over the last number of months and continue to do in a very difficult period for us all. I have a number of questions to Cathaoirleach so you might bear with me. I believe we need to reintroduce a sect meeting because it is not fair to the report, we get from the CEO to be racing through it as fast as we do. I think it merits a two-hour meeting to have a proper discussion so I ask that would be considered.

The other question I have is have we actually paid anything out yet on the restart grants?

And then under the 3.3 million allocation with NTA, is it time to review this, or is it starting to look like an exercise?

Because there's a lot of footpaths that need to be

done in different villages, including my own village, and I think they need to be starting to get prioritised because it is very important to the residents living in those areas. On the housing situation, I think the housing section are doing an excellent job under very difficult conditions. But I would ask that I think single men and separated fathers need to get a better crack of the whip, maybe more considered, consideration, now you might argue they do, but, I have a number of them on to me recently and they're in dire straits, so I would ask that might get some reviewing. Also, on the housing improvement adaptation grants, I notice that there's no budget for 2020. So, I'm just wondering what the story is there, and why that is the case?

And on page 18, I'm wondering can we get it, is it possible that we could get a listing of all the funding programmes that are available, that could be sent out to, certainly I'd like it, sent out to all the members so we can look at each programme and look what is available and the detail of it. We tend to get it in hindsight or through a third party who are no not represented, so I'd ask for

that to be considered. And the planning infrastructure, I just think that we're starting maybe to put the cart before the horse, there is an area I'd like to discuss in detail but I don't think chair you would allow me to do it today so I'll speed on. I sense that, the way certain things are done and I am sure it is not intentional it is just the way the system works and I think the system need to be reviewed, but there does appear to me watching it from an organisation perspective that, unintentional undermining of the role of the elected representative. We tend to I won't use the - we tend to get that in lots of situation, that needs to be seriously reviewed, I know this is a problem in other local authorities as well. And I'm not sure what the members think about it, but I've got strong passionate views on it. I'm not annoyed over it by the way, but I am passionate. The Wicklow passport, interesting initiative, it is good to see, that's on the cards for a long time I think the person who probably through that in the pot three or four years ago was Martina Robinson. On the page 26, how are we integrating the climate action SPC committee, how is that now integrating

with the planning seen that it is so very important?
And I'll be as quick. This is what I mean, we do
need a meeting to discuss these things properly.
I propose on planning, that we should have a members
committee that meets with planning I know we have
a SPC, but I think we need a grouping in addition
to that, that specifically looks at planning just
to make sure there's consistency, because you tend
to find sometimes someone looking for a house,
albeit and even though it is in a town, seem to have
a lot more difficulty than a developer coming in
with a hundred plus houses.

And also, on planning, planning enforcement, I did
look to have a special meeting on this chair but
I know time doesn't allow it but it is in the CEO's
report and I would, I don't think it is good enough
to discuss it with SPC, I'd like to discuss it in
a full council because we feed to have a full
procedure in my opinion dealing with
subcontractors, builders getting permission and
then subcontracting on to someone else to build the
houses, I'm racing this and it doesn't suit me.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I understand where you're coming
from, but I need to move on.

>>: Here we are today, I don't like the way we're running.

CLLR FORTUNE: I'm not finished.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Time. Can you be quickly please.

CLLR FORTUNE: You're using up my time now. Also, on the Whites remediation project, there was references to the judgment of Mr Justice Humphries, could we get a copy of that and what's the cost and who pays for it, Chair. I'm confused at this stage because I'll leave it at that, but it emphasises my opening point we need a proper meeting to discuss the CEOs report, he does it professionally and I would love on behalf of my constituents to be able to discuss it properly. There are loads of things we need to talk about. And I emphasise again, I do believe that public reps are not getting a fair crack.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you for that contribution.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Just in relation to the roads funding, it is a challenge to get that money spent by the end of the year there's no question of that, and we'll have a report on it at the meeting, we're trying do it by correct labour which is the quickest

rather than going to contractors, we're recruiting GOs, it is a challenge but we'll be doing our best. You made a good point maybe we should ask the department maybe can they be deferred until next year. In relation to restart grants, yeah, we've done a lot in terms of writing to people, and Chambers of Commerce advertising it, putting on the website but we'll try and get the message out, after the scheme changes, we'll get that out as well. On the west Wicklow swimming pool, the obvious site is around the Avonree we have a land zoned for community, residential, active open space and buffer beside the lake. We are preparing a town and village application for town and village grant scheme which will cost around 200,000 do a full assessment of the area zoned of active space and community that will identify exactly where the sporting facilities, will go, running track and swimming pool, once we've got that done it will be an important document because it will assist funding applications we will make in the future. That will go in at the end of this month. Baltinglass and terms of school traffic, Municipal District will look at that, and we'll try and fill

that post. Cllr Tom Fortune wouldn't recommend a second meeting at the moment, it is hard enough to get social distancing, but it is something Protocol Committee can look at. And, the in terms of footpaths, again, we'll certainly have a look at that, obviously it is part of the roadworks programme, schedule works, discretionary funding but there's more funding coming from the NTA and we can look at what we're prioritising what we put in those grants next year. Exact amount of the recertificate grants, I might ask Brian that in a minute, I don't have the exact minute. Single men and separated fathers, I get that there is a national policy now, that all local authorities will look at one bed units when we're building housing estates so that will cater for the single men and single women indeed. But it is just when you have multiple bedrooms families have been on the waiting list, will get more points than the single men but the department have asked us to do a housing need assessment in terms of analysing our housing lists and they are in favour of building more one-off units. HTGD grants, we have our funding for this year, I might ask Jo to give exact

figure.

In relation to the Wicklow passport, again I agree, it's a good scheme, it is just starting up, a lot of interest in it, and retail units and various different towns et cetera so that's going to make a difference.

The climate action SPC, has got a presentation on the county development plan, so they will be feeding into that and climate action is a big part of the county development plan so there's always going to be a link between those two SPCs. And the issue of contractors and subcontracting, not necessarily a planning issue but something that the planning SPC can look at. And Whitestown regeneration, remediation plan should be ready by the end of November. That will go through consultation process between EPA National Parks and wildlife, brown field and we but the cost of it in terms of consultancy have been paid by the department. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

CLLR CRONIN: Thank you very much. Thanks for the presentation and also before I start I want to thank all the council staff for their work over the past

number of months and especially those working in the communities assisting with deliveries and I know they're continuing to do so, it is a huge help to people in the area.

I'd like to welcome the funding announced under the July stimulus package, it is nice to see towns and villages will benefit from this funding but I do think that we need to ensure we continue our work on rural roads, I know many of my councillor colleagues raise it had today but the issue of potholes is huge, especially around the rural areas of west Wicklow. Also, just on the funding that was announced it is great to see footpath in Hollywood receive funding, I hope the bus stop will continue to be a priority for the council, I know I've raised it on many occasions but we're still looking update on that. Do we have a date for the houses in Dunlavin, the turnkey development?

I know phase one have been allocated but we haven't got a date yet to allow people to move in.

And they were due to move in in March, then July and still don't have a date yet. I know there's people anxiously waiting to hear if they will be allocated a house on phase two.

CLLR GLENNON: I'd like to thank the Chief Executive for his report, and while I'm complaining about west Wicklow forgotten about, it is nice to see Hollywood is getting the footpath go ahead. The funds are there now from central governments so there's no reason why it can't proceed. And I understand that the agreement has been reached with the landowners. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the Corrigan family in Hollywood for their continued support towards the community. Dermot and Katy, and his parents Peter and Alice are continuously being asked for, to assist in the expansion and development of the community and I'd like them very much for their efforts. The same families in Hollywood are called upon on continuous basis, they're asked for land for the school, graveyard fat path and hopefully in the future, bus stop. I spoke to the Chief Executive and plans are well advanced in that way, and I hope that that comes together rather quickly.

West Wicklow, I still maintain is largely forgotten about when it comes to council advancing our causes. While we're pleased about Hollywood,

disappointed to see that project driven by Cllr Gerry O'Neill largely the footpath around Red Lane is taken off the list and not getting funding in this round, I would hope that is progressed in the future and supporting counsellor O'Neill in his efforts in that regard. It is over a year ago I mentioned the white line stops at the top of the Wicklow Gap, there is no white line, once you head west, you seem to forget about us, it is on the behind when it comes to support from the county. From the county council, and I'm going to end with by saying that the bridge in Baltinglass, the pedestrian bridge needs to be done, I understand a million euros in relation to the update of the town would incorporate the bridge across the River Slaney, it is urgent and dangerous to people having to cross as it is, thank you.

CLLR SCOTT: Thank you Cathaoirleach and thank you Chief Executive. As always, I agree with Cllr Tom Fortune it merits a lot more time to discuss it. I want to take the opportunity to thank the planning staff in particular, in the council who have been very generous, particularly myself as a first time

councillor dealing with CPD in providing training, answering phone calls and e-mails, so a big thank you to them. A couple of quick things on the report, just under pipeline schemes on page 8, the Three Trouts in Greystones, is listed as 40 units, and I was just wondering, what the overall capacity for units, is it the total number of units on the site?

And I was just wondering has the LDA been approached or has service sites funding for affordable houses been examined, if we could have an update on that, that would be great. And the second point was on page 34, on waste management, and Chief Executive you know I've been in touch with you before about the problem with litter in Greystones district, and it was getting to be a crisis point over the summer. It is a busy district at the best of time with visitors coming in from the cliff walk and obviously people are on staycations and staying put and the one man in van is not sufficient to deal with litter and the waste in the summer months particularly in our district and has been numerous complaints the whole summer over this from the public.

So just want to raise that again.

CLLR LEONARD: I'd like to thank the Chief Executive for the report as usual it is always very informative. In relation to the business restart, could we get a number of the eligible businesses and then compare to those who applied, maybe a breakdown of that. Social housing arrears, the 2.179 million, is there a plan in place to recoup that and maybe could my motion that is further down the agenda be part to implement the payment card. I would like to congratulate the passport, and she's been doing a great job to promote it for Wicklow tourism and in relation to the maritime areas in Arklow, I'd like to thank the Chief Executive and others involved in putting together the RDF plan for Arklow Harbour, that's very much appreciated. I'd like, if possible, to get a update on the report, or today on the coastal erosion, the funding application for coastal erosion and feasibility study that's been done with Iarnrod Eireann, in particular the north beach in Arklow and access to that.

That's very important. To get something done

there. and just lastly, the harbour master's assistant, last year, I think it was roughly around a year ago, I was it was confirmed that the harbour master's assistant would be kept, and about you it is a year later and we still haven't, that position hasn't been filled and I'd like an update on that as well please.

CLLR O'NEILL: It was just on three issues there if I could thank Cathaoirleach.

On the swimming pool for west Wicklow:

Blessington area, you know, is that to be built in the town or where is it going because I understand that if it would be the case it is outside the town it can't be alluded to in the account and development plan because we're not discussing the issue of the town plan, today.

So just want clarification on that, where is the swimming pool going?

Briefly now on another issue, housing, I'm concerned as a councillor for the last couple of year that there are now three new housing estates have planning permission, private developments, and it is 14 years now since we had any social

housing built in the town. And we notice 280 people on the housing list in the area, and I think it should be seriously looked at, it is a serious issue.

I know the issue with Irish Water, they got their permission a couple of years ago to upgrade but, upgrade the waste water treatment plant but, they have only informed me recently it will be 2022, before they go ahead, so we have, in Blessington, we have issues where planning permission is in place for housing but none can go ahead until they upgrade is in order. And also, concerning there, because up to a dozen local people have got planning permission to build one-off houses in the Blessington area, they've been granted permission by the local authority, but they again can't move on it, until this upgrade is in place. Just third one, I want to say well done to all the staff here on the Greenway and house moving, I know every effort has been made by Wicklow County Council to include people and the people of the area in consultations, but whatever again I want to express my disappointment that the ESB who are the main stakeholders here, they haven't engaged with

people. Only last week, a meeting was called which county council attended, but however, as I say the main stakeholder, ESB didn't bother. And just one other issue there on the Greenway if I could mention there, the link to Tulfarris I don't think that should a priority, that's a private enterprise and it is wrong we include private enterprise with public money. Go raibh maith agat.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

Cllr Avril Cronin, again we take on board what you're saying about the potholes it is ultimately a budgetary, but the jet patch Cher will help. Hollywood, we have engaged a consultant to look at the design, because obviously that's a decision for TIA, it is not a national road, but, by preparing this design and allaying their fears, we think when we submit this to them it will assist in the decision-making process. I might ask Joe to comment on the exact date for Dunlavin and pipeline for Greystones, and if you wouldn't mind, I'll come back to that in a second. In relation to Hollywood footpath, I agree, it is great to get that funding and you know, there will be more NTA schemes in the coming years, so we need to identify what we want

for that.

The footpath around Red Lane and white line of the Wicklow gap, we will take that up with Municipal District. The bridge in Baltinglass, worthwhile project and we should take that to Part 8 stage and have it ready to apply for funding, there's a lot of money spent on Baltinglass from the RDF, but we should keep that in mind as well.

Terms of Cllr Lourda Scott, the waste management, yeah, it is something we'll look at in terms of Greystones, but, a lot of it is due to behaviour and behaviour of visitors and locals that you know, we saw issues where people were buying pizzas, putting it into the waste bins, and there's certainly element of enforcement required, we put extra enforcements and that did help. One man in a van, working every day, clearing out litter bins, you would imagine would be enough but it is something, it is more than the amount of litter bins and the clearing of them, there's personal behaviour we need to look at as well. But something we'll look at between now and next summer. Cllr Peir Leonard, details in relation to restart Grant School we will look at that,

arrears, we'll try everything in terms of direct debit, household budget, we have collectors, we seem to be getting there, but there were changes, rent review, and we had Covid-19 but we will be working on that. RDF for Arklow Harbour, yes, we should keep pushing that one, it is gone in the housing planning of local government now, but we will wait and see what comes up on that. Harbour master, that filling of that post is with our HR recruitment section, things have slowed up because of Covid-19 but it is on the list. The coastal erosion, we should have that shortly as soon as we get that we'll circulate it to members.

Cllr Gerry O'Neill in relation to the swimming pool, what we're doing at the moment, is looking at the lands we own and comprehensive master plan for all sports, it doesn't have to go through the county development plan process, that land is zoned for active open space and community and we'll look at that the best way using that in terms of swimming pool, running track, and playing field, et cetera. Just in relation to the Greenway and ESB, yeah, certainly, now they're committed, there's no question about that, 100% committed but need to be

involved in the process, and the link to full ferries, we'll have a look at it, the whole thing is about tourism and that's key part but that's something we'll have a look at. Thanks.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Chief Executive. One more I missed, Cllr Mary Kavanagh.

CLLR KAVANAGH: Yeah, this is just to get back to the issue of parking. Especially in relation to Wicklow. We pay probably the highest charges in the county.

In comparison to the other Municipal Districts. And yet the two biggest funding receipts don't come to us. And I know you've said you'll look at it, but I'm wondering what the possibility is of doing an exercise to do a proportional ratio of the work carried out by Wicklow Municipal District, versus the work carried out by the environment section and political the receipts accordingly so that both sections will receive something. I think it is very unfair that we're charged the highest amount in the county and yet we lose the two biggest funding streams completely and I think we should get some kind of proportional payback.

to the Municipal District because there's a lot of work we need do in the town with regards to all kinds of things, and it would certainly help. So instead of just looking at it, can you look at it from the point of view of trying to split the cost carried out, costs incurred by the Municipal District versus the environment section.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: OK thanks Cathaoirleach.

Yeah, we'll have a look at that, it is operated on a franchise basis but we'll certainly, that's a good session suggestion, we will do analysis on it and come back to you. One or two for Joe Lane.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We're fine.

JOE LANE: OK. Three questions, Dunlavin, this isn't enough scheme it is improved housing body turnkey so we're just, the last information we've been given quarter 4 this year so we're confident it will be Q4 and actively engaging with the developer and improving housing body to complete phase one and two. Three Trouts, I think the question particularly was can it be improved housing body, can it be social housing and affordable. No, that scheme particularly was

purchased for social housing. The current service sites fund which is the grant scheme for to aid affordable schemes is fully for infrastructure only and doesn't include land cost and there's people familiar with that scheme, there's a strong land cost there in the 41 units, the department will allow us to get the return back on that land. But that particular one was earmarked for social housing. Blessington: As elected members are aware; it was included as PP3 included circa units included in that site which will get rid of the pent-up demand. I have been, I'm involved with the PPB scheme at national level and the planning and the scheme development will not be delayed 2022, they're running in parallel, and everyone accepted the scheme that the scheme by the scheme is ready the sewerage scheme should be in place. We have joint engineering in lots of areas, we have advertisement for turnkeys where we ask developers if they have capacity to want to discuss where some of their development could be solid to the local authority to deal with social housing, a people are familiar in two areas in particular, this is provided early supply of units and can be a great

way to supply augment around supply. So, we have issued those ads if anybody is aware, you can come back to me and a number of members have.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Perhaps the statistics on the restart grants, Brian would you circulate them would you.

CLLR O'BRIEN: I have a new number here, just on the initial restart grant, we had 11,056 applications and paid out 4 million in grants to businesses. As you're probably aware, there's now a restart plus grant scheme where the criteria have changed, the minimum grant has been increased from 2,000 to 4,000 and maximum has been increased from 10,000 to 235,000. We've had a get that in number of software changes to process those applications but to date we've received over 1,300 on the new restart plus grant scheme, and they're to a value of 5.2 million, and will be commencing payment this week in relation to those new applications..

As regards Cllr Peir Leonard had a query regarding eligible businesses, we have over 3,500 rate payers so that's a good guide as regards knowing exactly eligible, it depends on the businesses and how much

they've been impacted by Covid-19. The criteria, only allows businesses that have had their turnover reduced by 235% or more, to apply and they also must commit to retain staff are on the TWSSS so two strict criteria that, so we wouldn't know how many are eligible until they apply. As a guide of all rate payers, he was 3,500, thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I'm going to move on to item number nine. To receive a presentation: Local Property Tax Funding - Mr Brian Gleeson, Head of Finance. At this at that stage I would also like to acknowledge and welcome Deputy Stephen Matthews who have taken time out for this presentation, it is great to see our former colleague back with?

BRIAN: I wanted to give an overview of the property tax model and how it works, outline the proposals, on local property tax was included in the programme for Government and highlight Wicklow's baseline figure and how it impacts on our current and future funding.

In relation to the programme for Government, you're probably aware there was a number of recommendations, included in it.

In relation to local property tax specifically all monies collected locally will be retained in the county. And the impact of that, would be annual national equalisation fund, which was used to supplement counties whose LPT funding was below the previous level received under general purpose grant scheme that would be paid by the executor as opposed to each county giving up 20%. Another, proposal a programme for Government was inclusion of new builds, since 2013, which are currently exempt from paying local property tax.

Unfortunately, the recommendations, require legislative changes, to be put in by the department of finance and additional funding from Deeper to implement the proposals. The end result in 2021, is that there's no changes to the LPT model or allocation to local authorities.

To explain the local property tax baseline, this represents the minimum amount of funding provided to a local authority, from the local property tax. It represents the previous level of funding received by the local authority under the general-purpose grant scheme.

Those local authorities with a surplus funding over

and above their baseline are required to self-fund services, in the housing capital area, there be replacing central Government funding. In 2020, 1.7 million from funding from Wicklow, local property tax was earmarked from this self-funding of housing. The Wicklow County Council baseline of 8.5 million is based on historical data, and not current information following major population changes over the last 10-15 years. The local baseline, there was an actual local government funding review, which included a review of the baseline and that was undertaken in 2018.

Led by the Department of Finance in order to identify key indicators for determining updated baseline levels for local authorities, these indicators included population, population increases, area, density, and the level of commercial rates income in a county.

You were probably aware a formal paper was submitted by Wicklow County Council to the department supporting the strong case for increasing the baseline figure for Wicklow.

The end result I suppose, of the baseline situation is unless the baseline is adjusted the net

financial benefit to Wicklow County Council arising from the proposed elimination of equalisation is actually zero and the net financial benefit to Wicklow County Council, from the inclusion of these new builds which we've spoken about will be minimal.

Just to give a bit more detail on that: The existing CSO, statistics in relation to new builds, has approximately 3,500 new builds completed in Wicklow from 2013 to Q2 in 2020, the average LPT payment in Wicklow paid 2020, was approximately 350, in a would generate additional income of 1.2 million the proposed equalisation for Wicklow in 2021, is 3.5 million therefore the gross financial impact of these programme for Government proposals for Wicklow County Council is 4.7 million.

However, due to this situation with regard to the historical baseline that's in place for Wicklow, the net financial benefit will only be 240,000 to the bottom line.

I'll go through the detail of the model, and explain and show you exactly why that is the case. This is the current situation, this year, there's 17.3 million has been allocated to Wicklow, based on the

receipts for local property tax within the county. 20% goes into the national equalisation fund, nearly 355 million, that reduced to 13.8 million, compared to baseline of 8.5 million which shows a surplus of 5.3 million of the surplus it is split between what Wicklow can retain for its own use, which is the net discretionary income and amount to self-fund housing capital, project.

The surplus, discretionary income is calculated, you can see from the screen there, it is 20% of the total funding so it is 20% of the 17.3 million and that comes to 3.5 so the 3.5 gives 1.8 million for self-funding, so there's approximately 12 million available to the Wicklow County Council revenue budget, to spend on our own resources. The rest of it goes to the self-funding and to the equalisation fund.

If I move on to scenario two: It shows the proposed situation with zero per cent, or of equalisation where it is eliminated, here we have the same 127.3 million is allocation, obviously now there's no amount has been allocated, or removed for the national equalisation fund so we retain 17.3 million. However, our baseline is unchanged, of

8.5, and that means our surplus has now increased from 5.3, up to 8.7.

Given that the net discretionary income is still 20% of the total allocation, which is 3.5, it means now the self-funding element has increased by the same amount of equalisation. It has gone from 1.8 million to 1.3 million which leaves bottom line of 12 million unchanged.

the last scenario, is, includes zero per cent equalisation and also the addition of new properties, which we said were about 3,500 worth 1.2 million in this example we've increased 100% allocation, from 17.3 million up to 18.5 million. Zero taken off for equalisation so retain 8.5, baseline again remains unchanged. So now we see the surplus has jumped from 8.7, in this example, and now up to 9.95 million.

The net discretionary income has increased slightly by 240,000 because we're getting 20% now of 18.5, rather than 20% of 17.3, so that's slightly gone up to 3.7 million. And surplus is increased from 5.3, up to 6.2, for self-funding, and the end result of that is that the retained amount in the revenue budget is 12.24 million, increase as I said

earlier of 240,000, in comparison to the other examples. So, where does that leave us?

I suppose following the publication of the programme for Government I wrote directly to the department highlighting this anomaly and requesting the baseline to be revised.

It was pointed out that a number of the changes required additional funding from DEPA and legislative changes from Department of Finance, CCMA financial committee which I'm a member included this issue, and official submission to LGMA of the financial impact of the programme for Government. But, I believe what we really need now is political support and political pressure in relation to this, particular situation to ensure Wicklow County Council, its baseline is adjusted to an appropriate and fair level, so we generate and we retain an appropriate level of the LPT.

So, I suppose, for information purposes I know people would have been aware of the programme for Government and inclusion of the local property tax recommendations and maybe weren't aware of the time line involved, and whether that would impact on budget 2021, so, I can't confirm based on the

reasons I've outlined in relation to legislation, that the 2021, allocation will remain unchanged. So, that will have to be taken into account, in our LPT meeting in two weeks' time. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Brian. As I watched that presentation, Brian it is the same presentation with the same two years, we have the same money, same problems and same challenges.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks Brian. That's real accounting trickery as I'm sure you recognise. The problem there is they're using the same fund for housing figure as a formula, self-fund for housing should be a fixed figure, so ever are I time our total property tax income goes up funding for housing goes up and reduces the total of the discretionary amount. So total discretion amount stays the same, no matter how much money we get on property tax the way the formula is set up, it is absolutely nuts that the figure for self-funding for housing increases I think there in your example, I just saw the figures for the first time, increased by three million from first scenario to third scenario. So we then have to come up with

three or 3.5 or 4 million on money for self-funding for housing, which means that, is that ultimately mean you get less money from the department for housing, you're digging into your own pot for 4 million and the way it is set up, if you had 30 million in property tax, they'd up your self-funding to housing to 15 million so you'd still end up with the same. So, the way the formula set up it is a joke actually. It means no matter how much property tax you get, they'll throw it back that you have to use a big chunk for self-funding for housing, but discretionary money stays the same. Your example we went up by 4 million, if you were allow today keep the 3.5 million, you were allowed to keep that or 20% and allowed to keep 1.2 million extra for the extra properties, that's what, 4.7 million and you end up with only 250,000, or extra, 240,000 extra, on an extra income of 4.5 million, sure that makes no sense at all. The way it set up is flawed and needs to be changed.

CLLR BEHAN: Thank you Cathaoirleach.

Cllr Edward Timmins is a very wise man and accountant on top of that, and I think he's

described this as an accountancy trick and there's no doubt that's exactly what it is, not perpetuated by the, or perpetrated by the staff of the council, but by successive governments and Government officials.

And to add insult to injury, even if you add in the houses that have not been paying property tax since 2013, we're still not going to benefit.

So, it is an outrage that this happens, year after year, and what's even more outrageous is that we can't provide extra services over and above what we used to be able to provide when we got the support grant. Although people's pockets are emptied to pay for this tax, we're not getting resource to actually make a real difference to people where they live.

And the other point I'd make to members is we're going to be faced in two weeks ago, this is being set up today to give us a certain message, it is a truthful message, but, make no mistake, we're being set up to be asked to consider another increase in the property tax next year.

And last year we were told it was an exceptional year, on that occasion that there was an

exceptional situation, because of lack of funding over insurance refunds, I can't remember the exact detail and we were told this was a once-off.

So, we'll wait and see what comes before us now in a fortnight, but I suspect members are going to be asked again to go along with this complete fraud on the taxpayers of County Wicklow. And I'm certainly not going to go along with it and I'm glad deputy Matthews is with us, he is familiar with this argument and he's now on a congratulate him I see him today he is appointed as Chairman of the Dail committee on housing and look forward to his contribution on that committee.

But I would ask Deputy Matthews to take back the message to colleagues in Government that we in Wicklow County Council are not going to accept this continual punishment for the people we represent because we live on the outskirts of county Dublin.

CLLR FITZGERALD: I think the microphone is out of synch. Just this is a con job. To be honest about it, I took the opportunity on Friday to speak to Michael McGready the minister and asked him the question about the equalisation fund, the

baseline, the houses since 2013 that have paid no property tax and, that's the minister for finance, won't be making any changes. The changes will come in 2022. The fact is you'll probably get more money one way and go out the other. I have plenty of examples in Arklow strict where you have one person living, husband or wife is no longer there, huge houses, paying huge property tax, and when I see where the 20%, of our equalisation fund goes, the counties that were property prices are probably 50-60% of price of houses, price of houses here in Wicklow, it is absolutely disgusting, and I know there has been a meeting on it, in Government, and it looks to me that is going to stay the same, whereas counsellor Timmins says the more we get the more is taken off us. We have had seven years now of people not paying property tax who should have been paying property tax and we have equalisation fund going to counties that are let's say wealthier than this county so I think you're quite right Chairman we need to use political pressure to get this changed, but in saying that I wouldn't be too hopeful.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

CLLR SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

Just to point out that, and I'm sure most members are aware, that this is unfair tax. It was unfair tax when it was introduced all those years ago and it is still an unfair tax today.

Of the 3,500 people who don't pay anything this this county a lot of members here last year would have felt that was going to be changed and unfortunately we've been told today it is not and I understand from your perspective as head of finance with you' not relaying the message so we won't shoot the messenger today but the reality is that there's under 100,000 people who haven't put their shoulder to the wheel since 2013 nationally, and we have people in this county who inherited family homes that was in their family for generations, who are being hit with a property tax. We have people sitting in houses that are valued up to a million euros, who have never paid one red cent in local property tax. This is a national scandal.

And we know that they keep changing the goalposts in regard to the equalisation fund. Members here, over many years raised the point that we have

counties who actually reduce their local port tax in their own county and some of the money raised here in County Wicklow was shifted off to them to help them put in their services which is an absolute shame on people at national level. I felt this would change, and unfortunately to hear this news today is despicable on people hit out there, potentially an increase in the local property tax and I certainly won't be supporting it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members would it be fair if I said we're all on the same hymn sheet here. And we need to get to the county development plan, we have a document from Brian, it is the same we got last year, we understand it, we're back here in two weeks and would you mind if we moved on and we moved to the county development plan. Cllr Tom Fortune I know you want to get in, we won't get to the county development plan if we don't. You can discuss it, but we need to get to the county development plan.

CLLR FORTUNE: Can I make a ten-second comment. We need to get the five TDs in the room with us, there's no point, one or two coming in, we need them all here because, they need to stand up and be

counted on this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Cllr Tom Fortune and actually we did invite our five TDs here and we only have deputy Matthews who did turn up. So, would you mind if I moved on because I do need to get to the county development man. Thanks members, I do appreciate your co-operation on this. Item on ten.

MS GALLAGHER: Can we do nine to set the date for the RPT.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Set a date for the LPT. Monday 21st of September, at 2pm.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr John Snell and Cllr Irene Winters. All in favour?

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Item number eleven is to consider the First Chief Executive's Report (previously issued) prepared under Section 11 (4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) regarding the review of the County Development Plan and to consider any directions regarding the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan

2021-2027 proposed by the members under Section 11(4) (d) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). so I would welcome Sorcha here and before you come in, thank you yourself and Bernie and all the work you did on this and the time, but I'd like to acknowledge all the work the members put in and the time they put into it, in relation to sending in questions and that. So, I will hand over to you?

SORCHA: Thank you. Thank you members, we're here today to discuss the first Chief Executive's report prepared for the review of the county development plan, thank you all for inputs over the last few weeks, and we'll get to them just after my presentation so I'll move as quickly as I can. The planning process move on to the next slide please.

Thank you. We've completed our first stage public consultation which as you know started towards the end of last year. And we had a number of public meetings and prepared an issues paper on our website that was publicised in all our forums and advocacy 156 submissions which is a 50% on increase on the previous plan, they are getting more complex

as people get interested if planning and instead of maybe addressing one or two issues a lot would address multiple issues so they were quite complex as some of you saw when you read them. Key issues that came up were climate change transport and place making in the past development plans we've had submissions for example with regard to housing, and there was a bit of a sea-change this time around so people are more interested in infrastructure and services and proving their communities than just the delivery of new housing.

The first Chief Executive's report was issued to you on the 12th of June and that concluded 128 recommendations with regard to policy and objectives and proposed new course strategy.

We've held over 20, probably more like 25-30 workshops with councillors in various configurations, Covid-19 obviously caused a bit of a problem but we got to speak to all of you in either groups or individually. So after today the Chief Executive has to continue to produce a draft development plan which we submitted to you the members in due course, it will be a proposed draft plan and you will have to adopt that as a draft plan

before it goes on public display.

All of the objectives in the current development plan will be reviewed and amended and updated as necessary particularly in accordance with NPF, and ministerial guidelines so some of have you come to myself and the team about some ideas and some are already addressed in the development plan but we will update them and approve them and integrate ideas where possible. Unless the Chief Executive signalled all provisions will remain in the plan. So, one of the key things in the Chief Executive's report is proposed new course strategy and that's probably the area where you have come to us the most over the last few weeks.

And most of you know at this stage our new population on housing target have come directly from the national planning framework and you have obligation to prepare a plan consistent with the national planning framework and the regional plan. In terms of the population targets, County Wicklow has been allocated a population target for 2031, at the upper end of the range which is 164,000 and those not familiar with the current development plan the current population target for the county

is actually 178,000 for 2028. So, the new figures give a lower population target and over a longer period.

Through, intensive lobbying and work from our members on the Regional Assembly, we've managed to achieve an extra allocation on top of that for Bray, and that basically comes out of the Dublin pot of population growth because Bray is in the metropolitan area. And that population growth has to go to Bray, it can't be spread out over any other town it is earmarked for Bray only. So, that would effectively bring our 2031 upper end figure to 173,500.

That translates to housing numbers, which is on the bottom end of the table there, and effectively means a growth in housing between 2016 and 2031 of 15,368 houses so that plan is headline figure and further tables you would have seen in the Chief Executive's report Rae late back to that number, 15,368.

The regional plan requires, and the national plan require us to look at all of our towns and evaluate them and look where the population and housing growth is going to occur. And the approach has

been lifted directly from the regional plan which set out an asset-based test which is a number of variables and pieces of data, that have to be collected for each and every settlement to evaluate whether it has the capacity to grow and what kind of level of growth. So the assessment criteria include scale, function, human capital, place making, enterprise connectively environment and infrastructure and as part of the report, one of the document was you will see, that you've seen is called the Asset Based Assessment, every town over 1500 has gone through that assess., the reason why 1500 is taken is the CSO sets 1500 as definition of an urban settlement.

And the planning act also, categorised towns of 1500 or under as a smaller subset of a town that you treat differently than the bigger towns. So, based on that, the data that he is in the asset-based assessment, we proposed a new settlement hierarchy, which is on the next slide. I know this is hard to see but you have all them circulated with the presentation. This document is in the Chief Executive's report you got last June.

So, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, the regional plan has already identified Bray and Wicklow Rathnew as our key towns, and that's a definition conferred by the regional plan.

They've been identified following an assessment of our towns by the Regional Assembly.

Only towns below those towns within your gift to set into a new hierarchy. So, we're recommending that level three and hierarchy should comprise larger towns of Arklow, Greystones and Blessington.

Greystones obviously is Greystones and Delgany. Level four in the hierarchy then, are the towns between 1500 and 5,000 which are Baltinglass, Enniskerry, Kilcoole and Rathnew and Newtown. The lower part of the table which is the smaller towns so 1500 or less, and going down to the rural areas, level five we're recommending Ashford, Aughrim, Carnew and Dunn Levin and Tinahely in one and Avoca, Dunard, Kilmac, Roundwood and Shillelagh, below we have tiers of villages that you are familiar with. So, we have our new recommended settlement hierarchy so now that we have that we should allocate growth to each of those towns.

And, the key determining factors of level of housing growth in each town is headline figure from earlier which was nearly 15,000 units but we have a cap of 30% set by the national planning framework that no town other than towns designated as key towns, can grow than more than 30%, so based on that 30% being a limiting factor we have done our best to allocate growth around the county, we've made a recommendation to how that would be best done. Again, apologies if the numbers aren't clear but it is in the Chief Executive's report. You will see some towns have overshot the 30%, limit since 2016, and nevertheless we have still recommended some additional growth be allowed in those towns because we can't have a zero growth rate anywhere, because there will be good infill town centre-type development we want to be able to grant permission for but we have to strictly limit that, if the town has overshot its 30% cap.

At this stage then the Chief Executive will proceed to prepare develop plan in courts with his recommendations and his proposed core strategy but you have the opportunity to issue directions now for example, you would like to see amendment to one

of his recommended policies or if there was a particular policy you were unhappy with, this is your opportunity to issue your proposals to the Chief Executive. But ultimately the Chief Executive has to proceed to have a draft development plan in RCS, and ministerial directions, so what the planning access is following consideration with first Chief Executive's report, members applying authority may issue direction, there's no obligation for you to do, regarding the preparation of the plan. They should be strategic in nature and take account of strategy obligations of the local authority. In issuing directions, members restricted to have sustainable development of the area. A number of you would have come to me with suggestion that is may well be good suggestions but may not be strategic in nature and we've advised you of that, but we will work with you to integrate your suggestions, wherever possible but might not be of this particular meeting but maybe for subsequent meetings and we will continue to work with you over the next period to integrate those suggestions as we go along.

The next stage of the plan are like I said to actually prepare and propose draft plan to submit back to you the members, we would be hopeful to get to you before the end of the year and then you have time to consider that proposed draft plan and come back to a council meeting next spring and adopt that as a draft plan. At that meeting it will also be open to you to make further amendment if you wish, but you will have a draft plan in front so it is easier if you want precise changes, after you adopt a draft plan it goes on public display and you will be familiar with the process that follows. Public submissions, another Chief Executive's report, after that, it is possible to adopt a plan or amend the plan, if you wish to make amendments at that stage there's another public display period and Chief Executive's report so we're looking at towards the end of next year or early the following year before a plan is adopted.

So that's the presentation for you and I understand that the number of you do have proposed directions, that you'd like to submit to the meeting so, Cathaoirleach I'll hand back to you to take it from there if you wish.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Sorcha and thank you for the presentation. Members that have directions, I'll take them now.

Cllr John Mullen. Sorry ...

Are we taking them in order, we should take them in order.

>>: Yes a number of members have submitted directions and we've packaged them together and sent them back around to everybody there's a document you all received and they're all in number according to I suppose where they would appear in the development plan so those relating to score strategy would be first and then moves-to-on to other issues like employment or design standards. So, if you want to follow the numbering system that's in the document, that will work yeah.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Direction number one, has been proposed by Cllr Fitzgerald, Cllr Glennon, Cllr Annesley..

CLLR FITZGERALD: Will propose this, Cllr John Mullen is it?

CLLR MULLEN: And if I could speak just as well one or two related, I know they're different ones, but

I want to speak to both of them rather than hold up the meeting every time because I know my name appears a few times, unfortunately. But it does. First of all, I would like to thank Sorcha and forward planning team.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Can we get straight to rather than thanking everybody because we don't have the time.

CLLR MULLEN: It was important because as a new councillor it was hard to understand that process, it is very hard for us as elected representatives and I refer to Cllr Tom Fortune's comment earlier, what is the function of a local representative? This plan is a very important plan, it lasts for six years.

And yet when the figures were produced and I know the planners are sometimes acting with, in my view with their hands tied behind their back because this came from a national framework which is deeply conversation of itself and drives in the face in my view of local government and the purpose of local government which is to allow the people in the towns and villages of all of County Wicklow to develop. And Cathaoirleach, that's why I did want to thank the planning staff because I'm not blaming them.

They've patiently taken me will you this at several meetings, e-mails and conversations.

By I still come to the conclusion that the figures published basically tell one tale and that is development in this county will happen in north Wicklow, and it won't happen anywhere else.

And there will not be a degree of flexibility to ensure, particularly when it comes to housing and housing crisis, that we actually deliver housing units at the end of the plan rather than theatrical figures. Now figures were produced for the growth of various towns in Wicklow. And because those figures were produced and are published, our tacit agreement is on them, and I can't agree to figures which tell that many towns and villages in this county will not be able to deliver houses, will not be able to deliver or argue for the waste water infrastructure or road indicators to measure improvements, that they deserve anyway because one will follow the other.

Infrastructure will follow housing development. Housing development will be tied down in this plan on the figures that have been produced here and the essence and I know we're at the start of the plan

and there's a will long way to go, I want to flag it now in front of this chamber today because this is the first time we've had this process and I know Covid-19 makes this more complicated with the fact we could have meetings upon meetings about this plan because it is so important in my view, but, certain towns in this county are going to get development out of this plan and others, vast majority in this county is going to be ignored and that's unacceptable. So what we're trying to build in with our proposals as a group, and my second one which I'm willing to drop if the first one is accommodated, is that we should have flexibility to ensure that we deliver housing, for the 10,700 in total can be delivered wherever they are practically achievable.

Rather than working out of targets that are not achievable.

And that's the essence of what, without getting into it too long and I accept what you're saying that you have an obligation to do what you have to do.

But as elected reps we have a role too and one of the county developments plans, if it is writ been

I the national Government and department, owe officials up there, be honest about it. But don't expect us to rubber stamp it.

And say it is a county development plan which we have all sanctioned because at the moment, based on these figures it couldn't be.

I'd like to conclude on that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr John Mullen.

Sorcha do you want to reply to that, that's a proposal from the Fianna Fail group, and we need a seconder so it will be seconded by the same Fianna Fail group.

MS GALLAGHER: Do you have a seconder.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Group is seconder on that as well.

CLLR FITZGERALD: Could we continue on and come back to Sorcha what time is it over at.

CATHAOIRLEACH: 4pm. Cllr John Mullen ...

MS GALLAGHER: Are we still on number one, is that agreed?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Is that agreed?

MS GALLAGHER: Agreeable with that?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: On number one there, I think

Sorcha referred to Planning and Development Act 2000 which deals with issue of directions, at this point in time our members may issue one, but you have to consistent with the strategy and take into account statutory obligations of local authority and relevant policies and objectives the Government to the minister and then are issued a clear directive, not to review wind energy strategy at this stage so that, I don't think we can run with that one.

CATHAOIRLEACH: If we take number one on its own then Cllr John Mullen, is that fine and then go to number two?

So, we have a proposal for number one. And seconded by the same group. So, do I need to put that to a vote them?

MS GALLAGHER: I'm not sure how we're going to do this, is it something we're going to comment on and move on?

SORCHA: Yeah, Cathaoirleach, if you want me to come in there, I suppose, just in response to Cllr John Mullen's point, you're absolutely right that

certain matters have been taken out of our hands, via the new MPV particularly. Which when it was first produced we were told it wouldn't be prescriptive with regard to housing numbers it would be qualitative we would look at our places and look how they should grow based on characteristics, and then six months later, a companion document was published with that, called MP F sorrowed map which set target so there was inherent contradiction there, we have targets and they're Government policy so Chief Executive will prepare a development plan that complies with that policy, he also has to prepare planning with planning act which requires him to have score strategy, and core strategy which is how it is set out in the act has to set out population and housing targets, for each settlement and they can't be fluid, they can't be between 100 and 500 houses in Baltinglass, they have to be a particular number. How of course there isn't going to be a slavish adherence that once if the target is a hundred houses, once 101 comes along everything is refused but there has to be a structure to core strategy whereby the numbers that are targeted for different

places, add up generally to the target that we're given for the county. Otherwise we're just letting the market and developers dictate our growth strategy and you suggested we should allow development to happen, where there's demand or where people want it to happen or maybe there's services, but that's not a structured approach. Essentially, we would be letting someone else lead us into development strategy and develop and landowners leading us into a place where it is led by them and we don't have control over it anymore. So, the whole thrust of the MP F is we take control where the houses is going to be delivered not landowners or developers or the market, we decide, or you decide where the best locations are. And we shouldn't be looking at housing as being the only funding source for services, the whole idea of the MP F is that we allow using to occur where the services are already in situ or about to be provided or can be provided by quickly, that we don't wait for housing to be delivered with no services coming along with it and hoping we get development levies and hoping then the Department of Education build a school or NTA fund traffic improvement scheme.

That we look at places that have the infrastructure already to grow, and where places don't infrastructure, we don't target them. This phase for masses amount of development, we use this phase of development, this development plan to play catch-up on all the services that are missing in certain places, whether that be employment, road infrastructure, schools, and we slow down or moderate the house and growth in those places until we have catch-up on the services, and then next plan around if that catch up occurred, then that place can then become a place where new housing should be delivered. And that's a theme that's coming through, many, many of the public submissions that we got on the development plan, that people aren't opposed to housing being delivered, but, a lot of people's opinion it is delivered in places where the services aren't adequate and they want to see us and other agencies investing in the services now before we have a glut of new houses and places where the services are inadequate. So, if a town, if we're recommending a town should moderate its growth rate in this proposed core strategy, that doesn't mean the door is closed for housing growth

in that town forever, it means during the currency of the new development plan, we the council, and all the other agencies, need to work together and pool our resources to do that catch-up in that place, to improve the quality of life in that place, for the people who are already there and not be waiting for new development to provide that financing for new services. We have an obligation to the people who already live in our towns and live in our counties that are living in places with inadequate services, and this is supposed to be a period of catch-up and moderation and in the future we should be looking, new houses, significant new housing may come about in the future but this stage is for catch-up. And that's the theme of the NPF and that's what is coming through in the figures they're giving us. They want to see places, Wicklow, Meath, Kildare and Louth moderate housing growth because these are places that had a lot of housing growth but not investment in services. But that mightn't be the situation forever.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Shay Cullen.

CLLR CULLEN: Thanks Chairman. Just two questions, number one I think it is important to be clear on the core strategy settlement figures for everybody here because I'm not 100% on this. The total figure of 10,700, I suppose the first question, when does that figure come into play? The listen I have for asking that, is currently, we have a lot of planning permissions going through the system. If for example I'll use one in Ashford where there is a currently a planning permission with An Bord Pleanala for 133 houses but Ashford's figure for the next ten years up to 2031 is a hundred, so, if a planning permission gets for 133 gets the go-ahead, that figure is smashed, it is gone, so, I suppose the question for everybody to be clear here is, the 10,700, when does that come into play?

If those planning permissions that are in the system or will be granted before this development plan is operational, does that 10,700 figures reduce town accordingly with the planning permissions that have been granted?

Another example Roundwood has 48 live planning applications being granted and the target for the

next ten years is 50. So, am I right in saying in a, two houses can be built in Roundwood in the next ten years?

These are the type of figures that it is important that everybody is very clear on.

And just on the number one there, direction number one, I just want to move on to that. Again, if we vote to agree with number one, the initial response from the Chief Executive is the development plan itself cannot play a role in active land management as it is policy document. Active land management would be an action, activity to be carried out by the council officials and therefore would be an operational matter.

I want clear direction on this, if we vote to go against the CE, what is the repercussions for us as councillors.

Thank you.

CLLR MITCHELL: Thank you.

I don't see how we can vote for number one because, the superior authority is national Government and Eastern Midland Regional Authority handed us down a population number which is we're required to

allocate out in a very prescriptive form. I was on the Eastern Midland Regional Authority when this was discussed, and there was a great deal of haggling and argument with the department and everybody else about the prescriptive nature of these target and it was agreed in principle and has been achieved in practice that I don't know something like 10-15,000 population target was transferred from Dublin to Wicklow.

Because it was unrealistic the numbers that were there. But I don't see how we can actually agree with this, when we're told by the superior legislators that we can't.

As far as can I see the main reason, we're going to have to down-zone a lot of land in individual settlements, and the main reason for that as far as I can see is that the number of people per house, which has been assumed in the year 2031, is 20% different to what was assumed in the last development plan in 2015.

So, therefore, you need a lot less houses for the same number of people.

How, in 2015 I proposed that would be the case because I felt that the numbers in the plan were

unrealistic, and were leading to over zoning of land because the social change which is implied in the huge drop in numbers of people per house wasn't going to happen and the last census had shown even in fact more than that I thought that was the case. Unfortunately, the councillors didn't vote for what I proposed as being the target for the number of people per house and could be consequently there will be a lot more down-zoning of plan together with reduced targets coming down from above. So I really don't see how we can, how we're going to move forward against the superior authority of the national Government and the EMRA, which has decided this is the population target for Wicklow and we have to divide it up so I don't see how it can go ahead.

CLLR BLAKE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

Just a follow-up question to what Cllr Shay Cullen was saying in terms of Ashford and we did this put this point to the staff around meeting in Blessington in relation to Ashford because certainly Ashford in section five I think they are, that they will obviously take up the vast north of the 29% increase over the next number of years, so

we made a point of Ashford, are probably in the wrong category based what Councillor Cullen granted in Ashford so they will take up the vast majority of that, so can I ask, Sorcha is Ashford in the wrong category?

In that regard, because that will probably take up as I said again take up the vast majority of the 400 units part of section five of it.

SORCHA: Thank you Cathaoirleach.

Just with regard Cllr Shay Cullen's comment, this is the new county plan, it won't be adopted until 2022, but each stage we go through between now and then we're going to have to revise the figures, that are in those tables.

So, at the moment, we have this target of around 15,500, that's not changing. We've had approximately 5,000 houses and in the table that we circulated to you in June was 5,002 that have either been completed or commenced construction, since 2016. So that leaves you with 10,700 left to allocate out around the rest of the county.

Since we issued that report that number, 5022 increased by over a hundred and the next time we come back at Christmas and January with proposed

plan it could have changed by 500. There's a number of large developments say in Greystones that have permission for a couple of hundred houses that haven't commenced yet and if they were to commence between now and Christmas the 5022 could be 500, so, every time a house starts construction or estate starts construction, your 10,700 within your gift to allocate subject to certain principles reduces..

So, as we go through the plan, we will be producing more tables and there will be decisions will become more and more difficult.

Over the next 18 months but the figures don't kick in until the development plan is adopted. So, that's the simple answer to that. But related to that, Cllr Vincent Blake's point about Ashford maybe being in the wrong category because of all the houses proposed or granted, that's, just because there are landowners willing to bring land to the market or developers willing to apply to planning permission is not dictating factor where a settlement should be in the settlement hierarchy, Ashford is struggling with regard to certain services, for example we had submissions with

regard to school places, and there are other services that are under pressure in the town. Ashford is very limited public transport and car dependent and limit employment at the moment. So, it is not that there's pressure for housing that dictates where a town should be in the hierarchy, it what kind of place it is, and what services it has to support housing.

And that's the asset-based assessment that is set out in the regional plan.

Also, I point out Ashford is under 1500 in population, and that puts it in a certain category of type of town, as per the planning act, and the NPF and RSES, it mightn't be too far exceeding that in due course, but at the moment, it's only, around 1400 but so is Aughrim, so they're both the same size but different places what is happening in them. So, like I said, NPF is about a sea-change, mindset change about how we decide where development happens based on the services available and the place and type of place you want it to be, rather than just whether there are developers or landowners who see that as attractive place that people will buy houses in.

Cllr Derek Mitchell, yeah the figures change every cycle with regard to household size, so, when we prepare the last development plan 2016 we didn't have the benefit of the 2016 census figures so we were basing like predictions about household size what happened before that, and what was happening with average household size and the 2016 census was the first census in many decade where the average household size increased in this country. So, we're starting from a higher point, this plan round, but, the NPF have set I won't say a target household size it estimates household size will reduce to 2.5 by 2040 so that's our start points is 2016 census and end point is 2.5 in 2040, so we've imagined a linear progression declined to 2.5 and they're the figures we utilised, so every plan there's changes and figures, and changes this assumptions we use and there will be different outcomes as a result.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks, Cllr Joe Behan is next.

Just before I bring in Cllr Joe Behan I decided I would go until 4.00, that's within the gift of the Cathaoirleach and thinking of the amount of people

would have in the room so we haven't a vote on one, so we'll continue on, we are within our rights to go until 5, because we have to deal with this.

CLLR BEHAN: Thank you I think you're right and want to compliment Cllr John Mullen and others who spoke for identifying one of the major problems with the planning system in this country, which is that it has been handed down to public representatives by national civil servants.

And we, are basically here having our hands tied when it comes to deciding our development planning priorities for the people we represent in our county and a lot of the directions that are put down here today and a lot of work has gone into them by individual members is to try and ease the restrictions on rural housing in this county and while I come from Bray, and I welcome the fact that there will be further development in Bray, this should not be done at the expense of people living in rural parliaments of County Wicklow.

Now how we get around this conundrum I do not know but I thought there might be hope when the new programme for Government was introduced and launched, it was stated one of the plans in that

programme was a review of this entire national strategy. And I wonder to what extent we may end up having to change, somewhere along the way because the Government might decide to come up with a new plan, yet again.

But I personally will be supporting proposals that are made here today that eases the situation for rural dwellers we're living in unprecedented housing emergency in this country. We have many people who have land around this county where they could have one or two houses, maybe on their property with the advent of homeworking it doesn't necessarily mean there will be more traffic on the rural road, it might mean the caught quality of life would be better for our people and because of the fact we have one of the most restrictive regimes in the entire country, we should as public representatives have the opportunity to make our views known on this. And to have our views incorporated in the plan. Yet again, we are being told by the top table you can't do it. Your hands are tied, in this case it is because there's a national plan that tells us what he can with and can't do. We should resist this at every possible

opportunity, and certainly from the point of view proposals put here today I think they're very sensible and should be supported by all of us. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, there are a number of hands up and number of hands to go down, I have a proposal from Cllr John Mullen on behalf of the Fianna Fail group and it is seconded by the Fianna Fail group and Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, do you want to come back in or put it to a vote.

CLLR MULLEN: Again, I just want to come in quickly but I have a quote here from the national policy objective nine that local authorities, is not identified in policy 2a or 3 in this infrastructure maybe identified a 30% of more regional local planning stages subject to agreement at regional Metropolitan and or local authority as appropriate.

And in the rural, spatial plan, also allows the local authority I presume the members of the local authority to issue flexibility in regard to these measures. Well that's while I accept what you're

saying, the purpose of what is on the paper, is to tell people in rural Wicklow, that apart from being exceptionally difficult to build a home you won't be going to your nearest village either because your nearest village won't be building any homes either and that is simply unacceptable. That's not balanced planning, it is not accountable planning as regards the citizens of Wicklow and what we're trying to sorrow deuce at this stage is that to try and lobby for a degree of flexibility on the actual, I'm not saying where they should be delivered. It's your figures are saying where they're going to be delivered. And I'm saying that's unacceptable, that doesn't match the reality of what is potentially out there. If I have to formally push it to a vote, I will ask for a vote to be taken if that's appropriate.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We have a proposer and seconder, I put it to a vote Cllr John Mullen.

CLLR KAVANAGH: Would it be fair to take a vote at this stage when we don't know what other proposals might be on the table.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We can't, we have to take them as

they're in front of us.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: In relation to the numbers. As the plan develops and as more houses come on stream and they're built the table will change anyway because we now and a year's time if there's 200 houses built in Greystones we will adjust the figures because you have to have a certain amount of capacity in each why are to deal with locals so that figure will change as the thing goes on, and subsequently when the plan adopted in two years' time we will do a review, we are obliged to do a review of it and the figures. If that clarifies things.

CLLR MULLEN: Again, the text that we're putting down in my view and in the view of the other councillors who support it is allowing a degree of flexibility being issued here, so I can't see the problem in us, in that text that we propose being inserted in the plan. I don't think it is a breach of significant nature it allows flexibility to deal with the reality of the potential for housing development in Wicklow considering we have a housing crisis in all parts

of Wicklow.

And I therefore, again, this is my first time and I know this process a newer than it was before, so, if it is going to a vote, it is going to a vote.?

SORCHA: To be hear clear the proposal before you on this particular matter is what set out in proposal number one there and what that proposal is asking is that the Chief Executive take, or the development plan plays a more active role than active land management. To make sure that housing units are delivered, and the Chief Executive has no difficult with that, because we do that anyway, we service land, we use vacant site levy and so on, there's no problem with the principle of that concept but the concept of flexibility in the numbers, to be honest, it's a direction that would be very difficult for the chef executive to comply with, because it is not clear what you mean by flexibility. The core strategy has to include a table and that's in the planning act it is not some Government guideline or ministerial letter the planning act says there has to be a core strategy table and the table has to have numbers in it, and that has to be in the development plan. So, to say

that, you're directing the Chief Executive to bring in element of flexibility isn't clear what do you mean by that. Because it is not possible to say that the target for growth in Tinahely is between 100 and 500 units, the core strategy can cannot include a figure like that so the direction is not clear for the chef executive to know what you want him to do exactly. So, when he prepares the development plan how is he to know what to put in the plan that meets your requirement there. Is there a particular town where you'd like to see a higher target?

If so, that is what should be proposed and for example there's one town Rathdrum where there is a proposal. Whether the Chief Executive is able to meet your requirement, meeting all the other requirement of RCS, and ministerial direction, would be something that is has to be teased out after this meeting. The proposal number one doesn't include a specific action, that you want the Chief Executive precisely to take in the preparation of the development plan. I would just add as well that the point raised about rural villages and rural housing being restricted,

people won't be able to build anywhere, in the last four years, there's been twelve houses built in all of the villages in County Wicklow. There are 5,000 houses completed or commenced, 12 have been in villages, we're talking about 50 settlements from the large villages, small villages, to rural hamlets.

So, there's clearly a problem there, it isn't people are refused it is people aren't applying for permission in these places, most like because there's limited services in these places. And what we should do is tackle that problem and again that's subject of another direction we take that we take root and branch look at villages and identify places where there is services for development or services can be easily delivered, and then we identify those places and promote them as places for people to live. In terms of rural one-off housing, at the end of the day if someone qualifies for rural housing, doesn't really matter what the number is in the development plan, a cap won't be reached, if a person is eligible and fulfil all the normal criteria and site meets the criteria it will be granted permission regardless there as

is a notional number reached in the county development plan, you see the number there is 800, so, that won't be reached by the time we do the next development plan and figures will have changed. So, these figures aren't targeting or decimating rural settlements, they've most effect on the medium size settlements and bigger settlements effectively.

So, I just point that out to you but coming to back to the direction, Chief Executive needs to be clear what you want to do on foot of this proposal and then, the Chief Executive and team can endeavour to look at that and see how we can go some way to meeting your needs or what it is you want to see achieved.

CLLR WALSH: Figures and looking at for example Bray and target for Bray to 2031, and looking at the figures delivered since 2016, Bray is basically two key sites there, one there's difficulty around one of them at planning stage in one application, if Bray doesn't reach the target during the course of the plan, I know that, is the mass figure, in 9.5 included in the figure here it is, so just for

example, if you look at Greystones, we've maybe overdeveloped in the last number of years, and we require follow-up infrastructure but, we have two Part 8s coming and there's other developments coming so by the time this is development, Greystones will have not head room for new capacity. And Arklow is another example in relation to wastewater treatment plant and delivery of that, which is four years away. Cllr Joe Behan made the point in relation to the NPF, 2040 plan, it is too long a horizon to make predictions and sensible practical projections in like this in relation to population and employment changes things are starting to happen, so we will have a review in two years aim time what flexibility will we have at that stage. Because obviously the landscape will have changed somewhat if things continue as they are. So, again, we need some sort of flexibility, rather than be stuck rigidly with the figures presented to us, thank you.

SORCHA: On that, the Chief Executive will prepare a report two years after the plan adopted setting out how the implementation of the plan is going at that point. And, if something radical has changed

or some major problem with housing delivery is identified, the certainly can initiate a variation of the plan at that stage if that's what is needed at that point. Variations can be initiated at any point but that seems like a perfect time to do it, within two years, but if, if the NPF are still the applicable higher order plans at the time, we would adhere to the principles that are set out of them. I suppose the number of people mentioned that things might be changing, at a higher level, and so be it, if there's revision toss the national planning framework, if something comes during the adoption of this plan, we'll do our best to do that along the way. If it happens just after we adopt the plan, we vary the plan. So, the team are available to amend the plan and vary it whenever is needed.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: If those houses come on stream in Greystones in the next year, needless to say we'll revise this, and this table will change, between now and when we adopt the plan.

CLLR TIMMINS: Members of my family own land in Baltinglass that is zoned land and in line with

legislation, if votes are going to be coming up and discussions coming up about numbers of houses and in different towns and villages with ethics legislation, I think I should absent myself from the meeting and any votes on these topics. So, I'd like to do that now please.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll record that thank you.

Where are we with the direction number one?

CLLR FORTUNE: When Sorcha mentioned 10,700 and any developments between now and say January 2022, would have to come off that figure, that's what I understand it to be. So, when people are talking about flexibility, that means to be unless I'm missing it, that if there's 2,700 houses built between now and January 2020, that means we have 8,000 units to play with in the plans, is that the way it works?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, that's my understanding.

CLLR FORTUNE: We could have a situation because there's lots of things in the pipeline as I understand it, where you'll have very, very little amount of houses across the county to go in the plan.

I mean, it gets back to my point, I think we have, and I'll shut up in a secretary second, I think we have urgent need on the different topics to review, which is separate what we're talking about, what the public reps are all about, how do we, allow to operate on behalf of constituents, how do we do things, are we told to do exactly what we're told, can we not get the TDs involved with us-to-get things sorted out for the county. It is not working as I see it at all.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. I will come back to Cllr John Mullen now, just on the direction number one. So, we need to move on, and make a decision here as to what we're doing in relation to direction number one, we have a proposer and seconder, Cllr John Mullen are you happy to take what Sorcha is Chief Executive is saying, where there is flexibility, there has to be were his words or do you want to push this to a vote to have the wording inserted in the Chief Executive's report the next one around?

MS GALLAGHER: In relation to the process there, is a proposer, and with the five elected members

so we will take a seconder, and if there's no dissent, if everybody is in agreement with what is proposed there's no requirement to take a vote. It is only where there's dissent we will go for a vote. If everybody in this room is agreeable to what is being proposed, there's no reason to go for a vote.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Is everybody in agreement? No.

MS GALLAGHER: So, we'll go for a vote.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We're going for a vote because we have to move on. Sorry, we've called it now, I'm going for a vote. We're vote on the wording that Cllr John Mullen and the group, direction number one circulated by the planners.

MS GALLAGHER: Can everybody project their voices because there will be a lull with the microphones. That's 15 for, two against, seven abstaining and eight not present.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Direction number two was proposed by Cllr John Mullen and seconded by:

CLLR MULLEN: Withdraw on that one.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Direction number three is proposed by Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cllr Pat Fitzgerald and Cllr Pat Kennedy.

Cllr Pat Fitzgerald?

CLLR FITZGERALD: I'm on. The proposal of the group is to direct the Chief Executive to identify Arklow as core regional town level two in the - we disagree with the decision as a result of the asset-based assessment taken by Regional Assembly through the spatial and economic strategy upheld by Wicklow council which designates Arklow to be a level three core regional sustaining town.

And when I look at what level three is, the self-sustaining town with high levels of population growth and weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require catch-up investment to become more self-sustaining.

Arklow, just I won't delay because we're tight on time here, the description of a core regional self-sustaining town is where there's high levels of population growth and weak employment base, however, Arklow has seen the lowest level of population growth 1% lowest of all towns in levels one and two, has the least commuter transcription to Dublin at 14%, as a strong employment base ratio

at 0.63, and equal to Bray. The description of core region key town level two, largely economically active service, that provide employment for the surrounding areas and with high quality transport links and capacity to act as growth, drivers to compliment the regional growth sisters. We have so many active services in Arklow, like plastic, Arklow Shipping, LMH, Armstrong Timber, and Arklow hotel, court services and Arklow health service. It is my view and the view of our group that Arklow should be in level two, which will attract more investment into the town, the town is showing strong signs of additional committed economic activity, SSE are locating in Arklow and the prime require care centre, and LMH and two data centres on old IF site, so accordingly I'm asking the members to agree for Arklow to be on level two, that Arklow should be on level two, instead of level three.

CLLR ANNESLEY: Thank you Cathaoirleach.

Arklow designated a key town on level two also, presents it with greater opportunity to source additional funding for critical infrastructure,

that it requires the construction, construction to a southern interchange via slip road from M11 to the Vale Road construction and completion of the rock beck to knock more roundabout, Roadstone road, to enhance potential for economic development and regeneration of the harbour, to support ongoing investment to the infrastructure to continued renewal maintenance and improvement to a high level to ensure high quality of frequently safety services accessibility and connectivity. And plus, also the flood defence works. Thank you Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Tommy Annesley as you read the Chief Executive's report, he's basically saying this is from the economic strategy not county development plan so to be honest ...

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: We don't have the authority to change that, that's set by the regional authority and not by us.

CLLR ANNESLEY: Can I come back in there, it is Government policy to build on brownfield sites,

that's recommended in Governments strategic policy. And in Arklow we have the site in the centre and harbour, and also various brownfield sites in Arklow. And as Sorcha said herself it is in key towns and Arklow is a key town so thank you. Cathaoirleach, Is that part of the national planning objective?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Part of the objective is part of the programme for Government, is my understand something that right.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I'm saying what you're saying with Arklow and promotion of Arklow as town and development that's something we're working hard on but designation what is a key town and core regional key town and self-sustaining town, that's not a determination we make, that's a determination that's already been made by the regional authority and we can't change tax-payer but certainly, now I agree with everything, Arklow is up and coming town and in terms of economic development we will be proposing all areas and sites and proposing them as you mentioned.

CLLR FITZGERALD: Really apply to Arklow, it is not

actually factual to be honest about it. High employment, we're employing over 800 people in Arklow from north Wexford and further afield from Dublin. So, I mean, Arklow is a town that should be in level two, to be quite honest about it. Towns that provide employment for surrounding areas with high quality transport links, and capacity to act as growth drivers to compliment the regional growth centres, that fillets Arklow.

And we have in the last few weeks, we've had two people looking at investing in Arklow, huge investment, and I think it should be in category two.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I know, but we don't have the authority to move it.

CLLR FITZGERALD: Whoever the authority has to move it should move it. But it says here, we believe it is not the sole remit of the Regional Assembly through to regional status and the Wicklow County Council is not bound by their decision. Planning and Development Act 2,000 section 11A and regional spatial and economic strategy section 42. So? Sorcha: I think there's probably, sort of maybe, it is terminology that's the problem here.

And when a regional plan or national plan is adopted, they put towns into categories and give them a name, we used to have moderate growth towns and large growth town type two in previous plans, it so happens the regional plan as identified a certain type of town and given it a name and called it a key town and the regional team and Regional Assembly have done a detailed assessment using their asset based approach and we would have provided them with thousands of pieces of data with regard to all of our towns, and based on that exercise, they have identified that this category that is called "e-towns" that are two towns that fulfil that definition are Bray and Wicklow Rathnew, it doesn't mean Arklow isn't a key town as the Chief Executive was saying, it is really important town in the county and a lot of work is done to regenerate it, and applications are put in for URD F, funding and so on, NTA is working with the roads department on developing a transport plan for the town so lots of activity going on, because of our belief that Arklow is a very important town that needs investment and attention. But the word "key town" is just a particular term in the regional

plan. And Arklow hasn't been identified with that designation in the regional plan. What we are propose something it gets the next highest designation available and in accordance with table 4.2 of the regional plan the next category are called self-sustaining growth towns and self-sustaining towns and the difference between the two of them is the one that self-sustaining growth town is a town that has all the services ready to grow in housing, whereas self-sustaining town still needs investment in infrastructure, to allow for large-scale housing. So, as the Chief Executive said we're committed to Arklow having the highest possible designation, and we agree it is a key town, it is just not a key town as defined by the name given to those towns by the regional plan. And we're committed and the Chief Executive has said that to including a lot of policies and objectives and statements in the plan highlighting the importance of Arklow. So that will occur anyway.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, we got Sorcha's views and Chief Executive, and Cllr Pat Fitzgerald and Cllr Tommy Annesley and I have done a lot of work, Cllr

Pat Fitzgerald do you want to push this to a vote.
Cllr Tommy Annesley are you seconding this.

CLLR ANNESLEY: Yes, I am.

MS GALLAGHER: Even if you put this to the vote if it is not within the powers of the elected members they're acting beyond their powers.

>>: We'll find that out.

MS GALLAGHER: We'll go for a vote.

17 for, one against, 7 not present and 7 abstaining.
Votes are carried.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Direction four is from Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cllr Pat Fitzgerald and Cllr Pat Kennedy. Cllr Tommy Annesley is speaking on this.

CLLR ANNESLEY: Yes, thank you Cathaoirleach. We're looking for the housing increased to 100-165, and I'm going to state a few reasons why, employment in Rathdrum will increase over the coming years to the taking over the chemical factory. Rathdrum is currently constructing a new primary care centre, planning permission has just been granted for 125-bedroom nursing home, St Colman's Hospital has a planning application for Wicklow County

Council to increase the bed capacity. There is 23 acres of zoned land ready for development.

Industrial land sorry.

Avondale Forest Path is about to commence, 8 million development for tourism purposes. As we know, Rathdrum has connectivity close to N11, corridor same as Wicklow to Arklow, rail corridor, daily bus services to and from Dublin. Education in Rathdrum is two creches with further two planned, Lee primary schools and one secondary school.

That's why I'm looking for, we are looking for the houses to increase from 100 to 65.

Sorcha: I think it is out in the report we submitted back to the Chief Executive isn't in favour of this proposal, I suppose there's a number of difficulties with it.

The first difficulty is with the growth in Rathdrum to date from 2016 to date has already reached the 30% limit. Nevertheless, the Chief Executive is still recommended some additional growth in Rathdrum because we can't have a newly growth scenario, because we need to accommodate good town centre infill and recommended an extra 100 units

in Rathdrum. That would bring it up to growth rate to 45% which is in breach to the NPF but Chief Executive to stand over that and fight that case. However to bring it up to 165, would increase it to close to 55%, so, I just, at this point it is noncompliant with the NPF and can't see it getting through the next layers of checking that we're going to have to go through, whether that's with the department or office of planning regulator. In addition, to increase the growth for Rathdrum, would mean the numbers still 10,700 to be allocated around the county so to increase Rathdrum, you have to propose where the 65 will come out of because otherwise the Chief Executive isn't clear what you're asking him to do. So, the proposal should be accompanied by a proposal where the 65 is to come from.

The final point is that, during this cycle the planned cycle, there's likely to be on going issue with water supply which may not be made good, it is allowing the development where the services are available and it is noticeably where services for that development is available. For those reasons the Chief Executive is not in support of the

proposal.

CLLR ANNESLEY: Thank you Cathaoirleach.

With due respect Sorcha, it is not Rathdrum's fault it had shovel-ready sites to be ready to go before the development plan came on the table. Rathdrum was ready to build houses, they are ready to build houses, and I don't accept that, that you're putting the responsibility of the 32 members of this council to say, well if we're going to extend Rathdrum, 65, we will take it from somewhere else. Can I go through those figures you've given me and all the councillors, and can I surely put 65 let's take example for Arklow, 12,050 houses will be built in five years when we know we're not having a treatment plant until 24/25, it could come from Arklow, I'm not saying it should be, but 65 houses are not a lot to ask for in Rathdrum and I'm he can pressing it is this the sites shovel-ready to go. But thank you Sorcha.

I don't accept it but thank you.

SORCHA: 1200 units for Arklow is not for the five years, it is for the eleven years, so the sewage plant will be up and running before that.

>>: In your words we will review the documentation in two years' time. OK. Now you're given it, twenty minutes a now you're changing it, it is up to review it is only numbers we're talking about at the moment. Would you agree, no.

SORCHA: It is numbers we're talking about, but the 10,700 has to add up to that number, so, without a complimentary proposal it is not clear what you're asking the Chief Executive to put in the new development plan.

CLLR FORTUNE: Yeah, clarification, yeah, I'm getting very concerned and very confused now, I really think we should stop this process now. And I think all the directions that have come in should be analysed by the executive with the implications that we're discussing here around the table so we all have a clear picture what we're asked to vote on, we're asked to vote on things that the people say in South Wicklow want, we don't know what effect it will have on the rest of the county how the figures will get out this is terribly unfair discussion going on a general basis and I recommend we stop it and get the detail get the backup to the

directions that have been fed in and we can look at the same hymn sheet and have the same discussion.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks,

CLLR LEONARD: I would have to be in agreement with Cllr Tom Fortune, I think the planners have put a lot of time in this, and I worked with architecture for years and seen the results of bad planning and not bad planning but development-led planning and I think it is very important to have a proper plan in place, I'm totally in favour of Rathdrum growing and Arklow and everywhere, growing but sustainably. I think that if we start messing around with figures now we'll mess up a lot of work and I think we should all maybe take a big pause, and be led by the planners in Wicklow County Council because I do have good faith in them and the change of direction the way we're going forward is the right way to do things. The other way has resulted in flooding and lack of infrastructure, lack of community services for communities and once and for all we need to get it right and I think it would have great benefits in the long run for Wicklow.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. I think we should

proceed I think there's a lot of time and work gone into this over the last period of time and it is up to everyone to make sure they read the documents that were circulated.

Cllr Tommy Annesley, it is your proposal, the Chief Executive is not in favour of it, on the extra 65 units. For Rathdrum. You have to direct us what you want to do.

CLLR ANNESLEY: We put this motion in and we would like the extra 65 units, I don't want to put the extra pressure on the Chief Executive but that's what he's there for and I would like to take this proposal to a vote even if you have to.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Gerry Walsh.

CLLR WALSH: I don't see how we can decide on this now here and then because we're bound by the figure of the bottom line so if we're adding 65 to one area, we have to take it away from another. So we're making a decision, sort of in the dark and maybe it should be subject to the two of had year review we mentioned earlier but I don't see how we add figures willy nilly looking at the overall plan and looking at the impact of the overall plan.

CLLR ANNESLEY: Well, I'd like to go ahead with this, you know, if members that want to vote for it, or don't want to vote for it, but that's my feeling.

CHATHAOIRLEACH: proposed by Cllr Tommy Annesley and seconded by Cllr Pat Fitzgerald.

>>: Does this decision have to be made today?

SORCHA: Well, the members are given a certain number of weeks to consider this report and it was eight weeks which was up about two or three weeks ago.

Now the planning act does say that no-one can challenge the validity of development plan for the timelines in the development plan not being achieved. So, it doesn't have to be done today. But, I suppose, if this is put off to another day, it's going to take longer to produce a draft plan because we need your directions to prepare the draft plan with and I don't think anybody wants to delay it getting a development plan moving. I suppose the other option and maybe the Chief Executive might come in on this is we're aware of

the proposal and of the desire to give Rathdrum a little bit extra than is in the proposal and we know the reasons as we do understand, we tried to put together a table that complies with the NP F and restriction that is come with it, and we know it is not perfect but it was the best we could propose to. I suppose over the next few months, what in preparing a plan we can certainly talk to the powers that be whether that's the Regional Assembly, the minister, the OPR, and see is there a way of addressing the concerns that you have, both the first proposal and proposals like this, and see can we find some kind of compromise that partially, maybe gives you what you're looking for and also, substantially complies with the NP F and RSES, because there's a number of proposals here that probably all can't be complied with, some of them are mutually exclusive and Contra contradictory, so if we pull them together, rather than strict instruction this that is to be in the plan, we know what you want and work with you can we come up with something that meets half way or gets you closer to what you want, which means you are not giving us a fixed direction on it and voting through a

direction.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: You do have an opportunity to make an amendment with a draft plan you can make amendments whatever you want.

>>: That's a good point, if we work together over the next few months and propose a draft plan and can't get a meeting of minds on say the population figure for Rathdrum, we can get half way but that's still not enough for you, when you come to adopt the draft plan you can make amendment and vote through amendment at that point. But it will be preferable if we work in collaboration over the next few months on these types of issues and accommodate everybody's desires and wants for the plan. If we can't you can't and still have the opportunity to come back.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Pat Fitzgerald wants to come back in.

CLLR FITZGERALD: If there are issues which require clarifications we can put them back to the eastern Midland authority, that happens, my mind is on them and they get queries such as this, in relation to county development plans from various

counties and maybe, some of these issues can be thrashed out at that forum.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Tommy Annesley will we leave it and come back to another day.

CLLR ANNESLEY: I would be amenable to that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Direction number five is proposed by Cllr Shay Cullen.

CLLR CULLEN: Thanks Chairman. I suppose very similar to the Rathdrum proposal I don't want to go over old ground but Ashford is obviously very similar and if Sorcha is willing to do a similar for Ashford as for Rathdrum in terms of looking at the figures over a period of time, I'm quite happy to go along with that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Shay Cullen. OK. Direction number six is Cllr Shay Cullen, seconded by Cllr Gerry O'Neill.

CLLR CULLEN: Yes it is do with level seven eight and nine in terms of small villages, clusters, hamlets, and open countryside, I suppose, there is a huge level of frustration in rural communities

where you know, local people are finding it hard to get sites, to get planning permissions, being put under huge stress, and I think we need a complete review of level seven, eight and nine, there's you know, there's areas across our county that we call them villages and you may have a church, you may have a school and that's it, and in terms of trying to build communities, I think it is important that we review this strategy because it is certainly not working, I think Sorcha eluded there is twelve or thirteen planning permissions over the last number of years in rural villages. And I think there's total confusion amongst the public, particularly the rural public in terms of where sites are available, are they available, what's the criteria, there's a perception in rural areas, as next to impossible to get planning permission so we have to open this up for a broad discussion, and I think Sorcha's willing and Chief Executive is willing to review the whole strategy with level seven, eight and nine.

CATHAOIRLEACH: They have agreed do that in this response. Direction number seven. Service sites

from the Fianna Fail group.

Cllr Joe Behan.

CLLR BEHAN: Just point of order it is quarter to five, I've submitted an urgent question, can you indicate what time the urgent questions will be taken, because if not the meeting will finish at five, we haven't got an additional time extension approved. So just, once I know it will be answered before the meeting is over, I don't want to interrupt your discussions.

MS GALLAGHER: Standing orders provide for 4.50pm.

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK. Direction number seven. Is topic on housing and serving sites from Cllr Gail Dunne, Cllr Patsy Glennon, ...

CLLR GLENNON: Before I go into that one, just comment that I wanted to make about the overall picture we're dealing with today. I think it is fundamentally flawed, the numbers that are allocated to certain towns.

For the next number of years and my logic for that or reasoning for that is that towns that were neglected with infrastructure are going to be doubly penalised there's no conviction within

those towns because of failures in the past providing the structure. This was discussed at SSPC by Cllr Sylvester Bourke and made this point to Sorcha and her team on that day. Towns that had been neglected will get a double whammy by the fact they're not included in decent development over the next number of years. And comparison, I made that day was some years back, Blessington was roughly a third size of Greystones, yet developments in Blessington was two houses versus hundreds if not thousands in Greystones. I just think that there has to be something built into the plan to cater for to provision of infrastructure during the period that those numbers can be raised in those towns. You've 500,000 houses allocated for Blessington over the next period of this plan, so I don't think it is going to be enough. Now I'm going to move on to direction number seven and this direction is accordance with national planning objective 18B and support new homes and small towns and villages, that development plan identifies suitable service sites in each of our small towns and villages to attract build their own house using the current infrastructure that is available to the

council. And it is in line with national planning objectives 18B.

There is I've a list here of 30 in large villages, 80 in large villages and 30 clusters and there's a number of sites in each of, number of each of those categories that could benefit greatly from the council providing service sites, it would cater for a category of people that Cllr Paul O'Brien referred to in our earlier discussion, people that don't qualify for social housing and those who cannot afford to buy a site and build a house for themselves, the middle income worker, or even the higher middle income workers finds it hard to get on the property ladder and that will greatly assist them so I ask the council to look at that and take that as direction going forward.

CATHAOIRLEACH: thank you. Sorcha. I think ... We've in agreement with that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: The time is now is 4.50 and told Cllr Joe Behan I would go back to them with members' agreement we should put this on the agenda for 2 success, to finish this, because we won't get if finished to. I would like to finish county

development plan on the 21st, when we meet to do the LPT, and there should be few items.

MS GALLAGHER: LPT meeting will be one item so we could discuss it at protocol if members are agreeable.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Joe Behan, you wanted to raise something?

MS GALLAGHER: I have a question submitted by Cllr Joe Behan. I'll read it out. Has the amendment to the planning permission to Florentine Centre in Bray agreed by Wicklow County Council been approved by An Bord Pleanála, if not, why not?

The response is, compliance with planning permission develop is a matter for the developer in agreement, that is provided for however the council has issued a warning in the in relation to alleged amendments and the processes under way, therefore nothing more can be commented on. A full report of the development is given at Bray Municipal District meetings on a monthly basis.

CLLR BEHAN: Cathaoirleach, I couldn't hear the second half - is An Bord Pleanála mentioned in the response? The question is about Bord Pleanála. The officials of Wicklow County Council agreed

amendments to the planning permission we voted for. And I'm asking, the question have An Bord Pleanála given their consent to those amendments. If not, why not? So, can you answer that question?

MS GALLAGHER: As I say, compliance with the planning permission is a matter for the developer in the development agreement.

So, it is up to the developer to satisfy themselves they are in compliance, but what I can say, what I've added is Wicklow County Council has issued a warning notice in relation to alleged amendments and that process is under way.

That warning notice was issued in July.

CLLR BEHAN: Cathaoirleach I'll ask for a copy of the response but that's not an answer to the question, I don't want to delay any longer, this is a very, very, significant situation that we're entering into here. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Joe Behan.

OK, well I think that concludes all the business we have today. We can, we have a few minutes left, what time is it. We can do another one.

MS GALLAGHER: You have another five minutes or seven minutes. Do you want to go to number eight?

CLLR BLAKE: On number five, have we parted are part of the problem I see in relation to sites is that we did provide a number of service sites on council-owned land in the past, and it is that aspect that hasn't been complied with that we're concerned about, there is sites that the council loaned and were designated for private sites to be sold by potential people in the local and that's part of the problem in terms of people being able to buy and build sites with houses own by the council.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Direction number eight is proposed by Cllr John Mullen and seconded by Cllr Gail Dunne. Rural housing, Cllr John Mullen.

CLLR MULLEN: Thanks, I accept that it is within the current plans, so I withdraw that now.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr John Mullen.

Direction number nine is Cllr John Mullen yourself

again.

CLLR MULLEN: I accepted that is included in the plan, so, I withdraw that as well.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Number Ten, employment strategy.

CLLR ANNESLEY: I was a bit upset to see this in that again, Bray and Greystones and Wicklow was mentioned and because Arklow is not a key town, it wasn't sufficient to produce for the IDA sites, Arklow has IDA site, the same as Greystones, Greystones is not a key town and I don't think it is fair if you don't allow Greystones in the loop with the IDA sites that you're going to exclude Arklow, it is self-explanatory on that one and it is not go Arklow against Gray stones but I want a fair play field for everybody. We have a lot to offer in Arklow.

Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Tommy Annesley.

SORCHA: This is terminology being used in the regional plan.

The reason why the IDA site in Greystones as opposed to other town is Greystones is in the metropolitan area and it is sites within the metropolitan area is in the regional plan, it doesn't identify any other strategic sites outside of the metropolitan area, because it is in that area that's why it is its employment site is picked out and others aren't. It is the same as previous proposal, we are absolutely committed to employment in Arklow and employment sites in Arklow highlighted and promoted it is particular terminology that's in the regional plan, so we can identify the IDA site is Arklow strategic site using the definition of strategic site in the regional plan because they have not identified it but we can identify the IDA site a strategic site in county context rather than regional context which is the Greystones one is, so we use that terminology but we'll have to make it clear it is a county strategic site rather than a Metropolitan area or regional strategic site. It is terminology.

CLLR ANNESLEY: It is a company in Ireland and have a look at Wicklow, look at their county development

plan, they wouldn't see Arklow in it, it is not fair for Arklow to be excluded because we're not Metropolitan. The next motion I will be putting in is I'll move to Wexford and I don't want, but you're leaving Arklow out of it, and I'm not surprised west lads picked up on this, because you haven't included the west either, I'm here to bat for Arklow and that's very fair, I know it is only terminology, but, it is not fair terminology.

Sorcha the core strategy is supposed to show the county plan is consistent with the regional plan, the core strategy isn't encompass everything, it covers key high level issues and that's t so, there will be plenty of places in the development plan where Arklow will be highlighted adequately. I'm guaranteeing you of that, but we can't give it a designation, regional designation that the regional plan hasn't given t

CLLR GLENNON: Following on what Tommy says in terms of west Wicklow, west Wicklow doesn't get a mention, which doesn't surprise me, I'm tired of working about it, Arklow is not Metropolitan, surely Blessington is, it is the same distance from Dublin as Greystones is, there is development

sites.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I've two minutes left, what do you want - I have to get this finished and I have to go back to Cllr Tommy Annesley. What do you want me to do here.

CLLR ANNESLEY: I don't always want to be fighting so I will have to take this one on the chin but I'm going to let you know I'm not happy for it but thank you for your response.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you item eleven is on behalf of Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, Cllr John Mullen, Cllr Walsh and Cllr Dunne, core retail strategy. But Cllr Fitzgerald, do you want to go with that?

CLLR FITZGERALD: But I see that you're not opposed to it, so I'm happy to leave it rest with yourselves to have it incorporated.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Onshore wind farm.

CLLR MULLEN: Thanks and again, I accept the direction here is because we're under ministerial direction, I did want to, I'm not going to push it to a vote, I happen to be one of two public representatives here today from the only part of

Wicklow offshore wind farming no part of Wicklow has on shore industrial wind farming there's another proposed industrial development in Kilranelagh. Which will damage the landscape, we have massive potential which I think we should investigate and go through it and we need to review therefore the damage to the landscape that further on shore wind farm development will do but accept we're under, again, accept but it is frustrating we're under ministerial direction on this point but I withdraw it.

MS GALLAGHER: If we have a seconder, Cllr Mags Crean is not here. Cllr Joe Behan thank you find out what number you are. Table six.

CLLR SCOTT: Thank you for fitting this in, we had a lot of talk during the afternoon about housing and numbers, and I suppose the one thing that is striking me is discussing the formulation this plan in the middle of global pandemic and haven't mentioned this once, we are in the pandemic for the last nine months and globally year-and-a-half, we have had SARS and swine flu and Covid-19 and

estimated we will live with Covid-19 for the next couple of years, according to recent reports in nature, so while we're drafting our CDP it is critical to take this pandemic and future pandemics in consideration particularly about high density living and particularly considered about co-living developments as an example, may I think it should be banned outrightly but we don't have the health authority to do that, however, I think the agrees with me, looking at his response, we're stating that committed to monitoring emerging health policy and ensuring plan is consistent with same, I say we already have the evidence for concerns here, we heard NEFIT there's a huge transmission factor when people are in close approximate equipment or sharing facilities, we've seeing direct provision sisters and schools and meat factories as evident, we're living through measures to prevent the virus and we're sitting here, carefully distanced and discouraged to mix with one another, I mentioned co-living development specifically in relation to this direction as these have potentially up to a money people kitchen and living areas, without doubt

social distancing would be difficult and advisability of isolating in individual spaces as small as fifteen square metres would be questioned. I know and I'm glad Minister O'Brien has started a review on these particular developments as they are compatible with health policy, however in drafting our plan my question is in 2023, or 24 there's another Covid-19 or another high profit my density living accommodation put in by developers, so will we confident in plan we're taking public health evidence in consideration when assessing these and critically assessing individual and outdoor space provided in terms of the challenge of disease spread. I would like to take precautionary approach with plan and answer yes to these questions and adopt this direction. Thanks.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Cllr Lourda Scott.

SORCHA. We note the minister is undertaking a review of co-living developments. So, we will follow that and see where that goes, and should revise policy, emanate from the minister's office, obviously integrate that in the plan if we're at the right stage but we'll do with a we k on the other

issues, generally about health and wellbeing and possibility of future outbreaks or other health concerns, we have committed in the Chief Executive's report that for the first time will include a health and wellbeing audit of the plan and this isn't something we've done before and we will obviously have to concern ourselves with the land use elements of health and wellbeing that's thaws the only thing within our gift. We have a good submission from the health service executive that set out factors that contribute to one's health and wellbeing and we're going to use that as basis for preparing this audit to check our plan, and our new emerging new plan to ensure it doesn't include provision that is might be contrary to improve health and wellbeing and take opportunities we can to enhance opportunities for improving health and wellbeing. So, I think a combination of monitoring the minister's review, and this health and wellbeing audit should go some way to addressing your concerns. And we're happy to work with you over the winter and see how that develops.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Lourda Scott are

you happy enough.

CLLR SCOTT: I haven't seen the parameters of the minister's review and there's no date on that, so that's a question I have, and as I was saying he will specifically looking at co-living, I don't know what terms of references he looking although it and in terms, five, six years' time, if there's another forum of high density, high profit, developments that called by another name will that then be encompassed under his very rue, am I confident that's enough. That's my concern, I don't know what other members think, but we're living in a critical E critical pandemic crisis at the moment, and really need to discuss this, and putting in a clear direction or plan, whether through the health and wellbeing audit but this needs to be specifically considered, I think it is crazy in a situation we're in at the moment we're not going to have a specific direction about this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Cllr Lourda Scott fair point in fairness. Item 16 is correspondence, there's no correspondence.

Cllr Lourda Scott that is been agreed or does it

go for the vote.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I would wait for guidance and come back to that a later date.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We can come back.

CLLR SCOTT: Can it be revised at later date?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: If you leave that one with us, we will check it out.

CLLR SCOTT: Could you find out terms of references for the review.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We can write to them and see if we get that. There's no correspondence so that brings us to the end of the meeting, thank you very much everybody.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you members and could the members of the Protocol Committee remain and maybe we'll meet this side of the room. Just quickly. And if you want to avail of refreshments, water, et cetera, sandwiches and cake to the back of the room please do.