

**ORDINARY MEETING OF**  
**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ON**

**MONDAY, 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022 AT 2:00 P.M.**

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CATHAOIRLEACH: Members, thank you very much for attending the meeting today. May I start with your indulgence to ask Teresa to read the agenda. I have a slight eyesight problem, I am going for surgery, please God, that will work out, the last time I make excuses. So, please, with the etiquette. Helen, sorry.

HELEN PURCELL: Welcome to the members joining remotely and to the public and to the press. To ask the members to keep cameras off and mics off when not speaking. If you have connectivity issues, get in touch and we will get you back in.

We will go ahead with the roll call.

(Reads register)

HELEN PURCELL: Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Helen. Can we have commiserations, please.

HELEN PURCELL: To suspensions of starchy are standing orders. I will read them out. The first proposed about Cllr Tom Fortune, seconded Cllr Mary Kavanagh, the wording is that the requests the publication for the action plan for the disability capacity review and the inclusion in the Budget plan for 2023 to ensure that another year does not pass when families and individuals are left without indication of when and who urgent needs that they experience will be met. That the council requests a successful Budget announcement for disability so individuals with disabilities and supporters can understand the existing and the new residential supports, stay places and respite supports are provided in the Budget in 2023, how it is outlined in the capacity review. If we are agreed.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Is everyone agreed with that? 4.30pm in it is a long meeting. So, OK. 4.30pm. And there is another suspension.

HELEN PURCELL: From Cllr O'Brien and Councillor Anne Ferris to present a resolution to the members that we give Mr Charlie Bird the freedom of the county.

So, again, if everyone is agreed we can deal with it at 4.30pm?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, that is great. Thank you, Helen. Now, the commiserations and the deaths.

HELEN PURCELL: We have a number of the grievances relating to our staff. Seamus Kinslar [SIC], brother of Chris Kinslar. Sheila McNamara, mother of Aisling McNamara. David Dewan. Maura Hassan. Sarah Sally Burn.

Thomas Murphy, father of former colleague, Thomas Murphy. Finally, Anthony Wright, a former employee of Bray in the Municipal District.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Will we stand for a minute's silence, please.

CATHAOIRLEACH: May the souls and the souls of the faithfully departed rest in peace. Amen.

Thank you. Disposal notices?

HELEN PURCELL: Minutes.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, please, read them.

Sorry, John Snell.

CLLR SNELL: Congratulations to local woman, Catherine O'Connor from Ratinew, who picked up an individual bronze medal and a team gold for Ireland in the World Championships over the weekend in Finland in the cross-country 8 kilometre over 45 age group. That Catherine is a student of that great club in the Athletic Club run by Bill Walker, as everyone knows the work, he does with cancer support and the cup final last weekend. To highlight that the occasion took place in Shamrock Park in Ratinew, I wanted to thank the committee for running in behind at late notice to put on a facility for this, the Blue-Ribbon Event for the football within County Wicklow. Congratulations to Tad More on winning the first Wicklow cup and you being an Arklow man, I know you have 3 strong clubs down there, the most famous is the Black and the White of Arklow Town. I know that they will be back. That is the niceties out of the way. To bring up an issue, if I can with your indulgence, to all 32 members of Wicklow County Council, that the grounds in Bray is owned by Wicklow County Council. There is a 35-year lease signed in 2001 with Bray Wanderers, I know there is lots within the chambers very familiar with the promotion of football within the Garden County, I'm speaking to the converted, I know but the reality is that the Wicklow Cup Final was not held in the grounds as the current administration in Bray Wanderers sought 2,200 Euros for the venue to be held there for four hours. I think that is not in the spirit of the lease that was signed.

That lease ceases in 2035 in 14 years' time. We as the elected members responsible for the council assets need to write to Bray Wanderers to request an explanation why such a price was asked of the Wicklow League. Any of us that love football, many here do, understand that the promotion of games for our boys and girls all the way up to adult football, that the Carlisle Grounds is the holy grail of Wicklow Football. I ask you to write a letter to the Wicklow Wanderers ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, for bringing that up. I don't have to remind you how this works you know this, about with regards to the suspension notice, you will have done the writing, and bringing it up to the attention but I have to move on to the meeting. I thank you for bringing it up but I will move to the meeting. I will ask the staff to write.

>>: If I can come in, that the lease is held by Wicklow County Council, so, as manager of the Bray Municipal District I would look into what you have raised.

CLLR SNELL: ...

>>: This matter was not on the agenda. It was not under suspension of standing orders.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I understand that, I am here to work with the members Lorraine. Thank you, John. Moving on.

HELEN PURCELL: To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 13th of June 2022. As circulated.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

HELEN PURCELL: Cllr O'Brien proposed? Can we have a seconder. Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy.

HELEN PURCELL: The second item on the agenda is to confirm and sign the minutes of the annual meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday the 20th of June, 2022 as circulated. Who seconded that, Cllr O'Brien? Right.

That is proposed by Cllr Shay Cullen and seconded by Cllr O'Brien. The third item on the agenda is to consider the disposal of property sited in the townland of Bray, Folio No WW1710L, known as 2 Fatima Terrace, Bray by Transfer Order to Ms Anne Walsh by transfer Fatima Terrace, Bray the person entitled to the freehold interest in the property as per the notice previously circulated.

Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy? And Cllr Dermot O'Brien? Thank you. Agreed by all?

ALL: Yes.

HELEN PURCELL: Considering the disposal of property Folio No. WW4065, Wicklow County Council, the property known as 28 Mellows Avenue, Arklow Wicklow County Council by Transfer Order to Ms Breda O'Reilly of 28 Mellows Avenue, Arklow, Wicklow County Council. The person entitled the to the freehold interest, as per notice previously circulated. Proposed by Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, and Cllr Pat Fitzgerald.

Are all agreed?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Agreed.

HELEN PURCELL: The 5th item to consider the filling of vacancy on the board of Mermaid County Wicklow Arts Centre, arising from Councillor Mags Crean.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We have a nomination for that.

Cllr O'Brien?

CLLR O'BRIEN: If no-one is coming forward, I would like to propose Councillor Anne Ferris.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Is there a seconder for that? All in agreement with that.

Agreed. OK. Thank you.

The next one.

HELEN PURCELL: Item number 6 to consider the filling of vacancies to the East Coast Regional Drugs Task Force arising from the resignation of Councillor Mags Crean.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Nominations for that? No. OK, can we put it on the next agenda, Helen or ask a few people again.

HELEN PURCELL: It will be adjourned to the next agenda. The members on it at the moment are yourself, and Cllr John Snell, the two members on the East Coast Regional Drugs Task Force.

CATHAOIRLEACH: This is a vital committee to have in the area, in the county, I encourage people to think about this. As Cllr John Snell says, it is doing great work. I would appreciate if we can get a nomination for the next meeting. Thank you.

HELEN PURCELL: To review standing order number 6, place of meeting and address of principle office, the elected members at previous meetings amended standing orders to allow for hybrid meeting on a temporary basis now to include the wording of item 6 of standing orders place of meeting and address of principle office to allow hybrid meetings to occur to allow in-person remote or hybrid meetings held as determined by the council. So that the competing can occur in Council Chamber, County Buildings and external venue of the council, one or more council buildings linked remotely. With a web address or a Conference call telephone number or aiming of above that is elected by members that is hybrid meetings. I think that everyone will agree that they have been useful to allow us to continue with business during COVID. To have the option available in the standing orders through the couple's wish to have a hybrid meeting at any time. We need a propose, a seconder and a vote to amend the standing orders.

CLLR MURPHY: I propose it, Teresa.

HELEN PURCELL: It was proposed by?

CLLR MURPHY: Cllr Miriam Murphy.

HELEN PURCELL: Seconded by? Cllr Sylvester Bourke. To amend the wording of standing order number 6, Cllr Joe Behan is not present.

(Vote taken)

That is 29 for, 3 not present. Item 8 to set date and time for council meeting to consider the third Chief Executive's report on submissions to amendment to the proposed amendments to the draft County Development Plan to make the County Development Plan 2022-2028.

CATHAOIRLEACH: To mention, there has been an email came in on Friday about new guidelines to this. So, maybe I will ask the Chief Executive to explain that. Sorry, we are going to [inaudible]

>>: Thank you. To reiterate what you said. We intended to get the final Chief Executive's report this week but the Minister on Friday published guidelines on development plans so we would like time to see if they have effect on the last stage of the development plan to integrate into the report, so the report is going out in the next 2 weeks, we hope with the review undertaken. We would then suggest we have a special meeting on the 12th of September to give you time to deal with the County Development Plan final stage to adopt the plan on a stand-alone meeting, rather than to integrate it into the normal meeting on the 5th. We are not sure about the time but better to have a stand-alone meeting in case it runs on. But the report going out as when we can finalise it in light of the guidelines from last Friday.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Are the members happy with a meeting on the 12th? All agreed? OK.

Propose and seconder, please. Cllr Shay Cullen. Secunder? [inaudible]

HELEN PURCELL: All agreed? Do you want to book in a time for people's dairies? 10am. That is 10am on the 12th of September. 9 to consider the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report June 2022.

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK, Chief Executive, please.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, at the outset, we have a fairly packed agenda. Obviously, there are suspension of standing orders, so I may ask the members if they can, in order to progress, the agenda, that we try to keep the Chief Executive report to an hour that is hobbles, given the number of items on the agenda. If there is anything relevant to say an SPC or Municipal District, that you can leave it on until then, that is appreciated. In relation to a few highlights.

Last Friday week we had a skills seminar here, a very successful session hosted by Minister Simon Harris to look at the skills gap in the areas of food and renewable energy and it was successful, from that a Task Force has been set up, which the Education Providers, such as SETU and KWETB to progress that matter to address the skills shortage and the education programmes we can develop for that the highlights in the Chief Executive report, just highlighting the 82 homes officially opened a couple of weeks ago in Hawkes Town and New Town and Jamieson Heights there was a community development fund of over 23,500 for 9 community groups in County Wicklow and as was mentioned previously, the County Wicklow Town, achieving the 7th placement in the High Ball Survey. [sic]

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Edward Timmins?

CLLR TIMMINS: Thank you, Chief Executive for the report. One item to raise. I have raised it here several times before, it is on page 60, the RADF Baltinglass approved funding in 2019, told that the works would commence in July 2022, when last requested a few months back. I believe at this stage that the tenders have been returned but still no sign of a contract appointed to report the states there. We hope to appoint a contract in Q3, that is obviously, July, August, September, which is pushing it back further. People come to me all the time, when is this

starting? So I would like to get some concrete information as to when it will start. to put, could a push be made to appoint a contractor and process the tenders, thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Lourda Scott?

CLLR SCOTT: Thank you. A couple of quick questions, one, I was wondering when we are to see the results of the Town Team's Review. That has not been updated. Is there movement on the production of the dog fouling videos? We are in the middle of the summer season it is still a problem and what are the council's plans for funding to complete the finishings on the walls, Kelly Close, I believe Joe was to look into that but wondering what the movement on that is.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Avril Cronin?

CLLR CRONIN: Thank you very much. I also was asking for an update on the development in Baltinglass. I know that Cllr Edward Timmins has asked that, so I will not go into more detail on that. Is there news on funding for the bridge in Baltinglass? Do we have updates on what is happening with the master plan for Burgage Lands? So, those are my three questions. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I may ask for the answer to them now, we start with Cllr Edward Timmins. Chief Executive, if you can answer that, please.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I suppose, look, as the report said, councillor, we have tenders. There is a process that has to be gone through with the tender. So at this point it is not possible to set a date. So we have to set a date at that stage. But not at this current stage. We will keep the members of the district informed. If there is progress on that matter.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Lourda Scott. A question on the Town Teams?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: That was the report, was it? Sorry, I missed ... the review? It is being circulated in team. So we are coming up with a draft on that. Then it will be circulated subsequent to that. So, possibly, we will look at maybe in September, having it at the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Joe, can you answer the question?

>>: The location as far as the company capital team is complete. There is no extra fund available. If there are works, they are done at a local level. The works as far as we are concerned are complete.

CATHAOIRLEACH: From Cllr Lourda Scott, the dog fouling, when will Environment take that one?

>>: I don't have information to hand but I can get it to you after the meeting is over.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I do know, I was asked to go to Greystones on Wednesday to launch a dog fouling campaign by Jim Cawley, we could next to him. I know it is happening on this Wednesday. So happy with that. Cllr Avril Cronin, the question about the N81, I think?

CLLR CRONIN: It was an update on Baltinglass as well. The funding, although, I know he has answered that question and the bridge in Baltinglass and the master plan for Burgage Lands.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Master plan, thank you.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Master plan, that is in progress. The next stage is to consult with the planning as regards any of the issues coming up in the options put forward by the consultants.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you happy with the answers? I don't know if you are happy but it is the answer at the moment.

CLLR CRONIN: Sorry, the funding for the bridge. Just the funding for the bridge? They can get back to me on it. Send me an email.

>>: The Baltinglass bridge is looked at in the next tranche of RFE funding applications.

CLLR CRONIN: Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Tom Fortune?

CLLR FORTUNE: You will be glad to hear, Chief Executive, I only have one question! There was an article in a Sunday paper yesterday quite astounding for lots of reasons. It read, on housing: Council's build 264 homes. To push to build it was a question asked by a minister, it sounds like a three-card trick and a very cute PR exercise but I think it is something that we as a Local Authority, and I know how hard the housing section in the council work and how hard the members here work and the chairman of the SPC work so hard on all of this. So I think it must be discussed at some level. If we bring the SPC into a meeting with us all to talk about it. I think this is a three-card trick. That we should react to it. It is basically saying that we as a Local Authority among a heap of authorities, are doing nothing. I have sat here in the chamber for a reasonable amount of time now, and heard about, you know we come up with a scheme, it has to go to a design, this, that, it takes for our five years to bring to fruition. The PR stem from here does not go into that. I am pretty sure, I would ask lots of questions, on lots of things here but when fairness is not being dealt with fairly, it must be highlighted. I know there is a problem, we don't have the funding, we don't have this. Recently we opened 82 houses and permission in my village for 75 and others, so, I think this is a slur on Local Authorities. I think we are being used by national politicians to cover up for the work that they are not doing. If they were to stop holding everything up, things would happen more quickly. I think that as a Local Authority we should not roll over and accept this but challenge it, to meet and to discuss it formerly. I propose to do that sooner, rather than later.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, I don't know if the CEO was happy with the one question but I was happy. Thank you, Tom!

CLLR FORTUNE: Have I to keep you happy, Chair! Cllr Grace McManus?

CLLR MCMANUS: We heard there was to be a homeless outreach in Bray, I wanted to say thank you to the officials involved in bringing that service back. Looking for information about the Bray members as to how it will work, if there is a time frame as people ask us how and when they can present so that information will be useful to us. The second question is about the San Remo facility in Bray. I have had stakeholders asking about the referral process. I understand that the referral process is through the Wicklow County Council. But wonder if there is formal engagement with the stakeholders working with homeless people in Bray about the service so that there is a conversation around that. It will be useful for the people on the front line working with...

I don't know if the CE was happy you only had one question, but I was happy. Cllr Grace McManus.

CLLR McMANUS: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just two quick questions. The first is we heard at our last Municipal District meeting we are going to have a homeless outreach in Bray which is really welcome. I want to say a big thank you to the council officials in bringing that service back. Just looking for some information for the Bray members of how that will work. If there is a timeframe for that. People ask us how and when they can present. So that information will be really useful to us. The second question is just about the San Remo facility in Bray. I have had some stakeholders asking me about the referral process, I understand that the referral process is through Wicklow County Council, but I am wondering if there could be some informal engagement with the stakeholders who work with homeless people in Bray about that service, just so there can be a conversation around that. I think that would be very useful for the people on the frontline working with people in very vulnerable times.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Derek Mitchell.

CLLR MITCHELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I wanted to ask the Chief Executive, earlier in January the Council commenced a study of the number of staff in the Municipal District offices, in particular the outdoor staff and a report was going to be produced about that. I would like to know when we can expect that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Joe, would you like to answer Cllr Tom Fortune's question?

JOE: You might send me the article... it's difficult to answer an article and I don't normally do it, but I will... what I will say is recently we did get and I am surprised at that. We did get a correspondence from the department and it was regarding the housing delivery plan. What it said was that the average was about 40% and we were below that. I remember the local authority, our housing delivery plan was developing 43% turn key local authority 1%, turn key approved housing body 26%, approved housing body, building on own land 23%, part 518%. PPC7%. Repair and lease 1% so that might buck that trend. I will get the article later on and maybe I will correspondence directly with him and through the SPC if that is okay. We do have a fairly, the local authority has a fairly big delivery of our own unites through the design and build. It would be seen nationally as a good in that regard. We are probably at this stage nearly

exhausting all the land available to us. So we are actually looking for land, but again we are competing for local authority builds going forward. Some of the bigger schemes will also include, as the councillor mentioned in his own area, that 75 is actually part of 150 and I would hate to think he would split them, I won't, Tom, you might.

CLLR FORTUNE: [INAUDIBLE].

JOE: You are splitting and Lock Lane is 170 not...

CLLR FORTUNE: [INAUDIBLE].

JOE: That is on the list too. Again I will look at the article and I will deal with the SPC, but if you wouldn't mind a copy, the delivery and the local authority in Wicklow has a fairly big supply of its own units. San Remo, there is a local group and maybe the local group might be best to go through in that particular one. We will talk to you directly regarding particular referrals, but the referral system has a safeguarding issue that is important and that was agreed at the local level. So we might just have a chat about that, we want to keep those referrals tight still. That committee is still functional. I think they are the two questions.

CLLR FORTUNE: [INAUDIBLE]... (not speaking into mic)

I was totally on your side. What I am saying is I know what you are doing, but this guy here doesn't seem to know what you are doing. I think either he does know and doesn't want to know, or spinning it whatever way he wants to spin it but it needs to be responded to very properly.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Chief wants to come in there.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I might add and like Joe I haven't read the article so I can't really comment on it. I think maybe the suggestion Joe said if it's brought to the housing SPC and discussed there it's probably the most appropriate place and decide what to do at that stage.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Then we had Cllr Grace McManus question, did you answer the two of them.

JOE: I did...

CLLR McMANUS: It was the homeless outreach in Bray, that was a separate question...

JOE: I will get details of that, I am not quite sure how it's going to work on a week by week basis, but I will get answers to that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Then the last question, Derek Mitchell's question, Chief Executive.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: As stated back in January we had commenced an undertaking to look at all the outdoor workers and the numbers. HR did an exercise of looking at the vacancies and addressing that versus our workforce plan and looking at the Gap analysis. Details were September out to the Municipal Districts and they are examining the numbers and making a submission in relation to what they feel is the optimum number required for their actual district. So those submissions are due back I think, I am not sure, maybe some of them have already come back. When they are all back in, HR will review them and obviously we will produce a report on that. Obviously the next step is if there is a big additional resource requirement, obviously the funding requirement has to come in at that stage. So that is where we are at the moment.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you, Chief Executive. Cllr R O'Connor.

CLLR O'CONNOR: Thank you, chair. I just have one question for the environmental section about a report from the EPA, which found that there were 534 cases where local authorities issued notices to households where septic tanks were malfunctioning, but the issues were not addressed after two years. I was wondering if that is a big problem in Wicklow? I was looking at the Chief Executive's section about waste and all of that and all of these letters we send to people. Is it followed up with? If they could just touch on that a little bit, it would be great.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Dermot O'Brien.

CLLR D O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just looking at the fire service report. The volume of work that is happening in terms of new builds that are happening around the county and compliance in terms of regulations and building control. I am just wondering, a coroner's report I was reading recently about a tragic death in Sligo where two individuals lost their lives in a fire in a property which, the report said was 100% preventable. The recommendation that came out of the coroner's report was that local authorities should develop formal arrangements for housing and fire services to share information and agree on a protocol for ensuring compliance with all fire safety regulations. I am wondering is that something we can do? Or is it something we can put together? I know with new builds, I am sure that happens as a given. But if we are looking at existing housing stock, we are looking at HAP and we are looking at people in vulnerable scenarios, is there a relationship between the housing department and the fire service department? So that we can ensure that regulations and legislation are being complied with. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Gerry O'Neill.

CLLR O'NEILL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Thank you, Brian. Just on the, about two year ago we were, it was announced there would be a new fire station in Dunlavin and in Baltinglass. I am wondering, I am looking an update on that. The last I heard about it was the tenders were to go out in the first quarter of this year, but we haven't heard anything since. If there was anything happening there?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr R O'Connor's question, environment question.

SORCHA: They have a very good record in Wicklow and this year's statistics, would be representative of previous years. This year we undertook 11 inspections of waste water systems and nine were found to be compliant of the two that weren't compliant we issued advisory notices requiring remedial action which are in the process of being followed up. We are proactive in that area and we don't seem to have a huge discrepancy or huge rate of non-compliance but we do have a team who follow those up.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Who is going to answer Cllr Dermot O'Brien's question?

LEONORA: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, that is certainly something I can look at and I will engage with the chief fire officer and the director of services for housing. There is obviously community engagement and community awareness around fire. One of the assistant chief fire officers works closely on a new project in relation to that, but we will engage in relation to that matter. Cllr O'Neill we got approval now to proceed to tender on the two fire stations and that is where we are at. That approval came in in late June, so we are proceeding with that now.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Leonora, for that, are you happy with those answers? I think so. Cllr Peir Leonard.

CLLR LEONARD: I have three. I want to follow up on the casual trading bye laws that were to be reviewed. I know that we were looking at them in Arklow and I think there was a county review being done, so just an update on that. Then in relation to housing, again I am receiving nearly daily notices to quit of families in my own local community and I know we have 140 on record for the county. I am just wondering what we can do about that? I know, like I mean these are a lot of them are true HAP and there is a lot of stress on people out there and not an awful lot of rentals available. I am wondering is there some way that the council can work with the landlords to try and get them to defer the sale of the properties. It seems to mostly be from sales of properties just to try and flatten out that curve. I think that would be really important. Then lastly in relation to the rest centre in Arklow, I know there were businesses displaced

when the emergency happened and they all got, went about their business and I know work has been done with them and the centre has been refurbished, but I want to, some clarification on their reimbursement as businesses. Will they be reimbursed for each week they were displaced? Some have been in contact with me and saying they are only being partially reimbursed for two months when they were out of the building for three months.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Gail Dunne. Cllr Gerry Walsh, sorry.

CLLR WALSH: Just a couple of quick questions. Noticing the budget for the installation of new gas and oil heating installations on social housing. I am just wondering long-term is there a plan to move away from gas and oil installations, it would seem that is the way forward on that. I know Cllr Scott mentioned reviews I am wondering is there anything further on that. The Laragh Glendalough traffic management plan, I am wondering how that is going. I also noted like Cllr O'Connor, I know Sorcha's reply to that. Have we taken any legal action in terms of failure to fix failing septic tanks and also I see the APA have an inspection plan targets for local authorities, so I wonder are we meeting our targets in terms of the number of inspections there. I know there is concerns over health and to human health and environment issues on that. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr M Kavanagh.

CLLR M KAVANAGH: Thank you, chair. I have one queries and it's come up three times in the last week, so I want to find out what the council position is. It's to do with, of all things rat infestations. What is the council's legal requirements under the environmental acts to deal with them under, one is housing developments. As you know when you displace a lot of soil, you also displace a lot of rabbit warren, or whatever they are called. Harbourage I believe it's called. The second would be private houses where the landlord won't take action and the third would be private houses that could be considered to be derelict and the gardens have become overgrown and provide natural harbourage for rats. People are complaining that rats are appearing in their gardens next door to these places and the children are in danger and they are worried sick about letting them out. So I don't know what the legal position is from the environmental point of view? There is definitely a health hazard there. If someone could answer me.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Who will take Cllr Peir Leonard's question on casual trading and the housing question there as well. This can go to Joe, but the casual trading?

SORCHA: I can take that. There is no review of bye laws going on at the moment, one but we can talk to Cllr Peir Leonard about she is thinking about and what the issues are.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Then the housing question.

JOE: The early engagement with the local authorities is essential and they should be getting on to us, we can deal with a couple of issues including the option you gave, talking to landlords and other options. So early engagement, the quicker people get on, even if it can be sorted it doesn't come to a homeless situation, we need to know and we need to work with them. That is the important part. The gas and oil question, the ideal scenario would be heat pumps, however some of our older houses, heat pumps require a higher level of installation, so Times it might have to be higher energy boilers rather than heat pumps. Heat pumps don't work with a lot of older units so. It just doesn't get enough background heat, so each case has to be looked at. We would be describing at BQ, but sometimes oil and gas is the only solution.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Then Cllr Gerry Walsh's question.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I will take that. The Glendalough master plan, we were looking at the environmental impact area, we have met with the consultants. The hope would be Cllr Gerry Walsh would come and make a presentation, back to the council again, possibly September,

depending on what the agenda is for that. So hopefully they will be in a position to do that. That is all part of it, that is all part of it. It's different stages. Obviously there was initial consultation happened last year, then there was the presentation provided. There is consultations going on now at the moment in relation to the environmental impact. That will have to start off officially, there will be a public consultation on that, but to kick it off the plan will be to meet with the members first and give an overview of where we are at the moment.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I think that was all the questions answered.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: In relation to the town regeneration officer. Obviously the funding was announced in relation to that. We applied for sanction from the department, that sanction came back last week, so we will now be commencing a competition in relation to that position.

CATHAOIRLEACH: How could I forget the rats, I hate them! Who is going to answer the question about the rats. That would be environmental as well?

SORCHA: I can advise you this will be a matter for the environmental health officer who are employed by the Health Board. We can provide you with the contact details of the various people who would look into these matters for Cllr Kavanagh.

>>: In relation to a question asked about Cllr Peir Leonard, the last group of Ukrainians were located in May, the centre was made available for the community from the 1st or 2nd of June. We paid compensation for two months. It was available from the 1st of June so no need to pay compensation for the third month.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Miriam Murphy.

CLLR MURPHY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just a few issues I want to come in on. First thing I would like to support Cllr Fortune's issue regarding the article. Also for our own selves, I like to propose to have an overview of the housing department and details. I think we are short-staffed on the outdoor staff and certainly entirely and I think we need a strong review on what, are we under resourced, we can't be over resourced, but and I certainly would be interested going forward in September. Also I think it's very disappointing to sit here again and have no Town Team report that is going on since February/March. As we know the Town Teams are falling and I think it's very long delay, I was quite surprised. Also just coming back to the housing thing, I think again we need to concentrate on our communications in regard of providing people with disabilities housing. Very successful, yes, but the lack of communication with the allocation of that housing specific person is not happening. Then there is a kind of, I suppose, a backtrack on some of the issues that need to be in place and not in place. So I would certainly like to see that gap being a bit closer and also I would like to support the comment of Cllr Leonard. I have recently been told by one of the people that were employed and had a business in it that she was asked for her accounts and that there was a discrepancy in what she had put in and now she is not returning to the premises. That business will be very sadly missed in the coming months. I would like to see that being investigated and going back and it was disappointing to hear that. That is all, thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Patsy Glennon.

CLLR GLENNON: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I thank the Chief Executive for his support. Again, during our recent Municipal District meeting we had Michael Flynn and he got more than an earful about the N81. We were led to believe that minister Ryan was coming to the chamber to discuss it. I think it's important that the N81 is prioritised. We don't feel we get the support from the entire chamber in respect of our needs. Again Leonora has undertaken to investigate the delay in the bus stop. It's going on three years now, it's a little bit Irish that the bus stop didn't be get, it's over a year if not two at this stage. Glendalough master plan, I know that

Brian's predecessor Frank certainly included west Wicklow in the traffic management for Glendalough, because you can't pass through the village of Hollywood now on a Sunday morning because of traffic from Glendalough going through and stopping at the cafe. So we badly need car parking out there somewhere. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Shay Cullen.

CLLR S CULLEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. A couple of questions. One is for Joe. It's around (sound distortion) particularly local authority vacant houses. I am wondering do we have a register of vacant properties across the county. I raised this at our recent district meeting in Wicklow to try and get a register of houses within our own district that are maybe lying idle for a period of time. I do think there is a lot of houses out there that need to be brought back into circulation as fast as possible. I think it should be an item that should be part of the agenda going forward to try and tackle this. I understand obviously there is other houses, not just local authority houses, but I think a big effort needs to be made to deal with this. My second point is... planning and it effects housing. That is the disposal of soil waste. You just have to look at the N11 every day of the week and to see the amount of lorries that drive up and down it. Primarily from south Dublin, north Wicklow, the whole way down to Gorey and Enniscorthy to dispose of soil. We have to look at this, if we are building a lot of houses we need to deal with the soil waste issue. I emphasise soil waste. There is two or three parts to this. First of all, it's, from an environmental point of view it's definitely having an impact, but from a housing point of view, whether it's local authorities building houses, where it's developers building houses, it's adding extra cost to building a house. I think we need to deal with this as a council. Whether it's through planning, there is not enough areas where we can tip soil waste in this county. It's very difficult to get planning around this area and I do believe it's something we have to have a look at. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you. We will start with Cllr Murphy's. She had a few points and questions. Chief Executive.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I am not quite sure was there a questions there, I think they were more...

CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you happy enough that your comments have been covered? Cllr Miriam Murphy, can you hear us?

CLLR MURPHY: Just coming in there now.... one was about the review of the Town Team. That is okay we have been told. I would like to know the problem with, to know how the situation with the business in the hub that changed that the person is not going back to it. It's very disappointing. And will we have a proposed meeting on the housing in Wicklow? An overview of our housing department in Wicklow?

>>: As the members are aware, there were three premises affected when we took over the rescue centre in Arklow for humanitarian crisis. We ran it for two months and we adequately compensated the three businesses affected. I wasn't aware of any business that hasn't come back. As far as I was concerned they were all back. The premise was made available on the 1st of June and there is no reason why any couldn't go back for the 1st of June. We feel that the compensation being paid is more than adequate to compensate them for the two months they weren't operating.

JOE: I might deal with that... there is two housing issues. I seen the report, the private, the ones we are CPOing are on the list, but there was a report on the relets and I will make sure that is on the next meeting across the areas. That might solve some of the particular issues. We also might have choice based letting lined up at some stage for some of the houses that are harder to let so we are not doing a full refurbishment. There was a report on the meeting before this

Chief Executive's report and I will make sure it's on the next one. As regards the Housing For All in rebuilding Ireland there was a quarterly return done on housing and that was the builds in each quarter. If that is not published by September quarter one or two, if they are not doing it nationally I will make sure they are included in the Chief Executive's report going forward. But that might be done nationally and in that case you will see the Wicklow County Council is achieving the targets. I will, in the absence of the Housing For All, Rebuilding Ireland which was done every quarter I will put something on the Chief Executive report to deal with that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, thank you. Cllr Patsy Glennon's question on the N81. Leonora.

LEONORA: Certainly we can raise the N8 is with minister Ryan. His plan is not just to talk about the N11 but the N81 and also active travel. So I think any topics that the members want to discuss with him he is happy to go through them. We have been engaging on the bus stop on the N81. We are trying to deal with further requests of information from the TII at the moment and then just in relation to the Glendalough/Laragh traffic management plan that can include west wick and the Wicklow Gap so we will make sure that happens with the consultants.

CATHAOIRLEACH: There was one more question about parking in Hollywood.

LEONORA: We can look at that as part of that perhaps and engage with the district.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That is the master plan. Then the last question was from, sorry, Shay Cullen, I was trying to think of you. Shay Cullen had a question and he had a fair point about lorries going to Wexford with soil. Like we are a county now that is putting carbon, trying to fight carbon and we are spreading the carbon footprint by vehicles going down across the border. So if that is an environmental question, I would imagine, Sorcha, are you happy to take that?

SORCHA: I can take the question, but I don't have an answer to you, a solution to offer, I am afraid.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Right, okay. I believe every problem has a solution, so it's up to this top table to find one. Shay, you had a second question there as well. A second point you called it.

JOE: The private ones are on the Chief Executive report and I will have to make sure, I think there was, before this there was a report, on the Chief Executive's report a while back on the local authority ones. They will be on the next report. We will have it on it and again in the area meeting I think we deal with that... the third point is we will look at, we are trying to look at choice-based letting. We were trying to get some of the harder to fill non refurbished ones that would be available and we were trying to get, I will check up on that.

Cllr John Mullen?

CLLR MULLEN: Thank you. Two questions, one is in relation to the project that had a first semi-public meeting in Rathbone library. That is an interim project between Wales and Ireland to promote tourism in rural areas, south of Rathbone, and with a view to getting projects and promotions of tours within the region. It was useful but I suggested that they target the meetings in the area where the project is concentrated on.

I think that it is a very good project. I have spoken about it to various organisations in the area, if they can have another meeting in the autumn in the actual region that they are targeting, it is probably better for attendings. To relay secondly, the last meeting prior to September, before the couple meeting is the websites to do with the green ways, that the websites are up and

running as quickly as possible. We will have decisions coming shortly and it is important that the public are kept fully informed to the mappings, in particular and we enter into the autumn.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Chief Executive, can you take that?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I agree with you, cull Cllr John Mullen to look at the websites, it is important to get as we get closer to the position that they are up-to-date. I will check with those at the meeting on those.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members, thank you very much for keeping the Manager's Report short. It is evident if we have one question you get your answer, we start to make comments, it takes longer so thank you very much for the direct questions and for the officials for the direct answers if you didn't get an answer to your question, please feel free to email and to get an update. The next thing on the agenda is?

HELEN PURCELL: To receive an update on the Burgage Lands, Blessington.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I will take that, thank you. Obviously, the last Municipal District members will be familiar with the situation and with the area. But to provide background for the rest of the members. Before I go into the details of the situation. The background is that the start of the existing 6-kilometre Blessington green way trail is located at the Avon facility. At the moment there is massive traffic and parking problems arising from that location, and there is an issue as well for the visitors to the green way. The Baltinglass and the County Wicklow Council have received Newham ruse communications from Shea O'Connor and the residents and Avon to come up with a solution to the traffic problem. The current situation, I've contacted Wicklow County Council on a couple of occasions regarding the parking problems, raised at a Blessington Greenway project meeting in March, where it was decided that the Wicklow County Council would look to see what the options were to address it. In mid-March, Avon requested that Wicklow County Council undertake a traffic planned pilot for the St Patrick's day bank holiday weekend as they expected traffic problems because of the event being on. There was a pilot for that weekend only. Specifically, stated to see how this weekend goes to learn lessons from it before any formal arrangement is made going forward.

The pilot was cancelled due to the weather. So that did not go ahead. A short time later, Avon put forward another pilot plan for the summer period. No approval was provided by Wicklow County Council. And the proposed, the proposal made no reference to a 3-euro charge. It was brought to the attention of Wicklow County Council that Avon went ahead with the works to use the Burgage Lands field as overflow car park. Wicklow County Council officials met with Avon shortly after to confirm that they developed the car park on erroneous understanding that the pilot approval that they had received earlier, covered the summer period too.

However at the same meeting they fully accepted that they proceeded, without the full consultation and consent of the Wicklow County Council. Wicklow County Council directing Avon to stop the 3-euro charge for parking in the couple field. Avon agreed to this instruction

and are using now the field as an overflow car park as needed. And when the barrier is lifted, the cars can go into the Burgage Lands field, free of charge. It is noted that the overflow car park is required at busy times such as the weekends when the weather is good, so, Monday to Friday it is not in use. In the pilot traffic planned for the summer was agreed it would have been brought to the Baltinglass for consideration before implementation but unfortunately it did not happen due to the Avon misinterpreting and they prematurely went ahead with the pilot without [inaudible] to complicate the matters, I referenced previously there was a license agreement in place, relating to third party for grazing purposes, the third party in question gave approval, [distortion of sound] it was helping the council address the traffic problems, this explains the fencing works done, which were to separate and to protect the livestock. So this situation also needs to be recognised. At the end of the day we have two options to close down the overflow car park to then have major issues over the summer period or formalise a temporary arrangement for the overflow car park, free of charge up to the 31st of August only to cover the summer period. The first option is probably the easiest option and the most straightforward option. But I don't believe that it should be that the baby is thrown out with the bath water. I don't believe it is right for the community, for the residents in the area, or the visitors to the Greenway for the residents of the Blessington community. It is against what is requested to us by Shea O'Connor. I have discussed the matter with the Baltinglass Municipal District, and with the members, as I understand the majority agree that the temporary car park solution to the end of August, strictly to the end of August is a better pollution than having no overflow car park at all. That is the proposal that is put forward. To go with this approach. To regularise the license agreement to have it in place until the end of August as a temporary solution. This is similar, look, we have had these situations in other locations where there was the Wicklow gap, temporary car parks to address the traffic problems after a request, so this is no different. Obviously, the premature works by the Avon did not help the matter but we are trying to regularise this, we believe it is the best approach for all concerned. Thank you very much.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Chief Executive.

Cllr Edward Timmins?

CLLR TIMMINS: I will be brief but to the point. Because this is an extremely unsatisfactory situation. Once again in Blessington, for the umpteenth time, I have raised it two or three times over the different matters on Greenway, et cetera, councillors have been excluded from decision-making or not told what the hell is going on here. Just completely, the facts on the ground change, we spot that on the ground thinking how did that happen? Who put up the barriers? The fences? Knowing nothing about it. We would be talking about this today, and I half apologise to the other 26 members, the other 26 councillors as it should not have been discussed here today. It should have been resolved locally in the Baltinglass Municipal District. But the way it should have been resolved to bring it to the district. On top, we are talking of a master plan for a couple of years. We have not seen a master plan. We have seen half

presentations but the master plan needs to be brought to the Municipal District for Baltinglass for the site purchased for 11 million by the council 22 years ago. This must be brought to the district, to the councillors for us to say what is happening with that 31ers, we have the houses to be built on the top end, we know about that but the rest of it? It must be brought to the council, for the councillors to have their say, input and then there will not be heated meetings that we have regulator in relation to Blessington. That is the problem. We are being ignored, side-lined and like the residents in the lakes and that, when you are side-lined and not consulted you get suspicious and rumours grow, et cetera, so there is a fundamental communication problem here.

Wicklow County Council, elected members, are not consulted, often people on the ground in Blessington know what is happening in advance of the local council finding out, we find out after the fact, as in this case. So, I am all for resolving this, being sensible, pro-business, pro-development of walk waist, and everything but really, this was handled wrong and badly and the council have been taken advantage of here from what Brian reported there and he more or less admitted that. So the master plan must be brought to the district to be resolved there. I am concerned about the legalities of this. What are Wicklow County Council covered legally? We have no formal lease or arrangement brought between the council on a disposal matter like you normally a do, as with the soccer club a few weeks ago, it was brought to the meeting and it was agreed to give a lease to the soccer club in Baltinglass. This was not brought before us. There is no, we are not aware of any legal arrangements that were made. Contracts that were signed? And I would like to ask that, actually, what actual documentation was signed by Wicklow County Council with the Avon retailer, with whatever party? I realise that the lady who has a license to graze animals on the land and the existing lands, I know there is no issue there but what agreement has been drafted or signed by the council and the Avon retailer, or whatever company is representing the company or the individuals, I would like to know what was actually agreed. But the bottom line it should have been dealt with at the local district and the master plan needs ...

CATHAOIRLEACH: OK, Cllr Edward Timmins, you mentioned the master plan four times, I will ask the himself to answer. Thank you very much for the questions and inquiries.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: I 100% agree it should have been dealt with locally at the district. At the last council meeting I suggested to go back to the stick. It was not accepted by the members. So, we are where we are here today. As regards to the communication, yes, as I said in my report, councillor, 100%, what should have happened. What the intention would have been, was that if a plan was agreed, that it would have gone to the members before any implementation, that did not happen, I've jumped the gun on it, now we are left in this situation but I agree, it should have been the case. This is not a disposal, it is a temporary license, it would not go before the council. The temporary lice senses do not go before the council. This is a disposal. The master plan, the long-term parking requirements of the area will be addressed by the master plan. 100%. Yes, it will be brought before the members. It is not a fate accompli. It is with the

planning at the moment for the feedback, it will be brought to the members to get their input on it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Gerry O'Neil?

CLLR O'NEIL: Thank you. I find this absolutely an assumption, I don't know. On the advice of the councillor, I wrote, on the advice of the council, I wrote to the council on the 10th of June with a few questions, I have not had a reply yet. One being: What contact was made with Avon about the plan? And it has been planned out since last January. The local Municipal District, have done nothing about it, that is terrible. So, there is something in place, you said by March? Again, that is terrible. I heard nothing about it what soever.

I asked also about the planning, was there a planning application, I don't know. I still don't know. I'm at a loss. I'm elected to the, as the councillor from the area. I cannot for the life of me understand how up to four acres of land disappears overnight. This is not only a little bit of, "There you are, pull in there, Mary", this is up to four acres with a couple of hundred metres of fencing you have the hard-core in. The gates on the side. You had them charging on couple land, the 3 euro, I know it has been dropped now but the point about it, it is, I know the area very well. I am clear that we do need car parking in the area. Especially with the development of the Greenway. And you know, not to confuse people, this is a small section of the Greenway accessed from the different points along the lake. You don't have to go through Avon whatsoever. I find that I hear from the business people of the town with they feel they are being treated very unfairly, that the word is out, you go down, you park up at Avonry and you can do everything there. It is wrong to suggest that the new car park is for the Greenway, that is wrong. I mean, maybe 20% of the people that park there will go on to Greenway, the majority of the people going to the Greenway will go to Russell Town or go to Annie Burns Lane and that is where the problem is. That, Annie Burns Lane, when I look for a small area of land for cash parking for the graveyard, I was told, you cannot get any of that 32ers, that is a part of the master plan and overnight we have Avon moved in with 4ers of it! The congestion, the Guardia have Spain about week in, week out, and talking about where the problem is. The problem is that at the grave yard and Annie Burns Lane, I have been there. I am getting the phone calls from the people there. But I could not support ... I want to see a solution to this, all right, car parking has to be addressed but I would never support. I don't want to go down the record of this here, that Cllr Gerry O'Neil supported these temporary little arrangements, because these temporary little arrangements, it know nothing about its insurance. If there is an accident, whatever on that land, who pays for it? There are series issues here. How it was drawn up. The insurance on it, the planning, we are in the dark, the complete dark. I would again, I would like my colleague, Cllr Edward Timmins, there, that this is typical. I think that Cllr Shay Cullen, outgoing on his speech last week, pointed out how important it is, so to put the councils with the elected reps you may have to take on board exactly what Cllr Gerry O'Neil or anyone else has to say but there should be a consultation process, that we are elected, we got there, elected and every one of the 32 councillors in the room have a mandate from the people. The

decisions should not be decided on outside. At least sit down and talk to the reps, to get their ideas on this. And their suggestions. That is where the problem is here. We are all at loggerheads. We will be at loggerheads simply as there is no consultation whatsoever. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, very well said. OK, do you want to take that question about the insurance?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: There is a letter of indemnity provided by the insurers by Avon to cover Wicklow County Council, so no issue there. As regards the legal side of things, the Road Safety Act, 1962 allows the Local Authority to provide car parks in order to relieve or prevent traffic congestion the Road Traffic Act 1993 allows us to construct for the safety of the convenience of the road user, and 2009, allows for the Local Authority to deal urgently with a situation that requires immediate action. So, legally we are covered. Insurance we are covered. This is just common sense. I wholeheartedly agree that the process was not ideal. We were not particularly happy how it transpired but there was not, from January, from the update I said the have contacted the council in January. And in March. The discussions started a few days before the bank holiday weekend. The first discussion in relation to the pilot. I said that the pilot did not go ahead. After that, that is when it happened. So, we have two options here. It is simple. We either shut it down, I don't think that is going to help for the summer. It will cause traffic problems. It goes against the advice and the requests of the O'Connor, so, there is no agreement in place as that is why we came here today to get approval, we will get an agreement. We were not going to, after what is happened, the last thing we will have done is to have a legal agreement with Avon before discussing with the members here today. That is what we are trying to get. To get the input and the agreement from the members of Baltinglass and then to regularise the situation going forward. That is the common-sense approach. It is a set time. The summer period up to the end of August. This it is to end. It is a temporary solution to a seasonal problem and the long-term issue in relation to parking within the area will be addressed as part of the master plan. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Chief Executive. Can I ask the members not to try to repeat the questions that have been asked? So, you are entitled to ask questions. Cllr John Mullen?

CLLR MULLEN: Thank you, thank you to the Chief Executive for his time on, this I know in fairness he has tried to put in a lot of work since Cllr Gerry O'Neil be brought up at the full council meeting, I don't want to repeat what has been said but, essentially from the lessons that we should learn are twofold. One is there is an ongoing communication issue. It is now the third or fourth time we have problems with the communications on what is happening on the background and what the local reps are told. So that is something to be learning that is Greenways County development plans or this situation. But I do accept on balance having spoken to the Chief Executive, that the council was trying to act in good faith. To deal with a problem that is at a tricky site there adjacent to the Greenway. The breach of that good faith was done by the private business that jumped the gun. They've betrayed a lack of trust and lack

of engagement that will be difficult going forward with future town plans and master plans if that's the relationship that is to be acted upon about this business.

Considering the location near the Greenways where we should work together to maximise the site for the tourism input and to the economics of the area to also to make it safe and accessible to all. The first question: What measures are put in to ensure, I agree that the 8-week period it makes sense to have it as an overflow free access car park but what measures are in place to ensure it is fully free access? As it is council property, as Cllr Gerry O'Neil has said it is the people's property. We must ensure if it is opened up to facilitate the parking for 8 weeks that it is free. And secondly, as it is tied into what is to happen to the 11 million sites purchased, I suppose that the name "master plan" suggests and I know that colleagues of mine feel it will come with a fait accompli, that this is what you will do here, folks, take it or leave it. And how does it fit into the town planning process I am confident and my colleagues feel that if the master plan put forward to us is not acceptable, we will be changing it to accommodate the local need as it is a unique opportunity to develop a massive site in Blessington. So, I wanted you to assure me when it comes to the master plan for the site that it fits into the full public consultation with the town plan the community in Blessington and the local representatives have the power to change that if they felt there were parts of it that were wrong. I thank you for the work on this. You have put lots of time into providing a detailed report. Again, it is a pity we cannot deal with it at Municipal District level but it is agreed that we come to it at the next meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I would have liked to have the west in first. I say it jokingly, that there is said that nothing is happening in the west but I will bring in the west and get it all done.

>>: From the perspective of somebody who is not a west member. To know a little of the situation, the Chief Executive said himself, it is not ideal. But I believe that the council are acting in good faith. But the reality is that there is a traffic problem in the area of Blessington. That is what, first and foremost we have to realise from our own perspective in County Wicklow, we have had the issues in tourist destinations, we have dealt with the issues through our own Municipal District meetings it leads me on to suggesting that, really and truly, this should never have come to a full council meeting, in my view.

I think it should have been dealt with as some of the members have said through the Baltinglass MD but it seems that from the last few months there seem several issues coming to the main council from the Baltinglass that cannot seem to be resolved. So it is something that must be looked at in terms of the Baltinglass members to resolve the issues, I don't know where Annie Burns Lane, is, as you may not know about streets in our area. These are the things where we have no clue where we are. It is unfair that 26 other members have to listen to Annie Burns Lane, where we don't have a clue where it is, so bring perspective to this. At the end of the day I will finish on this, there is an opportunity to have a temporary car park in place until the end of August. It is a sensible solution, albeit done in poor fashion. We admit that, I believe that this temporary car park until the end of August will do that.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Patsy Glennon?

CLLR GLENNON: I will not repeat what has been said but will agree by a lot of what has been said by colleagues, Cllr Gerry O'Neil and Cllr Edward Timmins. This should have been done differently. Brian acknowledged that. I expressed my personal view, that we should have our own route to the car parking area without using the Avon Road at all. That is my choice. I have a commitment that it will be looked at from the.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: ... That it will be looked at and consulted with the thought of the use of this in the area. Things have not been done the way that they should have been. Brian addressed the area of liability. And again, when will this be free to the public and to agree with Cllr Edward Timmins the master plan should brought to the council for discussion. Based on the two options and the commitments given regarding the future entrance to this area, given by Brian, and Breege and also consideration of car parking in front of the grave yard as part of the master plan, on the basis of that, I am content to go with the option of leaving it open until the end of August in the manner described.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor, John? Cllr John Snell, sorry I had a mental block.

CLLR SNELL: All right, there, Tom. Listen, first and foremost, I have huge sympathy for the senior officials of the council. Huge sympathy, as I think you are being left in a very awkward situation here in regards to what this company has done. I think that, Avon have acted in an inappropriate way to say that it is a misunderstanding, I would say it is a huge misunderstanding.

Now I try to get me head around it. Unlike previous speakers, I actually think, I missed the last meeting, unfortunately, when this was discussed but when I looked into it to discover that there is fencing being put in place in hard core up to the value of 20,000 Euros and to discover that the company themselves paid for that today, you sort of scratch your head and wonder why? I suppose that the reason being, that the land could have a commercial value up to 2 million. So, from a company point of view, it is money well spent.

I think that the solution here, is, that as land in Blessington that is being discussed for many, many years, we have heard this master plan being thrown around the Chamber here today. And nothing really is happening. I suggest that you go back to the Municipal District, you go back and first and foremost you sort out the mess and get consensus from the elected members.

Secondly, that you look at the master plan, to get the wheels in motion. It is unforgivable to have 11 million Euros spent on land in West Wicklow and lack of activity, from what I am told by the elected members of west Wicklow, the reality is that this is the right format to bring it up in. And seeing the way that this company have acted, against the wishes of the senior management here, it will be hard for you to row back with this company to get on equal footing in regards to working with them going forward. It is not how I would ask any reputable company to go about their businesses. There are people in the constituencies, north, east,

south, west, if they had done something illegal, they would be hauled in front of the officials, brought in front of the courts and fined and otherwise ... that is right and proper! They are doing something illegal. Unfortunately, that is what has happened here and it has been put down as a misunderstanding.

Doing something illegal. Unfortunately that is what happened here. It's been put down as a misunderstanding. I have to take it as that. I do have sympathy for the officials and the for the elected members to hear that the Gardaí have been consulted, the public have been consulted, officials in the Municipal District of Baltinglass and the district council. That is a slap in the face for democracy. I think bring it back to the Municipal District and I welcome the discussion on it here today.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Peir Leonard.

CLLR LEONARD: Just an idea. I know we have a couple of car parks in Arklow that are run by the council. I am wondering why there hasn't been any consideration to Wicklow County Council actually running this car parking space independence point of the business and reimbursing the business for the fencing and hard core which has been put in place. I am not familiar with the access or any problems that Patsy... surely that would be the solution until a plan, a master plan is put in place. Then when you get involved with business that complicates master plans because there is a precedent set of people occupying lands. Surely to keep things clean and above board it would be better for it to be contained inhouse in Wicklow County Council and for them to operate the car park independently.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Vincent Blake.

CLLR BLAKE: Thank you, chairman. I don't have any questions but I would like to commend the manager on the answer to the question he has given so far. While the council have paid 11 million for this land it's not lying idle, we are building over 100 houses on part of it. So it's been part of the plan is being implemented in regard to that. Look it, as far as I am concerned the option that the two options that the manager has put forward and I certainly would be supporting option 2, that is we continue to keep the car park open for the remainder of the summer and that it will be closed and given a guarantee it will be closed the end of August. I would support that proposal by the management.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Avril Cronin.

CLLR CRONIN: Thank you very much. Thank you very much to Brian there. I know it's a difficult situation. As I said, what has been said before is that the land is owned by the council. I am always a firm believer that communication is key and on this occasion unfortunately there was a lack of communication or maybe miscommunication and I think that we should all have a say on what is happening with council land. The not up to a private company to take over council land and decide to do what they want with it. Every year we have, we are getting calls and we are getting texts and emails from people at the weekends about the traffic issue. Guards are called up there at the weekend, it's brought up at our JPC meeting time and time again. We are having issues with parking up at Burbage. We do need a solution. While I don't believe it's up to a private company to take over land, I do think we are where we are and we need to find a solution. We are coming into the summer months now. The kids are on their holidays and when the fine weather does come, we are going to have the same issue again unless we find a solution. This solution we have may not be ideal, but I am confident that Brian has said to us that it's only a temporary solution to keep it open. I would like to see the master plan include

proper parking up there on council land, without private companies having their say. I do believe that that is something that we will, that will happen in the future. Just in the meantime if we do keep this open, can you just guarantee that you will look into alternative solutions for the coming years. As I said, at the moment, we are coming into the summer months so we are going to have issues time and time again this year. So we do need a solution ASAP. In the meantime can you look at a long-term plan and try and get a proper car park up there in place? I know that Cllr Glennon has suggested we have our own entrance and I think that is an important point to make. I also think we must ensure that if we do keep this open on a temporary basis that it is temporary. That it is monitored to make sure that people are not being charged and that it is used as an overflow car park. Can you also just confirm that it will all be done legally and that a proper agreement will be in place just to ensure that if there is any incidence up there that there will be proper measures in place with regard to liability. Just also confirm that it is just a temporary measure, that you will look at a long-term solution up on the council land and we will have our say in what happens.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Stokes.

CLLR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat. Can I firstly commend Cllr O'Neill who raised this with passion. I would also say to Cllr Timmins who apologised to the councillor, I feel you have nothing to apologise for. This is such an important issue, I thank you for raising this. I suppose we have to remain vigilant. County Wicklow is a large county and it is a concerning issue. I am wondering from a council perspective, are we aware of anywhere elsewhere this has become an issue and if yes, how are we approaching that? Go raibh maith agat.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr M Kavanagh.

CLLR M KAVANAGH: Thank you, chair just briefly. I don't know the origins of this scenario. I don't know how long the four acres has been not a car park, but maybe perceived to be an extension of the existing business. In other words what I am worried about is adverse possession. I am wondering is there any situation where that could arise. Do we have any situation where that isn't the case? That is another reason why we need to have some kind of legal agreement in place. That is the only thing I am concerned about. If as Cllr Snell said, that land has a value of up to two million, it's important that we establish actual title to the four acres.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Chief Executive, please.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Just to confirm there is no loss of possession, our law agent has confirmed that. As I say, I would be anxious after today that we get a license agreement in place as soon as possible which will specifically state it is only up to the 31st of August that it is free of charge, the current situation and we have, in writing from the Avon at the moment, that the current situation is that the car park is only being used when the Avon car park is full. The last space is full, the barrier goes up, the next car goes in, into the field and is not charged. That will continue. If there is a breach in that then the license will stop straight away. That is the situation. So Cllr Glennon made reference to it and Cllr Cronin about the option for our own entrance. In fairness, Cllr Glennon put that option up and we did look at it, the engineer in the district... I think up to... (sound distortion) from the main road in and it would take a couple of months to do. Obviously that is the summer period gone. Cllr Leonard made reference to manage the car park ourselves. Obviously we don't have the resources, you would have to go out and tender. Obviously the time to tender is going to be up in August anyway. So that is not really an option.

So, as I said, we are left with two options. We either close it down tomorrow, if needs be, or we just go ahead with a temporary arrangement, as I said, up to the 31st of August. I think it's common sense to do that. I think the only reason Wicklow County Council are looking at this is to alleviate traffic problems and congestion. That is our job. That is what we try to do. No other reason. That is what we have tried to do, as has been pointed out on numerous occasions. We have gone into this situation with the best of intentions, trying to alleviate traffic congestion in that area, that has been raised continuously. Cllr Stokes asked has it been brought up in different places. We had this last summer, we it in Brittas and the Wicklow Gap and in Glendalough. The solution we did was we had temporary car parks. That is what we did. The Road Traffic Act allows for that. That is all we are trying to do here is to try and address a problem, a short-term problem to the end of the summer for the people of Blessington, for the visitors that come into Blessington to walk the greenway. They should experience, they shouldn't be stuck in traffic chaos. We all saw the pictures last summer of the traffic chaos in different areas. This is what we are trying to avoid. So look, at the end of the day, if the members said to me here today they didn't want it and the option was to shut it down, I would do that in the morning.

But from hearing here today five of the six councillors in the district, of the two options put forward they feel they are in agreement with me that the best option is to have a temporary solution to the end of August. That would be part of a legal agreement, which would cover and protect Wicklow County Council. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I have two speakers to come in. Cllr Gerry O'Neill.

CLLR O'NEILL: It's very frustrating. Could I firstly apologise to Cllr Cullen for bringing these issues from Baltinglass Municipal District to here. The first one you refer to is the application by Wicklow County Council to An Bord Pleanála about the greenway, the 42km greenway. The reason it was brought here is we didn't have any option, the application went in on the same day as Wicklow County Councillors found out about the application. So we had no way of discussing it at a local level. The same thing as this thing here, it's going on months and months. I had no option only to bring it to this meeting, so I apologise for bringing it.

Could I just again get back, this is willy-nilly stuff we are listening to. What license is being drawn up? What insurance is being drawn up? I don't want to, I definitely, as a councillor here, I don't want anything to do with putting my name to something, God forbid maybe an accident on our land. It's also sending out the wrong signal.... if we agree to this here today, we had a family 12 months ago that moved in outside Dunlavin. They occupied a couple of square feet of council land and they got a house within a week. So what we are telling these people here now and again I have nothing, no animosity, but if this is the way of carrying on, that you occupy land, put fencing up, put hard core in, charge €3 to park on public land, if that is the approach that councillors and the council want to proceed which definitely wash my hands of it. If that is the message from here on in that you do what you like, take over council land, public land. And could I point out one very important thing, it's been said to me by plenty of business people in the town. This application to An Bord Pleanála that we weren't allowed discuss. Within the application from Wicklow County Council there are 25 car park spaces being got rid of in the town. 25 car park spaces outside businesses.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, I have another...

CLLR O'NEILL: Just a second chair.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I understand.

CLLR O'NEILL: These people feel very aggrieved that all traffic is being directed to another business down at Avon. The local town is losing out with this carry on again could I finally say we want a solution to the parking, but the parking where it's being done at the moment, where it's being suggested by the CEO is not solving the problem. I am sick and tired of saying that that here, the Gardaí are sick and tired of the it. Anyone who knows the town knows what it is and it should be addressed. When I ask for a couple of acres of this land at the grave yard I was told by Wicklow County Council you can't have an inch of it, it's part of the master plan.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

CLLR O'NEILL: Yet the other boys can take four acres and we are going to agree to that?

CATHAOIRLEACH: I have Cllr Glennon to come in, sorry, Cllr Vincent Blake.

CLLR BLAKE: There is no one denying there hasn't been issued with how this issue was handled from day one. At the end of the day we do need a find a solution to it. We have two options in front of us as the manager has outlined to us. It's only for a temporary basis in that regard. So I am prepared to propose that we...

CLLR O'NEILL: Put the temporary one where it's needed not down in Tinahely.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, Cllr O'Neill.

CLLR BLAKE: I propose we go for option 2, as the manager outlined there. It would be a temporary basis and we keep the car park open until the end of August. With all the assurance in terms of assurance, so I can, I propose that option 2 be put before the members.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Miriam Murphy.

CLLR MURPHY: I like to come in. This is ridiculous. We are here an hour-and-a-half. What I would like to ask is did the Executive go and meet the Municipal District members? And was the company concerned? Where they brought in to a district meeting? This should really not have come up. We are going to be voting on something that we, an hour-and-a-half and we still haven't got through the agenda. This has to be stopped. I am annoyed.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Can I bring in the last two more. Cllr Paul O'Brien.

CLLR P O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, I will be very brief. I agree with Cllr Cullen here. It's time to draw in a line in the sand here. With very been given the explanation, it's not a perfect solution, I grand Cllr O'Neill communication has been totally lacking here. But I am looking at the agenda, we are giving out for a long time that we don't get through the agenda, that we are sending people away that can't do their presentations so if there is a vote on this I am calling for it now, because I am losing interest.

CATHAOIRLEACH: There is no point.

CLLR P O'BRIEN: We are losing the point by the way.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Derek Mitchell.

CLLR MITCHELL: This shouldn't have arisen as has been stated so many times but I think we need to finish it and end it and something which ends in August of this year sounds the right solution and as long as we don't lose title to the land. I would agree with Cllr Blake and what he said about it and Cllr O'Brien and I think we should have a vote now and I will vote to go with the arrangement until the end of August.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, Cllr Tom Fortune.

CLLR FORTUNE: Two things. Chair, I don't see how we can vote on this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: There is no vote.

CLLR FORTUNE: Fair enough. Because the license that is being discussed surely has to go back to the district for the members to go through the license and see the detail in that, or whatever documentation is going on. Also, I was just thinking there, thinking back to the County Development Plan, in my area a piece of land was fenced off, hard cored, entrance shot into it from the road and planning enforcement turned it down, had it all blocked up again. So I think we need to be careful about precedent and when it comes to legals we need to make sure we know the legal situation. I am baffled and we do have some understanding of how business works. I am baffled that a business organisation would go in on acres of land that they don't own and put hard core fencing to the tune of €20,000 plus thousands of investment into it. I just don't understand that, I don't see why a business would do that. Certainly I am glad there is no vote because I am uncomfortable with what I am hearing. Cllr Kavanagh made a good point. If this ends up in court in some way and people have gone in and put in the investment, courts are funny places as we all know. So I am glad it's going back to the district for them to look at the legal document and I would advise the district to go through the legal document very carefully.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you. Can I say a few words on this? Last August I had two visitors down from Donegal. I brought them to Baltinglass Lakes as you know I am an Arklow man I wouldn't be over that side of the county. I went down to this hotel and I got the last parking space and I was driving around for five minutes looking for it. I saw someone going back to the car. Then we walked to Baltinglass lakes. A lot of the stuff in the hotel was closed. Then I went down to Baltinglass town and I got free parking, sorry, Blessington. I went down to Blessington and I got free parking, I said Jesus if we had this in Arklow we would be delighted. I was had the pleasure of going to Blessington this morning to open the Bricks Lego, I encourage you to go and see it. I was talking it a few businesses and they said we are very quiet. I said get out of that. They said no, because the bad publicity we got ought of no parking people aren't coming. Now Baltinglass does not want this, Blessington does not want this. My point is, and I totally understand why a business like that hotel group would do this, because it's 20,000 and they are going to get it back threefold. So they want parking, they don't want people like me turning away with my visitors. That is my tu'penny's worth. I believe there is no vote here and Chief Executive have you anything to add on this?

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: No, I will just say there is no vote. This was on the agenda, it's an update on the situation, that is what is being provided. I have discussed it with the members of Baltinglass Municipal District. Five of the six are in favour of option two and we are going to proceed in that manner. I think some of the rhetoric this afternoon has been unhelpful, words like occupied land and taken over land, it's not accurate and it's not helpful. The fact of the matter, as I have said, they did jump the gun, we weren't happy with that, but we were in discussions with the organisation in relation to trying to come up with a solution and a traffic management plan and we had given them approval to do a pilot for Paddy's day weekend, albeit it didn't go ahead. So the wording and the rhetoric is kind of suggesting that it just came out of nowhere and took over the land. It's not true. As regards the insurance I have already stated on a couple of occasions that there is a letter of indemnity from the insurance company to cover Wicklow County Council. So look, as I say we are where we are. I think it's not an ideal solution and this is the best option going forward and it's strictly until the end of August, a seasonal, temporary solution.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Chief Executive and thank you for explaining that thoroughly and thank you, Cllr Gerry O'Neill also for bringing to our attention. If any other

member has anything they want, don't hesitate to put it on the agenda. We will decide then, as a chamber whether it's worthy to be discussed. This was definitely a worthy discussion and I apologise if I have delayed things, I will try and keep it going. Talking about delaying there is a man down the back and he was supposed to do a presentation last month and he didn't, but then speaking to him he said sure I was upstairs in the office, Tommy. That is the advantage of having things on the screen. He was in his office doing his work and waiting until his time was called. So that is Jim Callery, I will ask Helen to read it out.

ADMINISTRATOR: To receive a presentation on the draft glyphosate policy.

CATHAOIRLEACH: I couldn't pronounce that word? What to call it? No Roundup mentioned in this chamber. Thank you, Jim.

JIM: Thank you everyone for the opportunity to present this glyphosate policy that we have been developing with the Climate and Biodiversity Action SPC. We are trying to develop best practice for Wicklow County Council in how we use weed killers, herbicides as an organisation and how we can focus on eliminating and avoiding their use going forward.

Glyphosate, in case you are not familiar with it, it's the substance used in herbicides, it was developed by a company called Monsanto and they sold it under the trade name Roundup so that is commonly used as a term for glyphosate. It was trademarked in 1970, it has been out of trade mark since the year 2000, so there is 2,000 projects that contain glyphosate, not just Roundup these days. It's by far the most popular herbicides herbicides on the market. It's it kills the plant above ground and below ground, it kills the roots. It's effective against all types of plants, broad leaf grasses and grasses and sedges, so it's more than others. So it is very effective as a weed killer, it's also used in agriculture in the form of a sodium salt to help plant growth and specifically in the ripening of crops so it's widely used for other purposes as well.

What are the concerns about glyphosate? One of the big ones is whether it is carcinogenic and the verdict on that one is out. There have been a number of cases brought through the courts, some have succeeded and some haven't. Whether it's safe or not, or whether it's carcinogenic does depend on how it's used. It does need to be handled with care and full protective equipment needs to be used in the use of glyphosate. It's known to have a negative impact on aquatic life, so it is known to kill life in water, whether it's fish, plant life that live in our waterways, they are affected by glyphosate if it gets into our waterways. It is widely linked to the decline in biodiversity. The widespread use of glyphosate has resulted in the loss of many pollinated plant and areas of habitat that have been lost through the use of herbicides, so it is widely associated with the loss of biodiversity and studies have shown that it may be linked to the loss of pollinating insects such as bees.

As you all know, Wicklow County Council is a partner of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. We joined up in 2020 and in recent years we have been working across all of our Municipal Districts to identify sites where we can reduce our mowing and manage vegetation for pollinators, leaving areas unmown for periods of time to allow our wild flowers to produce the pollen and nectar for pollinating insects to go to seat and it has been very effective as I am sure you will have noticed this early summer, we saw a lot more wild flowers around the county and coming into our town and it has been a positive boost for the county to see that work. There is a new plan out for 2021 and one of the things it's calling for is making public lands pollinator friendly

by working together across transport, local community schools and it is about finding ways to better co-exist with biodiversity and help return food and shelter for pollinators to our island. Under our continued commitment to that plan the next action we want to look at is reducing, eliminating the use of herbicides wherever possible in the county. So that is one of the reasons why we are developing this new policy on glyphosate. Next slide, please.

One of the things we have done in our policy and one of the key actions is to develop a hierarchy to look at how we will manage the vegetation in the county. As you can see in the hierarchy, the first priority is wherever possible to retain what we have. So rather than removing the vegetation, if at all possible we should be keeping it, we should be managing it for the wild flowers and to let things grow wherever possible. That is the first option, wherever possible we will leave the vegetation as is. Where we do have to manage it and there are many circumstances where we have to manage it, the next best option is we will look at mechanical methods for the control of that vegetation. So that is things like it can be simple tools in small areas for removing the weeds. It can be the use of strimmers, or it can be the use of steel brushes that can be attached to a sweeper truck to remove, to scour the vegetation of our cycleways or our streets, so it's removing the upper part of the vegetation material where needed. Next step would be to develop alternative methods of control of those weeds.

Removing the upper part of the vegetation where needed. The next is to the control of the weeds that are not as toxic without the impact as the herbicide, to look at alternatives that we can use in the Municipal Districts, we purchased Phone Stream, it is a system using heated water and oils, the oils bind in the heat and kill the weed, so less toxic than using herbicide. That machine is being tried out in and around Municipal District and we look for alternatives to find the solutions that can best help us to control the vegetation or weeds where necessary. The final option in the hierarchy, the lowest option is the use of glyphosate. We recognise that there may be circumstances where we need to continue to use glyphosate and it will be used where no other option that exists that can help us to control relevant issues, an example of that is dealing with the problem of Japanese knot weed, an invasive species, and few others options other than glyphosate that can control those invading species and we will use then glyphosate when we don't have another solution.

So, putting in place a proposed parole coal to look at using the hierarchy of options and where possible to choose an option for the management of vegetation through the policy. Where we feel the need to use glyphosate or where the Municipal Districts need to use glyphosate in the operations we have created a business case, a form to be filled out where anyone proposing to use glyphosate will list the job that they are planning to do, the area that they are hoping to manage using the glyphosate, and they will have to outline the alternatives considered and why they are not being applied and it will give us good information on practice as to what is happening, allowing works to be completed where necessary but also to allow us to identify where there will be opportunities going forward to use other alternatives that have worked elsewhere in similar situations. Finally, as part of the protocol, we are looking at a record form to be completed every time that glyphosate is used so that we have a good record of how much

glyphosate is used in the county, where it is being used, making sure that the staff using it are fully compliant in terms of training on the use of pesticides and that they are wearing the appropriate PPE to better monitor the use of glyphosate when it is necessary to use it.

Among proposed actions is to provide training for staff. We are involved in the application of glyphosate, at the moment the training available only covers how to spray and what protective gear is worn and the protective practices that must be put in place when applying herbicides. We want training to ensure that the staff are aware of the impact of using the herbicides on the vegetation and the impact on the pollinator, the friendly plants, and the biodiversity and particularly its impact on the water courses, so that they are fully trained on the impact on the biodiversity of using herbicides and how to use it. To ensure greater compliance amongst staff in the completion of the business case and the record forms, we are required under EU regulations to keep a record of where we are using glyphosate or other herbicides, who is using it and where so the policy will help to tighten up on that, to ensure there are full records of when the glyphosate is used.

So we can keep an organisational wide register of when glyphosate is used across the districts. To raise awareness on the herbicides such as glyphosate with the community groups, schools and businesses within the county to work with them to promote better practice to avoid and to eliminate the use of glyphosate in all circumstances where possible across the county. Also to monitor the use of the glyphosate and review the reasons for its use through the business cases. So that we can continue to focus on improving the practice by identifying where the alternatives are, where they are working well and to make sure when someone goes to apply to glyphosate, we can point them in the direction of the alternatives that worked elsewhere in the county.

This is just a timeline outlining the process. We hope to move towards adoption of this policy. The dates are slightly out of date at this stage but hoping once the proposal is adopted, that we will be able to swiftly roll out implementation across the Municipal District.

Just to finish up, to mention, we were quite timely asked by a committee to look at public petitions at the beginning of June to fill in a survey on the practices on the use of pesticides such as glyphosate. My colleague, Mary, has returned to the form to the committee, we were impressed with what we are proposing in Wicklow County Council, they invited myself and Mary in 10 days ago to talk to the committee about the proposed policy we are putting forward to the members. They were impressed on what was proposed. Very impressed that the policy is a good way of monitoring what we are doing and recording practice within the organisation. They are impressed with the focus on its development of alternatives to the use of glyphosate and they were impressed that we are also focusing on raising awareness within the wider community through the policy.

So, that's it. That's me. I am done with the presentation, I am happy to take questions that you have.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Jim. Cllr Lourda Scott.

CLLR SCOTT: Thank you, Jim. I am glad you did not have to wait in vain. I am fully supportive of the policy and delighted to speak in forth of it and in reducing the use of chemicals from the council's point of view, it is something that we have been discussing at the start of the policy group. COVID provided a lot of that in moving forward. I have to thank the climate team for putting in the work to get to us this point. Jim has given a good outline why to adopt the policy. It is worth reiterating, I noted there are a few formers here, it is worth to reiterate it is a policy for the council use of weedkiller, it has no effect on agriculture land in the county. It has been deemed by the WHO as probably being carcinogenic to humans which is probably not conclusive but probably is a health concern to those using it. When researching just in view of the speaking on this, without a doubt, it damages insects and kills insects, not just our pollinators and bees and butterflies that we are familiar but insects as a whole and there seems to be a paper out how it does this, and damaging to the immune system. Why this is important, it is not just on our pollinators but insect numbers as a whole, the numbers are plummeting, so fast, that in 2019, review of insects showed that they are on a path to be extinct within 100 years. Physical that happens, basically, human survival is unlikely, it is the dark tunnel that we are looking down. And pesticide usage as a whole plays a large part. So, Wicklow County Council, I must commend the council for taking a lead and proactive role in the county. There are a couple of authorities, in Dublin and in Cork who have taken measures to reduce the use of glyphosate. But County Wicklow has done a great job of developing the policy to say to everyone in the county to look at the so-called weeds in a different light. As Jim is saying we are using chemical weed killers as it is effective. So spraying something on, blitzing the weed, it is gone. But we have to change the mindset a little as a county as a whole, as elected reps and in talking to our communities, to let the need for complete tidiness go, nature is not meant to be tidy. That takes adjustment. It is great that detail, that we outlined in the policy to raise awareness in the community groups, schools and the businesses that on the application of glyphosate and the available charters, that is important. It will take some adjustment as we move away from using the pesticides but we can help opportunities to transition to adjust to a different way of looking after our shared areas. To see them looking a little different to what they are used to. I am confident that the public reps will support that. And support this policy that has been laid out in front of us. So no hesitation in recommending to the full council for approval and a huge thank you to the Climate Action Team on their work on this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Lourda Scott, Cllr Miriam Murphy?

CLLR MURPHY: Sorry, Tom. Sorry. Thank you, Jim for the presentation. I would have a problem to pronouns the word but I do understand it. I have a few questions, first of all, do I agree with it? Probably not. I would be old-style, I like things tidy, don't like seeing weeds, I am looking for the weeds in my garden and can't wait to put them out. I wonder where does the information sit when you are asking someone to fill out a form. How long does it sit on a desk? Where does it go to even say that this is a good policy? The research into it, is it working out? I am thinking,

on a few occasions, earlier this year, I was around a very popular duck pond area with a lot of foot fall, a lot of wild but also weeds that are so large, it is just unsightly. And I went back to the district who said they were not allowed to clean it off. Usually, it looks disgusting! Disgusting! I don't know if the public will understand the policy. I know there are people for change, whatever but there are some areas, that there is a need to get rid of weeds. I am certainly understanding of the aspects there of what Cllr Lourda Scott said about the insects, whatever but there has to be a balance. I really do think that. I think that going into the voluntary sector, I am thinking of the towns groups will it put off people volunteering? Because there is such, I suppose, paper work, and training involved in? Will we lose that community? That community contribution from the groups that are doing so fantastic work on the line? Would us as up, the outreach staff we cannot reach and they are taking up that upgrade of a lot of work. And us as council don allow our staff to do. I would be concerned about will it be unfortunately grown to an extent we have no chrome over it? I hope that you understand my ... I am old stock, unfortunately. But I feel, yes, we do have to have it as a safety but down the line, I would like to see research on a result of, is it a good way of the new way being done or a good way of the old style being done. Thank you, Jim.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you took take a couple of questions.

JIM: Yes.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr John Mullen.

CLLR MULLEN: Thank you for the presentation. I agree with both colleagues. Two questions, one is, obviously, ideally, we are not eliminating the use of Roundup. But we want to reduce it. Some of the teddy grounds groups that I work with are putting together vinegar-based alternatives, is there studies on how effective they are? And obviously their environmental impact. I agree with what Miriam said. Volunteers we don't have council workers in the rural towns and villages doing the landscaping at all. It is all done by the volunteers. I have recently had the volunteers coming to me to say that they have been stopped in the street, or stopped on their work in the evenings in the area where they are using a spray to ask all sorts of questions. I don't think that is fair. So, I think it is important that we educate the public that we are trying to reduce the use of them. And if these alternatives do work, then we should promote them as much as we can. The Japanese knot weed issue you raised as we identified that. That is along a riverbank in Tinahely and when asked, it was unfortunate but that the only solution was roundup. So, thank you again for the balanced presentation. Thank you.

CLLR O'BRIEN: I'm a member of the climate action and biodiversity SPC. What I wanted to do, Cathaoirleach, is to acknowledge and to commend, this for me, it is a best practice example of a policy whereby the use of something has to go through a process before it is decided to be used. So it is not left to people's discretion. There is a process there. I wanted to acknowledge, I think there is a best practice process about how we came to develop this policy as well. That is worth recognising. Within the SPC, there are representatives from all of the stakeholder groups,

there are farmers, people from the community sectors, the experts in the officials and experts among the councillors as well. And the expert research was relied and considered, and it relied on expert research and science, that is a credit to the operation. It is important to recognise that it serves us in the journey of change and transformation away from harmful procedures and practices. The last thing to say is that, again, the credit, and the previous councillors mentioned it, the journey of change requires more awareness and connection with communities and the average Joe out there, wondering about what they want to see and how they see it and what the perception of that is, and we have to take responsibility for supporting the journey of people changing their minds about what is beautiful, what is not, what is important, what is not. What will lead us down a pathway to.com in terms of a biodiversity crisis and what will support us to flourish with all the other animals that live on the planet. So I want to commend and to support the adoption of the policy. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Members, I have three speakers on this, I am looking for extension of time. What is the word I am looking for ... sorry? Conscious! Thank you. I thought you were saying something else there, what?! I am conscious of the two standing orders. So, we take them at 5pm. And to remind the members, we give out the presentations in the chamber and it is vital to get the presentations, so keep our comments to get the point across and if you have a question for Jim, to drive it into him, please. Thank you very much.

Next person is Councillor Roy O'Connor.

CLLR O'CONNOR: The policy has been debated through and through. It has been a long journey overall. My opinion on it, I see it more as a transparency policy. Overall.

I am not sure about everyone but I get the constituents contacting me to ask why are they spraying this here or there. This, with the app involved, the constituents well like themselves to see why is it sprayed nearby, what is the reasoning, and obviously most likely it is Japanese knot weed, that this Roundup is the best for something like that. So, the transparency aspect of the policy is hugely important. It was driven home within the SPC about that, that people can look up themselves to see what is happening within the district. So I wanted to say well done to everyone. That is all. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor O'Connor. Cllr Mary Kavanagh?

CLLR KAVANAGH: I wanted to congratulate Jim and the team for the work that has been done to reduce if not completely eliminate glyphosate from the environment.

I know that they may be a necessary evil for certain things like Japanese knot weed which cannot be removed any other way. But strimmers should be used a lot more. People are saying there is an overgrowth of valerian, and the automatic response is to spray it. But that is not the answer anymore. The environment is too important. But I think that sometimes there is too much overgrowth allowed. I think that just get in there with the strimmer and clear the paths.

If you have done research on Monsanto you will realise, they have been sued to record amounts in the United States to the tune of billions for carcinogenic cases taken against them. I think that the key to this is education.

We have to stop people imagining that everything in life has to be pristine. I have had people contacting me as a couple of and its dandelions were growing at the edge of a footpath. Dandelions are important for pollinators. They bloom before everything else, if dandelions are cut too early it has even more a detrimental impact on bees and other pollinators. So, education is the key.

Some people are letting their gardens growing wild as it is quite the thing to do, so we must promote that kind of thing and the other thing with regards to Tidy Towns, I think it is time that the Tidy Towns governing body was, had the idea promoted that they should be rewarding towns that take non-glyphosate and wild flower promotion. I refuse to calm them weeds. What is a weed? It is just a wild flower growing where it was not planted. So they should be rewarding the Tidy Towns for promoting the growth of wild flowers.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Benjamin Corgnet?

CLLR CORRIGAN: I very much welcome the adoption of the policy. It is great to see the alternatives and working with the Tidy Towns we have bought the burners for the plants in hard-to-reach areas that traditionally would have been sprayed. I think we have to start celebrating our wild flowers and plants. I love the bee signs along the motorway. People are talking about them on social media. Previously they would have been giving out about the fact that the verges are not trimmed they are saying it is fantastic, it is left for the bees. I agree with Cllr Mary Kavanagh, education is a big thing. We have Japanese knot weed area in my area, the area has been sprayed and signs puppet and the kids take them down and runaway with them. So it needs to come through and also with Tidy Towns, until there, it was that I was not aware that there were signs on the pathways that there is an area with knot weed so communication between all the groups, that should be great. But well done. A fantastic presentation. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Sylvester Bourke?

CLLR BOURKE: I would like to welcome the report and the policy that Jim has drawn up. It is very important to use it carefully. Roundup or Glyphosate is an important tool in agriculture. It must be used carefully. I certainly don't agree with widespread use of it. Having said that, I probably use a lot more than the council do at home on the farm as I am trying to reduce the amount of carbon, I put into the environment by reducing the amount of ploughing that I do. So I go for Mint Tail, that you can't do without using Roundup. So there is a debate. Farmers need guidance and the public needs to be patient as we are trying to do the best job to produce food as much as we can as cheaply as possible. It is an integral part of the process. If it is confusing for the farmers try to decide on the future. The EU policy is to push for organic production of food, so, no glyphosate, naturally. On the one hand we are told to produce and encouraged and

there is lots of money thrown to go organic, on the other hand we have a war in the Ukraine and we are worried about the food shortages, where we should be producing lots of food to feed the world. So, what side do you want the bread buttered on? It is confusing to know what to do in the future. It is important to make the balanced decisions as we must get it right. If we go all organic, there could be food shortages that are Europe-wide, too far the other way, we probably have too much cheap food. So we have to get the balance right. Not to go too wild in either direction as it is important that we feed our communities sustainably into the future.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, well said. Jim, any questions?

JIM: The first thing I picked up on is how much the balance is talked about, to get a balanced policy, rather than pulling the shutters down on the use of glyphosate. We are looking at a policy that is progressive, where it is used, where it needs to be used and identifying the alternative, so it is about the elimination of glyphosate through the determines nation of alternatives and with we see fee cases, such as the Japanese knot weed and Cllr Miriam Murphy mentioned tidying up areas, and some areas need be to be more tidy and some people wanting the areas kept more tidy. When it comes to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, this is no one solution for all areas of vegetation, it is a range of options we can use and decide what areas need to be mown, what whereas need a slightly longer duration of mowing, say, 6-8 weeks, what whereas to do two cuts a year and areas that we can do one cut. There is learning to do on that but the practice that works the best in different areas, in different parts of the open space but I think we will get there to find the best solutions for managing vegetation in our towns and communities across the county and what works well for the protection of biodiversity and works well for our communities to keep everyone happy with what we are doing. So there is scope to improve the practice but the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan allows us to take a flexible approach to the different sites to work out what works best in the different areas of county, so we will continue to work on that going forward to find the best solutions locally. On Tidy Towns we will not be forcing Tidy Towns or groups of volunteers to adopt our policy but we are encouraging them to go with us, and the national competition is pointing them in that direction. One town last year got a comment in the report that the use of glyphosate was spotted and the adjudicator was deducting marks for the use of herbicides, so it is a part of the award scheme for the national competition and the Tidy Towns groups that continue to use herbicides and glyphosate widespread in the towns will lose marks in the competition. We will have to work with communities to identify the alternatives that will work for them this their towns and to continue that process of education through the local community groups and through our own county awards and the work we are doing with the schools in Wicklow County Council. On the subject of vinegar as an alternative. That is a solution to look out for. We must be careful with homegrown remedies, salt and vinegar a used as local recipes for weedkiller to kill back vegetation but they can be damaging in environments so we must investigate what alternatives can be used and where they can be used safely and effectively to control the vegetation. I think that is the main questions that I answered. In relation to agriculture, it is a different field of practice, outside of the remit of the Wicklow County Council, our folks is to

eliminate where possibly the use of glyphosate in the public realm, in the communities, in the schools and of course, a community reaction in Wicklow County Council.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We have a proposer and seconder, who is Cllr Lourda Scott and Cllr O'Brien. Are we agreed? Thank you very much, Jim. Thank you very much for all of your good work and hard work. Keep it up.

Next on the agenda ...

HELEN PURCELL: Receiver presentation on the proposed investment in and upgrade of recycling centres, Mark Devereux, is going to present.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Hello Mark.

MARK: And thank you Jim for giving me a hard act to follow. Thank you, Teresa, for our presentation, one of our colleagues did some work on this as well. Just to let you all know we carried out a review and we started work on the review some time ago actually and issues such as COVID got in our way. We wanted to move on it a bit earlier. Centres were set up in 2002, Jim and another colleague of ours were affective in setting it up and the primary objective of the centres this those days was education.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, can I just ask members at home, can you hear the presentation? Yeah, okay. Sorry Mark, thank you.

MARK: So the centres were set up in a different era where there weren't green bins and we have got to a time where some of them are there 22, 23-years and they need to be refreshed and updated and both the buildings and how we use them and we need to modernize and improve the facilities. When we compare to CA sites, we have a lower level of service provided to the public than our other counties are providing. So there is significant urgent repair works needed to Bray and Wicklow and Arklow and most of them are second hand and how know need a lot of work. A lot of our equipment was purchase and installed and now at the end of its life. It was second hand when we bought it 200-years ago. So we're struggling all the time in the centres updating the equipment and we have a plan in place for that. We carried out a survey on the consultation hub, this time last year. And the objective of the survey was to try and find out how people recycle and 87% already have a kerbside collection and of those 78% have a green bin. So they do the recycling at home. And we asked the question would do people use the recycling centres, 5% said it was cheaper than the use of the green bin or is suited them. 66% said because of the variety of material taken and 20% because it's more environmentally friendly. We send them to companies that put them pack into reuse. We send our materials to centres in Ireland and the UK who we know will use the material. I will go on with my presentation, unfortunately we won't have the slides in front of us. I will go on in the meantime and try and get IT down. It's working now? You have gone all the way down. If you can go back 2 or 3 slides, back more. Yeah. Keep going back. More. The second slide. The second thing we,

these are the other things we found out when we surveyed through the consultation hub was 26% of those surveyed visited the site weekly or more often and 74% it's fortnightly or monthly and we had a comments section, 20% suggested additional services should be provided such as paints and mattresses. So there is a need for us to change what we collect. Also, last year, the waste enforcement regional local authorities carried out a study and they came up with the following, a focus on the circular economy in the CA sites and an emphasis on repair and reuse and recycle. It's national policy now, they are asking us to concentrate our CA sites on those things not collected at kerbside. 76% of householders have green bins at home. And to concentrate on streams of concern such as hazardous waste. The other thing is polluter pays principle should be implemented. This is national policy being sent in our direction by the waste enforcement regional local authorities. It comes from directives and it's embedded in a lot of our legislation that polluter pays. So also within our own waste segregation byelaws which were approved by this chamber a number of years ago. Receipting should be provided for materials deposited. If we request or investigate allegations of waste in a manner that's not correct or lawful, we can ask for proof that individuals are recycling or depositing their waste in authorised premises. So we therefore should be also providing that facility. We should be able to give them some sort of proof they are using our centres so they can in turn respond to the query we're asking in another forum. So receipts are important to us and that's one of the questions we're trying to address, although this wasn't a national priority document that was published. But they have told us in recent times earlier this year that soft plastic should be accepted. Because the kerbside collection companies are now collecting soft plastics in the order kerbside bin and we're not. So we should either provide that service if we're providing the recycling service or get away from all that all together. So with those items, questions in mind as to what we collect and where we collect it. We did research neighbouring counties and what facilities we have and compared them. The yellow stars on the map are the best or sorry, the most expansive sites and they are proper civic community sites, we don't have that. The blue sites are sites similar to ours, just outside your jurisdiction. So you can see Gorey and other sites similar to our sites but don't collect the bulky waste and also in green there, I want to bring your attention to Tinahely where we do provide a grant to a community group in Tinahely. Tinahely development association. So we can provide some recycling facilities for the community. What this shows clearly is although we have five sites operating, we don't have CA sites such as other local authorities do near us and we don't have a site in Blessington. So we're going to address that as part of this review, we have decided we'll address that. So we have investment plan, we're hoping to sign off on it and the first thing is a new roof for Bray recycling centre. And when there is heavy winds and rain, we sometimes close the centre because of safety. Arklow not as bad, the Murtagh isn't as bad but there are times, we have to close the centre and there is problems with the roof there and Arklow, being the more recent acquisition but it also because of its time, needs refurbishment and work done on it. We planned to set up a recycling centre in Blessington and it's

been discussed before and we really like to get on with it at this stage and we mentioned it to district members at the SPC meeting. We would also like to incorporate energy efficiency measures and we have gone as much as we can for instance in Bray, we changed the input from the ESB with investment in the electrical equipment on the site. We converted our primary energy source from diesel to electricity. So forklifts and equipment are run off the grid and we'll look at introducing photovoltaics and that's part of the plan. We would like to accept soft plastics in all centres, if you go back one more. But that requires investment, the bailers we have and the equipment we have won't accept the soft plastics, you need much larger quantity because it compresses down more than the bottles. We need different equipment and compacter skips cost money. We need a bit of investment in up grading there to bring in the charity shops. We're lucky in Bray we have the facility and we have a charity shop operating there. It's part of the agreement with that charity if we can find circular economy initiatives such as fun tour and up cycling, we'll carry out the improvements through the charity shops and we would like to do that in the other two centres. But to do that we need to invest and change around the way the centres work. In Arklow it wasn't feasible and we had a cabin there and it wasn't a good way to do it but we're hoping to revisit those issues. Also while we currently accept bulky waste, mattresses and sofas we can't at the moment. It's difficult to do that at the moment because we don't have the infrastructure and we would like to do that. So I tidied up my own garden and it was given. We would like to provide that service if we can. So we would like to enhance the local recycling centre services and greater range of materials that we would be collecting. We would like to improve the facilities in west Wicklow and plan a new facility. We would like to, ease disposal and there is a lot of users who go out of the county to dispose of mattresses and we would like to have modern recycling facilities and that's all part of the current strategy. So, significant financial investment is required. Cost, capital cost will be part funded through available grant schemes and our own resources and an ongoing income scheme will be required and that will bring Wicklow in line with other local authorities, so the capital investment has already been put into the capital programme. Current they are investing 3 and a half million. So these are only headline estimates, they are estimates based on the information we have to date. We have only carried out surveys so far in Bray and having carried out a criterion in Bray we have come up with a figure of a million Euros and the building is in particularly poor condition but once we start doing the work, we'll take advantage and try and modernize it as much as possible. We think we'll need 800,000 for Arklow, 100,000 for Avoca. 500,000 or start a site in Blessington. That means purchase or lease of land, and putting in the infrastructure that we require. We're hoping that the facility we put in place in Blessington will be on the door type facilities, to put a building up will be more than half a million. Bray the one million Euros is primarily because of the roof, it's in such poor condition and we're going to do a lot of work on the inside of the building because it's in poor enough condition and Rampere. It's more to do with the way people go around the centre. When we get into the detailed surveys these

figures may change. So we're currently proposing 3 Euro per visit, per vehicle. On current usage, actually, reduced a little bit in terms of visits, we will be free because it's already included, people are already paying the charge when you purchase a piece of equipment you pay a Wee charge. Our collection is funded already from this organisation. Glass will remain free of charge because we're going to keep our bottle banks as much as possible in place, we have it. So public spaces, so we face the glass towards the entrance. The additional charges, will provide for bulky waste and there is intention that any additional income we manage out of the refurbishment will be ring fenced. We'll commence in 2023 and our intention is to keep is nice and simple, it will be something like a barrier you tap with a card or pre-purchase a token and drive straight in. Before we go any further. We're the only rural local authority that has free recycling centres, every other local authority that has a recycling centre in the site charges for the use of the centres, the charges are on there on the slide. We did the survey two-years ago and it was brought to our attention by the then Chief Executive. The Dublin local authorities have certain aspects, some of their centres are free. Those that are free with the smaller CA sites. The larger sites that have the full range of services charge for those services. So we're the only local authority outside of Dublin that doesn't charge for our use of your recycling centres. The benefits of the charging, there is a host of reasons why we're considering introduction of charges. For instance, we have to change the mind set in relation to how waste is viewed. If people don't put a value on waste, then how are we going change people's mind sets and how people approach the generation of waste? It's known that when you change people's behaviour it's a carrot and a stick. I know my own children are critical of us when even putting stuff into the recycling centres they question whether that's really recycling. So we have to change a mindset. There is an element of education as part of this. So this will be a disincentive to householders to excess packages and whether we're purchasing something as sustainable as possible. There will be a direct connection between the charges and improvement in the services, we'll improve the services and do the work on the centres and introduce the charges in those centres and I would like to emphasise this point again if we're serious about climate change targets we have to look at our waste generation. I know this question comes up regularly and we have looked into it. Other counties, we have questioned other counties, they found people travelled to the centre less often and bring larger loads and are more organised about it. They didn't experience any increase in illegal dumping, at least 50% of the material that's fly tips, you only have to see the photographs and you can see things like furniture and plastics and tin cans, things that can be recycled easily for free are being dumped. And I don't believe they are use thing the recycling centres. That might be the last slide. That's it.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you very much. The minute you mentioned the price and charging, the screen lit up here. So with the members indulging can we go to standing orders and then ask Mark the questions. Is that okay with the members? Yeah, okay. First standing order is Cllr Fortune.

>> It's included in the budgetary plan for 2023 to ensure another year doesn't pass

with families and individuals left without any indication of when their needs are met and this council requests an assessment of disability so those supporters can understand how many existing and new residential supports and day places and respite supports will be provided for in budget 2023 and how it relates to the needs outlined in the capacity review.

CATHAOIRLEACH: And we have a seconder for that, Cllr Kavanagh, thank you. Tom, do you want to say a few words on that or are you okay?

CLLR FORTUNE: There is no need for me to read the motion, that's the motion that's before us. The background to this is all members received a letter from Joe Lynch the CEO and I spoke with the CEO myself. He is looking for us to advocate on their behalf, the background to this is the HSE have the disability capacity review to 2032 is there but it hasn't been published and it also hasn't been properly discussed in regards to resources. So Sunbeam House services tend to kind of be down the scale when budgets and different things are being decide and that's why the motion is in the format it's in. So really what we're asking today and this motion to be fair was going to be with Cllr Behan, we want to agree as a council to communicate with our TDs, the Minister for Health, Pascal O'Donoghue they are going to be doing the budget, for them to take seriously what the motion outlines. The other issue that Sunbeam experience is there is various announcements made over time and the same seem to be made year after year without it being delivered. So in the letter we got from him. For example he said there are significant number of families who require residential placements for their family members including situations where parents are in their 90s and have serious health needs themselves looking after people who require urgent assistance including personal care and businesses cases that are not being addressed for people within our care where their disabilities are progressing and unmet needs including housing, it's a massive area and really deserves our support. So I hope we'll pass it and Helen if you don't have the letter, I can give it to you here and we can write to all the relevant people and do that as urgently as we possibly, thank you chair.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay thank you, Cllr Kavanagh.

CLLR KAVANAGH: I want to support this motion and I was at a recent consultation and its obvious disability is the poor relation when it comes to funding and one in 7 people suffer from a disability Ireland and by 2026 that figure will rise to 20%. It increases with age and that means that for all the people present here and at home, disability is on the horizon for a number of people. For one reason or another. They also have the lowest percentage of disable people who take up full time employment. There is probably all kinds of historic reasons I won't get into but people with disabilities are very often destined to a life of poverty. And according to the statistics Ireland is the worse country in the western world where people are at risk of poverty. In Ireland it's 38% and in the Netherlands and France it's 21 to 22%. Yet Ireland was the first count to ratify. The funding has never been restored since the massive cuts in 2008 and on the subject of respite, I am sure there is many family members with disabilities and one of the main concerns of parents with a child with a disability is, what will happen to the child if I am no

longer able to care for them? And there is never been enough respite places and there is people in their 60's and 70's trying to care for adult children and it's time disability was put right back, centre stage. And they get their entitlements recognised and that a proper budget is put in place and this is brought right back out into the hope.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you, Cllr Kavanagh. I think we're all in agreement with this, would I be right in saying that? All agreed. Okay. Yes.

CLLR KAVANAGH: I think we would invite Joe Lynch of Sunbeam to attend the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH: All agreed?

>>: I also feel that it will be good to address the councillors. I said we would do that for the September meeting if possible.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Can he cut it down to ten minutes for a presentation?

CLLR MURPHY: Chair. Sorry.

I suppose I wear two hats on this conversation. I very much highlight and appreciate this coming. As I said, we have received it. As past staff member of Sunbeam, this is not new. I have much passion for the people who attend services like Sunbeam. And you are only hitting the tip of the iceberg of what has been said today. The respite is a very serious, a serious issue but this is not yesterday, this is not last year, this has gone on for the last ten years. The people that Cllr Joe Behan and Cllr Mary Kavanagh have supported today are talking about elderly people, elderly parents, maybe single parents, and siblings who have moved from home and the sibling is then left with the elderly parent. They are not entitled to home help, to support from outside services and then the respite was pulled.

Then, comes along the attending of day service. That was reduced, seriously reduced. Public transport, that the company supplied, that was reduced.

Comes along, five years down the line, total pull-off to transport.

The parents trying to get together to say please, please, please, leave the buses and we will pay. But no contribution. They wanted to pay a contribution to this, this was their respite. When their son and daughter went out in the morning at 9am or 8am, they had a few hours respite. They knew that their son, daughter was meeting friends, that it was their social life. They were doing activities, and that was their world and that they came back to their home again. They would not see anyone else from Friday to Monday. So this is a reality. it is not just respite it is everyday living. And Sun Beam is not the only one. And we have limited service. We have care at County Wicklow, we have Sunbeam services but all are very limited at this moment in time I can put my hand up to say that the service is making prisoners of people who have disabilities of physical disabilities and intellectual disabilities. Our government is killing our

people. I could say a lot more but I think ... and to be honest with you, even services of home help, I know somebody who is 38 years of age. Who got a serious brain tumour two years ago? Who has done rehab? Has come to a stage now of being able to live independently with support. Has been assigned a house in a co-operation, a co-operation facility in Baltinglass and cannot get home care to come in to live independently.

That is sad.

We are living in a sad weigh. I get so angry. I certainly would support. I think that we need a forum for our people with disabilities in Wicklow. On a medical ground and on these services and I fully support this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Miriam Murphy.

The next suspension of standing orders is Cllr O'Brien.

HELEN PURCELL: It may not be possible to invite Joe Lynch on the 10th of September but we look ahead to October. Everybody agreed. Yes. The next suspension of standing orders was submitted by Cllr O'Brien and Councillor Anne Ferris it is a resolution to members that we give Mr Charlie Bird the freedom of the county of Wicklow, that was seconded by councillor, Councillor Anne Ferris.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr O'Brien would you like to say a few words?

CLLR O'BRIEN: If you don't mind. I seem colleagues to indulge me with the resolution, I know I should have brought it with protocol but it is a sensitive case. I would like the highest commitment that we can bestow. Growing up, we were all familiar with Charlie covering TV working for the RTE and reporting on some of the most traumatic events in history. At one point viciously assaulted for bringing us the news. He was the only point of contact at one point between the RTE and the public. He witnessed the Troubles and the twists and turns of the Peace Process and bringing forward important news. He was on the international and on the charitable front Charlie shook the world with historic one, and he was there to report on the death of Senator Ted Kennedy. He presented a series, a collection of documentary programmes, visiting the Amazon, the Ganges and the Arctic, educating us even further. Charlie retired on the 16th of August, 2012, little did he know what awaited him. Charlie developed Motor Neurone Disease after experiencing problems with his voice. Unfortunately, I know this cruel disease all too well as my own grandfather past passed away from it. One of the last statements was: Did I reach the millennium? I don't know how anyone would react to hearing this dreadful diagnosis but Charlie is an inspiration to us all since receiving this dreadful news. Bringing about awareness to Motor Neurone Disease never seen before and raising 3 million for charity. I know Charlie is a humble man and does not see himself as inspiration but colleagues, he is. I know, sorry, I know we don't always see eye-to-eye at times in the chamber but today we have an opportunity to speak and to act as one to award Charlie Bird the freedom of County

Wicklow, one he deserves and one we can bestow on him. So on behalf of Councillor Anne Ferris and myself, I humbly ask that you support the resolution.

CATHAOIRLEACH: You have my support, 100%. I don't think that anyone is to oppose that. Am I right in saying that? Is it agreed? Councillor Anne Ferris, yes?

CLLR FERRIS: yes, Cathaoirleach, I wanted to thank.

CLLR O'BRIEN: For taking the motion today, and I'm delighted to second it. To say a couple of words on it. I believe even though Charlie Bird is a household name he has a special place in hearts of people living in Bray. Charlie lived here many, many years, he was a regular walker on the Bray Promise. He had time to say hello to everybody that greeted him or to stop to have a few words.

I would like to personally, to wish him well, indeed his wife Claire and the family well for the future. To thank him for all he has done for the womb of County Wicklow and indeed for the people of the country. One of my earliest memories of Charlie Bird was when he covered the tragedy at the Starlight in 1981, I believe it was and the appearance on The Late Show and when he was broadcasting to the West, he really gave inspiration to everybody in the country. This is a tough time he is going through. I really would ask for people to support the motion. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Stephen Stokes?

CLLR STOKES: Can I commend councillor Cllr O'Brien and Councillor Anne Ferris for bringing this forward. It is we deserved for someone who has given tremendous service to broadcasting and journalism and a long time County Wicklow resident and the Climb with Charlie campaign brought in vital funds and awareness to Motor Neurone Disease and to Petyr House for suicide prevention. I could not agree more with the proposal. Thank you to Paul and to Anne for this worthy recommendation.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Stephen Stokes. Cllr Miriam Murphy?

CLLR MURPHY: I too, I totally want to thank both couplers for bringing this forward. It is a fantastic acknowledgement of a man who has, I suppose, seen many, many challenges, but the biggest challenge has been put on his shoulders. For me, again, wearing another hat to share, you are a person in life to the public, I feel emotional talking about it. I never talked about my disability for a long time. Sometimes as you get older you just have to say "yes, I'm not able to" "at times I am unable to cope but I hide it. For that man to open his heart, mind, to share what he is going through with his family it has to be acknowledged and I hope sooner rather than later. Non-

CATHAOIRLEACH: Hell thank you, Cllr Miriam Murphy. Helen, where do we go from here?

HELEN PURCELL: If everyone is in agreement there is a policy in place in relation to the protocol. As Cllr O'Brien says it is the highest standard to bestow on anyone in the county. Only

two people have received the honour, Daniel Day Lewis and Katie Yore. It has been 2010 and 2009, it will take time to organise. But if everyone is in agreement with the resolution before them, to probably organise the event to take place in the council chamber in September of this year.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Everybody happy with that? Thank you very much. Can everyone remember Mark's presentation. He wants to charge 3 Euros to revisit the recycling centre. And would you believe it, Cllr Miriam Murphy, you are up now to speak, I don't think you have ever spoken as much. You can thank me later!

CLLR MURPHY: Thank you, I always liked marsh's presentations but I will challenge him on one or two things. I was going to ask, I was wondering will the work on the centres be carried out one by one? And where will Arklow be on the list, although it begins with an A are we first. Not to be selfish or anything. But the more upgrading that we have, the more people we will have used it. I think there is many, many services that can go in to the centres, it can be a pleasant journey, it is an educational journey for young and for old. I think, again, the credit to the staff, the workers that are working in the centres they are fantastic. I think that they do encourage and they are very, very helpful. I would like to see the charity shops going back into it too, as it brings a foot fall. The only thing is that I seem to have to go back to school to talk about the pesticides to use and now how to recycle again, so I will spend a lot of time studying but I would like to thank Mark and to wonder how the funding is allocated and the length of time it will take.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Miriam Murphy. Cllr Edward Timmins?

CLLR TIMMINS: I have seen this presentation. It was presented at the planning SPC. As you remember, Mark, I opposed the new charge, I think that the timing of it, apart from anything else, is wrong. The country is, you know, people are suffering a lot of extra charges, extra costs all over the place. I think is really inappropriate to be looking to bring it in now if at all. And secondly, the projection of 3 Euros, generating 1 million per annum, I question if that figure is valid, if that will work out that way, given the overheads involved in putting the system in place. So, as chairman of the SPC, I would be opposed to charging the residents of Wicklow County Council.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Stephen Stokes?

CLLR STOKES: Cathaoirleach, thank you very much, Mark, for a thorough presentation. I feel also, that people may be discouraged by the 3-euro charge. Can the range of free items be extended to include cardboard, cans and paper? Like Bali Mount recycling centre in south Dublin. What they offer with the bulky waste is a sliding scale and cars start at 15 euro. You are right about things being organised if people pay for it. I wonder, do Wicklow County Council make money from the recycling? Do they resell the items? I also warmly welcome Blessington

getting a new centre but can I ask if there are plans for the Greystones district to get a recycling centre? Should with 20% of the population it should be the next in line, I believe it is the only Municipal District without a recycling centre. So it means that they have to travel further, so it means use of more petrol. And if people are new houses, there is a lot to bring to Bray, it is not practical to put into their recycling bin and that is let alone the day-to-day waste. So I would press on the question, are there plans the future or next in line for the Greystones district for recycling? Thank you, Mark.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr O'Brien?

CLLR O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, I will be brief. I presume there will be more keep conversations in consideration of this going forward. But, again, there is, in my mind a big change being proposed. Again, we have to consider, it is a culture change. Culture is how we do things around here. So when we propose, we change how we do things around here. To consider how to bring people to acceptance or to the agreement on the societal and behavioural change. Change comes at a cost. So, I know there is a literal cost in this but is there a cost in terms of was it included in the survey or do we get the feedback, will we consult people on if they as citizens, as members of the community are willing to get on board with the type of change proposed? And has there been a model produced whereby we will not charge people but we will still pursue the vision for how we do recycle in the county.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Cllr Peir Leonard?

CLLR LEONARD: I am opposed to a charge to be implemented. I think when the waste was privatised, that you would get those, the majority of people that pay for waste. But I noticed recently in my Municipal District there is people stockpiling waste in their homes. It may not be fly tipping out and about but people who cannot afford to or for whatever reason there is a lot of waste built up and you end up paying the other end of the scale when you have to dispose of a huge problem. I think that we need to look outside of the box at creating revenue in the recycling centres as well. There is a lot of opportunity for industrial, for small industrial waste like glass, industrial glass windows, we don't VP a recycling facility for glass, PVV glass in the county and timber, that is another thing. We have, the utilisation of the space in the recycling centres we can look to the remodel those. I know that you mentioned bringing in the shops or whatever but I think there is an opportunity to even set up containers with, and to facilitate the men's shed in Arklow, the men's shed is outside of the town. The recycling centres are a great community meeting place. Anyone will agree, going there, with people being isolated it is the one place to meet, to have a chat. There is an opportunity to be grasping that. To look at the laying out of the glass recycling outside, to have a different design lay out to free the space to put in containers to facilitate the likes of the men's sheds that can recycle people's furniture.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Peir Leonard I have 10 minutes. I am not cutting you short. Thank you very much. Cllr John Mullen, please. Please keep it brief.

CLLR MULLEN: Again, I have serious concerns about the charge proposal. There is an alternative model. You mentioned Tinahely recycling centre which is a unique community-managed recycling centre in partnership with Wicklow County Council. We run the recycling centre at a fraction of the cost that a council run recycling centre is produced we still manage well. When the recycling centres were closed in COVID fly tipping soared we were meeting on Zoom and several areas said that the fly tipping was through the roof. So when you say that there is a reduction in use but no link between a reduction in use and fly tipping, I do not accept that. I am on the borders of county Wexford, when they have introduced charging as part of the deal with Wicklow County Council Tinahely has a free pick up in Carnew. We have more coming in from the Wexford site because of that. As it is free. I don't accept there is a connection between a reduced charge and fly tipping. But I don't think a charge is to work, if we take climate change seriously, we should have more modelled recycling centres and I don't think how we have investigated how the community and the partnership could run a nice little enterprise and recycle on a smaller scale, we may avoid the large industrial-sized costs of the present model.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Lourda Scott?

CLLR SCOTT: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I welcome lots of what was in the presentation. I think it is improving our recycling centres, it is good news. I use the Bray one a lot. It is a hive of activity on a Saturday morning. I hope it will not change with the modest charge proposed. 3 euro per car, it is not a huge amount. It will be important, though, that you are saying it is ring-fenced to be put into the centres but the communication as to what the charge is used for, the improvements that the communities see in the centres, that is really important to community day. I have a question with regards to the infrastructure improvements taking place, will the centres be closed and if so for how long? The other thing to see, maybe where the charge can be used is to see a focus on the repair cafes linked to the recycling centres. We need to be refusing purchased stuff, to start with. To reduce what we are buying, to repair what we are buying before we get down to the point of throwing stuff away and recycling, so I would like to see repair cafes started up with the people with the skills can gather, repair, et cetera so, based in the recycling centres so people would not have to recycle in the first place. To have further education and detail, and where the recycling items are going, so there is a chain as to where it ends up. Particularly electronics and all the rest, it is not left in landfill or that they are truly being recycled.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Mr Patrick and Ms Patricia Dunne?

CLLR DUNNE: Just to say, firstly, the role that the recycling centres are playing in promoting responsible recycling that came to the fore during COVID. But to have an open mind in relation to the proposed 3-euro charge. I would like to see more free items included in that, the cardboard and shredding paper. I know that Mark mention in relation to the hazardous waste. There is an additional charge from the presentation, I take it for those items and Cllr John Mullen said, I would have a concern that the additional charges would lead to increasing in the

illegal dumping. That is a concern, so an introduction or change it must be accompanied by good communication, accompanied by education.

CATHAOIRLEACH: 3 speakers and 5 minutes, so, please cut them short. Cllr Mary Kavanagh?

CLLR KAVANAGH: I remember that councils collected the rubbish then it was privatised. People were happy to have the recycling centres there. Paying to have the non-recycle items dumped. So, to charge now, it is not a reward. It encouraging legal dumping.

I would agree that any commercial waste, yes, there should be a charge for that but not household. I think that the responsibility for waste anyway, it lies with the department of communications, climate action and the environment. There is money coming in from the Government from investment in new recycling centres or improved recycling centres, so I don't see why the time, when the cost-of-living is so high, to be hit for something as basic as getting rid of rubbish, traditionally always collected by the councils. I think that is what I wanted to say.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Cllr Pat Fitzgerald?

CLLR FITZGERALD: I think that we will have difficulty with this. Restarted to recycle in the mid-2,000 when Michael Nicholson was involved. Not everyone is riding to the recycling centre, I see them walking on the bikes, going up with a pram as those people cannot afford to have 3 euro. If you are on social welfare. Whatever else. I just feel that there will be problems. But an interesting thing where I can see people coming all the way from Gory but we don't charge in Arklow. But the fuel to come into Arklow is 7 or 8 euro so that is a contradiction. Now the bottle banks, no charge for them? So people can put the bottles and the tins in and that needs to be clarified. But the recycling centre in Arklow needs upgrading. In some Saturdays you bump into people, it is not big enough. Nor is the floor space. So I feel it will take time for people to get used to this as 3 euro, it may not seem a lot but it is if you don't have it. Lots of people, they get a lift up there or they are on a bike, it will take time to convince people. I think that there will be mixed feelings on this mark. I am not sure people will be jumping over, or with joy, to be honest about it. I will not say much more.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Cllr Pat Fitzgerald. Cllr Grace McManus?

CLLR MCMANUS: A quick question, has there been a formal poverty proofing of this proposed change? If not, I propose that there is a poverty proving procedure done and a report given to members before it goes further. I see it as a poverty issue and now you say 5% of respondents don't have a green bin but it is waiting to see who it effects the most? I would like to ask about the public consultation and process. I am worried it is: We have the presentation and now the charges are coming in, I would not be in agreement with that at all.

CLLR O'BRIEN: This is a subject to take seriously. It is all about the timing on this one. We are going through a cost-of-living crisis bow lots of councillors have to leave the changer for various

reasons. Because it is an important topic and a subject I any we should defer the conversations to a future date.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We are not making a decision, there is no vote. I will ask Mark to answer the question as there is no vote. But I have my feelings, I will ask Mark to answer the questions.

I am going to ask Mark to answer the question because there is no vote on it. I am going to ask Mark to answer the questions. Thank you.

MARK: Okay, thank you Cathaoirleach and Cllr Murphy, so we'll start with Bray. So what we'll do is, we have surveys ongoing and if there are changes we can implement, for instance the charging mechanisms and we'll do that on all the centres as quickly as possible and things like the major engineers work we'll have to do it over the 3-years of the capital programme. The charity shops do bring footfall and we'll encourage them. We'll have the charity shops having an entrance which will be free. So the charity shops won't be through the charging point. The charge will be fed straight back into the job code. Money goes straight into the recycling centres and that's my plan. I have had discussions with the Chief Executive on how it can be managed but that's our plan. The projection of the €3, we use the €3 charge. So we assumed a reduction in footfall over the coming years and the €3 is still producing approximately a million Euros based on the number of vehicle movements that we have had over the last number of years. So that's a scientific exercise and we have dealt with other local authorities and when they introduced local charges there was a decrease in movement. The Ballymount sliding scale, we'll introduce a similar regime whereby large items have to be disposed of and we'll charge for them. So the objective in there as well as always to disincentivise people, just disposing of products. People who might resell on or repurpose will be incentivised to do so. So hopefully they will go to the Buy and Sell and places like that. So do we make any money? No. The recycling centres cost us well in excess of a million Euros. We'll have the same headline costs and we're leveraging as much income as we can. We're currently coming under criticism. Currently we have an ad hoc method of collecting fabric. So we're about to go to tender for that to try and get the best value for the public and organise it and ensure we have a system that people coming into recycle fabric come through a gate where they have to produce insurances and waste collection authorisation. So unfortunately we're going to be more focused on tenders for materials. We have improved the income and we have been leveraging the income over the last number of years because it dipped very quickly in 2018 and 2019 where there was a crises in the recycling world where no plastics were recycled outside Europe. All of that takes time and effort and the income we have is of the order of 300,000 versus well over a million and a half Euros expenditure in the annual budget. So the question, do we make any money on recycling of materials? Yes, we do, about 3 or €400,000 and it was way less than a million and a half in keeping the recycling centres open. The survey,

yes, we can carry out further surveys. Our intention is to introduce a tap and go system and introduce things we want free and glass because it's free in the bottle banks, makes more sense if the recycling is done locally. So yes we can carry out further surveys if that's what it takes. And the current costs are about a million and a half versus the 300,000 odd income. The recycling centres don't make an income at the moment. Glass windows, we do recycle glass, if you bring glass down to the Murragh it will be taken for free. Timber we don't take for free and it will be an extra charge as it's a bulky item. We'll be remodelling all the centres and as we do so we'll look at improving how people get in and out of the centres and in particular, the charity shops. We'll have a remit, they will all have a remit where we introduce a charity shop to a centre they will have a remit where they will be required to have a repurpose central economy role and we'll try and encourage them to increase the amount of materials they up-cycle or sell on. Very good point about the Men's Shed and we'll engage with them. In theory the Men's Shed can come under the charity shop because we intend to have an open process to recruit charity shops for Arklow and Wicklow. Tinahely recycling centre, the reason it operates on the fraction of the costs of the other centres is because we fund it. We give them a grant of 30,000 a year and we collect the recyclable materials and truck it into other centres such as Bray or Arklow. A lot of the materials are collected by us. Bear in mind it gets financial and practical support from us. Fly tipping soared at the beginning of the pandemic and it did but I argue it was because people were not out and about. People stayed within their five-kilometers and with our interaction with the Guards who were out and about, people didn't expect to be anybody in the uplands and that's why it spiked at the beginning of the pandemic. If you look at our records of convictions and fines, they also peaked at the beginning of the pandemic. We had a higher level of activity because people didn't expect us to be out and we had a high level of fly tipping and people stayed within the five-kilometers. They did it locally because they stayed within the 5K and once they realised the Guards were patrolling the 5K. We got multiple phone calls saying we just caught a lad throwing something over a hedge. We'll charge to include the word repair cafes, we want to encourage all types of Wee recycle. Wicklow County Council seeks out partners to take away the recyclables, who will take it away and recycle it. We don't sell the material. Unfortunately we can't. Some of our materials going into what we call recovery and all plastics go into recovery. And in this country it includes incineration and we seek companies to take away the plastics and reuse it. We work with a company in Blessington who make materials. Those recyclables often come from our centres because those companies take the materials from us because we hand pick it and sort it. We can't continue to hand sort it if we don't get the support of the public and the funding and resources, we're putting over million Euros into the centres, net every year. We have to have some support in that and help in that. Hazardous, we'll continue that in if we introduce the charging regime we can have it all the time. Cllr Kavanagh's assertion that charging will encourage illegal dumping, I would emphasise our neighbours didn't find that. I would also point out 50% of material we take from the uplands could

have been recycled free in our centres and the reason for the increase in dumping was of people's behaviour changing. The recycling centres were open all the way through COVID. So we didn't close them. So it wasn't because people weren't able to recycle, it was because they thought they would be able to dump without being caught. And that was found to be wrong. So member, I think I have answered all your questions. If you have any more.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We'll email you Mark but thank you very much for that. I have gone over time. My first meeting, I didn't get to Cllr O'Brien's motion. We don't have a decision to make on this. Mark explained this very well. The meeting was over about 5 or 6-minutes ago, okay, 14-minutes ago. I did want to finish on a happy note. Unfortunately that's been taken out of my hands because I got a tap on the shoulder to say, Cllr Behan's mother passed away. So I send my best wishes and deepest sympathy to him and his family. So I wanted to let everyone know. Thank you very much for helping me to get through this meeting. And I really appreciate it and please have a good summer break and protocol is we hope to get through that a bit quick. So thank you members. And thank you very much Helen as well.