

**Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on
Monday, 1st February, 2016 at 3.00 p.m. in Room 222,
Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.**

Present: Cllr. James Breen, Cathaoirleach presiding.
Cllrs. P. Hayes, G. Flynn, J. Cooney and R. Nagle.

Officials Present: Tom Coughlan, Chief Executive.
Michael McNamara, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services.
Ger Dollard, Director of Service.
Niall Barrett, Head of Finance.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. James Breen presided.

1. Minutes of meeting held on 4th January, 2016.

The minutes of the meeting of the C.P.G. held on 4th January, 2016 were circulated with the agenda and were noted by the meeting.

2. February Council Meeting.

The members noted the headed items listed and the notice of motions received for the February agenda.

- It was agreed to recommend to the full Council that the March meeting be brought forward to Monday the 7th March in view of the upcoming St. Patrick's Day festivities.
- It was agreed that the C.P.G. meeting for March would be held on Monday, 29th February.

3. Reply from Mayor of Limerick City & County Council.

The Meetings Administrator informed the meeting of the response received from Cllr. Liam Galvin, Mayor of the City & County of Limerick to the letter sent by the Cathaoirleach in December. The meeting agreed with the suggestion that initially a meeting would take place between the party groups of the respective Councils – two attending from each grouping on

this Council together with the Cathaoirleach. Arrangements to be made for this meeting to take place in February if possible.

4. Any other business.

- Ger Dollard briefed the members in relation to grant funding for swimming pools available from the Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport with one application per county being invited. He informed the members that submissions had been received from Shannon, Lahinch and Kilkee with proposed improvement works at each facility outlined and that works could also be undertaken at the Ennis facility. He outlined that the Department had now clarified that the Local Authority must own the facility for which grant aid is being sought. Ennis was the only pool therefore eligible for this grant funding.
- The Chief Executive referred to the recent meeting with the Chambers in response to the letter handed in at the December meeting of the Council in relation to the rates issue. He referred to the three issues discussed at that meeting as follows:
 - Car parking – the Chambers were proposing the addition of 500 permanent car parking spaces and that the charge be reduced to €1 per unit. The Councils response to this was that they were also keen to provide additional parking in the town centre area but this cannot be provided in a very short time span and the matter is being progressed in so far as is possible. In relation to the €1 charge per unit proposed, discussions are ongoing with car parking interests and various packages are under consideration. There will be further discussions with the Ennis Municipal District members in this regard.
 - Town Team – this was a model by Retail Excellence Ireland and operating in some towns at present and involved statutory community and other interested parties. It was noted that the CEDRA Sub-committee were to discuss this issue at their next meeting later this month.
 - Rates – Niall Barrett briefed the members of the discussion in this regard and said this was discussed under a number of headings as follows:
 - Rates proposed for 2016 are as agreed in Budget 2016 and no changes can be entertained at this stage.
 - Rate payers on payment plans. The Councils proposals were that people on payment plans to the end of August each year be included. The Chamber sought this to be extended to the end of December. It was agreed that this could be facilitated while cash flow issues may arise.
 - Extension of the rates grant scheme for people – this was initially to apply for ratepayers with rates liability of up to €5,000 per annum. The Chamber wished this to be extended to include rate payers with a liability of up to €7,500 per annum. Having discussed the implications of same the members agreed that this was not recommended. It was

also agreed that the question of the retention of the grants scheme for future years can only be done on a year by year basis.

- Ger Dollard briefed the members on the proposals for the Market area in Ennis which is currently under construction.
- The Chief Executive informed the members that it is proposed to appoint a second Senior Executive Engineer in the West Clare area.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Michael McNamara,
Senior Executive Officer,
Corporate Services.

2nd February, 2016.