

Government failure to keep records ‘disgraceful’

Fianna Fáil Councillor John O’Leary has slammed the “disgraceful attempts” by Environment Minister Alan Kelly to dismiss the Government’s failure to keep records of crucial meetings involving the establishment of Irish Water.

The Killmeaden based Councillor has said it is outrageous that no minutes were kept of high level meetings between former Minister Phil Hogan and the Chairperson of Bord Gáis when crucial decisions were made about Irish Water.

“I am appalled at the manner in which Minister Kelly last week attempted to shrug off this very serious revelation. It is extremely serious that no minutes were kept of meetings when vital decisions were made about Irish Water that would have a huge impact on Waterford taxpayers for decades to come,” said Cllr O’Leary.

“This is the latest evidence of the Government’s deliberate attempt to shroud Irish Water in secrecy from the outset. Very serious questions remain about the establishment of this hugely expensive and controversial Super Quango and we now learn that not only is the Government refusing to answer those questions, it actually went out of its way not to keep a record of meetings when crucial decisions were made on behalf of taxpayers.

“The Waterford taxpayers are paying dearly for the culture of secrecy at Irish Water. This is not about water conservation or the need to upgrade our water system. This is about the unnecessary decision made by Fine Gael and Labour to set up a hugely expensive super quango that operates with impunity and is not held accountable to the taxpayers who fund it.

He added: “I have now requested an urgent meeting with Minister Kelly and I am calling for an investigation into why minutes were not kept of the meetings between Minister Phil Hogan and Bord Gáis management in 2011/12. It is simply unacceptable that a series of decisions involving the establishment of Irish Water, who would run it and how it would be funded remain a secret. It flies in the face of every single promise made to voters in Waterford by Fine Gael and Labour about open and transparent Government.”