

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council
held on Monday 11th February, 2019 – 2.30 p.m.
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford.**

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. K. Doyle, Cathaoirleach.

Councillors:

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

Officials: Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive;
Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services;
Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services;
Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services;
Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services;
Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance & ICT;
Mr. G. Mackey, Chief Officer, LCDC;
Mr. P. Collins, County Secretary;

Apologies: Councillors M. Farrell (apologies that she would be late for the meeting);
T. Walsh.

At the outset, the Cathaoirleach asked the Leas-Chathaoirleach W. Fitzharris to chair the meeting while the Cathaoirleach held a separate meeting with the Whips of the political parties.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

1.1 County Council Meeting – 14th January, 2019.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke seconded by Cllr. T. Dempsey and agreed by all, the Council approved the minutes of the meeting as outlined above. No matters arising.

Votes of Sympathy:

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

- The family of Michael O'Leary, Auctioneer, Enniscorthy.
- The family of Margaret Murphy, sister of Cllr. M. Sheehan and John Sheehan, Caretaker

- The family of Denise Walsh, wife of Paul Walsh (Member of Joint Policing Committee)

Vóta Comhghairdeas:

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

- The Oylegate Junior B team who won the Junior B All Ireland final.
- St. Martin's Camogie team who will take part in the All Ireland Final on 3rd March 2019
- Nicky White, IBEA, who was inducted into the IABA (Irish Athletic Boxing Association) Hall of Fame recently.
- The Library Service of Wexford County Council for its seminar in commemoration of the Centenary of the First Dáil.
- Curracloe, which won the 2019 Irish Independent Reader Travel Award for Ireland's Favourite Beach recently.
- Monart Spa, which won the 2019 Irish Independent Reader Travel Award for Ireland's Favourite Spa recently

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

2.1 Proposed disposal of land at McCurtain Street, Gorey, Co. Wexford to the Health Service Executive, Lacken, Dublin Road, Kilkenny.

The Leas-Chathaoirleach asked if the disposal had been agreed by the Gorey District - it was confirmed that it had been agreed.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all, the proposed disposal, as submitted to the meeting, was approved.

2.2 Proposed renewal of lease of property known as Westgate Computer Centre at Wexford, Wexford to Access 2000 Wexford CLG.

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Dempsey, seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes and agreed by all, the proposed disposal, as submitted to the meeting, was approved.

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

3.1 LAC 1809 – Proposed development of existing site to provide 39 no. social housing units with auxiliary and associated siteworks at Rosetown, Rosslare, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. T. Dempsey and agreed by all the proposed development as submitted to the meeting was approved.

4. Audit Committee Reports

- Audit Committee commentary on the contents of the 2017 Accounts and audit findings in accordance with Section 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014

- Overview of Audit Committee work programme completed during 2018 in accordance with section 15 of the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014
- Audit Committee's proposed work programme for 2019

The reports had been previously circulated to the Members. Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance, advised that the three reports have been compiled as part of the Audit Committee's Work Programme for 2018.

The Audit Committee acknowledged the content of the 2017 Accounts, the contents of the Local Government Auditor's Report and the improvement in the Council's financial position. The Committee noted that, while there has been an improvement in the economy, and the Council is going ahead with an investment plan for the county, that a prudent outlook with regard to the Council's finances should be maintained.

The Council noted the reports, as submitted

5. Draft 2019 Annual Service Delivery Plan

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Service, presented the Annual Service Delivery Plan for adoption by the Council. The Plan sets out the services which the various departments of the Council will deliver in 2019. He noted that there will be a progress report submitted to the Members on a quarterly basis.

The Cathaoirleach then returned to chair the meeting.

Members then posed questions with regard to the Plan which were answered by Council Officials in attendance. The issues/questions raised included the following:

- Capital water and sewerage works in Fethard on Sea and the need to get a definitive answer from Irish Water as to when these works will be delivered.
- Given that 70,000-80,000 people view the London St. Patrick's Day Parade every year, that VisitWexford should have a banner which could be displayed at the parade.
- The Templeshannon Regeneration Project – suggestion that the Executive should keep in contact with the Swimming Pool Committee in Templeshannon to discuss any new proposals being looked at for the Project.
- Several villages in north County Wexford need are seeking updates from Irish Water as to the status and priority of their rural wastewater schemes e.g. Camolin,
- The finalisation of the new tourism strategy
- The inclusion of an Invasive species programme in the Environmental as well as the Roads Plan for 2019
- The need for capital investment in water and sewerage for Ramsgrange Village
- Sewerage treatment plant for Oylegate
- The development of an Advance Technology Factory in New Ross
- Capital Projects in New Ross
- The Enterprise Centre in New Ross
- The problems of littering and illegal dumping experienced by many communities in County Wexford
- Problems/issues for Members as a result of GDPR.
- The application for funding Gorey Market House.

- Increased CPO's of derelict sites to stop litter
- No market price shown on derelict sites list
- The need for Recycling Centres to issue receipts for waste material received.
- Extra funding for Enniscorthy Sports Hub which is seeking to provide underage soccer/rugby facilities. The land has been levelled and reseeded but now needs fencing.
- The Chief Executive advised the Members that there is interest in putting a new hotel in Fethard and that, subject to the planning application being right, the Council would be hoping to allow an interim temporary solution to deal with the wastewater problems encountered by the proposal.

6. Local Elections Update

The County Secretary advised the Members that the new Register of Electors were now ready for collection in the Council Chamber.

7. LCDC Report

Mr. G. Mackey, Chief Officer, LCDC had prepared a report which was circulated to the Members. Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, advised that presentations relating to the LEADER and SICAP Programmes will be made to the next meeting of the Council.

The Chief Officer then went out to set out the purposes of the LCDC's which were established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The LCDC is now a 19 person Committee and they have the second highest funding allocation in the country. He noted that there are high levels of marginalisation and deprivation in certain parts of County Wexford. Members then asked a number of questions which were answered by the Chief Officer and other Council Officials in attendance. Among the issues raised were the following:

- The measurement of success for the LCDC Grant Aid
- Is there need for improvements as the figures show very little difference since 5 years ago and there seems to be very little impact on the tackling of social inclusion – are there parts of County Wexford still excluded? The statistics seems to employ that there is no improvement
- Some communities are continually excluded leading to resentment in the areas and a social divide.
- Clear measures by WLD in their upcoming presentation to show that social inclusion is being tackled and statistics to prove that greater levels of participation are in place for certain groups.
- 28 areas in County Wexford are still the same as they were five years ago
- No money has been invested in those areas and there is a preference for projects which are shovel-ready. Many of these communities don't have the capacity to apply for SICAP funding and money is not spent in the areas of social deprivation.
- The Chief Officer advised that he is working with AIRO at present as to how best to measure the success of the programmes. He also advised that a whole of Government integrated approach is the key to help deprived areas - this would lead to a co-ordinated response in dealing with social exclusion.

- The success of the South End Maudlintown project with regard to social inclusion is a national model and has had a good end product in the Maudlintown area. The entire community has benefited.
- Mental health issues and substance abuse issues have not been dealt with properly - this need to be tackled in various areas.
- Gaps in the services and the interventions and need for collaboration when reviewing the plans.
- The success of the Men's Shed and Community Schemes
- The need to address school dropouts in the education system
- The need for infrastructure to service Riverchapel - Community Centre and other infrastructure for the large population living there is required.
- The need for further training to help disadvantaged communities to make applications for funding
- The Chairperson of the LCDC Cllr. K. Codd Nolan advised that the Community Department are working extremely hard and that she can see the impact of small grants on local communities across the county. The new programmes will see a lot of improvements happening for groups across the county and, in particular, will benefit communities who have not been reached previously.
- The Chief Executive then commended the work of Ger Mackey and his staff in Community under John Carley's Directorship. He noted that previously Wexford County Council had no oversight role or input into funding or where money was spent with regard to the LCDC.

Members of the Council now have an opportunity to see where the money is spent and to ensure that funding is prioritised to help communities who are most in need. The oversight role of the Council is to see that the money is spent in the most deprived areas and is spent in a way to get the greatest impact in those communities.

The Chief Executive also highlighted the need to skill up communities to assist them in making grant applications

Vote Re: New Local Electoral Areas and Proposed New Municipal Districts:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne it was agreed to go into committee to allow full and frank discussion. It was further agreed that any votes taken in respect of this issue would be held in public.

The Cathaoirleach then synopsisized the issues facing the Council and set out a number of options arising from his meeting with the Whips. A lengthy discussion ensued to which many of the Members contributed.

Following discussion about a possible motion to be put to the Council, the following motion (**Motion 1**) was proposed by Cllr. J. Hegarty and seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne:

"That Kilmuckridge would become its own municipal district similar to Rosslare."

Cllr. P. Kavanagh then proposed the following motion (**Motion 2**), which was seconded by Cllr. M. Whelan:

"In light of the fact that the four main towns of County Wexford are centrally located economically, culturally and democratically within the existing four municipal districts,

Wexford County Council calls on the Minister to revert to the 2014 Municipal District Boundaries which have served the people of Wexford well.

Having failed to resolve the issue imposed on Wexford County Council, we seek a deputation to discuss the issue.”

Three further motions were then proposed, as follows:

Motion No. 3 proposed by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. K. Doyle and seconded by Cllr. W. Kavanagh.

“In light of the fact that the four main towns of County Wexford are centrally located economically, culturally and democratically within the existing four municipal districts, Wexford County Council calls on the Minister to revert to the 2014 Municipal District Boundaries which have served the people of Wexford well.”

Motion No. 4 proposed by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. K. Doyle and seconded by Cllr. W. Kavanagh.

“In light of the fact that the four main towns of County Wexford are centrally located economically, culturally and democratically within the existing four municipal districts, Wexford County Council calls on the Minister to revert to the 2014 Municipal District Boundaries which have served the people of Wexford well.

If the Minister is unable to accede to the above, wish of the Elected Members of Wexford County Council, the Council calls on the Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform to assign the Kilmuckridge Local Electoral Area to the Enniscorthy Municipal District as proposed in the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee No. 1 Report 2018. The Council is of the opinion that this configuration better meets the needs of the people of Wexford.”

Motion No. 5 proposed by Cllr. M. Farrell and seconded by Cllr. P. Breen.

“In light of the fact that the four main towns of County Wexford are centrally located economically, culturally and democratically within the existing four municipal districts, Wexford County Council calls on the Minister to revert to the 2014 Municipal District Boundaries which have served the people of Wexford well.

If the Minister is unable to accede to the above, wish of the Elected Members of Wexford County Council, the Council calls on the Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform to assign the Kilmuckridge Local Electoral Area to the Gorey Municipal District. The Council is of the opinion that this configuration better meets the needs of the people of Wexford.”

Prior to the vote, it was noted that Cllr. M. Farrell had joined the meeting and that Cllr. G. Carty, Cllr. T. Dempsey and Cllr. F. Staples had left the meeting.

The Co. Secretary then clarified the voting process for the Members. Each motion would be put to the Council in the order in which they were proposed. If the motion was passed, no further motions would be put to the Council.

If the motion was defeated, the next motion would be put to the Council and this process would continue until either one motion was passed or all five motions were defeated. This process was noted by the Council.

Motion 1 was then put to the Council and a roll call was taken as follows:

Those in favour: P. Breen, M. Byrne, A. Donohoe, M. Farrell, J. Fleming, J. Hegarty, R. Ireton, M. Murphy, F. Ó Súilleabháin, M. Sheehan, J. Sullivan.

Those against: K. Codd Nolan, A. Connick, K. Doyle, M. Doyle, W. Fitzharris, D. Hynes, P. Kavanagh, W. Kavanagh, G. Lawlor, J. Moore, B.A. Murphy, J. Mythen, L. O'Brien, J. O'Rourke, O. Walsh, M. Whelan.

Those abstaining: T. Forde, L. McDonald, M. Roche,

11 members voted in favour, 16 voted against and 3 abstained.

Motion No. 1 was defeated.

Motion 2 was then put to the Council and a roll call was taken as follows:

Those in favour: P. Breen, M. Byrne, K. Codd Nolan, A. Connick, M. Doyle, A. Donohoe, K. Doyle, M. Farrell, W. Fitzharris, T. Forde, P. Kavanagh, W. Kavanagh, L. McDonald, J. Moore, B.A. Murphy, M. Murphy, J. Mythen, L. O'Brien, J. O'Rourke, M. Roche, M. Sheehan, J. Sullivan, M. Whelan

Those against: J. Fleming, J. Hegarty, R. Ireton, G. Lawlor, F. Ó Súilleabháin, O. Walsh

Those abstaining: D. Hynes

23 members voted in favour, 6 voted against and 1 abstained.

Motion No. 2 was passed by the Council. No further motions were put to the Council.

The Cathaoirleach then suspended Standing Orders to let the meeting continue until 6pm.

8. Report of Corporate Policy Group.

The Report of the Corporate Policy Group of 4th February 2019 was noted by the meeting.

9. 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:

- The length of time taken to get a pre-planning meeting.

- Concerns about remarks made recently by the Minister and John O' Connor, CEO of The Housing Agency regarding Local Authorities not building social housing. On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes, it was agreed to write to the Minister and the CEO of The Housing Agency expressing concern about these remarks.
- Nuclear Energy Plan for England/Wales - Members to be notified in future re such notifications
- A briefing for Members in the Tower Hotel, Waterford re the Project Ireland 2040 Plan.
At 5.55 p.m. Cllr. P. Breen and Cllr. J. O' Rourke left the meeting.
- Carlow I.T. site in Ferrybank.
Following some discussion about the suitability of the Ferrybank site, the Chief Executive advised that Wexford County Council had been assisting Carlow I.T. in seeking a site for their new campus. While he had seen the article in last week's newspaper, he was not aware whether the land in question is part of the Redress Scheme. He noted that it is zoned land, but that the Council had received no proposal to develop the site to date.
At 6.00 p.m., prior to the discussion on Carlow I.T., Cllr. M. Byrne left the meeting, having advised that he may have a conflict of interest in the matter.
- On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. M. Whelan it was agreed to invite the President of Carlow I.T. to a meeting of Wexford County Council to hear Member's concerns in relation to the new site.
At 6.02 p.m. Cllr. J. Hegarty left the meeting.
- Update on the post of Heritage Officer
- Derelict site at Old Wexford Hospital
- Member's contribution to the London Wexford Association.

10. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training

- Attendance at London/Wexford Association Functions on 27th April 2019 and 26th October 2019.
- Conference Report of Cllr. J. O'Rourke – E.U. Cohesion Policy - Carlingford, Co. Louth
- Conference Report of Cllr. F. OSúilleabháin – The Finance Act 2018 – Carlingford, Co. Louth.

The list of Councillors Conferences and Training was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. W. Kavanagh and agreed by all.

The Conference Reports submitted by Councillors were noted.

The Members approved attendance of the Cathaoirleach and the District Chairs at the London/Wexford Association Functions on 27th April 2019 and 26th October 2019.

The Cathaoirleach proposed that a Civic Reception be held to honour Handball Players and a number of Umpires in County Wexford. This was agreed by all.

11. Minutes of Meetings:

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

- 11.1 Borough District of Wexford 17.12.18
- 11.2 Gorey Municipal District 18.12.18
- 11.3 Enniscorthy Municipal District 17.12.18
- 11.4 New Ross Municipal District 12.12.18

12. Sealing of Documents

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Moore seconded by Cllr. W. Kavanagh the Sealing of Documents as submitted to the meeting were noted by the Members.

It was agreed that the March 2019 Meeting of Wexford County Council will begin at 2.00 p.m. to deal with the backlog of motions.

13. Correspondence and Communications

- Acknowledgement letter from the Office of the Taoiseach
- Email acknowledgement from the Office of the Minister for Health

Correspondence and Communications deferred to the March 2019 Meeting of the Council.

14. Deferred Notices of Motion:

14.1 Cllr. T. Forde:

“We ask that Wexford County Council seriously consider and take steps to end the over reliance of privately run bed and breakfasts or hotels for emergency accommodation. We ask that Wexford County Council recognise the unsuitability of the current emergency accommodation model and to examine the possibility of acquiring and using more actual houses that could be operated by the council or in coordination with other housing organisations for the provision of emergency accommodation.”

14.2 Cllr. T. Forde:

“We call on Wexford County Council to formulate and to make public a written mental health policy for housing which may include a clear protocol when dealing with tenants with mental health concerns and to include mental health issues as a priority in the allocation of housing”

14.3 Cllr. G. Carthy:

“That Wexford County Council immediately re-installs the vehicular access to the beach at Seaview, Kilmore. This commitment was given to the local community and the emergence services in May of 2018 and to date has not been acted on”.

Deferred Notices of Motion deferred to the March 2019 Meeting of the Council.

15. Notices of Motion

15.1 Cllr. J. Mythen:

“That this Council sends solidarity and support to our nurses and midwives whom have

legitimately balloted their members to take strike action, to secure restoration of pay with a safe fully staffed, functioning Health service, that values and pays them as essential skilled workers”.

15.2 Cllr. T. Forde:

"Maidir leis an Ghaeilge agus iarracht a dhéanamh í a chur chun cinn agus Seachtain na Gaeilge a cheiliúradh gach Márta: "Iarraim go spreagfaidh an Chomhairle seo go gníomhach úsáid na Gaeilge ag cruinniú Mí Mhárta de Chomhairle Contae Loch Garman gach bliain.

Iarraimid ar bhaill atá compordach leis úsáid a bhaint as ár dteanga-an Ghaeilge chun moltaí, comhghairdeas agus comhbhrón a thairiscint"

"In an effort to promote the Irish language and to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge every March, I ask that this Council actively encourage the use of Gaeilge at the March meeting of Wexford County Council every year by asking members of the council who are comfortable using the language to consider submitting motions and to offer congratulations and sympathies as Gaeilge."

15.3 Cllr. M. Doyle:

"In support of events to mark the sitting of the first Dáil and in recognition of it's historic importance, I propose that Wexford County Council take this opportunity to recognise the core principles of the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil by displaying a framed copy of the document in a prominent place in this chamber."

15.4 Cllr. R. Ireton:

"On behalf of Aitheantas I am calling on Wexford County Council to write to Minister Zappone's Department requesting/demanding that her Department acknowledges Adoptee Identity Rights and immediately shows Adoptees access to their own information on health, history and heritage in line with the equality and personal autonomy rights of other citizens and as voted for in two referenda”.

15.5 Cllr. M. Whelan:

"That Wexford County Council review its development fees for Solar farms in the county and raise them to a level that would reflect the impact on the local community”.

15.6 Cllr. J. Hegarty:

"In line with our ongoing efforts to position County Wexford as a healthy county, I call on Wexford County Council to pass on live information and warnings when required in relation to the air quality of our main towns to the general public via the Map alert system”.

15.7 Cllr. M. Byrne:

"That Wexford County Council condemns the outrageous cost overruns of the planned National Children’s Hospital and calls for those responsible to be held to account.”

15.8 Cllr. M. Sheehan:

"That this Council supports our GPs campaign for better terms and conditions with the undoing of FEMPI legislation and to calls on the Minister for Health to engage with the stakeholders to ensure that practices remain open, new doctors are recruited to ensure that practices remain viable and that patients do not have to travel long distances for GP appointments".

15.9 Cllr. T. Forde:

"I propose that this Council write separately to RTE, Eurovision Song Contest Ireland and the Irish performers, calling on all participants not to play any part in the 2019 Eurovision Song Contest, due to be held in Israel, until Israel recognises equal rights for Palestinians and observers international law."

15.10 Cllr. D. Hynes:

"That this Council considers in view of the many housing applicants, that the Council is not in a position to provide a social house for at present, would therefore develop a more direct link with letting agencies to find out what accommodations are available to rent within the HAP income guidelines and as far as possible which landlords will accept HAP. As many applicants are under severe pressure and are often stressed trying to find a suitable place to rent".

15.11 Cllr. M. Sheehan:

"That this Council calls on the Minister for Social protection to abandon the costly piecemeal practice to reviewing all those affected by the 2012 pension rules changes and to reinstate the old criteria of the pre-change State pension while developing a mechanism to backdate the full arrears to those pensioners affected"

15.12 Cllr. F. OSúilleabháin:

"This Council acknowledges the large number of homeowners in County Wexford who are currently experiencing mortgage distress. It welcomes the passing of the first stage of the 'No Consent, No Sale' legislation in Leinster House which prevents banks selling home mortgages to vulture funds without the consent of the borrower/homeowner. This council is calling on all T.D.s to facilitate the speedy passage of the bill through the remaining legislative stages".

15.13 Cllr. D. Hynes:

"That this Council calls on the government to reverse the decision by revenue to impose VAT at 23% on Food supplements from health stores".

All Notices of Motion deferred to the March 2019 Meeting of the Council.

16. Any Other Business - None

This concluded the business of the meeting.

County Secretary

Daingithe ar an lá de Márta, 2019.

Cathaoirleach