

MD/ZP

7ú Meán Fomhair, 2022

FÓGRA CRUINNITHE

**Meeting of Wexford County Council
On Monday 12th September, 2022 - 2.30 p.m.
Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford**

A Chara,

Tionólfar cruinniú de'n Chomhairle mar a léirítear thuas.

Mise, le meas,



Micheál O Draoi
Runai

Attendees may attend in person or remotely via Teams

If you intend to attend remotely please let the County Secretary know by 1pm Friday 9th September, 2022 and the necessary TEAMS link will be forwarded to you.



County Council Meeting – 12th September, 2022 – Agenda

1. **Confirmation of Minutes:**
 - 1.1 County Council Meeting 11th July, 2022
2. **Budget 2023**
 - a. **Local Property Tax – local adjustment factor 2023 (LAF)**
 - b. **Local Property Tax – Provisional Allocation 2023**
 - c. **Budget Meetings 2023 – Prescribed periods**
 - d. **Proposed Schedule of Dates**
3. **Approval for delegation from New Ross Municipal District to travel to Danville to attend Eugene O'Neill Festival – 16th to 22nd September 2022**
4. **Annual Report 2019 & 2020 – For Adoption**
5. **Chief Executive's Report**
6. **Minutes of CPG**
 - 6.1 Minutes of CPG Meeting 5th September, 2022
7. **Minutes of Meetings (For Noting):**
 - 7.1 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 08.06.2022
 - 7.2 Rosslare Municipal District Meeting – 15.06.2022
 - 7.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 22.06.2022
 - 7.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 27.06.2022
 - 7.5 Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meeting 21.06.2022
 - 7.6 Borough District of Wexford Annual Meeting – 27.06.2022
 - 7.7 New Ross Municipal District Annual Meeting – 27.06.2022
 - 7.8 Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District Annual Meeting – 21.06.2022
 - 7.9 Rosslare Municipal District Annual Meeting – 27.06.2022
 - 7.10 Enniscorthy Municipal District Annual Meeting – 27.06.2022
8. **Correspondence and Communications**
 - 8.1 Letter from Limerick City & County Council re: motion dated 1st July, 2022
 - 8.2 Email from Niamh Redmond Private Secretary to Darragh O'Brien, TD re motion dated 7th July, 2022
 - 8.3 Letter from Donegal County Council re: motion dated 22nd July, 2022
 - 8.4 Email from Mary Butler TD, Minister for Mental Health and Older People re motion dated 27th July, 2022
 - 8.5 Letter from Department of Social Protection re: motion dated 3rd August, 2022
 - 8.6 Email from Private Secretary to the Minister of State, Patrick O'Donovan TD re: motion dated 22nd August, 2022.

9. Councillor's Conferences and Training

9.1 List of Conferences/Training – List Attached

9.2 Councillor Conference Reports

- Councillor M. Sheehan – Special Conference on Dereliction and celebration of Church Lane Historic Towns Initiative – 22nd July, 2022

10. Notices of Motion

10.1 Motion Passed at Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment SPC Meeting 16th June 2022 **Motion on Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (DWWTS)**

“Wexford County Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to amend the Regulations relating to the registration of DWWTS. This is to allow home owners who missed out on the original registration date of 1st February, 2013 to register and become eligible under the DWWTS Scheme of Financial Assistance for the repair or upgrade of systems that have failed inspections. The Council also calls on the Minister to increase the current maximum grant level of €5,000 in light of recent significant cost increases for remedial works to Treatment Systems”.

Response of the Executive:

If agreed, this motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

10.2 Cllr. T. Forde

‘This council agrees that the housing delivery targets for the county through the Housing For All Plan 2022-2026, which at best will only deliver 36% of our current need, are insufficient and not ambitious enough for our county.

In light of recent comments made on local radio by the Minister for Housing that Councillors "are not found wanting for resources from the Government," this council request that the balance of this implied funding and additional resources immediately be made available so that we can work to significantly increase our delivery targets and meet the projected need in Co. Wexford.”

Response of the Executive:

The current Housing for All plan for County Wexford contains a minimum delivery target of 1,155 new housing units to be delivered over the lifetime of the programme (2022 to 2026). This target was provided to the Council by the Department and WCC's expectation is that it will improve on this target as the plan progresses.

The total need for County Wexford stands at 3,187 households. This figure is made up of 1,743 households who are currently accommodated in HAP supported properties and a further 1,444 households who have not had their social housing needs met. The target of 1,155 will meet 80% of the unmet social housing need in County Wexford and 36% of the full need.

This figure includes housing units delivered by WCC, Approved Housing Bodies and turnkey developments.

There are many factors that can affect the delivery of housing schemes. These include planning, water and wastewater services, land and the availability of external design consultant and works contractors.

WCC is examining each scheme on its programme with a view to maximising the number of units that can be delivered in serviced areas in line with the County Development Plan.

Additional resources have been provided under Housing for All and new staff are being recruited and put in place within the Housing section currently.

We are working in conjunction with the Housing Delivery Co-Ordination Office to develop more efficient methods for procuring new schemes that will reduce delivery times including the use of design/build and related tendering processes.

10.3 Cllr. A. Bolger

"Wexford County Council supports the campaign to scrap VAT on defibrillators, AED pads and batteries.

The Irish Heart Foundation has described the VAT as 'a tax on saving lives'. Providing defibrillators largely falls to community and sporting groups, the VAT on top of the purchase of a defibrillator is an additional cost for these groups where a defibrillator and cabinet are priced at approximately €1,900 excluding VAT at 23%.

To remove the VAT on defibrillators, AED pads and batteries would be a benefit to the wider community."

Response of the Executive:

If agreed, this motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Finance.

For information:

Wexford Civil Defence and Wexford County Council Emergency Services are co-ordinating a Community First Responder training event for October 2022 which will be delivered by voluntary emergency services groups including the Order of Malta, John of God, Civil Defence as well as in association with the National Ambulance Service. This training will include basic first aid as well as advice to groups on maintaining a defibrillator device in good working order. Where this training is completed, the Council will share group and defibrillator details with the National Ambulance Service for

inclusion on their advance location system, which can be advised to members of the public in an emergency. Regular training will be required to maintain registration with NAS.

The programme is supported by the Regional Working Group for Major Emergency Management and forms part of the Wexford Community Resilience Programme.

10.4 Cllr. J. Fleming

“That Wexford county council calls on minister for housing planning Daragh O Brien to change the regulation regarding a planning application site notice .when a site is inspected and the site notice is not visible the applicant has to re apply and go through the whole costly planning process again .

I am calling on the minister to change the regulation to when the county council inspect the site and find there is no planning documentation displayed they give a two week notice to the applicant to get the planning notice erected for inspection after that two week period .”

Response of the Executive:

If agreed, this motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

10.5 Cllr. M. Sheehan

“That this Council agrees to develop and establish a Hardship Rent Relief Scheme to alleviate financial pressures on Tenants in arrears with exceptional and unique circumstances and to be adopted before the 2023 Annual Budget.”

Response of the Executive:

The current Differential Rent scheme provides for a hardship clause, as follows:

“The Hardship Clause is applicable to households when, in exceptional circumstances, payment of their calculated rent would, in the opinion of the Housing Authority, give rise to hardship to the tenant or tenant’s family. In such cases, the Authority may agree to accept a smaller sum from the tenant for a specified period. Such a smaller sum should not be less than 6% of the total assessable household income.”

The clause is considered on a case-by-case basis by the Rents Section. Often where a household falls into arrears, a payment plan can be agreed that recognises the challenges of the household.

10.6 Cllr. L. McDonald and Cllr. G. Carthy

“We hereby call upon Wexford County Council to immediately identify and secure a site to commence preparation for the submission of an affordable housing scheme for the Rosslare District.

We further request the production housing plan for the Rosslare District under Housing for All to be produced at the October meeting of this Council”

Response of the Executive:

All counties were assessed by the Department of Housing in terms of affordability as part of the preparation process for the Housing for All Action Plans. In the first instance, County Wexford, when considered as a whole, did not meet the affordability threshold to be considered for funding under the Affordable Housing Fund. The AHF would provide the local authority with up to €50,000 per housing unit in order to meet the affordability ‘gap’ between construction costs and the financial limit of the purchaser.

The Council has subsequently contracted KPMG to undertake a sub-county analysis on the main urban centres within each district, including Rosslare Strand in the Rosslare District, to determine whether we can demonstrate an affordability constraint and therefore access the necessary funding through the Affordable Housing Fund.

Once it is established on foot of the KPMG report what areas may access funding through the AHF, the Council will move to identify further affordable housing schemes for development. The Housing Department will also work to support other schemes outside the main Affordable Housing Fund, where land and project costs can be met.

The Council has already commenced procurement for a team to design, build and manage the first affordable scheme in the County, located at Ramsfort Gorey.

The Housing for All Plan for the County, with a breakdown of each district, is currently available on the Council’s website. A full list of approved housing projects for Rosslare District will also be presented at the District Meeting.

10.7 Cllr. BA Murphy, Cllr. A. Bolger, Cllr. D. Kenny, Cllr. P. Breen, Cllr. A. Browne, Cllr. L. McDonald

“We call on Wexford County Council to immediately apply for housing projects under the Single Stage Approval Process so we can provide essential accommodation.”

Response of the Executive:

There are 9 schemes that will deliver a total of 221 housing units, which do not meet the criteria for the single stage application, that are being progressed by WCC under the 4 stage process.

The single stage application has specific criteria in terms of the number of units and the overall project scheme cost (20 units and €6). It is suited to straightforward sites with

low risk as the budget has to be defined at an early stage of scheme development and included in the single stage process. This budget is then fixed by the Department. If the approved budget is exceeded, further approval has to be sought from the Department and there is no guarantee of recouping all costs.

In effect, the same amount of work is required for both the 4 stage and the single stage processes but there can be a time saving in terms of the number of approvals required from the Department, and this is typically of the order of a couple of months.

WCC is examining all of the schemes that could avail of the single stage process and will where suitable use this process.

10.8 Cllr. T. Forde & Cllr. J. Codd

"As many children in County Wexford cannot secure a place in a secondary school in their local area and are forced to travel to a school in another district, we call on the Minister to ensure that adequate bus services are provided to facilitate all school pupils with transport so that their education will not be hindered."

Response of the Executive:

If agreed, this motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Education.

10.9 Cllr. J. Fleming

"That Wexford county council calls on the Electricity Supply board to withdraw the Pso levy charge from bills to financially cash strapped customers whose bills have increased hugely recently."

Response of the Executive:

If agreed, this motion will be forwarded to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications.

For information:

The PSO (Public Service Obligation) levy is mandated by the Irish Government and approved by the European Commission. It is charged to all electricity customers in Ireland and supports the generation of electricity from sustainable, renewable and indigenous sources.

The levy is calculated and certified annually by the CRU (Commission for Regulation of Utilities) in line with relevant legislation. All energy suppliers are required to collect this levy from customers through bills.

10.10 Cllr. M. Sheehan

"That this Council calls on the Department of Housing and Local Government to amend the Housing Application regulations to permit Local Authorities the ability to disregard

the Annual Average (52 Week) Income rule to accept applications for Social supports in cases that present evidence of exceptional incidents of hardship and/or extenuating medical conditions.”

Response of the Executive:

If agreed, this motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

11. Any Other Business