

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council
held on Monday 9th September, 2019 – 1.30 p.m.
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford.**

Attendance:

In The Chair: Councillor M. Sheehan

Councillors: P. Barden; M. Bell; P. Breen; A. Browne;
C. Byrne; M. Byrne; G. Carthy; J. Codd;
K. Codd Nolan; A. Connick; D. Devereux; A. Donohoe;
M. Farrell; J. Fleming; T. Forde; J. Hegarty;
D. Hynes; W. Kavanagh; L. Kelly; D. Kenny;
G. Laffan; G. Lawlor; L. McDonald; J. Moore;
B.A. Murphy; B. Murphy; J. O'Rourke; F. O'Súilleabháin;
J. Owens; F. Staples; J. Sullivan; O. Walsh;
M. Whelan.

Officials: Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive.
T. Larkin; E. Hore, J. Carley, E. Taaffe, Directors of Services;
Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance;
Mr. P. Collins, Meetings Administrator;

1. Presentation to Members – REVAL 2019 Publication of the Valuation List

The Cathaoirleach welcomed John O'Sullivan, Commissioner for Valuations, who is making a presentation with regard to the REVAL 2019 for County Wexford. The presentation had been circulated to the Members and the Commissioner went through the main points in his presentation.

He advised the Members of a number of key dates. The final valuation certificates would be issued on 10th September 2019. The Valuation List will be published on 17th September 2019. The right of appeal to the Valuation Tribunal would be 28 days from 17th September and that the effective date for rates purposes is 1st January 2020.

Following the Commissioner's presentation there was a question and answers session and Members asked questions with regard to the REVAL of County Wexford including the following which were dealt with by the Commissioner for Valuations:

- The number of properties in Wexford where the valuation has reduced
- The number of people who have not yet received a response from the Valuation Office
- The process with regard to revaluation of coastal buildings
- The large valuation increases in some businesses in Enniscorthy
- The rates treatment for charity shops
- The fair and transparent system that was put in place by the Valuation Office
- It was noted that some premises which had not been revalued for many years could have experienced some increase
- The basis for revaluation should be profitability

The Cathaoirleach then thanked the Commissioner for his presentation and it was noted that the presentation was available to the Members on MinutePad.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

2.1 County Council Meeting – 8th July, 2019.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke seconded by Cllr. P. Breen and agreed by all, the Council approved the minutes of the meeting as outlined above.

The Cathaoirleach then asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes and the following were discussed:

- Concerns about the Tenancy Handbook which had issued recently
- Update on the case regarding Martin Power - T. Larkin, Director of Services, advised that the Council has received a number of items from Mr. Power and that the Council has reviewed the documents and sent them on to our Law Agent for a response
- Cllr. D. Hynes advised that the Chief State's Solicitors Office and the OPW are conducting an investigation on the assembly of the Anne Street site and T. Larkin, Director of Services, advised that the Council will co-operate with any investigation.

Expressions of Sympathy:

The Members expressed their sympathy to the families of the following recently deceased:

- The family of Saoirse Kennedy, grand-daughter of Robert Kennedy
- The family of Sean Scallan, Corish Park, Wexford
- The family of Margaret Foley, Clonroche
- The family of Biddy Berry, Ferndale Park, Wexford
- Cllr. J. Moore wished to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of the fatal shooting of Garda Gerry McCabe
- The family of Tyler Murphy, Clonroche
- The family of Markie Reck, father of Geraldine Carthy, Planning Dept and father in law of Gerardine Reck, Housing Dept.
- The family of Donal Broaders, brother of Geraldine Broaders, Credit Control
- The family of Padraig O'Gorman, father of Padraig O'Gorman, Housing Officer
- The family of Emily Steacy, mother of Robert Steacy, GSS, Gorey Municipal District
- The family of Sean Keeling, father of Alan Keeling, Housing Liaison Officer
- The family of Noel Whelan, brother of Cllr. Michael Whelan – Cllr. M. Byrne noted the loss to the family and the people of Wexford. He wished to acknowledge the contribution Noel Whelan had made to County Wexford and his influence and commitment to the Kennedy Summer School and passed his sympathy to Sinead and Seamus Whelan

Vóta Comhghairdeas:

Déan na Comhairleoirí comhghairdeas ar na ghrúpaí/dhaoine liostaithe thíos:

- The organizers of the Kennedy Summer School
- James Owens, who refereed the All Ireland Hurling Final 2019
- Glynn Barntown GAA Club for their recent success
- Faythe Harriers GAA Club for their recent success
- Michelle O'Neill, who officiated at the UEFA Women's World Cup Final and the recent Chelsea v Liverpool match

- Pat Sinnott who organised a Wexford v Waterford Legends Charity Hurling Match and raised €10,500 for the Little Blue Heroes Foundation for seriously ill children
- The organizers of the Castlebridge Record Makers Festival
- Craobh Loch Garman for organizing an Irish music event in the Irish National Heritage Park and to WCC for their support for that event.
- The Environment Section for their Mattress/Sofa Amnesty initiative mattresses.
- John Murphy of Carrick on Bannow who organised the Phil Murphy Weekend

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

3.1 Proposed disposal of 51 Pondfields, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke seconded by Cllr. A. Connick, the proposed disposal was agreed by the Council.

3.2 Proposed disposal of 9 mts sq of land at Pig Market, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke seconded by Cllr. J. Owens, the proposed disposal was agreed by the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh items 4,5 and 6 which dealt with nomination to a number of boards and sub-committees were postponed to the October 2019 meeting of the Council.

7. Ratification of PPN Representatives to Committees of Wexford County Council:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly, the Council ratified the PPN representatives to serve on the JPC and SPCs, details of which had been submitted by the PPN and circulated to the members of the Council.

8. Nominations to 2019 Audit Committee:

Following consultation between the Chief Executive and the members of the CPG, the following nominees were recommended to fill the external seats on the Audit Committee:

Ms. Madeleine Quirke, Rosslare Harbour
Ms. Linda Doran, Enniscorthy
Mr. Harry Reinhardt, New Ross

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Carthy seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor and agreed by all, the three external members, as recommended, were formally appointed to the Audit Committee.

9. Local Election (Disclosure of Donations & Expenditure) Act 1999 – furnishing of Statements to Members:

The County Secretary advised that a report had been circulated to the Members and that copies of the statements have been circulated to the Members. This was noted by the Council.

10. LPT Variation Decision:

Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance, had circulated a Discussion Paper in accordance with the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The following requirements form part of the Annual Budget Process:

- Making a decision of the Local Property Tax (LPT) Variation +/-15% by 30th Sept 2019 and producing a preliminary Budget for 2020 by the end of September.

The Head of Finance then went through the Discussion Paper in detail and also highlighting the public consultation process which had taken place over the summer. Five submissions were received from the public and the submissions were included in the Discussion Paper.

She advised that the overall financial position of the Council is stable. The Discussion Paper recommended that the Council should adopt a 10% increase in the LPT for 2020 which will see the LPT retained at the same level by County Wexford as the rate applied since the 2018 financial year. She then sought approval of the Members for this recommendation.

The 10% increase in the Local Property Tax (LPT) for 2020 was then proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. P. Breen and agreed by all.

Cllr. F. O'Súilleabháin seconded by Cllr. T. Forde then made a proposal to leave the LPT at the base line rate and have no increase. The Cathaoirleach then decided to take the original proposal first and advised that, if it were passed, the second proposal would fall automatically.

Following a vote it was agreed by all Members present to increase the LPT by 10% with Cllr. O'Súilleabháin and Cllr. Forde voting against and Cllr. J. Codd abstaining.

During the discussion on the LPT variation decision a person from the public gallery had approached a member of the Council with a letter.

The Chief Executive advised the Council that this approach to a Member of the Council was in contravention of the rule for Members of the Public attending a public meeting of the Council.

He advised the Members that the letter had been returned to the person who delivered it in the public gallery and he had been advised that he would be asked to leave if there was any further interference with the meeting.

11. Budget 2020 – Proposed Meeting Dates:

The Head of Finance had circulated a list of dates with regard to various parts of the 2020 Budget to the Members and on the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe the list as circulated was agreed.

12. Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans (RIHL) Allocation 2018-2019 and associated borrowing requirements:

The Head of Finance addressed the Members with regard to the report on the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans which she had circulated earlier. She advised that Wexford County Council had been allocated a sum of €15,922,084 for building loans in respect of 2018 and 2019. She stated that the Council had given approval for borrowing the bulk of this money at meetings in 2018 and 2019.

In accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act approval of the Council was then sought for borrowing of €1,422,084 to fund the RIHL Programme for the remainder of 2019 and to align approvals to date with the consolidated allocations received.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming the proposal for the borrowing of €1,422,084 was approved by the Members.

13. Draft SPC Scheme 2019-2024:

The County Secretary advised Members that the Draft SPC Scheme had been approved by the Council at their July 2019 meeting and had gone out to public consultation over the summer. The Council received five submissions with regard to the SPC Scheme. A synopsis of the submissions and recommendations had been circulated to the Members.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. D. Devereux seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan and agreed by all that:

- The Economic & Development SPC be increased by two extra Council Members.
- The Planning & Development SPC be reduced by 3 Council Members.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. A. Connick, it was agreed that Cllr. L. McDonald would be appointed to the Housing & Community SPC.

Following the amendments, Council representation on the five SPCs is as follows:

Housing & Community	8
Transport & Water Services	6
Economic Development & Enterprise	9
Planning & Building Control	4
Environment & Climate Change	7

The SPC Scheme 2019-2024, as amended, was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. D. Devereux seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan.

14. Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024:

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services, then presented the Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024. He advised that the plan had gone to public consultation over the summer and that five submissions had been received, all five of which can be accommodated within the Plan.

It is now proposed to prepare a draft Plan which will be presented to the CPG and Council in November and December 2019 for approval. This was approved on the proposal of Cllr. G. Carthy seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all.

15. Annual Service Delivery Plan Q1 and Q2 2019:

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services advised that the Plan is for Q2 2019 and it contained an extensive number of items. He advised that if any Members had queries they should contact his office. The Q2 plan was proposed by Cllr. M. Whelan seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor and agreed by all.

16. Consideration of Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Annual Report 2018:

Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, advised that Mr G. Mackey, Chief Officer for the LCDC had circulated the LCDC Annual Report to the members of the Council.

The Director also advised that Mr Mackey will now be taking up office in Enniscorthy Municipal District and that Amanda Byrne will take over his role in the Community Department. Members then thanked Ger Mackey for his work and commitment to rural Wexford during his time working in the Community Department. This was agreed by all.

The Cathaoirleach noted that new staffs were coming back into the County Hall from the Districts and that new staff will be deployed to the Districts also.

The members noted the LCDC Annual Report 2018.

17. Report of Corporate Policy Group

The report of the Corporate Policy Group held on 2nd September, 2019 was noted by the meeting.

Cllr. B. A. Murphy referred to the QPR Training contained in the report and advised Members to attend. She also advised that she had green ribbons to distribute to Members of the Council and Staff with regard to support for suicide prevention.

18. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive's Report was considered by the Members. The Chief Executive and Members of the Management Team responded to Members queries arising from the report including the following:

- Update on New Ross Advance Factories
- Updated position on John Street, New Ross
- Up to date position on Michael Street, New Ross
- Update on dredging programme on Crescent Quay, Wexford
- Funding for Healthy Ireland and update with regard to the plan
- Update on Curracloe Greenway
- Thanks to Clinton Donovan and the clean-up crews of Wexford County Council on the clean ups carried out in various parts of Wexford - it was noted that there was a huge increase in illegal dumping in the county
- Update on the construction of the first building in Enniscorthy Technology Park
- Footpath from the new housing development in the Ballagh
- Current position with regard to Seaview, Kilmore Quay
- Coastguard station
- Hedgecutting
- Technician for the Rosslare District
- Update on the Templeshannon Regeneration Project
- Rolling out of the My Open Library to all parts of Wexford
- Funding to reinstate roads around Oylegate
- Gorey Market House

- Biodiversity
- Flood plan for Enniscorthy
- Schedule for works on side roads to the new motorway
- Castle in New Ross District
- New Ross Search and Rescue Update

19. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training

- Foreign Travel to China and Wales

Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, advised that the Council had been invited to China and he recommended that a small delegation to include the Cathaoirleach, one Council Official and the Chair of the Economic SPC be approved. Approval was also sought with regard to a trip to Wales in respect of the Ancient Connections Intereg Project for Ferns.

The list of Councillors Conferences and Training and the invitation to attend China and Wales was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming and agreed by all.

20. Minutes of Meetings:

- 20.1 Annual Meeting of Borough District of Wexford 17.06.19
- 20.2 Gorey Municipal District 21.05.19
- 20.3 Annual Meeting of Gorey Municipal District 18.06.19
- 20.4 Annual Meeting of Enniscorthy Municipal District 14.06.19
- 20.5 Enniscorthy Municipal District 20.05.19
- 20.6 Annual Meeting of New Ross Municipal District 14.06.19
- 20.7 New Ross Municipal District 08.05.19
- 20.8 Annual Meeting of Rosslare Municipal District 19.06.19

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Breen seconded by Cllr. A. Connick and agreed by Members present the Minutes outlined above were noted and approved.

21. Sealing of Documents

The Sealing of Documents as submitted to the meeting was noted and approved.

22. Correspondence and Communications

- Correspondence from Minister Simon Harris re second cat lab for Waterford University Hospital
- Correspondence from Minister Simon Harris concerning the interim control measures the HSE have introduced with regard to recruitment of health sector staff
- Correspondence from Minister Simon Harris concerning the Standing 4 Women* Campaign
- Correspondence from Dept of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in relation to pension provision for CE Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors
- Correspondence from State Examinations Commission in relation to provision for student sitting leaving cert exams following a general anesthetic.
- Correspondence from Simon Harris, TD, concerning GPs and FEMPI legislation.
- Correspondence from National Monuments Service
- Correspondence from Richard Bruton, TD, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment regarding dog fouling.

The correspondence outlined above was noted by the Members.

23. Notices of Motion

23.1 Cllr. Malcolm Byrne

“That Wexford County Council introduce special by laws that will return the speed limits on the former N11 roads from Clough to Camolin to Ferns to Enniscorthy and to Oylegate to 100kmph. That the process for such by laws commence immediately with the objective of having the necessary changes in place by year end.”

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. O’Rourke and agreed by all.

23.2 Cllr. David Hynes

“This Council calls on the government to reverse the decision to cut €31.80 training allowance for people with disabilities. It is an attack on the most vulnerable in our society. This has been a huge benefit to such people in seeking to further their educational prospects and to make themselves feel more independent and less depended on society.

The news that thousands of students who received CAO offers recently prepared to take up college courses in the coming weeks, a cohort of students with disabilities face having their Rehabilitative Training (RT) allowance axed next month.

The weekly allowance of €31.80 aims to support progression to further education or employment”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Hynes seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell. It was agreed to ask the government to reverse the cut to disabled persons and this was agreed by all.

23.3 Cllr. Tom Forde

“I ask that in building new playgrounds or regenerating existing playgrounds, Wexford County Council would introduce a policy of application of the Principles of Universal Design by installing a range of equipment which can be used by both able and less able bodied children. In addition, that towards achieving universal design, Wexford County Council would begin a programme of retrofitting existing playgrounds with at least one item of play equipment specifically designed for inclusivity of all.”

Cllr. T. Forde noted that this motion was already Council Policy.

23.4 Cllr. Lisa McDonald

“That this Council calls on the Government to immediately provide funding to carry out an urgent traffic survey on the N11 from Rosslare Europort to Oylegate with particular emphasis on alleviating the growing congestion at the roundabouts and slip roads on that route and to thereafter immediately commit to provide the funding to deal with the upgrading required to ensure that all traffic can flow in light of the immediate threat of a no-deal Brexit”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. L. McDonald seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly and agreed by all.

23.5 Cllr. Michael Sheehan

“As a means of generating new business and addressing vacant shops in key main commercial areas, that this Council requests the Economic SPC to investigate a tailored programme of rent discounts and/ or incentivised rebates to encourage new startups or develop a focused scheme whereby the Council rents and subleases prime located shops to a specific category of enterprise/ start up with clear time- phased discount and claw back provisions”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. W. Kavanagh and agreed by all.

23.6 Cllr. Malcolm Byrne

“That Wexford County Council oppose any moves to remove responsibility for traveller accommodation from local authorities and communicate that concern to the Ministers for Housing and Local Government as well as the Dáil deputies for Wexford.”

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor. It was agreed to write to the Minister for Housing and Local Government as well as the Dail Deputies for County Wexford.

23.7 Cllr. David Hynes

“This Council calls on the government to vote against the Mercosur trade deal between the European Union and Bolsonaro's Brazilian government. As this leader is a right wing oligarch only interested in exploiting the poor of Brazil (esp the indigenous people of the Amazon) and damage the environment. The deal will also put many of our own struggling Irish beef farmers out of business by allowing cheaper beef in to the country”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Hynes seconded by Cllr. J. Codd and agreed by all with the exception of Cllr. D. Devereux.

23.8 Cllr. Tom Forde

"I ask that Wexford County Council, as far as is feasible and possible, incorporate adequate cycling infrastructure as part of all upgrades and new roads projects in the future with the aim of improving road safety for all users and to connect the main zones of origin and destination within the county which should provide effective through-movement for cyclists."

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly and agreed by all.

23.9 Cllr. Lisa McDonald

“That this Council calls on Irish Ferries to reintroduce the French Ferry to sail from Rosslare Europort for the 2020 season and thereafter given the issues that arise in light of a no deal Brexit”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. L. McDonald seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes. Cllr. C. Byrne proposed an addition to the motion to say that a delegation should now meet with Irish Ferries, this was agreed.

The Chief Executive advised that he had met the Manager of Irish Ferries before the summer, who notified him that Irish Ferries keeps Rosslare Port under constant review. He was also of opinion that the move away from Rosslare to Dublin Port was not as popular as had been hoped.

The Chief Executive suggested that WCC waits until the effects of Brexit are better known and understood before looking for a meeting with Irish Ferries.

24. Any Other Business

Cllr. M. Whelan asked that arising from the earlier incident whereby a Councillor had been approached by a member of the public from the public gallery that guests who attend at the Council Meeting be named at the outset and this matter should be dealt with by the Protocol Committee.

Cllr. D. Kenny advised that local people were not notified regarding the recent Wexford Stages Motor Car Rally. Mr E. Hore, Director of Services, advised that there is an official process for road rallies and that notices are published in the local paper. He understood that, in this case, the rally group had called to all houses. Signs are also erected locally and alternative routes are normally made available.

Cllr. M. Whelan congratulated James Stafford of Ballycullane who won the recent Wexford Stages Motor Car Rally.

Cllr. O. Walsh raised the issue of Horse Racing Ireland and the impact of recent developments.

Cllr. D. Hynes objected to naming names of members of the public in the public gallery.

It was noted that the notifying the public about the Wexford Stages Motor Car Rally could be done on social media.

It was agreed, following further complaints that the issue of persons attending Council meetings in the public gallery will be dealt with by the Protocol Committee.

Cllr. Owens raised an issue regarding a child in Enniscorthy and the Director of Services j. Carley agreed to look at the merits of the case.

Cllr. Owens also said the new sound system in Enniscorthy was a great addition to the graveyard and thanked the Council for providing same.

Mr. E. Taaffe advised that the Draft Annual Report 2018 is almost complete and will be presented to the Members at the October 2019 Meeting of the Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

County Secretary

Daingithe ar an 11ú la de Samhain, 2019.

Cathaoirleach