

PLANNERS SEEK WORKABLE PLANNING LEGISLATION – IPI PRESIDENT

The priority of planners is to ensure that the Planning and Development Bill, currently passing through the Oireachtas, is workable for the long term, not to slow the legislative process down, according to Gavin Lawlor, President of the Irish Planning Institute (IPI), during his address at the IPI annual conference in Waterford.

Addressing over 300 professionals from across the planning, construction and sustainability sectors at the IPI annual conference in Waterford (18-19 April) on the progress of the Bill, he pointed out that “in its current form the Bill is not fit for purpose”.

The IPI President claimed that it will have a detrimental impact upon citizen engagement in the planning process, as it proposes unrealistic timelines, guidelines and compliance, making aspects of the Bill unworkable.

“Our ambition is not to slow down the Bill but to work with policy makers to get it right. We have made several submissions on the legislation and engaged very constructively and openly but remain convinced that the Bill requires further section-by-section consultation and review with practitioners so that the implications in practice of the new measures can be considered.

“The IPI want to see a Bill that serves the needs of society and the common good for generations to come. We remain fully committed to working with the Minister, Minister of State, Department, Oireachtas members and all stakeholders to make sure this legislation is fit for purpose, and we look forward to seeing further revisions and amendments at Report Stage.”

Gavin Lawlor, who became head of the Institute in January, also said his focus for the sector is establishing planners’ critical role in delivering climate action and sustainability. Attracting more people to planning as a career and ensuring



Gavin Lawlor, IPI President

the profession provides a united front are also priorities of his tenure.

“Sustainability is at the heart of what we do. Planners understand the issues of climate, biodiversity, demography and economic development but our voice risks being drowned out by those that don’t have a holistic understanding of these issues,” he added.

“Planners know how to ensure the housing and infrastructure we need is delivered for the benefit of the environment and society and we need to be more assertive about the skills and knowledge we bring.”

The IPI President noted that while much of this year’s conference programme focussed on building understanding across the planning, technology, construction and sustainability sectors “we also need to build understanding across the planning profession itself and break down barriers”.



IPI President Gavin Lawlor, MIPI, pictured with the Mayor of the City and County of Waterford Cllr Joe Conway, at this year’s IPI Annual Conference in Waterford on 18 April.

WATERFORD’S URBAN REGENERATION

The Mayor of Waterford City and County, Cllr Joe Conway, told IPI delegates that the vision of Waterford City and County Council is to make Waterford “the most liveable city in Ireland, where our growing population can sustainably live, work and play”.



Chairperson of An Bord Pleanála Peter Mullan addressing this year’s IPI Conference.



The North Quays is a flagship sustainable urban regeneration project, according to Mayor of Waterford City and County Cllr Joe Conway.

“The North Quays is a flagship sustainable urban regeneration project. The project creates the opportunity to develop a sustainable and exemplary city centre by connecting the north and south sides of the city and will reduce dependency on travel by private car and will increase the modal shift of journeys to walking and cycling, and further encourage this by the creation of high-quality public realm space.

“The overall North Quays project is a model for the proper integration of land use planning and transport planning which is critical to delivering the smart, sustainable and competitive cities needed to meet our future challenges.”



Waterford City and County Council, in partnership with the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund and other stakeholders is investing in the regeneration of the heart of the historic city centre.



Claragh Mulhern, MIPI, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage addressing the conference.

Waterford City and County Council, in partnership with the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund and other stakeholders is also investing in the regeneration of the heart of the historic city centre. Investment in the sustainable regeneration of Waterford's towns and villages is also continuing with the support of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund.