



## COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHORCAÍ

---

### Minutes of Proceedings at Meeting of Cork County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2018.

#### I LATHAIR

Comhairleoir D. Ó hUrthuile, Méara Chontae

Comhairleoiri MacCraith, Mac Seafraida, Ní Fhúarthain, Ó'Donnabháin Dheasmhumhnaigh, Ó Cainte, S. Ó Coileán, M. Ó Murchú, R. Mhic Cárthaigh, Ó Colmáin, Lombard, Ní Cochláin, Críod, Ó Gráda, Ó Luasaigh, Ó Riain, Ó Conbhuí, P. Ó Suilleabháin, C. MacCárthaigh, Ó Ceocháin, Sheppard, Ó Cadhla, Rasmussen, N.Ó Coileán, Uí Thuama, Ó hEigearthaigh, S. NicCárthaigh, Léanacháin-Foghlú, Ní Bhrian, N. MacCárthaigh, Ó Floinn, Ó Dúghaill, Mhic Dháibhí, Uí Mhurchú, Ó Sé, G. Ó Murchú, G. Ó Murchú, B. Ó Muimhneacháin, Uí Mhaoláin, T. Ó Coileán, D. Ó Coileán, Ó Cearúill, J. Ó Suilleabháin, C. Ó Suilleabháin, P.G. Ó Murchú, Uí hEigearthaigh, Ó hAodha.

#### PRESENT

Councillor Declan Hurley, County Mayor, presided.

Councillors McGrath, Jeffers, Forde, Ó'Donnabháin, Desmond, Canty, J. Collins, M. Murphy, R. McCarthy, Coleman, Lombard, Coughlan, Creed, O'Grady, Lucey, Ryan, Conway, P. O'Sullivan, K. McCarthy, Keohane, Sheppard, Barry, O'Cádhlá, Rasmussen, N. Collins, Twomey, Hegarty, S. McCarthy, Linehan Foley, O'Brien, N. McCarthy, O'Flynn, Doyle, Dawson, J. Murphy, O'Shea, Gearóid Murphy, G. Murphy, B. Moynihán, Mullane, T. Collins, D. Collins, Carroll, J. O'Sullivan, C. O'Sullivan, Hegarty, Hayes.

Chief Executive, Director of Services Roads & Transportation, Senior Executive Officer.

#### CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1/2-3

Proposed by Councillor Michael Hegarty

Seconded by Councillor Kevin Conway

#### RESOLVED:

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12 March, 2018, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.”

## VOTES OF SYMPATHY

2/2-3

- TO: Mr. Don Woods, on the death of his wife, Mary (former Midleton Town Councillor)
- TO: The Burke Family, on the death of their sister, Mary (former Midleton Town Councillor)
- TO: Seán O’Loinsigh, on the death of his father, Michael.
- TO: Noel Walsh, on the death of his mother, Peggy.

The Mayor and all members wished to be associated with the votes of sympathy.

Councillor Michael Hegarty welcomed Councillor John Paul O’Shea to the Fine Gael Party, and wished Councillor O’Shea every success.

Members also welcomed Councillor Kevin Conway as the new group spokesperson for the Independent Elected Members.

The Mayor informed members that a cover letter from the Director of Corporate Services was circulated to all members at the meeting, together with a copy of the Terms of Reference for Committee No. 1 which has been tasked by the Minister to undertake the review of Cork County.

The Mayor advised that members would be given an opportunity to discuss the matter under Any Other Business before the close of the meeting.

## STATUTORY BUSINESS

### Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001:

Members noted the following disposals.

#### **LEASE OF LAND AT KILNAGLEARY, CARRIGALINE, CO. CORK**

3(a)/2-3

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

#### **DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST AND PLOT AT 1 CHAPEL STREET, DUNMANWAY, CO. CORK**

3(b)/2-3

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of freehold interest in house and plot as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

**DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST AND PLOT AT 18 FACTHNA'S TERRACE,  
SKIBBEREEN, CO. CORK**

3(c)/2-3

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of freehold interest in house and plot as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

**DISPOSAL OF LAND AT KILCOOLISHAL, GLANMIRE, CO. CORK**

3(d)/2-3

In accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, the disposal of the property as shown hereunder shall be carried out in accordance with the terms specified in the notice issued to members dated 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

**REPORTS & RECOMENDATIONS OF OFFICERS**

**Road Grant Allocations, 2018**

4/2-3

The Director of Services, Roads and Transportation outlined the main provision of the report on Road Grant Allocations, 2018, which are as follows;

**National Roads**

The 2018 National Roads Allocations, as issued by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2017, amounts to €18,667,828. The allocation represents a 2% reduction on the initial 2017 allocation of €19,115,129. The principal elements of the allocation are outlined below:

**Major Schemes category:**

- N8/N25 Dunkettle Interchange:  
An allocation of €0.5 million has been made to the Council in 2018, for preliminary and enabling works such as Site Clearance, Site Investigation and Archaeology while the Main Construction Contract is being procured and will be managed directly by Transport Infrastructure Ireland. Tenders have been received from the 5 shortlisted contractors for Main Construction Contract. Assessment of the tenders is currently underway. Construction is expected to start by end of 2018 / start of 2019. Construction is expected to take three years.
- N22 Baile Bhúirne to Macroom (22kms) :  
An allocation of €4.0 million is available in 2018. Advance works such as Fencing, Site Clearance, Site Investigation is nearing completion. Three Archaeology Contracts are also underway and should be complete by June/July 2018. A second Advance Works Contract has been awarded. Contract Documents for the Main Construction Contract are well advanced. Construction is expected to take two and a half to three years.
- N25 Carrigtwohill to Middleton Scheme (4.5kms):  
An allocation of €25,000 is available in 2018 to prepare a Project Appraisal Plan.
- M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Motorway (11kms): An allocation of €300,000 is available to advance this scheme in 2018. The Motorway Orders and Environmental Impact Statement were published in May and June 2017. The Oral Hearing took place in November and December 2017. An Bord Pleanála has indicated that its decision may be published on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2018. Tender Documents for the appointment of Consultants for the next Stage are currently being prepared.
- M20 Cork to Limerick Motorway: TII have requested that the design of the M20 Cork to Limerick Motorway should be led by Limerick City and County Council (LC&CC). €1.5

million has been provided to LC&CC in 2018 to progress the Scheme and a Section 85 Agreement is being brought to Council shortly to enable LC&CC to develop the scheme in County Cork

- N72 Mallow Northern Relief Road (4.0kms): An allocation of €300,000 is available in 2018. JACOBS has completed a Feasibility Report and is now completing a Project Appraisal Plan. Draft Tender Documents for the appointment of Consultants is complete. The appointment will enable preparation of document for Scheme Design, Compulsory Purchase Order and Environmental Impact Statement and submission of same to An Bord Pleanála.

#### Minor Works Category

- N40/Dunkettle ITS Study, N40 Motorway Reclassification, TEN-T Route Study:  
An allocation of €400,000 is available in 2018 between these three projects. WS Atkins has been appointed to investigate and report on the N40/Dunkettle ITS Study and the N40 Motorway Reclassification. Procurement of a Consultant for the TEN-T Route Study is underway. Intelligent Transport System (ITS) Ducting is being installed on all approaches to Dunkettle Interchange.
- N73 Clogher Cross Waterdyke has an allocation of €100,000. The Compulsory Purchase Order is confirmed. Approval has been received from TII to issue Notice to Treat to the Landowners and appoint Consultants for the Design Stage.
- N73 Annakisha has an allocation of €5,000: The Compulsory Purchase Order was published in November 2017. A date for the Oral Hearing is awaited from An Bord Pleanála.
- N71 Newmills and N71 Bandon Bypass: Feasibility Reports required followed by Project Appraisal Plans being advanced.
- N72 Carrig to Ballygriffin: Route Selection and Part 8 required

#### Pavement:

An allocation of €10,069,192 has been made for the Pavement up from an initial allocation of €1,150,000 in 2017. Significant supplementary allocations were made in 2017. The decision of TII to revert to making allocations at the start of the year, for the substantive pavement improvement works programme for the year is welcome and the increased level of activity is essential given the widespread deterioration of the pavement on many sections of the National Roads network in the County.

- The following pavement contracts are underway or nearing completion:  
N25 Killeagh Village  
N25 Castlemartyr East, funded from 2017 allocation  
N22 Lissarda  
Pavement repairs to all national Routes
- The following Pavement Contracts are about to start:  
N20 Charleville Main Street  
N71 Leap to Dromillihy
- The following Pavement Contracts are to start later in 2018:  
N20 Ballygibbon to Ardamadane  
N20 Ballymartin  
N20 Velvetstown to Shinanagh  
N71 Canrooska  
N71 Derry  
N71 Lisselane to Gallanes  
N72 Grange East and West

Environmental Works: A further €50,000 has been made available in 2018 for the eradication of Non Native Invasive Species.

National Roads Office: A support grant for this office in the amount of €2,100,000 has been made, which will meet the costs of the office.

Maintenance Allocations: An allocation of €1,079,638 has been made for maintenance which is a 23% decrease on the 2017 allocation. This reduction is a serious concern particularly in the case of the allocations for Ordinary Maintenance which have been reduced by 32%

### **Regional and Local Roads**

Attached are details of the 2018 Regional & Local Roads Allocations, as issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport on 26<sup>th</sup> January amounting to €44,092,735. A further €451,921 is assigned from the Self Fund of the Local Property Tax bringing the total to €44,544,656. The allocation represents a 22.4% increase on the 2017 allocation of €36,389,590.

The principal elements of the allocation are:

- The Discretionary Maintenance Grant allocation is €9,217,921 (€8,766,000 + Self fund €451,921) which is marginally down on the 2017 allocation of €9,247,983. This is the main source of funding for ongoing maintenance tasks such as pothole repairs and drainage. There will be specific funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development for Local Improvement Schemes this year, so the option/requirement for funding them from the Discretionary Grant no longer arises.
- The Drainage Works Grant is a new grant type for road drainage measures with an allocation of €1,306,500 in 2018.
- The Restoration Improvement Grant of €25,017,000 is an 18.18% increase on the 2017 allocation of €21,168,202. This is the largest Grant and provides for the strengthening and overlay work on our roads and the fact that there is separate fund available for Community Involvement Schemes further increases the amount of work that can be done. Up to 19% may be transferred from this allocation to the Discretionary Grant allocation but this option will not be allowed in 2019. This facility to divert some of the Grant to Discretionary Maintenance has been important in allowing the maintenance programme to continue and in meeting the Council's labour costs. However in view of the increased grant amount, the drainage works grant and an increase in own resources funding for maintenance and bearing in mind that the transfer option will not be available in 2019, it has been decided to transfer 12.5% to the Discretionary Grant. Details of the Restoration Improvement schemes for each Municipal Area are being brought to individual Municipal District Committee meetings for approval.
- Community Involvement Schemes  
A separate fund of €10 million is being made available nationally for Community Involvement Schemes in 2018, for which Road Authorities are invited to make submissions by 23<sup>rd</sup> March with details of specific schemes being requested. The local financial contribution remains at 15%.
- The Restoration Maintenance Grant and Supplementary Restoration Maintenance Grants, amounting in total to €6,259,000 are specifically for Surface Dressing and represent an increase of 17.1% on the 2017 allocation of €5,344,500..

- Specific Improvement Grants have been increased from €50,000 in 2017 to €200,000 in 2018 and but again there will be no new schemes starting in 2018. The allocations are principally to cover contractual land acquisition commitments, it is hoped to complete the Part 8 for the R595 Oldcourt scheme and do some minor works there and to submit a Project Appraisal for the R586 Illen Bridge Scheme.
- Bridge Rehabilitation Grant. The Bridge Rehabilitation Grant of €1,695,220 includes a welcome €500,000 towards the cost of extra works that had to be undertaken in 2017, so the remaining allocation of €1,195,220 is a marginal allocation on the 2017 allocation of €1,150,000. The listing of bridges is indicative as a number of failures to bridges and structures have occurred since the submission of the Council's application to the Department last September and these will have to take priority for the funding available.
- Strategic Road Allocations. There is no allocation under this Grant category this year as there have been no new starts under this category since 2013 and outstanding commitments by the Department to schemes in this category have been met. However, a draft Project Appraisal has recently been submitted to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for the Carrigaline Western Relief Road with a view to obtaining funding.
- The Safety Improvement Works Safety allocation of €620,000 is a 26% increase on the 2017 allocation and will allow progress on 16 schemes.
- An allocation of €13,515 is available towards the cost of signage for 30 kph Speed Limits in Housing Estates, should the Council decide to proceed with some.

#### **Local Improvement Schemes**

- The Department of Rural and Community Development has notified Cork County Council of funding of €1 million for Local Improvement Schemes in 2018 and proposals are being prepared for submission to the Department by 28th March.

#### **Sustainable Transport Measures**

The National Transport Authority notified Cork County Council on 9th March last of funding of €1,085,000 for Sustainable Transport Measures under the Regional Cities Grants Programme 2018. Details of the allocation are attached together with a report on the implementation proposals by Peter O'Donoghue, Senior Engineer, Traffic & Transportation Section, Planning Directorate

The Director of Services, Roads and Transportation commented that the July timeline imposed for the completion of works and drawn down of funding under the Local Improvement Schemes is of concern. The Director of Services welcomed the increased allocation of 22.4% for Regional and Local Roads and said that our regional roads are deteriorating, and that we need to revert to spending significantly on these roads.

The Mayor thanked the Director of Services for the comprehensive report on the road grant allocations for 2018, and then commented that there has been a 2% reduction this year in the Council's national road grant allocation. The Mayor welcomed the announcement of an increase of 22.4% in the 2018 allocation for regional and local roads.

The Mayor referred to the notice of motion agreed by the members of the Municipal District of West Cork calling on the Minister to ensure that Cork County Council's National Road grant allocation would be aligned with other Counties as a proportion of Motor Tax collected. The Mayor said he is actively seeking a meeting with the Minister in order to address our on ongoing concerns regarding the conditions of roads around the county.

Members then thanked the Director of Services, Roads and Transportation for his report, and during the discussion that followed members made the following points:

- Members welcomed the announcement of the various paving schemes on the N71
- The surface condition of Clonakilty to Lisselan section of the N71 is very bad.
- Proper substantial realignment schemes are needed on the N71 as it has the reputation as one of the most dangerous stretches of roads in the Country.
- The current condition of the N71 is making it difficult to promote industry and tourism in West Cork
- There has been no commitment to funding for the N71 at Newmills.
- Traffic management plans for the Halfway to Innishannon route of the N71 would be welcome
- TII need to listen to our requests and respond.
- The increased funding is a sign of an improving economy.
- It is extremely important that the funding we are allocated is spent effectively.
- Members queried if it was too late for any community involvement scheme submissions.
- The reduction of 32% to the ordinary maintenance funding is of serious concern.
- Limerick City and County Council is the lead authority for the M20 project.
- Will delivery of the Mallow Relief Road be managed by Cork County Council or Limerick City and County Council.
- Is it possible to fast track delivery of the Mallow Relief Road, which will be of huge economic benefit to all of North Cork.
- The condition of rural and local roads is of huge concern.
- Pothole and drainage works are paramount.
- The local and community involvement schemes should be prioritised, as there has been a huge uptake in both of the schemes.
- We need to write to the Minister requesting that the July deadline imposed on the Local Improvement Scheme be extended until September, at least.
- Extending the deadline will enable us to carry out more improvement works during the summer months.
- As the largest county we should be refusing the 32% cut to the ordinary maintenance allocation.
- The 32% cut represents a slap on the face for rural Ireland by an anti rural Government.
- Members welcomed the allocation of €13,515 towards the cost of speed limit signage in housing estates.
- Should we also be looking at the introduction of ramps at the entrances to estates.
- The reduction in the general discretionary funding is a major concern.
- Where was Ballymaquirke Cross on the programme.
- Our national road allocation has seen a slight reduction in funding.
- The new interchange at Dunkettle will be a huge project for the entire Cork region, works will commence in early 2019, with a construction phase lasting over 4 years.
- Members queried when they could expect to see details of our own roads capital budget.
- Additional knotweed programmes need to be rolled out around West Cork.
- Members welcomed details of the Carrigaline Western Relief Road contained in the report.
- What level of funding will be provided for urban road design schemes as there are hundreds of houses being served by local roads without footpaths and inadequate public lighting.
- The Lehenaghmore Scheme has been prepared however no funding is available to advance the scheme.
- Members sought an update concerning access to the bridge in Castlemartyr.
- The IFA has sought to increase milk production in West Cork. This increase in production will place increased heavy traffic on our road network.
- Central Government needs to visit West Cork and see firsthand the condition of our road network.

- The Killough Bridge in Allihies is impassable for more than one car, and queried if the bridge is listed on the rehabilitation programme.
- Members also referred to the Inchingerig Bridge on the R586 between Drimoleague and Bantry.
- The report makes no reference to the roads passing through Crookstown and Coppeen on the route to Castletownbere, which is one of the largest land ports in Europe.
- Members sought updates on the Lakeview roundabout in Midleton and the R630 Whitegate road as the NRA (at the time) agreed the route would be upgraded to national route status.
- Members queried the 23% decrease on the maintenance allocation and sought clarification what the grant was for.
- Members welcome the completion of road works in Killeagh.
- Roads in Ballymacoda and Knockadoon are in a terrible condition due to increased traffic due to the bypass of Killeagh.
- Members complimented the hard work of the outdoor staff; however, the council does not have enough staff to respond
- The roads are in such a bad condition and we have gone beyond the point of pot hole filling.
- It is disappointing the R624 in Cobh is not listed, and we need assurance it will be on the agenda next year.
- We are investing in our maritime history in Cobh, yet as a Council we are not addressing the condition of roads in Cobh.
- Potholes are causing damage to cars and the Council is facing a massive bill in repair claims.
- In relation to ports what is meant by TEN-T status and why does it not apply to Castletownbere.

The Director of Services, Roads and Transportation, responded members' questions and confirmed that no funding from the Council's own resources is used for Local Improvement Scheme. The Director of Services then outlined that the maintenance cuts referred to in the road allocation report relate to national roads and not to regional and local roads. The Director of Services noted that the reduction in maintenance funding is significant for the N71.

In response to questions concerning the Mallow Relief Road, the Director of Services confirmed that the project will be overseen by Cork County Council.

The Director of Services said that in terms of traffic calming measures; speed ramps are not the favoured option and confirmed that a number of pilot schemes trialling alternatives to ramps were carried out in several locations in the Municipal Districts of Cobh, Ballincollig/Carrigaline and Bandon/Kinsale. The Director of Services confirmed that a report on the pilot scheme is due to be sent back to the Department shortly.

The Director of Services informed members that Cork County Council is currently on year 3 of a three to four year knotweed spraying programme on national roads.

The Director of Services confirmed that TII have put out a tender for a detailed design of the pedestrian foot bridge in Castlemartyr, and discussions are ongoing with landowners in relation to the Killough Bridge in Allihies.

In response to a members' queries concerning plans for the R624 Fota Road, the Director of Services and Divisional Manager South Cork recently met with the Principal Adviser in the Department to discuss plans for the Fota Road and the possibility of upgrading it to National Road status. The Director of Services stated a response is awaited from the Department, and that he was hopeful to secure funding under the council's own capital budget for a redesign proposal for the R624 Fota Road.



The Mayor then informed members that he has been trying to arrange a meeting date with the Minister to address our ongoing concerns regarding the conditions of roads throughout the county. The Mayor confirmed that a letter would issue to the Minister requesting to extend the deadline of the Local Improvement Scheme to the end of October, at the earliest.

## **NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

### **ACQUISITION OF DERELICT HOUSES THROUGH CPO**

5-2/3

Councillor Joe Carroll proposed, seconded by Councillor Noel Collins, the following notice of motion:-

“That this council would invoke the powers contained in the Housing Act 1996, whereby the Council would acquire derelict houses through CPO, then fully refurbish and re-instate them, and add them to the council's housing stock.”

Members noted the report of the S/Director of Services, Housing, which outlined as follows;

Cork County Council (through its Municipal Districts Directorate) has responsibility for dealing with derelict sites within its functional area. Cork County Council can buy derelict sites in its area either by agreement with the owner or through compulsory purchase. To progress such acquisitions Cork County Council must advertise the details of the proposed compulsory purchase in a local newspaper and send a notice to the owner or occupier of the land, setting out details on how and where an objection to the proposed purchase can be made. If an objection is made, the local authority cannot buy the land without the consent of An Bord Pleanála. If An Bord Pleanála approves the compulsory purchase and the local authority has dealt with any objections received, the land is transferred to the local using a vesting order.

The Housing Directorate is presently preparing reports on 21 properties with a view to purchasing same by invoking the Councils powers under the Housing Acts 1966 (though which powers of CPO are also provided). These units are part of 203 units that have been uploaded on vacantheses.ie. Another 4 units are at offer stage to the owners, with a further 14 units being investigated with the intention of purchase through CPO or by agreement.

Not all vacant, derelict or dangerous houses or sites are suitable for social housing, for various reasons including, excessive cost, poor location and lack of demand/need.

Cork County Council has prepared a Vacant Homes Action Plan, the Vacant Homes Officer; Seamus De Faoite has responsibility for its implementation. The 2016 CSO figure for vacancy in Cork was 13.2%. A targeted vacancy rate survey is due to be carried out on 4 towns in Cork County to facilitate an accurate assessment of the real vacancy rate. Vacant properties can be uploaded on vacantheses.ie. This website is monitored by Council staff, who assess demand in the area in which the units are located. Once demand is confirmed, information is gathered on the properties regarding ownership or reason for vacancy etc with a view to pursuing the property if it is deemed suitable for social housing. The Buy & Renew Scheme was announced in 2017 under Rebuilding Ireland.

The scheme is designed to assist local authorities in acquiring vacant properties for social housing. Demand for social housing along with suitability for social housing must be confirmed, as well as confirmation that a property is vacant for a period of 12 months or longer. The cost of purchase,

along with the cost of repairs must come under the ceiling cost for normal social housing acquisitions. The target for Buy & Renew properties from 2018 – 2021 is 200 units.

Members thanked the S/Director of Services for the report, and during the discussion that followed members made the following points:

- Response to members’ notice of motions should be circulated well in advance on the morning of the meeting.
- Derelict houses are in every town and village
- Dereliction causes nuisance for people living next door
- This leads to vermin and anti social issues
- Louth County Council is leading the way in acquiring derelict properties through CPO.
- Derelict properties could be repaired and used to house the homeless.
- There is too much red tape governing the CPO of derelict buildings.
- We need to first obtain the legal definition of what a derelict property is.
- We must acknowledge that not all derelict properties will be suitable for social housing.
- Cork County Council has never acquired a property through CPO on the grounds of dereliction.
- This would help answer our urgent need for housing and would re-invigorate our towns and villages.
- Pilot CPO projects should commence in each of the municipal districts.
- Staff should be designated to these pilot schemes.
- We would need to establish if there is enough funding in our own resources or through government funding to allow for the acquisition of derelict properties through CPO
- The Urban Renewal Scheme was very positive in the past
- The Housing crisis is one of national emergency
- The issue of dereliction is also a problem in the metropolitan area.
- It can prove difficult to identify the owner of a derelict property.
- According to census statistics there are 15, 000 houses empty in the county, yet we are only targeting 200 buy & renew properties from 2018 – 2021.
- We need to seek greater funding from the Government in order to target more properties.
- Does Cork County Council still erect derelict notices on properties?
- The motion should be forwarded to the Housing SPC for consideration.
- Auctioneers should be requested to submit lists of derelict properties that cannot be sold.
- The old library building on the Kanturk’s Main Street is a dangerous structure as slates are falling from the roof.
- Acquiring derelict houses through CPO would put a threat on people who own derelict properties and refuse to do anything with them

The Chief Executive outlined to members that it is interesting to note that the majority of local authorities have not resorted to the option of acquiring derelict properties through CPO. The Chief Executive said that Cork County Council takes pride in having met and exceeded its housing targets. He confirmed that actual vacancy rates across the county are in the region of 3-4%, and the 2016 CSO figure for vacancy of 13.2% was not an accurate reflection.

#### **EXTENSION OF TIME**

At 1.10pm, on the proposal of Councillor Alan Coleman, seconded by Councillor Timmy Collins, members agreed an extension of time until 2:00pm.

#### **PROVISION OF HOUSING UNITS AT PRICES BELOW MARKET VALUE**

6-2/3

Councillor Seamus McGrath proposed, seconded by Councillor Frank O’Flynn, the following notice of motion:-

“ That this Council seeks an update from the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government in relation to the provision of housing units at prices below market value associated with developments funded through LIHAF. “

During the discussion that followed members made the following points:

- The increase in LIHAF funding to €226 million is welcomed
- LIHAF aims to deliver delivers 23,000 houses by 2021
- A certain proportion of these house were to be made available at 10% under the market price
- The delivery of affordable social housing is critically important.
- Affordable housing is an option for those who do not qualify for social housing.
- In the past, there was great success with the affordable schemes.
- Affordable houses were originally in the LIHAF scheme, these are now being referred to as “below market value” units.
- LIHAF should have answered the affordable issue, it clearly has not.
- How are the proposed LIHAF schemes in Cork progressing.
- Will any of the LIHAF schemes come on stream this year
- What percentage of these will be available at below market value.
- We need a new affordable housing scheme
- In Dublin, the Ó Cualann Co-Housing Alliance has delivered 3 bedroom houses for €160,000.
- The Ó Cualann Co-Housing Alliance should be invited to attend a Development Committee meeting.

The Chief Executive stated that out of Cork County Council’s four LIHAF schemes, three have moved forward. An application for 600 houses at Dunkettle has been submitted An Bord Pleanála. 300 of these are LIHAF units, and 120 will be delivered as reduced cost units.

The Chief Executive outlined there is an agreement in place for the delivery of 2,500 houses in Waterrock, Midleton. 520 of these are LIHAF units and a percentage of these units will be delivered at €20,000 below certified reasonable value. The Chief Executive informed members that the LIHAF scheme at Shannonpark, Carrigaline is continually moving forward, and that he was hopeful for another round of LIHAF projects.

Members agreed to write to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government on the matter.

## **TASK FORCE TO DEAL WITH THE SERIOUS ISSUE OF DOG FOULING**

7-2/3

Councillor Danielle Twomey proposed, seconded by Councillor Noel McCarthy, the following notice of motion:-

"That this council set up a task force to deal with the serious issue of dog fouling. This group to be made up of officials from the Environmental Department, MDs and members of council. The group should have its own funding from council budget and with the primary role of putting plans in place to target the issue head on."

Members noted the report of the Senior Executive Officer, Environment, which outlined as follows;

The Environment Directorate of course acknowledges the ongoing challenge of dog fouling. It is the worst form of litter and in addition represents a serious public health risk. It has over recent years become one of the top issues of complaint both from the public and elected members.

The council's programs in this area involve the Veterinary, Waste Enforcement and Awareness units of the Environment Directorate together with Municipal District and Area staff. There is an established tradition of co-ordination across these various teams. In 2012 a Dog Fouling Policy was adopted by the Environment SPC which put in place a protocol for responding to dog fouling issues. That response is lead by our Dog Warden service and involves ongoing active engagement with complainants, alleged offenders and local community groups as necessary. The newly appointed County Dog Warden is also very active in ensuring that targeted visits take place to identified dog fouling black spots.

Dog fouling is an offence under the Litter Pollution Acts and can be subject to an on the spot fine of €150 and of up to €3,000 on summary conviction. Enforcement action can be problematic because of the necessary evidentiary proofs required. There must be a witness to the event and the identity of the person in control of the dog must be established. Dog owners tend not to offend in areas under surveillance and thus we are frequently responding to reports made by members of the public who, perhaps understandably, are in most cases unwilling to be a witness in support of a prosecution. Enforcement certainly needs to be part of the response to dog fouling; however, it is definitely not the solution.

The council has run numerous programs and awareness campaigns in relation to dog fouling in recent years. Indeed under the 2018 national Anti Dumping Initiative funding has been sought to further support signage and awareness campaigns on the subject. We nevertheless acknowledge that despite the significant resources assigned to it, dog fouling remains a significant problem and ongoing challenge for this council and indeed for all other local authorities. As indicated above dog fouling policy was last considered by the Environment Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in 2012. It would be our recommendation that this notice of motion be referred to the SPC for consideration as part as an overall review of policy in this area. The SPC would also be the best forum at which to get the input of all the stakeholders involved.

During the discussion that followed, members' comments included as follows;

- There is a serious health and safety aspect to the issue of dog fouling.
- A number of local authorities in the United Kingdom have passed Bye-Laws making it an offence not to clean up dog fouling and designating certain amenity parks as dog free areas.
- The four local authorities in Dublin have joined together to tackle the problem and have erected signs highlighting that dog owners must clean up after their dogs.
- Fingal County Council has commenced broadcasting public messages concerning dog fouling.
- We must name and shame those dog owners that are caught for the offence.
- This is a huge issue in our towns, villages and parks.
- Dog foul bag dispensers have been installed in many areas but disposal bins must also be provided.
- There is inconsistency in relation to the location of dog fouling bins.
- There are approximately 17,000 people living in the urban area of Carrigaline, yet there are no dog fouling bins provided.
- Dog fouling is a form of littering.
- The attitude of dog owners must change.
- Has extra funding been allocated by the Department to combat this problem
- Legislation needs to be changed making it an offence to take a dog out in public without the necessary means to clean up after the dog.

- The biggest issue is enforcement and we must recognise do not have enough staff on the ground.
- In the Municipal District of Fermoy, no dog fouling fines have been issued.
- The Municipal District of Fermoy launched the Green Dog Walking Scheme in the fight against dog litter.
- Additional funding and resources are required to tackle this issue.
- We should consider using drones as a method of monitoring dog fouling in public areas.
- The Environment SPC needs to lead on addressing the issue of dog fouling.
- We need to benchmark our response against the best practice in other local authority areas.

Members agreed to refer the notice of motion to the Environment and Emergency Services SPC for further consideration.

## **CIVIL DEFENCE**

**8-2/3**

Councillor Eoghan Jeffers proposed, seconded by Councillor Kevin Conway, the following notice of motion:-

“That Cork County Council commends the great work of the Civil Defence and will endeavour to support the role of their units. Cork County Council will write to An Taoiseach, The Minister for Defence to request and support extra funding in the allocation from the Department of Defence to Cork County Council’s Annual Budget”

Members noted the report of the Chief Fire Officer, which outlined as follows;

Cork County Council commends the great work carried out by all Civil Defence Officers and Volunteers in particular during severe weather events. Cork County Council sought funding from the Department of Defence in quarter four 2017 for the financial year 2018 in respect to Civil Defence operations. Generally over the last number of years Department of Defence has funded 70% of operational expenditure. In addition the Department of Defence regularly provide further funding for capital expenditure when requested. Cork County Council continuously monitors Civil Defence expenditure and in the context of the response to recent storm events additional funding will be sought as appropriate.

During the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

- The service provided by our civil defence cannot be measured in financial terms.
- Recent storm events have shown we will struggle into the future unless more resources are provided.
- There is a worrying decline in civil defence numbers, which is now down to 215 members in a vital service area.
- The vast majority of civil defence members are volunteers.
- They provide many services to our communities, free of charge
- In 2017, €125,000 was provided for new equipment for civil defence.
- Civil defence is the poor relation of our front line services
- Increased spending on Ireland’s defence forces should be redirected to our civil defence rather than spending it on an EU army.

Members agreed to write to An Taoiseach, The Minister for Defence to request extra funding for the Council’s Civil Defence.

## **VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS**

TO: Pineroft Darts Team on winning the Spring League.

TO: Mitchelstown Tennis Club, winners of the Division 2 Cup.

TO: Park United Soccer Club, on winning the U16 League.

TO: Conor Lehane and Mark Shorten, St Brogans College Bandon, on winning the 2018 Certified Irish Angus Need Schools Competition.

TO: Billie Jean Sargent's RDC Group on winning the Ireland's Got Talent Final.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Schull Pontoon**

Members requested that an update be sought from Minister Michael Creed in relation to the new pontoon for Schull Harbour. The new pontoon was meant to be installed in May 2017 as promised by Minister Creed in 2016; however, the pontoon has not yet gone in production. Members requested that assurance be sought from the Minister that the new pontoon will be installed by mid June at the very latest.

The Mayor agreed that a letter seeking an update would issue to the Minister.

### **Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees**

The Mayor referred to the cover letter from the Director of Corporate Services and the copy of the Terms of Reference for the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees No. 1, which was circulated to members at the meeting.

During the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

- Members expressed their frustration of not being informed of what was happening
- In the effort of fairness members of Cork County Council need to be provided with the same information that Cork City Council has.
- Two separate committees have been established
- Committee No. 1 has been tasked to undertake the review of Cork County.
- Any town with a population of 15,000 or more could potentially have its own Municipal District
- Ballincollig may be potentially classed as a new entity within the revised city boundary
- No reference to a timeframe is outlined in the terms of reference and how much time do we have to make submissions.
- John Paul Phelan T.D., Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform needs to explain what is happening
- This is evidence of the continuing disgraceful treatment of Cork County Council.
- There must be public consultation.
- Changes to the city boundary alteration will need to be progressed by way of primary legislation or ministerial order, which will need to be passed by T.D's in Dáil Éireann.
- Council members need to influence their political party members to amend the provisions of the boundary legislation.
- Through the whip, Fine Gael will follow up with the Taoiseach and Tánaiste.
- Michael Martin, T.D and Minister Simon Coveney have deserted this council.
- Members asked if Cork T.D's were invited to attend a Development Committee Meeting.

The Mayor confirmed that letters issued to Cork T.D's inviting them to attend a Development Committee meeting of Cork County Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2018.

The Chief Executive said he attended a meeting of the Cork Local Government Implementation Oversight Group (IOG) on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>, March, 2018, and advised members of the sequence of events at the meeting. The Chief Executive stated he was provided with the IOG's final map at the meeting, and this map was circulated to Members.

The Chief Executive informed members he was advised at the IOG meeting that €600,000 would be provided to each local authority for the purposes of establishing specific implementation teams, and he expected to receive approval for a small number of additional senior staff to be put in place to facilitate the transition process between both authorities.

The Chief Executive said that at the IOG meeting both Chief Executives were given assurance they would receive the terms of reference for the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees that same day; however, no formal notification of the terms of reference was provided to him as Chief Executive of Cork County Council, except for a phone call he received at 8:00pm on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, advising him that the terms of reference had already been published online. The Chief Executive said he arranged for an email to be circulated to members that evening, and he noted that members had received a copy of the terms of reference for Committee No.1 at this morning's meeting.

The Chief Executive commented that the expected outcome of the process is difficult to determine at this point in time, and that the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees have been tasked with reporting to the Minister no later than 13 June 2018. The committee's report could potentially result in a revised electorate representational figure of 5,500 per member in the county, and based on this potential figure Cork County Council should be seeking 61 elected members.

The Chief Executive informed members that a special meeting of the Corporate Policy Group would be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 to assess the Council's options, and that three additional elected members would attend the special meeting.

The Chief Executive confirmed that a report examining the potential restructuring of the Municipal Districts would be brought to members at the April meeting.

### **Opening of Tenders**

The Mayor confirmed the following tenders would be opened at the meeting:

1. Framework Agreement for Bridge and Road Structures Consultancy Services to Cork County Council & Cork City Council" – 13 Tenders were opened.
2. Construction of Housing Development (9 units) at Cuirt na Silini, Cloyne - 4 Tenders were opened.
3. Tenders for Courtmacsherry, Glengarriff and Reen Dredging Projects –3 Tenders were opened.

**This concluded the business of the meeting.**