



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

Cork County Council

Minutes of Proceedings at Meeting of Cork County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork and by Microsoft Teams on 13th June at 11am.

I LATHAIR

Comhairleoir Gillian Uí Chochláin, Méara Chontae

Comhairleoiri: Uí Chochláin G, Ó Colmáin, Ó Murchú C, Ó Suilleabháin S, Uí Shuilleabháin M, Ó Donnabháin, Ó Coileáin D, Ó Murchú PG, Ní Chróinín, Ó Conaill, Mac Craith, Uí Daltún, Ó Muircheartaigh, Uí Bhuachalla, De Faoite S, Daltún Ó Suilleabháin, Ní Cheallacháin, Barra, Sheppard, Rasmussen, Ó Conchubair S, Ó Conchubair A, MacCarthaigh N, Ó Flionn, Uí Bhriain, Ó Laoghaire, Dawson, De Róiste, Ó Muineacháin B, Ó Dubhghaill, Ó Sé SP, Ó Murchú G, Críod, Ní Mhuineacháin G, Ó Luanaigh, Ó Cochláin M, Uí Loinsigh, Ó Luasa, Ó Haodha Padraig, Ó Murchú Gearóid, Ó Madaoin, Ó Sé T, Léineacháin Uí Foghlú, Ó Héigheartaigh, Ní Heachtigheirn, Uí Thuama, MacCarthaigh S, Mac Uaid, Ní Cheallaigh, Ó Cearbhaill, Ó Muirthile, Uí Chaochlaoich, Ó Haodha Pól

PRESENT

Councillor Gillian Coughlan, County Mayor, presided.

Councillor: Coughlan, Coleman, Murphy K, O'Sullivan J, O'Sullivan M, O' Donovan, Collins D, Murphy PG, Cronin, O' Connell, McGrath, D'Alton, Murtagh, Buckley A, White J, Dalton – O' Sullivan, O' Callaghan, Barry , Sheppard, Rasmussen, O' Connor S, O'Connor A, McCarthy N, O'Flynn, O'Brien, O'Leary, Dawson, Roche, Moynihan B, Doyle, O'Shea JP, Murphy G, Creed, Moynihan G, Looney, Coughlan M, Lynch, Lucey, Hayes Pat, Murphy Gearóid, Madden, O'Shea T, Linehan – Foley, Hegarty M, Ahern, Twomey, McCarthy S, Quaide, Kelly, Carroll, Hurley, Coakley, Hayes Paul.

Chief Executive, Mr Michael Lynch-Director of Planning and Development, Mr Padraig Moore-Senior Planner, Senior Executive Officer

[a] CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1/6-1

Proposed by Cllr. Michael Hegarty

Seconded by Cllr. Frank O'Flynn

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd May 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

[b] VOTES OF SYMPATHY

- TO:** Mairéad Lucey on the death of her uncle Finbarr Lucey
TO: Councillor Joe Carroll on the death of his sister Ettie Carroll.
TO: The Donnellan family on the death of their father Sean Donnellan.
TO: Deputy Peter Burke on the death of his father Peter Burke.
TO: Kathleen Curtin on the death of her husband Tom Curtin
TO: Nicholas Jackman on the death of his wife Mary Jackman
TO: Marie Murphy on the death of her husband Denis Murphy
TO: Colman Walsh on the death of his sister in law Eileen Walsh
TO: Liam O'Connor on the death of his father Maurice O Connor
TO: Eileen O'Connell on the death of her daughter in law Gillian Daly

[c] STATUTORY BUSINESS

3/6-1

SECTION 31 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AS AMENDED:

Briefing on the Notice of Intention to Issue a Direction to Cork County Council on the Cork County Development Plan (Draft Direction) issued by Darragh O'Brien TD Minister for Housing Local Government & Heritage on 3rd June 2022 pursuant to Section 31 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as Amended. For noting by Council.

The Chief Executive, Mr Tim Lucey, outlined the contents of the Draft Direction received from Minister Darragh O'Brien on 3rd June. He said that the Draft Direction has been circulated to Members on 3rd June. The statutory process in respect of the draft direction would be outlined to Members.

Mr. Pdraig Moore, Senior Planner gave a presentation on the Draft Direction as follows:

Mr. Moore outlined the legislative background and said Section 31 and Section 31(AN) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, set out the legal requirements/timelines around the issuing of a Draft Ministerial Direction

Mr. Moore outlined the Section 31 timeline:

Section 31 Timeline:

3RD JUNE 2022 – MINISTERS NOTIFICATION OF DRAFT DIRECTION TO CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

S.31 (6) a plan shall not have effect in accordance with those sections which relate to the draft direction

Circulate copy of Draft Direction to Members
 Development Committee Friday 17th June 2022

17TH JUNE 2022 – CE PUBLISHES NOTICE OF DRAFT DIRECTION

(required to publish no later than 2 weeks)

17TH JUNE 2022 TO 1ST JULY 2022 – DRAFT DIRECTION ON PUBLIC DISPLAY

(2 weeks)

Elected members may make a submission during the public display period and if so send copy to the Minister

1ST JULY 2022 TO 29TH JULY 2022 – PREPARE CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT ON DRAFT DIRECTION/ BRIEF MEMBERS ON CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT

(No later than 4 weeks after the period of public display of draft direction)

Views of and recommendations made by elected members if any are included in the CE Report Full Council Meetings on Monday 11th and 25th July 2022
Development Committee Friday 15th July 2022.

29TH JULY ISSUE REPORT TO ELECTED MEMBERS, OPR AND THE MINISTER

Report to be furnished to elected members, the OPR and the minister

Note: No Development Committee or Full Council Meetings scheduled post 25th July.

29TH JULY TO 19TH AUGUST 2022 – OPR CONSIDERS CE REPORT AND MAKES RECOMMENDATION TO MINISTER OR APPOINTS INSPECTOR

OPR shall consider report and make recommendation to minister to issue direction or appoint a person to be an inspector to consider direction no later than 3 weeks after receipt of CE Report.

If Minister agrees with the recommendation to issue then he/she shall issue the direction with or without minor amendments. No time period is specified in which Minister shall issue direction.

Note: No Development Committee or Full Council Meetings scheduled during this period.

He outlined the potential for extended timelines as set out in Section 31AN(4) to Section 31AN(9) of the Act.

NOTE A:

In the case where an inspector is appointed to consider the direction an inspector may be appointed no later than 3 weeks after receipt of the Chief Executives report. Inspector is required to publish report no later than 3 weeks after his/her appointment. No later than 3 weeks after this OPR makes

recommendation to Minister either to issue/not issue or issue amended direction. (Total – potential additional 9 weeks)

NOTE B:

Where giving of a direction would require a material alteration to a development plan the Minister shall no later than 3 weeks after the recommendation by the OPR publish notice of the material alteration (determining whether SEA is required and carry out where necessary). Copy of proposed material alteration shall be available for inspection for a period of 4 weeks and submissions invited. No later than 8 weeks after public notice publication Minister shall prepare a report. (Total – potential additional 11 weeks).

Chief Executive’s Report requirements are set out in subsection 31(8) as follows: No later than 4 weeks after the expiry of the period referred to in *subsection(7)(b)*, the Chief Executive shall prepare a report on any submissions or observations received under *subsection (7)(c)* which shall be furnished to the elected members of the Planning Authority, the Office of the Planning Regulator and the Minister.

Section 31(9) sets out what is required to be included in the Chief Executive’s Report as follows:

- (a) summarise the views of any person who made submissions or observations to the planning authority,
- (b) summarise the views of and recommendations (if any) made by the elected members of the planning authority,
- (c) summarise the views of and recommendations (if any) made by the regional assembly,
- (d) make recommendations in relation to the best manner in which to give effect to the draft direction.

The Members Submission requirements are set out in Section 31(10) In relation to the notice issued by the Minister under *subsection (3)*, the elected members of the planning authority—

- (a) may make a submission to the Office of the Planning Regulator at any time up to the expiry of the period of time referred to in *subsection (7)(b)*, and
- (b) where so submitted, shall send a copy of it to the Minister

Mr. Moore outlined the reasons for the Draft Ministerial Direction as follows:

1. The Development Plan has not been made in a manner consistent with and has failed to implement the recommendations of the Office of the Planning regulator under Section 31AM.
2. The Plan, as made, fails to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. The Plan is not consistent with the National Policy Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework, specifically NPO 3c.
4. The Plan is not consistent with the regional development objectives set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region, specifically CMASP PO 16, RPO 35 and RPO 151.
5. The Plan is inconsistent with Ministerial Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Act, specifically:

- a) the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012;
 - b) the Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007) and the Development Plans, Guidelines for Planning Authorities-Draft for Consultation (August 2021);
 - c) Specific Planning Policy Requirement 4 contained in the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines (2018);
 - d) Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Cities, Towns and Villages (2009);
 - e) The Spatial Planning and National Roads, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012);
6. The Plan, as made, is not in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

Draft Direction:

- a) Delete replacement paragraph 9.5.7 inserted under MA 1.9.16 relating to the preparation of a Joint Retail Strategy and insert the following objective in Chapter 9 of the Plan:
To complete the preparation of a Joint Retail Strategy with Cork City Council which will jointly determine the scope for retail development generally, and for retail outlet centre development specifically, within the Cork metropolitan area within 12 months of the adoption of both City and County Development Plans and to adopt the Joint Retail Strategy into the Cork County Development Plan by way of a Variation. b) Delete the amended and additional provisions for “Retail Outlet Centres” inserted under MA 1.9.20, including objective TCR 10-2 Retail Outlet Centre and associated map;
- b) Delete the amended and additional provisions for “Retail Outlet Centres” inserted under MA 1.9.20, including objective TCR 10-2 Retail Outlet Centre and associated map;
- c) Reinstate the zoning Objective of those lands the subject of zoning objective Bantry BT-R-0X inserted under MA 5.2.6.27(a) to that of the draft Plan i.e. the subject lands reverts to BT-AG-01 Agriculture.
- d) Delete the amended residential densities on specific sites under MA 4.2.3.41 Carrigwohill CT-R-18 to revert to Medium A density and MA 4.2.3.43 Carrigwohill CT-R-04 to revert to High Density, and
- e) Reinstate the zoning objectives of the following lands to that of the draft Plan consistent with the recommendations of the Chief Executives Report dated 16th March 2022.
- i. MA 3.1.4.15-FY-1-05 Fermoy “Industrial development”-reinstate the zoning objective of the subject land to that of the draft Plan i.e. the subject land reverts to Greenbelt 1.
- ii. MA 3.1.4.16- FY-X-01 Fermoy “Special Policy Area- Expansion of existing mart facilities and provision of an NCT centre”-reinstate the zoning status of the subject land to that of the draft Plan i.e. the subject land reverts to unzoned.

Public Consultation on the Draft Direction takes place from Friday 17th June to Friday 1st July 2022.

A copy of the Draft Direction may be inspected online or at a range of Council offices and libraries

Submissions or observations in respect of the Draft Direction can be made from Friday 17th June to Friday 1st July 2022.

Submissions may be made either online or by way of a formal written submission to the Senior Planner

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members said they are frustrated and appalled by this direction
- Said they are elected by the people to make best decisions for the county
- Stated they are upset at the power of non-elected bodies in respect of the County Development Plan
- Asked if the views of the general public will carry any weight or does the Office of the Public Regulator take full control
- Members said it is clear that there is political involvement in this decision
- Said this decision undermines the powers of local government
- Members asked if there is any legal recourse to this direction
- Stated all Members made decisions on the County Development Plan for the betterment of their local areas
- Members said the Office of the Planning Regulator does not understand what is happening on the ground
- Stated the OPR has no respect for Cork County Council or for the judicial review
- Said this was not how local government should be done
- Queried if an inspector is appointed, where is the inspector appointed from?
- Members said it is difficult to understand how a judgement in the Council's favour can be tested again and again
- Said they worked hard to put together this CDP with the best possible advice and knowledge
- Said this Ministerial Direction is a vote of no confidence against the Members of Cork County Council
- Said the Cork County Development Plan was one of the first to be completed and to be tested
- Said it was a watershed moment for Cork County Council
- Some Members said they had a differing view of the role of the OPR
- Said the three senior members of government from Cork should intervene in the matter
- Said Cork County Council has been successful in two judicial reviews and the judgements were clear that Cork County Council was correct in how it did its business
- Said that the judgements did not deal with the constitutional rights or limitations of local government, and these had not been tested in the Supreme Court-Irish Local Government was the weakest in Europe
- Said promises of support were made to Cork County Council as the time of the Cork boundary change

The Mayor said the direction shows a complete lack of trust in Cork County Council. She said it is an attempt to erode the Council's legitimacy. She said the draft direction flies in the face of the Principle of Subsidiarity and encouraged members to make submissions on the draft direction.

The Chief Executive said a great deal of work has gone into the County Development Plan over many meetings, 3000 submissions and 2 years of input. He said that there were 5 matters which were raised in the draft direction, and this is a credit to the work that has been done on the County Development Plan. He said Members have an opportunity to decide whether submissions will be made individually or together as a Council.

Members agreed that a Special Meeting of Full Council in committee would be arranged to discuss the matter. Cllr Frank O'Flynn proposed, and Cllr Seamus McGrath seconded.

DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY:

SECTION 183 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001:

Members noted the following disposals:

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CARRIGALINE:

Disposal of land at Monkstown Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, Castlefarm, Monstown, Co. Cork.

5(a)/6-1

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 3rd June, 2022.

Situation: Disposal of land at Monkstown Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, Castlefarm, Monstown, Co. Cork.

Area: c.0.24 acres.

Consideration: €4,000.00

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF MACROOM:

Lease of Briery Gap, Macroom, Co. Cork

5(b)/6-1

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 3rd June, 2022.

Situation: Briery Gap,
Macroom,
Co. Cork

Term: 30 years (by way of lease) – rent review every 5 years

Consideration: €300 per annum

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BANDON/KINSALE:

Disposal of land at rear of 17 & 18 Chapel Avenue, Timoleague, Co. Cork

5(c)/6-1

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 3rd June, 2022.

Situation: Rear of 17 & 18 Chapel Avenue,
Timoleague,
Co Cork

Area: Measuring 0.0037 hectares (0.0091 acres) as outlined on
Map (part of Folio CK7778)

Consideration: €1000 plus €500 towards legal/admin costs

6/6-1

PART 8 MANAGER'S REPORT SECTIONS 179(3) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)

RESOLUTION UNDER SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000, AS AMENDED

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BANDON/KINSALE

Proposed by Councillor John O'Sullivan

Seconded by Councillor Kevin Murphy

Consideration of Part 8 Chief Executive's Report on proposed road improvement works on the R605 Ship-Pool Bends at Ship-Pool, Innishannon, Co Cork.

RESOLVED:

Noting that in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, (as amended), notice of the proposed development was published, 16 submissions were received in respect of the proposal, approval pursuant to Section 179 of the Act is given for the proposed road improvement works on the R605 Ship-Pool Bends at Ship-Pool, Innishannon, Co Cork.

SECTION 19 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001:

7/6-1

Filling of the Casual Vacancy arising from the resignation of Cllr Noel Collins.

Members agreed that this item be deferred.

**[e] REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES
TUAIRISCÍ AGUS MOLTAÍ Ó CHOISTÍ**

8/6-1

FILLING OF VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL BODIES:

PPN APPOINTMENTS:

Proposed by Councillor Mary Linehan Foley

Seconded by Councillor Michael Hegarty

Public Partnership Network (PPN) Appointments to Strategic Police Committees, Joint Policing Committees and Local Community Development Committees were approved as follows:

- (a) Joint Policing Committee - Ena Howell
- (b) Housing SPC (1 no. vacancy) - Donal Kissane
- (c) Social Inclusion, Rural & Community Development SPC - Peter Kidney

CORPORATE POLICY GROUP

9/6-1

Approval of attendance by Members at conferences on the Conference list for June 2022

Proposed by Councillor Ben Dalton O'Sullivan

Seconded by Councillor Kevin Murphy

10/6-1

CARRIGALINE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Proposed by Councillor Marcia D'Alton

Seconded by Councillor Seamus McGrath

“That because of the benefits green spaces bring to large housing developments, this Municipal District would bring a motion to full Council requesting clarification of

- a. Measures taken through planning conditions to protect green spaces prior to taking in charge
- b. The legal status of green spaces subsequent to taking in charge
- c. Impediments, if any, to the taking in charge of a green space
- d. The maintenance of green spaces both before and after taking in charge.”

Members noted the response from the **Director of Services, Planning** which outlined as follows:-

Where a green space is provided for in a planning permission, satisfactory completion is required.

It is considered best practice, as stated in Departmental Circulars and in accordance with legal advice, for Cork County Council to take title of open space lands before concluding the taking in charge process. The taking in charge process is a reserved function of the Elected Members of the Municipal District.

Once title is taken the lands are in the ownership of Cork County Council.

Instances where a developer is no longer active and/or where the public do not have access by right or by permission to green spaces can be impediments to the taking in charge process.

The maintenance of green space prior to taking charge is the responsibility of the developer and generally it is preferable if local arrangements are made with and by local residents to maintain such spaces after the taking in charge process is concluded.

Members noted the response from the **Director of Services, Municipal District Operations and Rural Development** which outlined as follows:-

In the case of housing estates post taking in charge, residents associations are generally formed and these residents associations take responsibility for the future management and maintenance of the common areas in the estate informed by the views of local residents and property owners alike. The council is highly supportive of the establishment of residents associations and provides guidance and assistance re same through it's network of Municipal District offices.

The council may also provide funding support through the Municipal District General Municipal Allocation. The manner in which this funding is allocated varies from MD to MD and is at the discretion of the elected members in terms of overall MD needs and priorities. In some cases, grant assistance may be provided to support residents associations, Tidy Towns groups and/or community development associations in carrying out grass cutting, purchase of equipment, planting, painting etc. in spaces which are visible and which constitute public spaces in estates. This practice is carefully assessed on a local MD case by case basis in the context of available funds. The funds may be made available through the annual Community Grant / Amenity Grant process. It should be noted that enhancing the physical development and presentation of private housing estates is a matter first and foremost for local residents. Cork County Council does not generally provide funding assistance for the maintenance of private housing estates where such works would solely benefit the private housing estate residents.

In a limited number of cases - specifically some council estates - the local MD members make provision from the MD GMA to arrange for grass cutting to be carried out by private contractors.

The nature and extent of response is a matter for each individual MD having regard to the range of needs and demands on the local GMA.

Cork County Council has no involvement where the estate hasn't yet been completed or taken in charge.

During this discussion, Members made the following points:

- Members said the maintenance of estates is very important and thought it would be beneficial for all member of the Municipal Districts to have clarification on this
- Important to understand the process around taking in charge of estates and green spaces
- Asked for information on circular letters as referenced in the response from the Director of Planning
- Stated that residents often have to take responsibility for green areas
- Said it is unfair that the responsibility lies with resident groups
- Asked could Cork county Council retrospectively take green spaces into Cork County Council title
- Obvious that there are gaps in the legislation that causes local issues
- Said council needs to ensure consistency in order to support Pollinator Plans across the county
- Members queried if there are any plans to update policy dated 2008
- Said green spaces have important amenity value
- Said the Amenity Grants did not give Residents Associations funding for grass cutting

The Chief Executive said he will revert regarding the Department Circulars and will revert re title issue. He said he will brief Members at Development Committee. He said the plan is fit for purpose and reflects the most recent legal advice. He said a briefing regarding unfinished estates was given to Development Committee recently. There are bonds in place and progress is being made. He said the cost increases for maintenance of green spaces will be considered during the budget process.

11/6-1

KANTURK/MALLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Proposed by Councillor Liam Madden

Seconded by Councillor Gearóid Murphy

“To get support of Council and Businesses in Area re Rail Option on N/M20 re opening of stations like Buttevant, Mourneabbey, Rathduff. This will have a huge effect on our carbon footprint”.

During this discussion, Members made the following points:

- EU Resilience fund has been announced
- Talks of re-opening stations, should just not be East Cork
- Mallow is also a hub town, stations near Mallow would also be of huge benefit if they were also added to the list of re-opening stations
- Suggested feasibility study would be of benefit to see what can be developed
- Would take traffic away from towns and reduce carbon footprint
- Members said now is an ideal time to look at development of Buttevant
- Queried where the €185 million is being spent and looked for a breakdown on the costs
- Suggested Roads and Transport SPC would consider the matter
- Members said this will help the sustainability of these villages
- Rail travel would be a viable option for people living in these areas
- Said there would be low capital costs
- Members agreed a letter would be sent to Iarnróid Eireann and the NTA
- Said the people of West Cork regretted the loss of their rail stations and every effort should be made to retain the North Cork rail stations.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MANAGEMENT REPORT TO COUNCIL:

Finance Department

Quarterly report of the Finance Directorate for the 3-month period up to 31st March 2022.

Members noted the Finance Directorate Quarterly Report.

[g] CORRESPONDENCE FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS COMHFHREAGRAS Ó RANNA RIALTAS

13/6-1

FRANCES FITZGERALD MEP

Correspondence received 30th May 2022 from Frances Fitzgerald MEP in response to the Council's letter dated 14/04/2022 in relation to the ongoing environmental and social injustices endured by countries such as Chile, Argentina, Bolivia and the Democratic Republic of Congo in meeting the exponentially accelerating demand for the lithium-ion batteries that will enable the Commission's goal for Europe to become a climate-neutral continent by 2050.

Members noted the correspondence from Frances Fitzgerald MEP

14/6-1

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, CULTURE, ARTS, GAELTACHT, SPORT AND MEDIA

Correspondence received 2nd June 2022 from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in response to the Council's letter dated 13/12/2021 in relation to the bidding process for America's Cup.

Members noted the correspondence from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

- Members said they are disappointed that the government have decided to withdraw their application for America's Cup
- Said it would have been a great opportunity for Cork
- Said the proposed investment in infrastructure to facilitate the event would have had long term benefits for the Harbour area

[h] NOTICES OF MOTION FOGRAÍ RÚN

APPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

15/6-1

Councillor Cathal Rasmussen proposed, seconded by Councillor Seamus McGrath

“That a report be given on how many applications for social housing were received from January 2021 to 31 December 2021 and how many have being received from Jan 2022 to end of April 2022. Can a breakdown be given on the length of time it has taken for all these applications to be processed and can an explanation be given as to why it takes 12 to 16 weeks to process an application in general. Can a breakdown be given on how many of the applications year ending 2021 were successful or not. Also can a report be given on the length of time it has taken for those successful applicants in 2021 to receive their link to the CBL system.”

Members noted the response from the **Director of Services, Housing** which outlined as follows:-

Please see table below for new applications received.

2021	1234
2022 (to end of April)	411
Total	1645

(Note: this table does not include applications where applicants notify the Housing Directorate of changes in the applicant’s circumstances e.g. changes in household composition, medical circumstances etc. that necessitates a review of their applications)

1. Breakdown be given on the length of time it has taken for all these applications to be processed and an explanation as to why it takes 12 to 16 weeks to process an application in general.

The average time for processing of new applications countywide from Jan 2021-April 2022 is 7 weeks. However it should be noted that the length of time it takes to assess an individual application will vary depending on the circumstances that present with each application.

The introduction of the new Social Housing Assessment (Amendment) Regulations 2021 has increased the supporting documentation that an applicant must present with their application and has increased the calculations necessary during the assessment process to determine an applicant’s income eligibility or otherwise for social housing support.

It may also be necessary in many instances to seek additional supporting documentation from the applicant to make a decision on a particular application. The application can only be assessed when the application is fully complete and the applicant has satisfactorily responded to all requests for further information.

It must also be noted that due to certain exceptional circumstances some applications need to be prioritised in order to address an emergency situation e.g. applicants who present as homeless, applicants who have received a valid notice to quit on their private rented accommodation including applicants who are in HAP or RAS accommodation, Mortgage to Rent applications etc. Whilst these applications are prioritised for assessment the consequence is a subsequent delay in the processing of other applications who have no associated exceptional circumstances.

2. Breakdown on how many of the applications year ending 2021 were successful or

not.

Approved Applicants = 827

(date of application > 01/01/2021, new applicants only)

3. Report on the length of time it has taken for those successful applicants in 2021 to receive their link to the CBL system.

An applicant who has been approved for social housing support is provided with their access details for the CBL system (User I.D. and Password) at the same time the approval letter issues to them. This would generally take place within a week of the application being approved by the Housing Officer.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members querying that the purpose of this motion was to find out why the average time for processing of new social housing applications report is normally 12 -16 weeks
- Said that the turnaround time for straight forward applications needs to be quicker
- Asked if there are issues with personnel / the system / or the application process?
- Members said that they appreciate that there is pressure on the Housing Department and acknowledged the hard work of the staff in that department
- Said there should be better systems in place to process applications that come through from people who have lived abroad and that additional guidance needs to be given to these applicants
- Said that applicants find the system very frustrating
- Members said something should be put in place for applicants who require emergency accommodation
- Said that a wait time of 12-16 weeks to process applications is far too long
- Members said that applicants can be waiting 20 weeks for applications to be processed for South Cork applicants
- Said that applicants have nowhere to go while they are waiting to be approved for social housing

The Chief Executive said there is no systematic failure and acknowledged that some applications take longer than 7 weeks to process. He said HAP applications are prioritised. He confirmed that emergency cases are prioritised and there is a process in place to respond to people that become homeless. He said an FAQ document from the Housing Department may be of benefit to the applicants and he will raise this with the Director of Housing.

The Mayor asked that all Councillors work to promote the Affordable Housing Survey to their constituents.

PROJECT ACT TOWNS REPAIR AND LEASING SCHEME

16/6-1

Councillor Ben Dalton O’Sullivan proposed, seconded by Councillor Mary Linehan Foley

“I am asking Cork County Council to issue a leaflet to all businesses in Project Act towns on the Repair and Leasing scheme. This could help bring forward vacant “over the shop” units for social housing. Similarly, if the mayor would consider a PR promotion of the scheme in County Cork, it would be helpful”.

Members noted the response from the **Director of Services, Housing** which outlined as follows:-

“The Repair and Lease Scheme is primarily targeted at bringing vacant residential properties back into use where a property requires repairs for it to comply with prescribed rental standards. The RLS will pay for the repairs up-front in return for the property being made available to be used as social housing. This upfront payment can then be paid back over the lifetime of the lease. The maximum payment under the Scheme is currently €60,000 per property.

While it would not be practical to correspond with all businesses in Project Act towns, the Housing Directorate will liaise with the MD’s who ran Project Act to decide on how best to promote the Scheme including through the relevant business associations who partook in Project Act. A discussion can also be held with the Mayor’s Office regarding promotion of the Scheme.

The national Town Centre First policy makes particular reference to the matter of vacancy in town centres and to measures that might be introduced nationally to assist in working on this matter. The Council will work actively with emerging policy and facilitation measures across all of its Directorates, in particular through the MD and Property Activation and Regeneration areas of the Council in maximising impact on town centres.

It should be recognised however that the long term leasing of a property will be dependent both on need and on existing social housing in the area.”

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members said it is very difficult for single applicants to source social housing
- Vital to get our town centres up and running
- Should be going back to living above shops and this should be encouraged
- Said the current scheme is not working and needs to be revamped
- Requested a report on the applicants that have applied
- Said the scheme is good but it has a very low uptake
- Said more needs to be done to get people back into town centres to revitalise
- Said that a lot of businesses and houses are idle
- The uptake of the scheme is not great as there are high costs to owners because regulations have to be complied with
- Asked to circulate this scheme and help promote Repair and Leasing Scheme
- Should push this scheme to help promote social housing
- Stated that living over the shop is the norm on the continent
- This scheme would be particularly beneficial to people needing 1 or 2 bedroom apartments
- Members suggested relaunching the scheme
- Members suggested having an MD designated officer to identify properties
- Queried if the level of grant provided for the scheme needs to be increased
- Said a scheme of apartments in Youghal town centre near the clock tower recently won an award and similar schemes could be rolled out in other towns
- Noted the response from the Director of Services for Housing stated that the housing dept will liaise with the Municipal Districts that ran Project ACT and will consider options for promotion of the scheme with the Mayor’s office.

The Chief Executive said that there are challenges around the scheme. He said the grant of €60,000 may not be adequate to deal with issues that arise in refurbishing the buildings to current standards. He said

the regulations have to be complied with to sign off on any scheme. He said it is up to National Government to consider if the regulations can be relaxed, this cannot be done at local level.

Extension of Time

Proposed by Councillor Ben Dalton O'Sullivan

Seconded by Councillor Declan Hurley

INCREASE ACCESS AND NUMBER OF FLIGHTS TO AND FROM CORK AIRPORT

17/6-1

Councillor Frank O'Flynn proposed, seconded by Councillor Joe Carroll

“That Cork County Council call on the Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) and Mr Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Transport and Ms Hildegard Naughton TD , Minister for State to increase the access and numbers of flights to and from Cork Airport, to reinstate all the flights from Cork which were reduced during COVID and to facilitate the people travelling to and from the south of Ireland as Cork Airport has the spare capacity to facilitate this”.

During this discussion the Members made the following points:

- Members said that the number of flights from Cork Airport needs to increase
- People travelling to Dublin Airport means larger carbon footprint
- Members discussed the recent issues and delays in Dublin Airport
- Said that Aviation Authority should have an ‘All of Ireland’ approach
- Said there is spare capacity in other airports in the country including Cork
- Stated that flights should be transferred from Dublin to Cork
- Suggested that Mayor would meet Deputation from Airport
- Members agreed to write to the Minister for Transport and Junior Minister & Munster MEPs to highlight capacity
- This issue shows an imbalance in the Country where everything is centred around Dublin
- Said the recent scenes in Dublin Airport are reprehensible
- Dublin Airport need to spread the flights out evenly around the Country and especially to Cork
- A lot of the facilities are not open in the airport and this has led to loss of jobs
- Cork needs to show it is open for business
- It is important that the airport is there to support business, concerts and tourism
- Members said that the loss of flights to Boston from Cork was a big loss
- Members said they would like to compliment the staff of Cork Airport
- The airport is always very busy and the staff are doing the best that they can on the ground
- Said they are concerned about the landing fees, as Dublin receives a lot of those

[K] VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

18/6-1

TO: Seamus Sexton Jnr on his gold medal at the European Bowling Championships

- TO:** James O'Donovan on his bronze medal at the European Bowling Championships
- TO:** Tim O'Donoghue on winning the Cork City Marathon in record course time.
- TO:** Sunday's Well Rebels Mixed Ability Rugby Team who won IMART 2022
- TO:** The organisers of the IMART event on a very successful event
- TO:** Matthew Lucey on his retirement from Ballinhassig Community Development Association
- TO:** Con Cottrell on his retirement from Ballinhassig Community Development Association
- TO:** The Organising Committee of the 1st Goggins Hill family festival on a successful event
- TO:** Reg Sweetnam on opening his new business Black Rooster Peri-Peri and wishing him all the best with his business endeavours going forward
- TO:** Fountainstown Association for their Blue Flag status
- TO:** Crosshaven Boys National school on winning the naming of the two new cones in the Port of Cork in the Name the Cranes competition.
- TO:** Youghal Pipe Band on winning 1st Place in both grade 4B and Open Grade at South of Ireland pipe band Championships on 28th May
- TO:** Francis John O Flynn with six friends who cycled 800 km from London to Lahinch in aid of the Irish Cancer Society. This was in memory of their friend Declan Sexton
- TO:** Scoil Bhríde Crosshaven on their recent Camogie team winning the Scaith an Scoil finals 2022 against Strawberry hill in Páirc uí Chaoimh.
- TO:** Marie Healy as Captain of the first female Irish Mixed Ability Rugby Team on winning the International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament (IMART) Women's Bowl Final
- TO:** Coachford AFC on winning the AOH Cup Final
- TO:** Aghabullogue National School on winning the Sciath na Scoil Chorcaí Roinn 5 Hurling Final
- TO:** Cumannpeile Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh ar an mbua a bhi acu san gComórtas Peile na Gaeltachta
- TO:** Conor Lucey on achieving Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in the European Bowling Championships

~ THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING ~