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Wicklow Co Co Meeting 2 Nov 2020

CATHAOIRLEACH: Good afternoon everybody, can you hear me. You are all very welcome to our monthly meeting and just before I do I am going to ask Lorraine to do a role call.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you. (role called).

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members thank you very much for being with us this afternoon. If I could just asking when people are not speaking if you can just mute your mic because there is a bit of interference coming through the system. Sometimes it's hard to see everybody but I promise I will get to everybody. I am going to go to item number one which is the Chief Executive's Report. So hand you over to the Chief Executive.

CH. EXECUTIVE: In relation to Covid-19 all outdoor work is ongoing and construction projects, the main building is open by appointment although we're not turning anybody away. In a way it suits because completing the customer care hub and works to the council chamber and meeting rooms. Libraries are on line only and that's government policy in keeping people at home. In relation to the Blessington, Bray and the housing services and Bray Municipal district, members are asked to make contact in advance and Blessington motor tax and Bray motor tax are open on restricted hours. The car parks are still open and we would however be closing the level R car park having regard to the 5km restriction. In relation to the rates waiver, that's been extended to the end of the year which is very welcome. We will have confirmation hopefully this week on if we're getting funding and it looks like we're getting funding to compensate for the lack of parking and the direct costs in relation of PPE. Just in relation to the community call initiative, it's back up and running, eight to eight. The government issued a circular last week which was sent out basically it's a keep well campaign. There's five main areas, keeping active, staying connected, switching off and being creative, eating well and minding your mood. So it's really about resilience of the general public for the next six-months. The community call will have a key role to play there and we have received funding, €67,000 for various initiatives. In the community call and community forum we have set up three working groups. One in relation to staying connected and managing your mood. So that consists of local authority, HSE, Gardai, volunteer centre, age friendly community reps. And we'll be more proactive this time in terms of getting out there and contacting people and set up befriending services, working with the volunteers. The second one is keeping active which consists of the sports partnership, including ourselves and we have a sports partnership coordinator, a healthy Ireland coordinator and a social inclusion development worker. So looking at sporting organisations and set up Facebook challenges and walks, physical activity and there is various Apps being developed at the moment, basically getting communities to organise these events themselves. And the final one then is in relation to switching off, being creative, eating well, that will be the libraries, Creative Ireland, our Apps Officer, our Heritage Officer, our Age Friendly Officer, Environmental Awareness Officers etc. So those groups will meet weekly and they will report into the community forum and it's all about buildup that community resilience and as I say it's over the next six months.

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In relation to the homeless, the supported homeless facility in Bray is now up and running as is the Solas facility in Wicklow is pretty much ready now as well. We have isolation units in each area if the need arises. Schemes that will be completed over the next few months, Killbride Lane in Bray 42 units, FCA in Wicklow and Jameson Heights in Kilmac 20 units Rathnew 47 units. So in the next three months they should all be fully completed. One last one, you may have seen Nationwide last Friday week, there was a full episode on Wicklow which covered the food strategy the Eco trail etc and it was very welcome. That kind of publicity you couldn't buy it but one of the issues they mentioned is Glendalough and Deirdre Byrnes did a very good interview. And what she was introducing there is a consultancy project that's now ongoing, with a company called Conserk. So they are working with Failte Ireland, OPW, NPWS and ourselves looking to develop a tourism master plan for Glendalough, Wicklow Mountains National Park and a visitor orientation plan for County Wicklow. So it's a multidisciplinary team tourism, environmental heritage. So they are looking at the natural heritage and what to do with the visitors when they come in, in terms of a visitor centre etc and identifying the widest range of activities and sites of interest within the park and looking to connect it up to the rest of the county. They are coming up with some pretty radical ideas so I think we might invite them into the next full meeting of the Council and hear their views because it's a lot of money being spent on a consultancy service and in addition to that Failte Ireland can give grants directly to what they call strategic partners, which is the likes of Caoilte, RSI's national Parks and Wildlife and if this strategy is developed and agreed there is a very good chance of getting funding for initiatives in terms of parking and visitors centres. So I might invite them into the next meeting. So I'll leave it at that Cathaoirleach, and I'll take any questions.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you for a very detailed and informative report, anybody any questions?
Councillor John Mullen.

CLLR MULLEN: Thank you Chairman. Again an increase on the last meeting. So I hope we can follow up with Airtricity on that. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you John, I will take them in threes, anybody else got anything? Councillor Cronin.

CLLR CRONIN: Thank you very much Cathaoirleach you didn't forget me this time thank you. So thanks to the Chief Executive for that report. I just have a few quick questions. The first one is in relation to the housing development. I know I have raised it a number of times but the residents are eager to know when they are moving in and they have received letters and been allocated houses but they are yet to find out when they are going to get their keys and move in. So also the Irish Water clinics that were held last week it clashed with our meeting and I am still waiting for the response to my queries that I submitted. So maybe someone in the council can chase that up for me and finally we have huge issues in rule areas with regard to broadband. (sound gone).

CATHAOIRLEACH: I think we lost you there. Councillor Cronin?

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CLLR CRONIN: I was just asking about the broadband and we're having great difficulty getting response from Eir and I know the national broadband are coming in before our municipal district meeting next month but in the meantime I am just wondering has the Chief Executive any plans to appoint the new broadband officer for the county. I know we don't have one at the moment and I do think there is a big gap there especially in rural areas.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Scott.

CLLR SCOTT: Thank you Chairman and thank you for the report. Just on page seven, under social housing stock. I note arrears have increased by nearly 1.5 million in a year and I was wondering what the explanation for that was and there seems to be a big difference between this year and last year. I was wondering if we have a proposed date for the draft development housing plan and just the comment on the Frank Kelly Close I was just wondering if there was any progress on getting a gate on the pedestrian ramp, thank you.

CH. EXECUTIVE: Yeah. The public lighting there is hard and we'll certainly get on to Airtricity and look that. We spent a lot of money on public lighting but we're still pursuing it. In relation to the housing development in Dunlavin, the exact date, I'll ask Joe or Jackie to come back on that in a minute and in with Irish Water we'll get this information out to you for that. In relation to national broadband plan, working away in the county and they have a T1 application in for the Greystones area and there is a survey around Wicklow and there's a number of broadband connection points being introduced. And in relation to broadband officer we held interviews for staff in IT. So it will be one of those staff that will be take on that role. In relation to arrears in rent, we did have a rent reviews last year and a lot of the rent to be paid went up for a lot of people. We have also a lot of new houses coming on screen. So we're taking in more money but you are right arrears have grown, partly because of rent review and COVID and the restriction in relation to rent collectors to go out, it's something that really affects our income. We'll have the rent collectors back on board with the standard operating guidelines and protocols. The county development plan we're hoping to be back in January, Frank Kelly Close I might have Joe to give you an update on that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor Leonard.

CLLR LEONARD: Thanks again for the Chief Executive's report. In relation to Arklow Harbour. My ongoing request for the re-instatement of system to harbour master's position and the filling of that position. I think it's a health and safety issue because there is nobody present down there on an ongoing day-to-day basis and in relation to the Arklow flood relief we had a presentation there in the municipal district a couple of weeks ago and after ongoing, I suppose requests for glass to be incorporated into one of the biggest catchments in the country, the Avoca River, there is no glass. So I just wonder if there's plans to integrate the glass into Wicklow? So then just in relation to what you were speaking about there. The Glendalough and Bord Failte I got a recent email in relation to state funding from conservation officer from Senator Victor Boylan, I was wondering maybe Wicklow County Council could look for state funding and it might be a good time to request that, a lot of counties do and it's state funding.

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CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor Leonard. Joe Lane.

MR LANE: The Dunlavin issue. The issue is the issue between the body and the developer. So they are taking their time on this one and we have been over it regularly to try and speed it up. The first 26 should be done bit end of this year the other 14 we're a little bit more worried. I believe the issue is regarding the issue and a couple of our small issues but it's not been finished to our satisfaction and it's taking longer and we can only get the information off them, we have no contractual agreement with them. The ramps on Ferrycarrig Close we were asked to put a gate on it to slow people down. We can't put it on the ramp because of the accessibility but our consultants are looking at putting it on the step. So we've asked them to look that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay thank you Joe. I would like to bring in Breege Kilkenny.

MS KILKENNY: Yeah. We would hope to have a draft of that in mid January just to confirm that okay?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you Breege. Councillor McManus.

CLLR MCMANUS: Thanks Cathaoirleach and thanks to the Chief Executive for the report and there is a proactive approach going, in terms of bringing those guidelines so it's very valuable work and fair plan. I just wanted to comment on the figure of, unless I am reading it wrong, up to date for child homelessness there was 469 presentations of children in the county which is a startling figure and I think it warrants a proper response by us all but my question would be, is that 469 children or is that 469 presentations? And finally just to pass on, I have noticed I think it's the franchise department have been running a campaign for postal voters that are cocooning and it's very valuable work, so if you could pass that on. Thank you very much.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Chief Executive I will bring you back in there.

CH EXECUTIVE: The assistant for the Harbour Master, that's on our list for recruitment and I will get a date on those interviews and come back to you. The flood relieve, the glass, we talked to consultants in relation to that and we'll come back to you and the conservation offer we'll have a look at that and sometimes they can be shared with various counties but I will check in relation to grant funding, on child homelessness I will ask Joe to come back on that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Joe, are you there?

MR LANE: If you look at the bottom one. We changed that this year to, obviously with the questions, to make it a more user friendly format. So we'll look at that number again just to make sure but we have based on report, we have revamped the other report and we'll be able to compare that to last year. Because again, the information wasn't consistent so we'll pick at that up a bit more.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Joe. Councillor Timmins.

CLLR TIMMINS: Thanks Chairman, just briefly on the rebuilding Ireland home loan and the tenant purchase scheme I just wonder if we can improve that process a bit people made application and

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been refused and then they appeal them and put in extra information and extra detail sometimes addressing the reasons for refusal and then we have a letter back with the identical letter they got in the initial refusal letter and I wonder could the process be improved regards the communication back and forth and working with applicants to get approval. I have had a case where I worked through it with the applicant and they were approved even though the second letter they got back on appeal was exactly the same as the first letter. So I just wonder if there is a way of improving communication lines in relation to the applicant and council and housing authority and what is the authority's role here.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Timmins. Councillor Ann Ferris. Just to say, thank you for the report and it's been put to me a couple of times by various people in Bray that there maybe proposals to introduce charges in recycling centres in Wicklow, just clarification on that and the second thing I wanted to comment about the centre for the homeless opening in Bray and I want to tell the members that a neighborhood committee has been set up which comprises of the four east ward councillors and there is three representatives from the resident's association, from Dublin Simon and Triona Irving from Wicklow County Council and I want to put it on record I want to thank Jackie Carroll for all the work she's done since the project was first muted and her continuing help to the councillors in relation to questions put to us at the meetings, so it's very, very welcome and the residents moved in a couple of weeks ago and a lot of them were in tears with joy when they moved in and I want to thank everybody involved in the project and you as well Joe lean and it's a most welcome addition in Bray.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

CLLR FORTUNE: Thank you chair. First of all can I just say the report from the CEO is excellent, just a few questions. One on housing and can I just say generally on housing I think they are doing a really good job in very difficult circumstances and I just want to thank them for that. On page 11 of your report, you are addressing homelessness and you have various grids, I wonder if we can add a grid that there that highlights the situation for single men and those sleeping rough and people with family and need access to children so that we can treat it as a priority because I know you are supportive of what I am asking and maybe we should highlight it on a monthly bases. On page 14 under energy efficiency, I just wonder have we an all county plan for that or is it intended we have a plan per district and on page 15, the outdoor recreation and infrastructure scheme, I wonder how we put that together and how does a project get on that particular grid we have in your report? And on page 19, looking at tranche, I know there's currently tranche two under the community enhancement programme and on the healthy Ireland on page 20 maybe you might give us a thumb print overview of how it works, I see there are various grants available. Can I just say on page 21 the Wicklow County Council in the 1920s, I think that's a very interesting project that's been done and I presume there's booklet on it or will be. It just seems very, very interesting. Also on page 31, we're talking about preparing an all RDF submission to be in by 1 of December, I am just curious to know what that is and on page 33 we talked about social media and I just wonder what the purpose of social media and who is our target and on page 42, environmental awareness we might get a broader explanation of what is happening there. And on page 44. The whites town remediation

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project, do we know the cost of that is and how it's going to be funded and where that funding is going come from and on page 52 under the links of projects, the Bray DART interchange and the Bray foot bridges and on the middle of the page we talk about the Greystones transport study I am wondering what the timeline is on that. It's very topical at the moment. Thank you chair.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. I will ask the Chief Executive to come back in there now.

CH. EXECUTIVE: Okay. Just in relation to the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan, the applications come to us and go to the housing agency who assess in terms of credit and payment capacity and payment capacity is the biggest problem with them and they come back here for decision but we have to take the views into account and we have a committee here that will look at them and look at the appeals but we'll certainly review it, just on the recycling, we're not applying any charges but we need to review them and there is materials coming in from outside the county and there is charges from our counties and we're letting them in for free. There's a lot of issues and we'll need a full review. Just in relation to this single in the homeless we can include something on that. The outdoor recreation infrastructure scheme is generally dealt with by the Outdoor Recreational Officer and is a group that they will report to, so he is in contact with the community groups all the time in terms of different times of work that would work and certainly, if anybody has any ideas in terms of working through the plight for out door recreation or any kind of works because there is going to be significant funding over the next number of years. In terms of The Green Party they have committed 360 billion a year. So any types of walkways that people are interested in would contact the CCSD section. The healthy Ireland, I might ask Michael to come in on that as well just to give an update. So the RRDF this is category two which is projects ready to go. So there's one in Rathdrum in relation to a community centre. Also looking at in Baltinglass, a new footbridge over the River Slaney, it's kind of like an extension of the RRDF, and the Arklow Shillealgh Greenway, something around those. That's just three they are putting in at the moment. They will be a further call for funding for schemes that need to go to design stage. That that's ongoing. We're going to keep those under review. So it's rural regeneration fund to enhance towns from an economic point of view in particular. The social media, that's really about getting the message out about the services that we're offering and initiatives that are ongoing at the moment and particularly with COVID and getting the message out and trying to target young people there seems to be a gap there and something that could be picked up by social media and it's not even Facebook, it's the likes of Instagram, Snapchat and the message is being missed to a certain extent by some cohorts of young people but in general it's about creating awareness of what we're doing. Environmental awareness we have the Environmental Awareness Officer here covering the social development goals but we might get him back for a full presentation in relation to what is happening there. The Whitestown remediation plan, we're very close to having it ready and that will go to consultation process between all the statutory bodies and brown field. So that will happen over the course of next year. At the end of that process we'll know exactly what the project is and the cost is and the department are being fully appraised all the time about this and they know the bill is coming and they are funding the consultancy service, so site investigation and consultancy fees that's all been paid for by the department at the moment. In relation to the Greystones transport study, that's been funded by the NTA. Just on the timelines I might ask Colm Lavery to come in on that if you don't mind.

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MR NICHOLSON: There is three measures and measure one is for small amounts of work and we made nine applications and we work with the road recreation officer and we come up with small schemes and measure two is large schemes and measure three a national schemes. Under the community enhancement programme we have applications in, they're currently being assessed, we set a midterm review group and look at those applications and make decisions based on recommendations and on the healthy Ireland it's a national framework and we have advertised for small groups to come in. People making plans around education and healthy eating etc and we give maximum grants of five grand, minimum grant two grand. Applications were closed last week and they are going to be assessed and we make decisions and they are all done through healthy Ireland.

MR LAVERY: They are both schemes funded by the NTA. So the terms of reference for both of schemes required to be signed off by the NTA. We prepared draft scope for both studies and we have had a workshop with the NTA to go through the terms of reference for both studies so, we're preparing the tender documents for the consultants to lead both of the studies at the same time so we're just waiting for the NTA o sign off on the terms of reference so hopefully within the next couple of weeks we'll be going out to consultants to carry out both of these, the Arklow and the Greystones Study, thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Joe Lane, were you to come back in there Joe?

MR LANE: There was two issues, one is the building Ireland loans, I haven't got the percentages but the main reasons are the net income ratios and insufficient credit capacity, unsatisfactory savings outside credit policy. As the Chief Executive reports in lot of cases these are unwritten and examined by the housing agency. So even though the Councillor said the same letter was sent. It can be in many cases because the same reason applies. In some cases if the income is outside the ratio policy there isn't much we can do. We wouldn't be breaching, we wouldn't be in favour of sub venting that. It should be noted 55 were placed and 24 have gone through successfully and the other question regarding the fabric up grade in the Chief Executive's Report under efficiency. That's a county at large, the fabric up grade is a county at large approach. They are applied for across a variety, we have recently tendered for 178 houses across a number of estates for phase one.

CH. EXECUTIVE: And there will be significant more funding, so that funding is going to increase over the next number of years.

MR LANE: On the homeless report. In that report one of the categories has had a solution in the meanwhile. So across those categories of people in the bed and breakfasts one of those had a resolution in the period and that would be in the category that councilor fortune was referring to.

CLLR WALSH: Just page 49 there. The N11, M11 improvement scheme, I am concerned they are looking at that again, it's going on 12 months and we're still waiting for a report in relation to the preferred option assessment. I see tenders awarded to Ernst & Young in relation to land valuation consultancy services and for legal services, so at the end of the day, the September meeting, this announcement last November caused a lot of anxiety particularly to property and landowners in the Glen of the Downs and the Kilmacanogue area. So the longer this goes on the more anxiety this

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causes. The bus priority project is welcomed but issues around Glen of the Downs needs to be resolved. It's drag on and we need some confirmation. In relation to the waste management complaints, 262 and just wonder it that up on previous years? And pollution control and septic tank inspections we have had two with one noncompliant and just wonder if there is plans to increase those inspections. That expired figure of 38, what category do they come under? Is it something else I am missing.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Vincent Blake.

CLLR BLAKE: I know Council mentioned about the lights and the issues, so I would like to thank our manager for the fact that we have another tranche of money in the programme. So for Joe a couple of questions, with regard to the fact of the completion of the rapid building in Carnew and completion date I would like an update on it and I know Councillor Timmins, mentioned about the rebuilding Ireland home loan it's a low approval for something that's a very important aspect of loans for people to purchase or building their own houses, tenant purchase scheme 90 applications and only 5 approved. 52 of them declined and 90 application and only five approved and it sounds like discontinuing the programme and there is seriously something wrong there and the fact that so many application and only a small percentage approved. Thanks Chairman.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Blake.

CLLR DOYLE: Councillor Fortune there, Joe Lane alluded to it there but I am not sure what he is speaking. Councillor Fortune was speaking about prioritising young single men in terms of homelessness and the Chief Executive said there something could be done and I just would like clarification on that. I have a concern or caution against prioritising any section of homeless people based on sex or gender just seems a little unusual particularly as females are also on the streets. And Councillor Ferris asked about the recycling centre, I am just wonder if there would be any review or public submissions on or something that would be carried out internally.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I will bring the Chief Executive back in now.

CH. EXECUTIVE: Just the N11, M11. We were due a report in June, there's delay partly because of COVID and people working were home but there has been a delay and we have certainly communicated that to TII and we're expecting a report at the end of the year so we'll just keep chasing them in relation to that. the septic tank inspections, there is a target set by the EPA and the total number of targets for 2020 I think was 32 inspections have been scheduled and the plan is to meet or exceed the target and there is over 20 that have taken place already so we have standard operating guidelines and we'll exceed that target and similarly there is grants available. They provide for increased financial assistance and non-means tested, not exceeding 85% of the costs subject to a maximum of 5,000 towards the cost of remediation, repair upgrade or replacement systems subject to advisory notice have failed an inspection under the NIPS . Those grants are available. And the local authorities Water Programme Offices identify those potentially environmentally risky areas. Just in relation to the lights, again that's something that we'll take up with Airtricity and it's an issue particularly in the west. In relation to prioritising homeless. I think

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it's single men and women. That Councillor four tune is referring to. In the necessarily single men. The recycle centres, we need to look at how the processes are operating and just needs a full review it's an operational issue we can do internally. I might hand back to Joe.

MR LANE: Yeah, we will review it again but there are three issues coming up regularly, one is the income and specific limits and the main issue people aren't fully dependent on social welfare. The delays and valuations can be quite, can take a while, possibly can go to appeal where it takes a while for our valuation and then it goes back. So there is a process there and the third one is, this could be where a lot of them are picking up. They may get approval to buy it but may not get a building loan or a loan elsewhere. So they maybe approved to purchase but they may not be able to get a loan or buy. That's, they are the main reasons for the fall off between the application and of course some application aren't proceeded as we go through them.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

MR LANE: We will review it and bring it to the SPC and going back to policy the Council made. There are a number of things like part 5, there are a few houses, acquisitions since 2010 where we don't sell for other reasons.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you, going to bring in Director Colm Lavery there.

MR LAVERY: Not really much more to add to what the Chief Executive said. We were supposed to report, the consultants were supposed to report back with the preferred option by the middle of the year and there was delayed and we're assured the preferred option report by the end of the year and both TII and ourselves expressed our concern at the slippage into relation to that, so we're working towards that deadline but I will express again the concerns of the members at the next steering group meeting which is in two-weeks time.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor Patsy Glennon.

CLLR GLENNON: Thank you and I welcome the comments about consultants looking at Glendalough and I just want to reemphasize that the west won't be forgotten about in the spend that comes from that insofar as the 35 to 40% of the traffic goes across the Wicklow Gap to Glendalough and to make sure it's not forgotten. You mentioned about routes for walking. There is an ideal route in Hollywood, it's a Caoilte Wood. It's used by people from Dunlavin, Donard and other places where they come to exercise particularly during the period of COVID. Your news in respect of the houses in Dunlavin is welcomed and they are splendid and there is very little social housing in West Wicklow for the last while particularly north of Baltinglass. So the foot bridge across the Slaney and I know you spoke about this before and it's in your plans and you're looking for funding for it, is that something that needs to be pushed and we need to get the ministers in Government to follow that up and it needs to be pushed on while the rest of the town is getting revamped under the current scheme and finally Hollywood Cross and this is probably more Colm, we feel speed restrictions need to be put in place. It's particularly acute in the light of the bend having been removed. While one welcomes the improvement in roads its consequences of it and we need some traffic regulated perhaps dropping to 80. But it can't be done by the council alone. So it probably needs someone

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like Colm to communicate with TII to get it moving and it's quite an issue of concern and we had an issue of concern for the police also, so it's something that needs to be worked on immediately rather than being put on the long finger. So that's all thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Gail Dunne? Okay, moving on, Councillor Paul O'Brien

CLLR O'BRIEN: Thank you Cathaoirleach and thank you Chief Executive for your excellent report. On page 43 is states about Brittas Bay car parks and I want to welcome the decision to open the carparks in the winter for free. I understand why there's no bins out there and no toilet facilities but I would appreciate if the Council could monitor the car parks during the winter because unfortunately some people won't appreciate or respect the decision of the Council to open them. So if there is a case of littering that the Council would monitor the situation rather than just close the car parks and maybe just consider putting one dog litter bin in each car pack because some people will be driving more than five km but would appreciate maybe to keep an eye on the car parks rather than just closing them down and certainly keep in touch with us and we can keep every body involved.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Kavanagh.

CLLR KAVANAGH: It's around a year ago we were told there was a requirement for 175 beds in Wicklow County to achieve the tourism targets and I see there was a report expected by the end of October that there was an accommodation working group preparing a detailed study and I wonder have we made any progress on that, because our target is to achieve 200 million in tourism revenue by 2023 so 2020 is almost over and all be it a COVID year, I just want to know in there is been any progress especially regard to toe tells, we have no hotel in Wicklow and there is no hotel in Greystones and I don't know how many hotels we have in Bray.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you and one more. Councillor Neary. I will go to the Chief Executive for a response.

CLLR MITCHELL: I haven't spoken yet. I had my hand up for a while.

CLLR DUNNE: You can hear me now?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah, go ahead.

CLLR DUNNE: First of all I want to thank the Chief Executive for his comprehensive report. It's very well organised and so thank you very much. Just a couple of issues, I know a couple of councillors have been on about lighting again and with the hour changing the lights are on in Wicklow town and the east of the County needs to be looked at and there's lot of lights out in Wicklow town. The second thing is there you mentioned there is nearly a million Euros being spent on walking routes and green ways and my question is about the Wicklow to Greystones Greenway, what is the update on that because we have two minister ins Greystones and it's one of the most beautiful walks and it seems to be on the back burner. The last issue is a problem, I thought I would briefly mention is over problems with sewage in back of people's houses, Wicklow County Council have done what they can and Irish water can't do anything and the banks are doing nothing. But the neighbours of

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these houses are in uproar. There was an article in the Wicklow People this week, so living next door through sewage coming up through the floor of the house next door. So can anything be done about that. Thank you Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Johnny Neary. Okay, Councillor Derek Mitchell.

CLLR MITCHELL: Thank you, just about the transport report on Greystones, I just want to check that the objectives of the transport out of Greystones by bus and train as well as a report on the internal report on Greystones, there is a very high percentage of commuters.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Gerry O'Neill. Are you there Gerry? Councillor Neary? Okay. I will go back to the Chief Executive.

CH. EXECUTIVE: Okay. Thanks Cathaoirleach, the foot bridge across the Slaney, we're going to see if we can expand the existing RRF. If not we'll apply for a new one and we'll keep talking to them in extending the exiting funding but we have to go through a part A process. The Hollywood cross speed limit that's in our one for TII and we'll follow up with them on that. The route in Hollywood in Caoilte for the walking route, we'll bring that to the attention of the rule recreation officer and apply for the funding into the future. The Glendalough. I think we'll bring them to the Wicklow tourism meeting, in relation to Councillor Dunne and the lighting we'll take it on board and bring it up with Airtricity and the Wicklow to Greystones, the feasible study identify a possibly feasible route and the next stage is the full environmental aspect report. So there is a big bill associated with that. About 7 or 800,000. So we're waiting for the call for that. So that's the next phase in relation to the project. The common services in relation to the sewage. It's a real issue for people, I agree with you and we'll follow up on that. Councillor O'Brien, we'll monitor that in terms of litter and dog litter. The 175 beds that was identified by the Failte Ireland study they also looked at the cost of building different types of hotels and hotel with a conference centre and standard hotel and B&B's and guest houses and hostiles, they have given us all the information. We have done part of the accommodation subgroup of Wicklow tourism that is looked at doing a deep dive into that and there is another consultant and that consultancy has just started. It's Weldon Maher who has worked with us in the past. So we'll have a prospectus specifically for Wicklow and somebody who is looking at investing in a Hotel or guesthouse or hostel would have this detailed analysis of the market in Wicklow. It's difficult at the moment with COVID and we have had a number of preplanning queries in relation to hotels, we will be encouraging anybody that comes in and facilitate people in meetings. In relation to Councillor Mitchell, I will ask Colm to comment on that in terms of the transport out of Greystones.

MR LAVERY: There's a number of points and I might just take them in turn. In relation to Hollywood Cross we have been in discussion so one of nine issues we need to look at is a speed limit reduction to facilitate the bus stop. So we'll bring that further point into the conversation with TII. The issue with speed limits is fine but enforcements is the bigger issue that the lower speed limit about be forced in that area of road. In relation to the Greystones transportation study, the main focus of the study is obviously the access and travel within the environment of Greystones and the town itself and part of that would be access to the DART station and rail network and we'll make sure that the

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access bus transportation is taken into account as it would be on the main street but I will just make sure it's covered Councillor Mitchell. In terms of the Wicklow sewage issue this is the problem with backyard services and unfortunately issues that arise in one property, most of the time the issue arises in a neighboring property belonging to another person and there is issues about access on to people's private property. And obviously Irish Water only work-up to the environs of the property. So it is an environmental health issue. Environmental side have taken action in relation to it but we'll look at it and see what more we can do to deal with the issue there. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members if you don't mind I am going to move on to item number two. We have a presentation from SSE renewables and we have been very patient in waiting for us, so with that said I would like to welcome Barry Kiline, Director of development Ireland. James O'Hara and Deborah Coleman. So you are very welcome.

(Powerpoint Presentation by SSE Renewables)

(Comfort break)

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Barry and thank you to James and Deborah as well for a very informative presentation and it's an exciting time for wind energy. Members, I think you would agree with me in thanking Barry and James and Deborah for an informative presentation. Councillor Murphy.

CLLR MURPHY: Yeah. Hello to everybody and thank you for the presentation and it's great to see Deborah in a different capacity and very strong presenter there as well. It's very exciting and to hear Arklow given the opportunity for this huge project, it's bringing for many local divisions, I suppose you could say, I would like to know, will there be submissions allowed in when planning goes publicly and what is the community grants and will there be a criteria involving that as well.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Murphy.

MR O'HARA: Are you happy we address that on the go?

CATHAOIRLEACH: I was going to take three questions at the time. Councillor Mitchell.

CLLR MITCHELL: Thank you I think it would have a very significant effect. However, in Arklow's case it has a very long history and I think this project around servicing the centre in Arklow would be very appropriate for Arklow and it would very much mitigate and a balance against the visual effect which this will have and contrast that with the Dublin Array which they planned to put it over north Wicklow without providing any jobs, so the balance is different and seems a good thing for Arklow to have it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Welcome Councillor Walsh.

CLLR WALSH: I was one of the members that went to the North of Scotland and we saw the transformation that the Beatrice project had on that particular town so it's an exciting project for

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Arklow and in particular for Wicklow. There is two other project ins the pipeline and I know you can't comment. We have the Codling Wind Park and the Dublin Array. So in terms of the sheer volume, is there capacity for three such projects in the one general area, I know how important it is in terms of getting emissions targets reduced. I wonder can anyone comment on that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Fitzgerald.

CLLR FITZGERALD: I think there was reference made to 2005. I want to thank SSE for the presentation, I think it's a huge project for Arklow and I want to welcome it. I think there is huge anticipation in the town, it will be good for Arklow and surrounding areas and especially with green energy and whatever else goes with it. I sincerely hope the project stays on track, I think you are talking about 2025, I warmly welcome it and and it's very much to be welcomed and obviously the permanent jobs on the South Key is to be welcomed as well. And I just want to wish you well into the future and it's great to hear Deborah there as well. Thank you very much for the presentation.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I am going to hand back to Barry now.

MR KILCLINE: Maybe James if you are happy to take the first question.

MR O'HARA: The public consultation is a pre-submission consultation and that's in relation to the EIAs and get feedback on those before we submit them. So that goes up to 11th of November but there will be a formal process. So both of those submissions that will go in before the end of the year will be advertised again both locally nationally and they will be available through An Bord Pleannala and the SID process and also with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and they will be inviting representations on both of those applications in the new year. That's it Barry.

MS COLEMAN: You are looking to find out about the criteria. So the community fund will come into effect once the wind park enters operation but the primary for off shore have yet to be set out and the consultation is part of this for the renewable energy support scheme and it's worth noting the benefit of the local communities have enjoyed from community funds from on shore wind farms and you can look up on the website about the projects have been supported.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Deborah. Councillor Leonard.

CLLR LEONARD: Yeah, I just want to ask are there any plans to invest in apprenticeships opportunities prior to the wind farm being constructed? It would be great to get something up and running in the next coming years when plans are ongoing prior to the commencement for young people.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks and Councillor Dunne?

CLLR DUNNE: Thank you for the presentation today, I was one of the guys who went to see the Beatrice Centre and I had a private zoom meeting with Louise Glennon but will thereby going forward in the plans any chance of Wicklow Port benefiting from any of the work done on windmills or is it totally for Arklow and at the end of the day they have the choice but as you know Wicklow

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Port is open all year around and it's a safe port and it's never closed and the draft coming into Wicklow Port is over five meters and I would hope there is some way Wicklow Port would have some spin off from the wind bank in Arklow and I would be worried that the Codling would take up a lot of the space in Wicklow Port when they move. So maybe first in first served. Is I would just like an answer is Wicklow in their plans for some employment and work out of the bank thank you.

MR KILCLINE: Yeah, so I think the mention of the visuals and LVIAs, so there are visual representations now available on the website also that show the project off the shore and you can see those then from a number of viewpoints on shore as well. So they are available on the website now. In terms of our project, I don't want to speak on behalf of the other two projects but what I would say is each project in itself will need to assess all parameters are addressed in an environmental impact assessment on a cumulative basis. So, visuals and navigation all of the spectrum of areas. So each project, as they are submitted through the consenting process, will assess the cumulative impact of each other's projects. In terms of the apprenticeships, I think it's a good point and we have met with the Kildare/ Wicklow training board in relation to this appreciable and in 2021 we'll begin to engage with the supply chain and one of the key areas is the wind turbine suppliers themselves. So when the project is operational is the maintenance of the turbine and the service operators that will operate out of Arklow. So there will be a significant requirement for maintenance personnel for the turbines in Arklow during the operational stage and that's probably the key area for any sort of apprenticeships programmes because they will need significant resources not only for the Arklow project but for the other projects coming on line as well. So this is a key area we intend to address with the wind turbines suppliers in terms of what are their plans for up skilling local resources to fill those roles when the project does come on line. In terms of the Wicklow Port benefit. It would be, it will be impossible for the entire project to be serviced by a single port. So we have full intention and expectation through the operational period that Wicklow Port will have to be used whether that's in terms of, some of the attributes you mentioned in terms of the depth of water and the benefits in terms of some elements of the Wicklow Port. There will be a need for use of Wicklow Port as well as Arklow Port just in terms of the construction activities and then ongoing maintenance activities periodically. So we fully expect there will be benefits for Wicklow, it's not an all or nothing situation. The only decision in terms of back in June was not only where the operations maintenance facility was going to be situated for the CTDs, but in terms of construction and then annual or six monthly maintenance, they will have to use both ports. So I do see full significant benefits to Wicklow as well.

CLLR DUNNE: Thanks.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That's great. Thanks James. So I don't think there is any more questions. So, can I just thank Barry and James and Deborah for your presentation and we'll be looking forward to working with you as you bring the project to its start date. So thank you very much for the presentation. Thank you. No moving on to item number three. Update the members on the development of a mapping tool to record projects and actions that deliver on Sustainable Development Goals and Jim Callery is with us to do this presentation.

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MR CALLERY: Good afternoon, I am going to share my screen with you now, okay, can you see that presentation?

(SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS PRESENTATION)

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Jim, I enjoyed that. Is there anybody who wants to come in there? Councillor O'Connor.

CLLR O'CONNOR: Thank you very much for the presentation Jim, I think it's really critical overall for everyone in a sense that the public can easily see how we're addressing this which I find really important. Is there any hope in approaching the national government saying this is worked well in Wicklow? Could we adopt it to a nationwide way of doing it because it looks like it's going in the right direction. I think the current government would definitely be interested, thank you.

MS GALLAGHER: Just before we move on. Can I ask Jim, Jim can you just remove the screen? Thank you.

MR CALLERY: Do you want me to deal with that question? I think certainly the mapping exercise has proved very successful and it is something that we can look at bringing to the national level going forward. It's something we'll bring in through climate action and regional office and promote it through them and bring it to a wider audience across the country yeah.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Scott?

CLLR SCOTT: Thanks Cathaoirleach and thanks Jim. I think it's a great initiative and I have to commend everyone involved and working on it. I was at the SDG and Local Government along with PPN and there was great engagement from everybody at that as well. So well done. I suppose a couple of comments on it is, I think there is a piece that has to be done regarding educating local groups so we're sure they know enough about all the SDGs to its full extent and I do think the environment pillar is the most well known, but I think that does get lost because the SDGs do encompass such a wide social role as well, I do think it's important And just the second comment is, I think Wicklow County Council have a real opportunity to lead the way on the SDGs through the County Development Plan as well and use them as goals that we want to achieve and they are actual targets rather than just labelling them as what we have done and I do think it's important. Other than that really looking forward to using the tool, well done again and to all the team there.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor Scott. I don't see anybody else looking to come in. Sorry, yeah. Councillor O'Brien.

CLLR O'BRIEN: Sorry for interrupting you there. So something that I think is important Jim but the sustainable development goals, 17 goals to transform our world. So they are not novelty or add on extras and I think maybe in terms of the mapping tool, its value comes from its usage and even within all the members of the Council we can bring that to life by linking in with the groups we're connected to by informing and encouraging and supporting people to recognise, as Councillor Scott

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said, there is a recognition piece you are doing stuff that's connected to the SDGs, that's positive, but the SDGs are a guide for us to transform the world and 2030 is the original deadline that was set for how, when we would see whether the SDGs had a profound impact that we're hoping they would have but I think there is certainly a role for us to play in that regard. And to ignore them is risky and I think there is huge potential for them to be a guide for us but also for us to but to inform how we'll work in the changing times ahead. It's great stuff.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Jim, can I thank you very much for the presentation and look forward to working with this in the future and I am sure if anybody has any questions you will respond to them. So thank you very much Jim for that and going to move on to item number four. So to update the members on water quality in County Wicklow and we have Jonathan Sexton to present this for us. So Jonathan you are very welcome.

(WATER QUALITY PRESENTATION)

CATHAOIRLEACH: Jonathan, thank you very much for that. I will just ask you to take that slide off the screen because I can't see anybody. Thank you very much for that, that's very informative and a lot of work going on there in our rivers as we can see from that. You are going to circulate that presentation are you?

MR SEXTON: Yeah, it's a big document. We'll try and print it and circulate it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Leonard.

CLLR LEONARD: I just want to thank Jonathan for all the work he's doing. I haven't actually met him in person yet but I've heard lots about him and all the good work that he's doing. I think we all have a role to play in creating awareness and we've been ignoring our rivers and the river quality for too long and these people have done amazing work with their educational program and I think a lot of members, it would be a good idea for everybody to sign up to one of these if they get a chance to. It's a great way of learning about water ways and creating awareness for the kids and the next generation and hopefully improve the water over the next few years.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor and Councillor Derek Mitchell.

CLLR MITCHELL: That's good news about Wicklow, I just have a particular query, will the Newcastle River downstream of the bridge, it's gone down in status and there's report in relation to a planning application in Newcastle from the inland fisheries to say that, there is been a number of breaches of the license and various other issues. And essentially it's over the amount of water in the stream which isn't enough to discharge the waste but the go-ahead is given to a developer in Newcastle where I thought there would be no more building attached to the sewage works. So as I have asked for something from the Council to say what is going on here and I am just concerned having

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breaching the license conditions with the plant, and having known for a long time and somebody was given the go-ahead to connect to the Irish Water plant. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Jonathan, do you want to come back in there?

MR SEXTON: Thanks for the comments there, it would be great. Our local water community officer is Donal O'Keeffe, he used to work in Wicklow County Council. Derek, it's a valid comment that you make. We were consulted at the time with regard to Newcastle Waste Water Treatment Plant and its capacity and its licence conditions. What I noted from our monitoring which is monitoring the river up stream and downstream is that the treatment plant has been optimized over the last three- years and it's shown huge improvements in the down stream results in the river compared to the up stream and we're not seeing an impact from the treatment plant currently which is great to see. It's great to see when somebody spends the money that they actually get the improvements in the water body that they're actually discharging to. As far as those process optimisations, I am presuming they have managed to increase the capacity of that plant and they wouldn't be able to put in the 40 or 50 houses unless they had the capacity to treat that. The problem for me with the water quality perspective is when we looked at up stream data over the last five years there is a steady increase in the orthophosphate in the river and that means there is something happening in that catchment further upstream that's allowing extra phosphate into the river. Primarily that's an agricultural catchment but we have referred that to Law Pro and they are going to have to sent the catchment scientist into the Newcastle River to actually look at the maps and look at land using and target key places within that catchment that they are going to have to walk and sample to try and identify the hot spots and liaise with the various stakeholders.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Jonathan, Councillor Silvester Bourke. You're on mute.

CLLR BOURKE: Thank you very much Cathaoirleach and thanks Jonathan for the presentation. I would be concerned that agriculture is getting blamed a lot there and I just like to think that Jonathan might consider that quite a lot of farmers in Wicklow are very compliant with nitrate directives and perhaps some of the credit would be due to them for the improvements and while there might be occasional hot spots he talks about I wouldn't like to think farmers in general are labelled that they aren't playing their part, they are playing their part to make sure water quality improves. I don't believe any farmers are using excessive amounts of fertiliser. We do our best to stick the guidelines and apply what is needed to crops, to grassland for maximum efficiency. We're probably trapped in the cheap food policy of governments in that European policy is driving cheap food. We're competing with import from all over the world and it's all about the lowest cost per unit. It's forcing farmers to be as efficient as possible and that's where the problem is, I believe. We're at the cutting edge of sustainable food production, and it's a very thin line between overdoing it and getting right. So it's a debate I would love to have with you if there is more time but just be aware that farmers are playing their part.

CATHAOIRLEACH: It's an excellent report and your idea of printing if off, if you could, I think we would get a lot of good value from that. Councillor Blake.

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CLLR BLAKE: Will thanks for the presentation and I know the river basin catchment programme in 2004, so there is been a lot of work done there over the last 16-years in terms of improving water quality and can I ask you, what level of attitude did the EPA have in terms of discharging sewage plants and I know you did a lot of work in the river catchment area of the Derry River over the last number of years and all the reports that came back, my understanding was the catchment area was of good quality and yes, discharges led to serious difficulties over the last number of years with the result we haven't been able to build any serious level houses because of what was said in terms of discharges from the sewage plants, so can you actually tell us to any extent of their contribution towards the problems of the Derry River.

MR SEXTON: Yeah, it's very black and white issues with Irish Water, they're quite strict and both of plants you mentioned as far as I am aware are at capacity and I know Tinahely there is optimization works going on all the time, trying to reduce surface water coming into the plant. Shillelagh they are also spending money on optimisation including improving the plant performance and the monitoring I carry out up steam and down steam of both of those locations showing they are currently not having an impact. We are not seeing impacts down steam of both of those locations. Now that's not to say they've unlimited capacity to take extra houses, Vincent, I'm afraid to say. That's definitely something to bring up with Irish Water if you think it could be optimized to a level where they can take extra development, that's up to you to bring up with them. There's nobody else so Jonathan I want to thank you for the presentation and I look forward to it being circulated to us. I'm going to move on now to item number five. To approve a temporary overdraft accommodation of €20m for the financial year ending 31st December, 2021. So I am going to bring director Brian Gleeson here.

MS GALLAGHER: Before we proceed can I just mention two things, just as a matter of housekeeping, since we took the role Councillor Derek Mitchell and Councillor Irene Winters, Councillor Gerry O'Neill and Councillor John Snell joined the meeting between 14:09 and 14:40. That's just for noting. And just in relation to this item before Brian Gleeson comes in, this requires a resolution of the Council and we cannot pass a resolution of the Council on line. So in order to pass resolution we have to convene a special meeting by quorum. That's been organised for tomorrow at 2:15. So this matter is in consideration by the councillors today, a proposer and a seconder. If there is no decent we'll meet by quorum tomorrow and this resolution needs to be with the Department by 5th of November.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Lorraine, this is a standard procedure we do every year whereby we get approval for 20 million or bank overdraft facility if we should so require it. Fortunate we haven't had to use the bank overdraft and long may it continue. So we still need to go through the process and we have to put in the official application to the Department by this coming Friday. That a Council resolution needs to be attached with the application. So this is the process and the reason why we need to meet tomorrow with a quorum to get through that. I suppose the 20 million is in respect, it's more so, it's cash flow in relation to timing differences that may occur throughout the year mainly in relation to say housing, we would be spending a lot of money in that particular area on capital schemes and then we would make application to the department looking for grant aid back

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and obviously with the new RDF projects paid up front and claiming. So this is to cover us for any delays in the claiming of grants whereby we might need or cash flow supplemented with the bank overdraft. So it's standard and we have had 20 million for the last number of years. So there is no change in that. Proposer and seconder in relation to it. Proposed by Councillor Silvester Bourke. Councillor Timmins, yes.

CLLR TIMMINS: Just briefly Brian, I know in the past we've done this but in the past we've never had to use it. Do you anticipate we will have to in this case?

CATHAOIRLEACH: I don't think so, fortunately the Department has been quite good in actually processing the claims especially on the housing side and we have got them back fairly timely fashion which helped the cash flow. So we haven't been near to using this year even allowing for the impact of COVID. Next year obviously we expect there still to be some impact with COVID but we would hope and expect there will be continuation of government support, similar to the rates waiver scheme that was put in place this year to assist county councils with their cash flow. So I would be hopeful we wouldn't have to use it but you never know. I would feel very confident we won't can to dip into it but it's always good to have a safety net there. Councillor Dunne you were indicating you wanted to come in? No. Okay. It's been proposed by Councillor Bourke. Is there a seconder? Seconded by Councillor Blake.

MS GALLAGHER: That's great and we'll meet tomorrow to pass that resolution. Thank you members for that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Item number six is the ministerial, order online meetings, so Lorraine I am going to bring you in here.

MS GALLAGHER: Thank you very much, we on standby the update the elected members on the new council chamber and customer care hub. Members will have been circulated with the guidelines for supplementary standing orders regulating the proceedings relating to Council meetings. So as you all know the minister has signed an order giving effect for online meetings and all decisions taken by elected members at such meeting, whether physically or remotely has the same status in law as decisions or votes taken at the meeting. Cathaoirleach it's a matter for elected members of each local authority to decide if and how meetings of the local authority will be held remotely and where elected members take such decisions they should consider appending supplementary standing orders to the existing standing orders to regulate holding of meetings. These will have to be adopted by the elected members. So we'll have to meet in a physical space to adopt these such as remote meetings and management of remote meetings and the, waiting procedures, remote voting. Attendance of the public and the meetings of committee. Cathaoirleach, what we plan to do is to work with the protocol committee and the protocol committee now after this meeting and the elected members and the executive and to bring a set of draft standing orders to the Councillors by the December meeting and that's scheduled for the 7th of December. We have to meet physically. Our intention would be remote meetings, paragraph one allows a designation that the local authority may meet in a Council Chamber an external venue to accommodate meetings of the Council. We have a number of newly refurbished elected members rooms, or online meetings

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completely or a combination of the above to provide for physical and/or remote attendance by elected members. Cathaoirleach, from conversation with yourself and the executive, what we would be proposing is a hybrid approach and we have the new chamber which should be ready at the end of January. So we can have a mix of physical meeting and some tuning in remotely and have an examination of the Council Chamber to see how many elected we can fit in with the two meters, physically distancing and we deal with all of that in the standing orders. So Cathaoirleach if you wish to go through the presentation first and go back to the standing orders?

CATHAOIRLEACH: I would like to go through the presentation and bring in Gemma, so you are very come.

MS WHITTY: Thank you Cathaoirleach and elected members and I am just going to share my screen with you.

(PRESENTATION BY MS GEMMA WHITTY)

CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, can you hear me Gemma. I just want to congratulate you for all the work you have done on this project as project manager, you have gone a great job on it and you have been down so see the works and it looks really well and it would be really good to welcome members of the public into the new centre as they come into their business and we have rooms where they can talk privately and it really lifts the whole ambience of the foyer so thank you very much for all the work you have put into this and the rest of people who have worked with on this on behalf of myself and I am sure members would send on those issue wishes to you as well. Councillor Behan wants to come in.

CLLR BEHAN: That you are Cathaoirleach and thank you to Gemma and thank you for all your hard work and we look forward to getting back to some normality. It was really about the previous matter about the standing orders and I understand the protocol committee will be discussing it later but there are two things they very important and one there is some end date put in the supplementary standing orders that this isn't the kind of thing that could carry into next year this is an emergency situation and any change should be very much an emergency measure. The first lockdown it was a sunset clause passed so it automatically stopped and it to be renewed if there was a situation where it had to be renewed again. So I would urge there is a sunset clause put in and the second one is attached to that is the opportunities for the public and the press to be present when we are making any decisions, it's vital that when we make decision we're making decision on behalf of the public. So the public should have the same access online I believe anyway that we have. And the press, any members of the press or media should also have that opportunity and I would ask that the protocol committee consider those two matters.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Behan. Councillor Kennedy.

CLLR KENNEDY: Two quick points and one is to thank you for the presentation and I am just wondering in relation to queries that have already been submitted but may not have been responded to, would it be worthwhile issuing them to the customer service email address to have them recorded and start that process. And maybe might clarify, I think the track and tracing of

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queries is an excellent addition and particularly help myself and my other colleagues and the second point Cathaoirleach is just in relation to the comments Councillor Behan made there and the protocol committee and discussions for later on and what I would ask the committee is if they would consider changing the standing orders on a more permanent basis and particularly thinking of discussions I had with my fellow female councillors recently around difficulties for women and women with children, for individuals with additional carers needs or additional access or health needs attending meetings and just life in general being very different and I think we're very lucky we have a diverse range of councillors and we need to support this going forward and I would like to see the opportunity in any of our female councillors would like to have more children and they are at home on maternity leave this wee equally you allowed to log on and vote and we have the opportunity to make changes that are going to encourage more people to get involved no politics going forward. Thank you very much Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Kennedy. Councillor Fortune.

CLLR FORTUNE: I just want to say the place looks really fantastic and I am looking forward to the communications matching, I have been critical of communication in recent times and I am looking forward to the communication matching the ambience you are delivering and no doubt that it will. I couldn't hear what Councillor Behan was saying there but I got the gist of it and I would fully endorse and support what was just said. I believe what is being set up now is very, very beneficial from lots of angles. It shouldn't stop us having any kind of a meeting to discuss any kind of issue and having everyone involved and I think Councillor Behan was making reference to the public and press and we have to make sure everybody is involved and we're living in the age of technology and it shouldn't be a challenge and the space we have in the county buildings is looking what it should look like and we should match it by being brave and pushy on how we communicate and make ourselves transparent and open and well done to everybody and good luck with your new role and look forward to working with you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Councillor Fortune, Councillor Murphy.

CLLR MURPHY: Thank you Cathaoirleach and huge congratulations. Just one point I would like to point out is the seating, I know it seems to be low seating which is fine but for those coming with mobility problems I think there needs to be one or two or three aisle seating placed with hard hand rests so they are stable when they get up on it and that has been an issue with some libraries and it's been addressed. So there maybe some people that might not be able to get up with back trouble or mobility problems on lower seating, so maybe if there was two or three higher seating placed it would be very accessible. So really well done thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor Cronin.

CLLR CRONIN: Thank you Cathaoirleach just a question for Gemma thanks for the presentation and I have to say the work looks fantastic, we're going to have a very snazzy chamber now. Just a question on the central line, do we have a timeframe for when we should have a response like, if we send in a query do you hope to have a response back when a certain period of time, thanks a million.

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CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Councillor Cronin. Gemma can you come back in please.

MS WHITTY: First of all thanks to everyone for their lovely comments, just to address a few questions, Councillor Kennedy, we have taken overall the Councillor representational requests centrally as from two-weeks ago when we launched we did a soft launch on the customer service hub. If there are any outstanding previous requests previously submitted directly to the departments you are more than welcome to forward them on to us again. The whole idea about managing the Councillor representation requests centrally is just to give a consistent professional service delivery on an equal format. We give a written acknowledgement and we'll forward it on to the directorate and they give us a copy to us. So it provides a clear record for all correspondence which goes on the comments of Councillor Fortune. Communication is very important to have a clear, consistent across the board. So you get your ticket reference number and you have evidence you have submitting your question on behalf of the citizen. There is also the possibility, the facility for doing monthly or weekly reports to see where cases are unresolved so we can chase them up and follow them up on your behalf. Moving on to Councillor Murphy, thank you for your lovely comments. Just to advise the seating area in the foyer has not been complete yet. However, we're ordering additional seating including pods for breakout areas and we'll definitely consider your point there. Moving on to Councillor Avril Cronin, as I mentioned about responses, we'll receive all the questions, automatic acknowledgement from us personally with your case number if you have logged on the CRM system and we endeavour to issue acknowledgement within a 48-hour period. We will forward it on to the directorate and we have a lot of support communicates from the directorate and they are issues responses quite promptly. If failure to do some we have our liaison officer. So we look at the cases unresolved and they will be followed up accordingly.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I heard a story that there was a member of the public that was so delighted with the help she got that they brought you in a cake. Thank you for all your work. I am just going to bring Lorraine back in here for a second.

MS GALLAGHER: The protocol committee will meet later on and what definitely missing from our online meetings is the attendance of the public and the media and that will be dealt with under standing orders. So what we'll be striving forwards is a set of draft standing orders that the elected members can consider with a view to adopting those standing orders with a view to having a hybrid meeting with the social distancing with the public, with as the public or press can attend there or remotely.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you Lorraine. I am going to move on to item number seven which is the elected members public liability and personal accident schemes.

MS GALLAGHER: This item is just for noting, the elected members have been circulated with the public liability scheme and if you can contact Gillian Lang with your preferred preferences.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks Lorraine, item number 8, correspondence.

MS GALLAGHER: Just to say our budget meeting is 23rd of November. There is a workshop on Wednesday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock I think it is.

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CATHAOIRLEACH: Yeah.

MS GALLAGHER: And also the Joint Policing Committee. We're welcoming Commissioner Drew Harris next Thursday week at 2 pm.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That's great, thank you very much that's great. And just AOB?

MS GALLAGHER: That's it. No AOB on the agenda.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much for joining us.

CLLR BLAKE: Just a note of sympathy to the Kelly family to our MEP Sean Kelly on the death of his mother down in Kerry.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll be having a physical meeting on the 23rd and I will do all the sympathy notifications at that stage, is that okay? And we can note that again on that day Cllr Blake. Thank you very much for being with us.

MS GALLAGHER: Just to say can yourself and the members of the protocol committee please stay on and we'll do the protocol committee meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks everybody for being with us.

MS GALLAGHER: First Monday in December.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, bye, bye.