

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council
held on Monday 10th July, 2017 – 2.00 p.m.
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford.**

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. J. Hegarty, Cathaoirleach.

Councillors:

P. Breen;	M. Byrne;	G. Carthy;	K. Codd Nolan
A. Connick;	T. Dempsey;	A. Donohoe,	K. Doyle,
M. Farrell;	W. Fitzharris;	J. Fleming	D. Hynes;
R. Ireton;	P. Kavanagh;	W. Kavanagh;	A. Kelly;
L. McDonald;	J. Moore;	BA Murphy,	M. Murphy;
J. Mythen	L. O'Brien;	O. O'Connell;	J. O'Rourke
F. Ó Súilleabháin;	M. Roche;	F. Staples	J. Sullivan;
D. Wadding;	O. Walsh;	M. Whelan.	

Officials: M. T. Larkin, D/Chief Executive;
Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services;
Mr. S. Begley, A/Head of Finance;
Mr. P. L'Estrange, Chief Fire Officer;
Mr. P. Collins, County Secretary.

Apologies: Cllr. G. Lawlor
Cllr. M. Sheehan
Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services

1. Presentation by Valuation Office (In-Committee):

On the proposal of Councillor L. O'Brien, seconded by Councillor A. Donohoe, it was agreed that Item No. 1 on the agenda would be held In-Committee to allow for open discussion on the new valuation proposals.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Rates Staff to the meeting.

Declan Lavelle, Head of Valuation Services, then made the attached presentation. He advised that the new Valuation Office List will be published in autumn 2019.

Following the presentation Councillors raised a number of issues and questions which were answered by Declan Lavelle. Included in these issues were:

- The timing of issue of valuations prior to the 2019 local elections
- Concerns over progressive towns being hit harder by new valuations
- The method of assessing rental values
- The speed of revaluation of properties
- The relationship between the rent and the valuation
- The effect on family owned businesses
- Construction company premises and yards and office larger than is now required

- Vacant properties
- The amount paid by multiples and large supermarkets
- Rural v urban public houses – value in trading data
- Work being carried out by local valuers
- Public utilities
- Two similar businesses
- Limits on increases
- The increasing rates on nursing homes will be passed onto elderly people
- Exemptions for sports and community centers
- Preliminary valuations on change of use
- Valuations on 6 month trading

In particular Mr. Lavelle noted that the revaluations are closely linked to the rental figures, which reflect the market rent. The experience of the Valuation Office to date is that they have only received representations from 18% of rate payers with regard to the changes in the rates. He advised that he is conscious of the Local Elections in 2019 and will feedback the Members concerns to the Commissioner.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Declan Lavelle for his presentation and he noted that it was the general view of the meeting that the 2019 date for the revaluations to go live will certainly be an issue. He also asked that Valuation Office keep in touch with the County Council regarding any further updates on the matter.

2. Confirmation of Minutes:

- 2.1 County Council Meeting – 12th June, 2017.
- 2.2 Special County Council Meeting – 19th June, 2017.
- 2.3 Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council – 19th June, 2017.
- 2.4 Special Meeting of Wexford County Council – 3rd July, 2017.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan, the Council approved the minutes of the meetings as outlined above.

Cllr. D. Hynes expressed his shock regarding the news that The Echo Newspapers has gone into liquidation and hoped that a buyer can be found. He particularly noted the effect the closure will have on the people working in the business and their families.

Congratulations/Comhghairdeas:

The Members expressed their congratulations to the following groups and individuals/Léirigh na Comhlairleoirí a gcuid comhghairdeas leis na grúpaí agus na daoine seo a leanas:

- Jobstown win in the Courts
- Councillor J. Moore who has been appointed Chair of the Waterford IT governing body
- Jack Forde, St. Killian's for his performance in the Leinster Juvenile Track and Field Championships, winning the U15 High Jump.
- Ida Casey in the national finals of the shot putt
- Mary Beary on her book about the death of her son by suicide

- Paul Hynes on winning the Seafood Platter in the Kilmore Seafood Festival
- Tadhg Furlong for his role on the Lions Team
- Paul Boyle, Gorey who represented Ireland in the Under-20s Six Nations Rugby Championship

Votes of Sympathy:

The Members expressed their votes of sympathy to the following:

- The family of Thomas Sheehan, father of Cllr. M. Sheehan and John Sheehan, Water Services
- The family of Gerard O'Reilly, former employee Wexford County Council
- The family of Sheila Rowe, sister of Michael Dempsey, Wexford Library

3. Section 26 Fire and Emergency Operations Plan 2017-2021:

On the proposal of Cllr. L. O'Brien seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all the Council approved the Section 26 Fire and Emergency Operations Plan 2017-2021 as submitted to the meeting.

4. Annual Service Delivery Plan Quarter 2:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. R. Ireton the Annual Service Delivery Plan Quarter 2 was noted by the Members. A number of issues were raised with regard to the progress to date in some areas in the Report including roads, third level education, Holmestown, the park at Killeens, the Womens Refuge, CCTV, litter and illegal dumping.

The Cathaoirleach proposed given the number of queries that Members should email in their queries for detailed answers.

5. Update on Performance Indicators:

The County Secretary gave a presentation on the update on performance indicators which had been previously discussed by the Council. On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. Moore the update was noted and agreed by the Members.

6. Burial Grounds:

6.1 Burial Ground Maintenance and Development Strategy

6.2 Bye-Laws of Wexford County Council for the Management of all Open Burial Grounds within the Jurisdiction of Wexford County Council.

Following initial discussions on the matter it was agreed that the Development Strategy and Bye-Laws should be brought back to the Districts for further examination and then brought to the SPC for further consideration before being presented to the full Council.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Whelan seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy this approach was agreed by the Members.

7. Report of Corporate Policy Group:

The report of the Corporate Policy Group was proposed by Cllr. A. Donohoe seconded by Cllr. L. O'Brien and agreed by all.

8. Chief Executive's Report:

The Chief Executive's Report for July 2017 was circulated to the meeting. Questions raised by Councillors present were answered by Council Officials in attendance. The issues raised included the following:

- Recent action at Killowen, Gorey involving the Planning and Environment departments working together, with the co-operation of the Gardai, on a serious enforcement matter.
- Climate Change Report
- Sufficient resources for Planning Enforcement given the rise in the number of planning applications
- 3D Printing in the Library
- The future use of the Market House in Gorey
- The allocation of a house at Francis St, Wexford
- Cost of expenditure on unfinished estates from 2008 to date
- Building control
- The publication of the report regarding windmills
- Works to public convenience in Curraclloe
- Science Festival
- Refugee Settlement Programme
- Bridgetown Village
- Public convenience at Crosstown
- Delay in refurbishing houses for re-letting
- The delay in receiving funding for housing from the Department
- The brown bin collection service
- Litter survey
- Fly tipping
- Anti-social behavior

The Chief Executive's Report was proposed by Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin and seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming.

9. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training:

On the proposal of Cllr. A. Donohoe seconded by Cllr. L. O'Brien, the Members noted and approved the List of Councillors' Conferences, Training and Reports as circulated to the meeting.

10. Minutes of Meetings:

On the proposal of Cllr. W. Kavanagh, seconded by Cllr. J. Mythen and agreed by all the Members present the following minutes were noted and approved.

- 10.1 Borough District of Wexford 15.05.17
- 10.2 New Ross Municipal District 10.05.17
- 10.3 Gorey Municipal District 16.05.17
- 10.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District 15.05.17
- 10.5 Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee Meeting 13.12.16

11. Notices of Motion:

It was agreed that motions 11.1, 11.5 and 11.6 would be dealt with together

11.1 Cllr. D. Wadding:

“This council calls on Minister Simon Harris to acknowledge the flaws in the Herity report on foot of the tragic death of Thomas Power and to upgrade cardiac services at University Hospital Waterford providing a 24/7 service for the South East region which has a population of over half a million”.

11.5 Fianna Fail Party:

“Recognising the need for the Southeast Region to have access to critical healthcare; recognising the failure of the Herity report and its rational and findings to deliver 24/7 Cardiac Care- Second Cath Lab, this Council calls on An Taoiseach and Minister Harris to instruct the HSE to proceed with the installation of this vital service with immediate effect and upon adoption, this motion is circulated to all the County/City Councils in the region”.

11.6 Cllr. D. Hynes:

“This council calls on the Minister for Health to provide the people of the South East with 24/7 Cat Scan at University Hospital Waterford as the lack of the round the clock services is putting lives at risk”.

The three motions were proposed by Cllr. D. Wadding, seconded by the Fianna Fail Members and Cllr. D. Hynes and agreed by all.

11.2 Cllr. D. Wadding:

“After the tragic Grenfell Towers fire disaster in London, we call for a review of fire safety standards in all council accommodation and of all new developments to ensure the highest possible fire prevention measures and materials are used”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Wadding, seconded by Cllr. A. Kelly and agreed by all.

Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, advised that the Minister had asked for a national review to be carried out. The Director will send out copies of the Department Circulars received by the Council to the Members. He also noted that the Chief Fire Officer had commenced his own review prior to the receipt of the Circulars.

11.3 Cllr. D. Hynes:

"This Council calls on the Minister for **Housing**, Planning, Community and Local Government, to urgently look at the The **Housing Assistance Payment** (HAP) scheme which is replacing long-term rent supplement. On the Rent Supplement scheme, tenants were left on the housing list until such time as an offer of a social house could be made by the Council. It is now the case that applicants on HAP are not on the list any more (except in the unlikely case of a transfer). This is a discriminatory anomaly and prevents housing applicants on HAP from receiving an offer of a social house with all the advantages that accrue in security of tenure etc".

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Hynes seconded by Cllr. A. Kelly and agreed by all.

At 5.15 p.m. Councillors J. Fleming and G. Carthy left the meeting.

11.4 Cllr. M. Byrne:

"Recognising the challenge of suicide in County Wexford and the need to promote positive mental health and supporting the work done by many voluntary groups in this County, that Wexford County Council resolves to continue to campaign for improved services in 2018 and to provide a fund for this purpose and for supporting voluntary groups in this sector. In order to this, the Council shall provide for a one off increase in the Local Property Tax of 1% for one year, 2018, with the specific purpose of all sums raised being used to tackle suicide and promote positive mental health in Co. Wexford."

The above motion had no seconder and therefore fell.

12. Sealing of Documents:

On the proposal of Cllr. L. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan the Members noted and approved the sealing of documents as submitted to the meeting.

13. Correspondence and Communications:

The Members noted the following correspondence received:

- Correspondence from Simon Harris, TD, Minister for Health, concerning medicinal cannabis.
- Correspondence from Simon Harris, TD, Minister for Health, concerning "A Vision for Change".
- Correspondence from Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, in connection with a referendum on the public ownership of water.
- Acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection regarding the reinstatement of the Bereavement Grant.

- Acknowledgement from the office of Mr. Simon Coveney, TD, in connection with reducing the size of Council Districts.
- Acknowledgement from the office of Mr. Simon Coveney, TD, in connection with access to all forms of social housing for RAS tenants.
- Acknowledgment from the office of Mr. Simon Coveney, TD, in connection with removing people from social housing waiting lists.
- Acknowledgement from the office of Mr. Simon Coveney, TD, in connection with solar farms/PSO levy.

14.Any Other Business:

Cllr. J. Mythen asked that a presentation be made with respect to the Lobbying Act 2015 and it was agreed that training on this matter would be dealt with later in the year.

Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin asked for seating on the roof of the County Hall for staff.

Cllr. A. Donohoe welcomed the renewal of work on Courtown Pier.

Cllr. D. Wadding looked to reduce the numbers of bottles of water being used at Council Meetings and suggested that a water cooler would be used; it was agreed that this would be looked into by the County Secretary.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

County Secretary

Daingithe ar an la de , 2017.

Cathaoirleach