

District council meeting of 15 March 2023

Convened and announced on 09 March 2023

Present: ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET Marion (CSV), Mayor; SCHILTZ Fernand (LSAP), Deputy Mayor; JUNGBLUT Tom (CSV), Deputy Mayor; EIFES Eric (DP), ZHU, Dali (DP), DI GENOVA Jean-Pierre (CSV), SCHMITZ, Jean-Pierre (CSV), LOOSE Yves (CSV), ARRENSDORFF Jean-Jacques (Déi Gréng), WOLTER Laurence (Déi Gréng), THIERIE Geoffrey (LSAP), Councillors; TAZIAUX Tim, Acting Municipal Secretary; SCHILTZ Nadine, Secretary.

Apologies: SCHMITZ Jean-Pierre (CSV), Councillor

1. HR matters (in closed session)

In closed session

2. Determination “indemnity for cash losses”

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) explained that the decision of 11 December 2022 on the District Collector’s indemnity for cash losses was reworded in a generally valid manner. The indemnity sum determined with regard to the official number of residents of Contern district consequently remains the same.

The district council unanimously approved the determination of the indemnity for cash losses.

3. Creation of a post

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) advised that the Cabinet wanted to create a vacant post for a waged employee who had been repeatedly unsuccessful in the search for a wage group A2 district officer position in the past four years. The post was being created to assist the purposes of the Technical Services department, and was equivalent to pay grade A, wage group A2, sub-group scientific and technical.

The district council unanimously approved the creation of a post for a waged employee.

4. Supplementary credits

Deputy Mayor Tom JUNGBLUT (CSV) drew attention to a number of expenditures for which supplementary credits needed approval. He invited Jean-Claude Müller, Chair of the Comic Festival Committee, to speak to explain the reasons for this.

Jean-Claude Müller advised the district council that a supplementary credit was needed in the regular and in the extraordinary budget for the Comic Festival. Both expenditures only became apparent after the 2023 budget had been prepared. One related to an offer for the inventorising and cataloguing of 16,000 comic books. The other concerns the Culture Ministry’s grant for organising the Comic Festival, which up until now was transferred annually to the Comic Festival account, but from this year on is being paid to the district council’s account. Consequently, the amount of this grant needs to be forwarded to the Comic Festival Committee.

The Deputy Mayor for Finance reported two further supplementary credits, in one case to enable a donation to be given to Doctors Without Borders for the earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria, and in the other to pay an invoice to the Chamber of Agriculture relating to water conservation.

The district council unanimously approved the four supplementary credits, two in the regular budget and two in the extraordinary budget 2023.

5. Approval of a detailed design (APD) with project budget – Construction of homes in Contern

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) welcomed the architects' office XXA and the consultants MC Luxembourg to present a building project for social housing in Rue de Luxembourg, Contern. It concerns 16 rental properties, to be split across two buildings each containing eight housing units.

The architect Ms Patricia Streber presented the project in detail. The position of the two apartment buildings made it possible to create an opening and to connect the village centre with the new An de Päschen district. The two buildings are connected with one another via a shared cellar. In each of the three floors, there are two to three housing units per building planned, of varying size and layout. The two apartment blocks should accommodate around 60 people.

Construction will be to energy class A+. The heating system uses heat pumps, and installation of PV and solar collectors on the roof is similarly planned, as is a 12,000-litre rainwater collection tank. Each apartment will be equipped with a central ventilation unit.

The estimated costs for the works, which can start at the end of 2023/early 2024, total around € 8 million inclusive of VAT.

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) thanked Ms Streber for the comprehensive presentation. She added that after submitting the APD, more would be learned about the amount of the state subsidies. It was also planned to build a fairly large play area.

Jean-Jacques ARRENSDORFF (Déi Gréng) welcomed the project, which took the climate guidelines into account. He praised the energy-efficient and sustainable type of construction being sought, along with the use of renewable sources of energy. The councillor's sole concern was to suggest planning to install a bigger rainwater collection tank.

Eric EIFES (DP) similarly spoke in favour of the project and asked whether the cost of fees was included in the price.

Andy Anen from the consultants MC Luxembourg advised that these costs had not been able to be assessed up to that point. As soon as it was possible, the district council would receive a detailed breakdown. He also gave an assurance that these costs would be lower than usual.

The district council unanimously approved the detailed design with budget for a housebuilding project in Contern.

6. Approval of a detailed design (APD) with project budget – Construction of homes in Oetrange

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) invited Caroline and Jil Medinger from the architects' office Medinger Architecture to present the district council's project to create subsidised rental housing in Rue de l'Église in Oetrange.

Architect Caroline Medinger explained the location of the planned apartment block. This is adjacent to a national monument, and in the centre of the village. Consequently, since the building plays a key role in the appearance of the whole village, care was needed over the choice of materials and colours, and over the details of the design. For instance, the volume of the old building which has already been demolished needed to be preserved. In addition, when considering the look of the new building, care was taken to enable various elements of the demolished building – such as the arch above the door – to be retained.

Here, spread over three floors, a total of six rental apartments between 45 and 95 m² in size are to be created. Due to the poor condition of the soil, it is not possible to excavate a basement. For that reason, the space for parking prescribed by law was to be created on the adjacent parcel of land.

The calculated budget for the project presented totalled € 3.7 million, including VAT and fees for architects, engineers and consultants, along with a 10% contingency for possible unforeseen additional costs.

The district council unanimously approved the detailed design with budget for the building of subsidised housing in Oetrange.

(Jean-Jacques ARRENSDORFF (Déi Gréng) left the room.)

7. Approval of a division of a plot of land in Contern

The district council unanimously approved the application for creating land parcels on several plots of land, recorded in the cadastre for Contern district under numbers 53/5532, 88/5528, 88/5529, 88/5530, 88/5531, 88/5462 and 99/5474, located at “An de Päschen” in Contern, for the creation of affordable housing. This is in accordance with the request of 30 January 2023 from GEOCAD Sàrl.

8. Approval of a detailed design (APD) with project budget – Conterstuff conversion

(Jean-Jacques ARRENSDORFF (Déi Gréng) entered the room.)

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) made reference to the public meeting where the project to renovate the Conterstuff was presented and set out in detail. There was just one minor change to the budget, on account of the engineers’ fees.

The district council unanimously approved the plans and the cost estimate inclusive of VAT, totalling € 6.7 million, for conversion of the Conterstuff in Contern.

9. Approval of the Contern District PAP QE

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) invited Tom Schmit, the district’s architect, to speak to the special development plan for the existing districts (PAP QE – *plan d’aménagement particulier – quartiers existants*) in Contern district.

Tom Schmit reported that the consultants ECAU had revised and adapted the PAP QE in accordance with the opinion from the Interior Ministry and the objections raised by local residents, insofar as this was still possible. On some projects that were up and running, however, no further changes were possible.

The district council voted unanimously to accept the Contern district council’s special development plan QE.

10. Termination of an agreement – Easement Zitha

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) advised the district council that the item related to an agreement from 2019 between Contern district council and ZithaSenior S.A. concerning an easement for the laying of a temporary drainage system on a plot of land owned by the district council in Contern. However, this infrastructure is no longer needed, since the ZithaSenior homes in question were now connected to the new drainage channels. Consequently, the agreement can be terminated.

The district council voted unanimously to terminate the agreement of 6 March 2019 between Contern district council and ZithaSenior S.A. concerning an easement in Contern.

11. Approval of an agreement – Expenses PAP Zitha

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) explained that ZithaSenior S.A. was planning a project that required an amendment to the current special development plan. The district council was to pre-finance the costs for this, which would be repaid in full by the aforementioned company to the district council at a later date.

The district council unanimously approved the agreement concerning the pre-financing of costs for a specific amendment to the special development plan.

12. Approval of resignation by a member from a committee

The resignation of Danielle Kies as a member of the “Homme de l’Art” Committee was accepted unanimously by the district council.

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) thanked Ms Kies for her service on the committee.

13. Appointment of a member to various committees

The district council unanimously approved the proposal from the LSAP group on council to appoint Antonio Pina Caetano as a new member to the Committee of the 3rd Age and to the Expert Committee.

14. Approval of a preliminary agreement – Purchase of land in Contern

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) explained that the district council was proposing to acquire the parcel of land with cadastre number 1674/2946 in Contern district, Contern Section C, in the place known as “In Beyren” with a total area of 1.08 hectares of farmland, for a total sales price of € 108,200. The purchase is of public benefit and will be used to create a new cycle path.

The district council unanimously approved the preliminary agreement for the purchase of land in Contern.

15. Approval of five documents:

a. Sale of land in Moutfort

The district council unanimously approved the notarised document with number 1506/2022 concerning the sale of an area of land located in Moutfort, in Rue de Medingen, with cadastre number 1640/5817 and covering 46 centiare, for a sales price of € 88,492.50. In a decision of 21 September 2022, the district council had approved the preliminary sales agreement for the aforementioned plot of land. The purchase is of public benefit and is needed for a planned project.

b. Exchange of land in Contern

The district council unanimously approved the notarised document for exchange with zero net balance number 203/2023. The district council is exchanging the plots of land with cadastre numbers 977/5315, 977/524 and 972/5314 without charge for the following plots of land with cadastre numbers 946/5507, 946/5294, 934/2457, 945/2532 and 945/2531, all located in Contern, Contern Section C.

c. Exchange of land in Contern

The district council unanimously approved the document for exchange with zero net balance number 204/2023. Here, the district council’s site in Contern district with cadastre number 946/5509 is being exchanged without charge for the following five sites 977/5241, 972/5312, 948/5297, 948/5303 and 948/5302.

d. Transfer without charge – Contern

The district council unanimously approved the notarised document number 203/2023 for transfer without charge of three sites to Contern district council, registered in Contern district, Contern Section C under numbers 977/5242, 976/5521 and 976/5363.

e. Sale of land in Contern

The district council voted by a majority, with 8 votes for and 2 votes against [Jean-Jacques ARRENSDORFF (Déi Gréng), Laurence WOLTER (Déi Gréng)] to approve the notarised document number 233/2023 concerning the sale of a plot of land, located in Contern, Contern Section C, in the district “Op Briicherpad”, cadaster number 349/5761, with a total area of 2.06 are.

16. Approval of 29 lease agreements

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) explained that the lease agreements currently in place dated from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, and were consequently no longer up to date. For that reason, an inventory of the district council’s holdings in land leased for agricultural use had been drawn up. The existing contracts with the farmers had been revised and redrafted. The duration of the leases is set at nine years, and the annual leasing price is € 2.50/ar.

The district council unanimously approved 29 newly-signed lease agreements.

Eric EIFES (DP) left the meeting.

17. Approval of an agreement – Luxembourg Climate Alliance

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) invited Deputy Mayor for Climate Matters Fernand SCHILTZ to speak about the new Luxembourg Climate Alliance agreement.

Deputy Mayor Fernand SCHILTZ (LSAP) advised the district council that the Luxembourg Climate Alliance had existed since 1995, and that Contern district had been a member for 23 years. The purpose of the agreement is to redefine objectives, initiatives and structures to be realised, along with relations between the various partners.

The district council unanimously agreed to approve the Luxembourg Climate Alliance agreement.

18. Approval of a charging arrangement “sale of firewood – 2023”

The district council unanimously approved the schedule of charges for the sale of firewood to Contern district residents.

19. Approval of subsidy rules for flood protection

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) explained that the subsidy rules were intended to encourage residents in the district to invest in flood protection measures for their homes. The maximum sum was set at € 1,500, although this was not to exceed 50% of the costs of the overall investment.

The district council unanimously approved the subsidy agreement concerning flood protection.

20. Determination of remuneration to course leaders for IT courses

The district council unanimously approved the remuneration of € 84 for IT course leaders per course per student.

21. Subsidies / Extraordinary grants

a. 10 Joer Nagis

The district council unanimously approved an extraordinary grant to the Natur- & Geschichtsfrënn leweschte Syrdall asbl association of € 500 for their 10th anniversary.

b. Aurore – Gala

The district council unanimously approved an extraordinary grant to the Gymnastics Aurore Oetrange asbl association of € 2,500, as a contribution towards the high costs of lighting at their annually-arranged *Gala gymnique 2023*.

c. Eng Uergel fir d'Conter Kierch

The district council unanimously approved an extraordinary grant to the Eng Uergel fir d'Conter Kierch association of € 1,522.08, as a contribution towards the costs of maintaining the church organ.

d. Donation to Doctors Without Borders – Turkey / Syria earthquake

The district council unanimously approved the Cabinet proposal to make a donation of € 5,000 to the charity Doctors Without Borders, to help the victims of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

22. Change to traffic regulations in Contern district

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) notified the district council of several changes to the district's traffic regulations.

Charges were being introduced for parking in Rue Daniel Grun, in Contern's commercial district. Parking times were being restricted, and a parking charge was payable which was collected via parking meter or electronically. In addition, changes to the road signs were being made in Rue de Syren and in the commercial district at Rosswénkel/Rue Daniel Grun and Chaux de Contern. Minor modifications were also necessary in "Soibelwee" in Moutfort, and in "Medenpoull", Rue de Moutfort and Rue de Canach in Oetrange.

The district council unanimously approved the amended traffic regulations for Contern district.

23. District council opinion – Protected zone for drinking water extraction Dupont de Nemours

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) explained the opinion from the Cabinet regarding the draft for a Grand-Ducal Regulation concerning the creation of protected zones, in order to protect the existing source of drinking water for DuPont de Nemours on lands in the districts of Weiler-la-Tour, Dalheim and Contern.

Two letters of objection were submitted with regard to this. The Cabinet considers it sensible to potentially integrate some provisions of the draft Grand-Ducal Regulation in question, in view of the arguments presented, in a scientific and logical method, into the measures for protecting water quality. This is with a view to simultaneously ensuring appropriate and sustainable farming production in this protected zone. Considerable efforts have already been undertaken to improve groundwater quality in recent years, and the use of herbicides has reduced considerably.

Councillor Jean-Jacques ARRENSDORFF (Déi Gréng) did not agree with the concluding sentence in the opinion, and proposed amending that sentence with the following comment: "y compris en matière d'agriculture biologique et/ou biodynamique" ("including with regard to organic and/or biodynamic farming").

The district council approved the opinion on the protected zone for drinking water extraction for DuPont de Nemours with the addition proposed by Councillor Jean-Jacques Arrensdorff.

24. Approval of income

The district council unanimously approved income of € 1,091,548.81 for the financial year 2022 and € 2,341,206.55 for the financial year 2023.

25. Announcements and councillor questions

Mayor Marion ZOVILÉ-BRAQUET (CSV) extended an invitation to the information event on 23 March in the Cultural Centre in Moutfort, where the Cabinet was reviewing the legislative period 2017–2023.

Deputy Mayor Fernand SCHILTZ (LSAP) gave a reminder about the independent and free advice from Klima-Agence. He also extended an invitation to a Klima-Agence conference on PV systems on 22 March. A Climate Day is being held from 10:30–18.00 on 7 May, in conjunction with the SIAS association, in the recycling centre in Munsbach, with an extensive programme of climate-related events.