

## €4 million for Dunmore East Harbour dredging

The €4 million made available to dredge the harbour in Dunmore East is “a critical infrastructural investment,” according to Deputy John Deasy.

The capital funding, a large proportion of the €14.63m allocated nationally by Marine Minister Simon Coveney last week, “will significantly assist fishermen and processors, as well as those involved in other marine activity such as vessel repair, with knock-on benefits for the services sector and the wider local community,” Mr Deasy said. The Waterford Fine Gael TD has made numerous representations on the general development of the harbour in Dunmore. €450,000 was granted for a widening of the slipway at the West Wharf last year, in addition to a new wave wall pavilion, while the Minister has also confirmed funding of €220,000 for an extension of the State fishery harbour building. A major upgrade of the village’s water supply is also underway.

“The key thing though is the dredging,” Deputy Deasy stressed. “The harbour there hasn’t been dredged properly for 20 years and the build-up of mud and silt has got to the point that boats over a certain draught just aren’t able to get in to dock, particularly at spring tide.” Acknowledging the campaigning role played by Cllr John Carey in highlighting this issue over the past decade, Mr Deasy added: “While the Department had recognised that major dredging was needed, it was a question of finding the money. The trick was extending the harbour maintenance programme budget, which was only around €7m for the whole country; and so the answer we kept getting was that there weren’t sufficient funds available.”

“I know from Minister Coveney’s office that the Department is anxious to proceed as soon as possible and the plan is to go straight to tender, with a view to having the dredging contract in place by early to mid summer,” Deputy Deasy added. Meanwhile, a total of €468,000 has been allocated to Waterford under the Local Authority-owned harbours, piers and slipways programme arising from the recent storm damage. This comprises €315,000 for Boatstrand pier, €135,000 for the Tramore seawall, and €18,000 for the storm wall in Dunmore