

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council
held on Monday 13th March, 2017 – 2.30 p.m.
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford.**

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. P. Kavanagh, 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	J. Hegarty,
D. Hynes;	R. Ireton;	W. Kavanagh;	A. Kelly;
G. Lawlor;	L. McDonald;	J. Moore;	BA Murphy,
M. Murphy;	J. Mythen;	L. O'Brien;	O. O'Connell;
F. Ó Súilleabháin;	M. Roche;	M. Sheehan;	J. Sullivan;
D. Wadding;	O. Walsh;	M. Whelan.	

Officials: Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive;
M. T. Larkin, Director of Services;
Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services;
Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services;
Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance;
Mr. P. Collins, County Secretary;

Apologies: Councillors J. O'Rourke; F. Staples.

1. Wexford Mental Health "ASK" Campaign:

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the members of the "ASK" Campaign and other organisations including Community Minds, It's Good to Talk, Lions Club, Marine Watch and others to the meeting. Frank Staples Jnr and Sharon Pettit of the "ASK" Campaign made the following presentation as attached.

Following the presentation the Members congratulated the Group on its presentation and campaign. There was widespread support amongst the Members for the campaign. Councillors also raised the issue of rolling out the campaign to the overall County and were concerned that other groups involved, some of whom were present at the meeting, should be involved.

It was further noted that mental health services in County Wexford need to be improved and that perhaps this group could act as an umbrella group for all of the groups involved.

"The Chief Executive thanked the "ASK" Group for their presentation and advised the Members that he proposed to allocate some modest funding via the Communications budget to assist the campaign". He also stressed the importance of all the groups who would be required to engage and help in the campaign.

The Cathaoirleach echoed these sentiments and advised the meeting that Mayor Frank Staples had been on radio giving details of his own personal experiences with depression and that this campaign will make a difference and should be helped by the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor seconded by Cllr. Tony Dempsey it was agreed that the Cathaoirleach should contact the HSE to seek an improvement in mental health services and to enquire from the HSE what is meant by appropriate mental health services in County Wexford. This was agreed by all.

2. Confirmation of Minutes:

2.1 County Council Meeting – 13th February, 2017.

On the proposal of Councillor M. Byrne, seconded by Councillor T. Dempsey and agreed by all, the Council approved the minutes of the County Council Meeting held on 13th February, 2017.

Votes of Sympathy:

The Members expressed their votes of sympathy to the following:

- The family of Mick McGee, who was involved in the greyhound industry.
- The O'Brien family of Bray who had lost 4 family members in a recent fire
- The family of Pat Farrell, Wexford
- The family of David Walsh who had been killed in Australia recently
- The family of Michael Whelan, brother of Sean Whelan
- The Fox family on the death of their mother Mai
- The family of Mary Dempsey, sister of Eddie Doyle, Enniscorthy Municipal District
- The family of Jack Barry, Irish Water Safety, Bunclody and former employee of Wexford Borough Council

Congratulations

The Members expressed their congratulations to the following:

- All Staff in the LEO Office on the Enterprise Awards which were held recently
- Brian Cantwell, Bank of Ireland, Taghmon, who assisted with the Enterprise Awards
- Wexford Hurling Team and their Manager Davy Fitzgerald on the promotion into Division 1A
- Lee Chin on his performance on "The Toughest Trade"

3. Proposed disposal of land under Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001:

3.1. Proposed disposal of land at 5 Bishops Park, Wexford to William and Linda Keeling

On the proposal of Councillor M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. L. O'Brien the Members agreed to the proposed disposal of land at 5 Bishops Park, Wexford, in accordance with the notice circulated.

4. Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8, of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended):

4.1 LAC1611 – the development of the disused railway line, railway bridge and railway tunnel extending from Rosbercon, New Ross to Mountelliot as a cycle and pedestrian route.

The Members noted the report of Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive dated 7th March, 2017. On the proposal of Cllr M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. L. O'Brien the Members agreed and approved the development as outlined in the report.

5. Rates on Charitable Properties:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all with the exception of the 5 Sinn Fein Members, Cllrs. M. Farrell, A. Connick, D. Hynes and D. Wadding, the Members approved the report on Rates on Charitable Properties as submitted to the meeting.

6. Audit Committee – Report to Council:

- 2015 Accounts and associated Audit Report
- Annual Report on activity of the Audit Committee during 2016
- Audit Committee 2017 Work Programme

On the proposal of Cllr. L. O'Brien seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all the Council approved the above documents as submitted to the meeting.

7. Proposed date for Refugee Intercultural and Awareness Training for Elected Members of Wexford County Council – 12 noon on 10th April 2017:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all it was agreed that Refugee Intercultural and Awareness Training for Elected Members of Wexford County Council will take place at 12 noon on Monday 10th April, 2017.

8. National Planning Framework:

Documents which were circulated at the meeting were presented by Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services. Mr. Larkin pointed out that the Planning Framework will replace the National Spatial Strategy. He also noted that the closing date for submissions gave a very short timeframe in which to prepare the submission. He also advised that in addition to the Council's submission the views and concerns of the Council will be included in the Regional Assembly submission which is being prepared on behalf of the Chief Executives of the five Local Authorities in the region, Wexford, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne it was agreed that further discussion in more detail is required about this process and he proposed that a Special Meeting be held to discuss same.

The Members then discussed the report and advised that a number of issues were not included and it was agreed by the Director that those issues would be included. The following are some of the issues raised:

- The development of Rosslare Europort post Brexit
- The downgrading of Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey rail links to County Wexford
- Village sewerage solutions required
- Mental health issues
- Second level education
- Health services
- Housing and affordable rates
- Employment

Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, advised that he would modify the document to reflect the views of the Council. The document was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. P. Breen and agreed with the amendments put forward by the Council.

9. Date of Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council – 19.06.17 at 12 noon:

On the proposal of Cllr. L. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne it was agreed that the Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council will take place on Monday 19th June, 2017 at 12 noon.

10. Review of Corporate Plan 2015-2019:

The Members noted the proposed changes to the objectives of the Corporate Plan 2015-2019 as circulated. On the proposal of Cllr. A. Donohoe seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all the Review of the Corporate Plan 2015-2019 was approved.

11. Annual Service Delivery Plans 2015/2016:

The Members noted the Annual Service Delivery Plans 2015 and 2016 as circulated to the meeting. On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. Hegarty the Members noted and approved the Annual Service Delivery Plans 2015 and 2016 as circulated.

A number of issues were raised arising from the plans including the following:

- Road Safety
- Dog Fouling
- The preparation of a handbook for residents associations
- The inspection of premises
- Arrears of rent should be flagged as early as possible within two weeks of the rent arising
- Taking Over of Estates - Mr. T. Larkin advised that he would prepare a further report on the taking in charge of estates for the next meeting of the Council.

12. Performance Indicators 2015:

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Hegarty seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all the Members approved the Performance Indicators for 2015 as circulated to the meeting.

In addition to the items proposed in the report it was proposed that community and social housing should be a priority.

Cllr. J. Hegarty advised that the roads performance indicators should be reviewed at the Transportation SPC. He also advised that WCC should look at the waste services, the 3 bin services was important and we should talk to other County Councils who are more successful in these matters than Wexford.

Private water should be discussed by the Water SPC, this was agreed by the meeting.

Mr. E. Hore, advised the following:

There have been three major road condition surveys carried out on a countrywide basis for non-national roads over the past 20 years; the 1995 and 2005 non-national needs studies and the 2011 regional road survey and study.

In the 1995 survey County Wexford's non-national roads in all categories, i.e., Regional, Local Primary, Local Secondary and Local Tertiary, were ranked in the lowest grouping in terms of poorest condition i.e. amongst the worst roads in the country.

In the 2005 survey counties Wexford and Donegal were the only two counties to rank in the bottom grouping of 5 groups in all four road categories in terms of roads needing reconstruction, the most serious of road condition and costliest form of road repair.

In the 2011 condition survey on regional roads County Wexford despite a 19.7% improvement between 2004 and 2011 was ranked worst in Ireland in terms of the % of regional road requiring reconstruction at 27.8%. Only two other counties (Offaly and Mayo) were rated at over 25%. Some examples of how other "rural" counties fared in this road condition survey – all with road networks requiring less than 10% road reconstruction.

2.6% (Louth)	9.0% (Limerick)
4.2% (Monaghan)	7.8% (Cavan)
8.6% (Carlow)	9.1% (Kildare)
8.4% (Westmeath)	6.7% (Leitrim)
8.9% (Kilkenny)	3.4% (Longford)

Yet all those counties receive the same level of funding as Wexford based on length of road and independent of the actual condition of the road.

The road widths in County Wexford, specifically the widths of the Local Primary, Local Secondary and Local Tertiary are also wider on average than the majority of the same road classifications in other counties, which in effect "penalises" Wexford in terms of national funding based solely on length of road. The surface dressing cycle which forms the basic level of maintenance and safety requirement has gone from the recommended 1 in 8 years to almost 1 in 40 years.

Based on these facts the roads in Wexford must receive additional funding to reflect condition rather than just length of road if major structural failure of the non-national network in the County is to be avoided.

The two main road grants are the restoration improvement and the restoration maintenance grants. Both of these grants are, as stated, allocated based on the length of mileage or kilometre of Regional and Local Roads within each county. However six councils receive additional funding based solely on the premise that they experience higher road traffic than the norm and weighting factors are applied to the funding (length of road) to determine the increased funding allocation.

Council	Factor
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council	2.0
Fingal County Council	1.5
South Dublin County Council	1.5
Kildare County Council	1.2
Louth County Council	1.2
Meath County Council	1.2
All other Councils	1.0

Road condition should form a significant factor in the allocation of funding - road traffic is but a subset of road condition. Given the above facts I would like to make the strong case for Wexford roads to be included on the list of those counties with a weighting factor applied to the annual funding. I would respectfully suggest that this factor be at the higher end of the scale for some years to come to offset the under-investment of many years past.

County Wexford can never arrive at a situation where the standard of non-national road can compare with even the average standard throughout the country if funding based on road condition is not introduced.

Indeed the gap between the standard of roads in County Wexford and the country in general will continue to widen given the significant underfunding of Wexford non-national roads.

This is fact based on all the road condition surveys carried out to determine the state of the country's rural road network. It is clear that since the discrepancy in road condition was first scientifically highlighted in 1995, Wexford's roads have not received the investment necessary to protect and improve this vital infrastructural asset.

13. Report of Corporate Policy Group:

The report of the Corporate Policy Group was noted.

14. Chief Executive's Report:

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

- Culvert at Rosslare
- Meeting of WCC on the Ferry
- The rollout of the 850 anniversary of inviting the Normans to Ferns
- The Wexford Ambassador Programme
- The possibility of funding for public lighting at the Ring Road in New Ross
- Rosslare Harbour/Europort
- The repair leasing scheme

15. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training:

The County Secretary circulated a list of foreign travel and this was agreed by the Council on the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. Moore.

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

16. Minutes of Meetings:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all the Members present the following minutes were noted and approved.

- 16.1 New Ross Municipal District Meeting 11.01.17
- 16.2 Gorey Municipal District 17.01.17
- 16.3 Enniscorthy Municipal District 16.01.17
- 16.4 Borough District of Wexford 16.01.17
- 16.5 Protocol Committee Meeting of Borough District of Wexford 16.01.17
- 16.6 Twinning Committee Meeting of Borough District of Wexford 16.01.17
- 16.7 Economic Development & Enterprise Meeting 23.01.17

17. Notices of Motion:

17.1 Cllr. M. Byrne:

Smoky Fuels - Noting

- (i) the seriously damaging effects on health and the environment of the continued burning of smoky fuels;
- (ii) the motion carried by this Council in March 2015 seeking to prohibit the burning of smoky coals in the County;
- (iii) the announcement in October, 2015 by then Minister, Alan Kelly, of the Government's intention to proceed with a nationwide ban,

Wexford County Council expresses its concern at the delays by Minister Denis Naughten and his Department in proceeding with this measure. This Council calls for the introduction of this ban within six months.

Proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes and agreed by all.

17.2 Cllr. M. Byrne:

Climate Change Strategy

Noting the motion carried by this Council in October, 2015, to undertake an audit of all our activities to minimise or eliminate their impact on Climate Change, this Council expresses its disappointment that no action has been taken to date on this matter and calls for it to be prioritised by the executive. Further, noting the executive's remarks at Council meetings on this issue over the past six months that the delay is due to the lack of a strategy by the Department of Climate Change, that in developing our own strategy that we highlight this failure on the part of the Department.

Proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. T. Dempsey and agreed by all.

17.3 Cllr. J. Fleming:

“That this Councils calls on the HSE to reinstate the proper title of 'Saint' on all it's ward names and signage in Wexford General Hospital to reflect our heritage, tradition and history”.

Proposed by Cllr. J. Fleming seconded by Cllr. A. Kelly and agreed by all with the exception of Cllr. D. Wadding.

17.4 Cllr. J. Moore:

'WCC calls on Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Oireachtas to, as a matter of urgency, **withdraw** the current Sea Fisheries Amendment Bill 2017 and immediately open consultation with the Irish Fishing Industry to review the implications of the **current** Bill for Irish Fishing and also the **future** implications for Brexit.'

Proposed by Cllr. J. Moore seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe and agreed by all with the exception of the 5 Sinn Fein Councillors.

17.5 Cllr. D. Wadding:

- a. To call on the Irish government to ratify, as soon as possible, the convention against trafficking in human organs which was adopted by the Council of Europe on 9th July 2014 in order to criminalise illegal organ transplantations. The Irish Government has already signed this convention, but is yet to ratify it.
- b. To call on the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs committee to follow through on the pledge made by the Oireachtas Sub Committee on Human Rights to “investigate to the maximum extent possible” persistent, credible reports of forced organ harvesting and other severe human rights abuses imposed on Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience in China.
- c. To call on the Chinese government to end its practice of forced live organ harvesting of prisoners of conscience and release all illegally detained Falun Gong practitioners in China.

Proposed by Cllr. D. Wadding seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes and agreed by all.

17.6 Cllr. D. Wadding:

“This Council calls on government to acknowledge the role State collusion with the Church played in the horrors of the Tuam mother and baby home, to issue an immediate apology to all those affected and to carry out investigation into deaths at other similar facilities”.

Proposed by Cllr. D. Wadding seconded by Cllr. F. OSúilleabháin and agreed by all.

18. Sealing of Documents:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. L. O’Brien the Members noted and approved the sealing of documents as submitted to the meeting.

19. Correspondence and Communications:

The Members noted the following correspondence:

- Acknowledgement from the Office of Simon Coveney, TD, regarding HAP rules.
- Acknowledgement from the office of Michael Creed, TD
- Acknowledgement from the Office of Simon Coveney, TD, regarding planning permission for solar farms.
- Letter from Dept of Social Protection regarding the free travel pass scheme
- Acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Education and Skills regarding access to schools for children
- Acknowledgment from the Office of the Minister for Education and Skills regarding St. Senan’s Hospital
- Acknowledgment from the Office of Minister Denis Naughten
- Correspondence from Simon Harris, TD, regarding Orkambi
- Correspondence from Chris Smith, Private Secretary to Minister Ross regarding the expansion of the M11/M50
- Email from Simon Harris, TD, regarding “Vision for Change”
- Email from Simon Harris, TD, regarding FreeStyle Libre

20. **Any Other Business:**

None.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

County Secretary

Daingithe ar an la de , 2017.

Cathaoirleach