

**COMHAIRLE CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2016 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC OFFICES, DUNGARVAN**

PRESENT:

Cllr. Adam Wyse Mayor	Cllr. Jason Murphy
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Ray Murphy
Cllr. Breda Brennan	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. John Carey	Cllr. Seamus O'Donnell
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. John O'Leary
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. Cha O'Neill
Cllr. Davy Daniels	Cllr. Michael J O'Ryan
Cllr Declan Doocey	Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Seanie Power
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Blaise Hannigan	Cllr. Séan Reinhardt
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr James Tobin
Cllr Eddie Mulligan	Cllr. Siobhan Whelan

APOLOGIES:

Cllr Joe Conway, Cllr John Cummins

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. M. Walsh, Chief Executive
Mr. L. Power, Director of Services, Economic Development & Planning
Mr. J. Murphy, Head of Finance
Mr. M. Quinn, Director of Services
Mr. F. Galvin, Director of Services
Mr. D. Murphy, Financial Management Accountant
Ms. A. Jacob, Senior Staff Officer

1. To resolve to vary/not vary the basic rate of the Local Property Tax

The Chief Executive outlined the profile of income and expenditure for the coming year's budget setting out the key positive and negative financial movements. He explained that even taking into account a projected net gain of €600,000 in rates income that the overall opening position would be over €1 million worse than 2016. This was as a result of the impact of the loss of the global valuations grant, payroll and pensions increases, increased insurance costs, a reduction in Irish Water income and increased loan charges. The Chief Executive stated a reduction in income of this level would have serious implications in terms of the Council's ability to maintain service delivery in core areas such as housing maintenance, roads and other areas with a further negative impact on the quality of the Council's assets which was unsustainable. In these circumstances, the CE said he had no choice but to recommend a 7.5% increase

in the local property tax for 2017 and that an adjustment in the commercial rates may also have to be considered at Budget time.

Cllr Tobin said that he and his party were opposed to an increase in the LPT, he was concerned about the potential impact of an increase in house values and he proposed that the Local Property Tax would remain unchanged. Cllr O’Ryan seconded this proposal and also raised the lack of resources from central government.

Cllr Geoghegan said there was a lack of support from central government and that Fine Gael would not be supporting an LPT increase. Cllr Kelly said that householders were already hard pressed due to lack of resources from government and would not be supporting the increase. Cllr Clune said that it was Sinn Fein’s policy to abolish the LPT and that they would oppose any increase. Cllr Power requested that the LPT be left unchanged due to financial pressures on households. Cllr Pratt proposed that the LPT would remain as is. Cllr Brazil, said he could not condone an increase on householders who were already struggling. Cllr Reinhardt said he was opposed to any increase.

Cllr Hearne asked a question concerning spending in the areas of travel and subsistence, homeless services and training. The CE said that travel was for staff and members combined and was commensurate with pre amalgamation spending with a target to reduce spend by 10% and that there had already been investment in technology to address this. In relation to training he said that the expenditure was mainly statutory training under health and safety and that there would be a 60% return from central government to cover Haddington Road.

Cllr Daniels said that central government funding was inadequate and would not be supporting any increase. Cllr Roche condemned the pre budget process and said she would not support an increase. Cllr Clune asked why there was a significant reduction in bad debt provision and rates refunds. J. Murphy, HOF said that the figure shown reflected that Irish Water was no longer rateable and that the Council had no role in collecting LPT bad debts. The CE said that the Council would continue to pursue bad debt across all areas.

Cllr. Tobin’s proposal to leave the rate of Local Property Tax unchanged for the 2017 Financial Year and as seconded by Cllr. O’Ryan, was put to the meeting and carried on a majority show of hands.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Mayor

Dated: _____