

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council
held on Monday 8th May, 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;	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,	J. Mythen;
L. O'Brien;	O. O'Connell;	J. O'Rourke	F. Ó Súilleabháin;
M. Roche;	M. Sheehan;	J. Staples	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;
Ms. A. M. Colfer, Finance Dept;
Mr. P. Collins, County Secretary;

Apologies: Councillors K. Codd Nolan; M. Murphy.

2. Confirmation of Minutes:

2.1 County Council Meeting – 10th April, 2017.

On the proposal of Councillor B.A. Murphy, seconded by Councillor R. Ireton and agreed by all, the Council approved the minutes of the County Council Meeting held on 10th April, 2017.

Votes of Sympathy:

The Members expressed their votes of sympathy to the following:

- The family of Jim Reidy, husband of Sinead Casey, District Manager, New Ross Municipal District. The Cathaoirleach spoke on behalf of all the Councillors to offer his sympathy to Sinead and to offer prayers and good wishes to her. The Chairman of New Ross MD, Councillor M. Whelan added his sympathy on behalf of the New Ross District.

Congratulations

The Members expressed their congratulations to the following:

- Wexford Opera House on winning an international award for Opera Festivals
- Bunclody/Kilmyshall Drama Group for their success in the All Ireland Drama Festival
- The organisers of the Darkness Into Light event
- Wexford Sports and Classic Car Club for the recent event in New Ross
- Green Ribbon Mental Health Campaign event held in Campile, New Ross

It was agreed on the proposal of Cllr. R. Ireton to send a get well letter to Michael Sills, President of the London Wexfordmen's Association.

It was agreed to take Item No. 15 next on the agenda.

15. Presentation by Tommy Kelly former Principal Enniscorthy ETB – Third Level Facility at St. Senan's:

Mr. Kelly gave his vision of a multi-purpose educational campus at St. Senan's Enniscorthy which would include the location of a University of the South East. Mr. Kelly circulated the attached proposal which sets out the main points of his presentation to the Council.

Following the presentation the Cathaoirleach addressed the meeting and highlighted that Wexford was losing out nationally in terms of education. He was particularly concerned that County Wexford produces 10% of food produced nationally, but that only one course on agriculture is currently available in the county.

He further noted that a third-level campus at St. Senan's would be a boost to the local economy, but would also provide a cheaper option for students in terms of accommodation. He supported the concept of a multi-purpose campus and was of the opinion that the H.S.E. should hold off the sale of St. Senan's for two years to allow for the development of the proposal.

Members contributed to a wide ranging debate covering many of the issues raised by Mr. Kelly in his presentation, including the following:

- Cost of sending children to college
- Smart farming
- Working with contacts in Savannah to develop the proposal
- Student accommodation/retail outlets on campus
- Third level participation deficit in County Wexford
- Need for Technology University
- Low access to third level education for citizens of County Wexford identified in the A.I.R.O. Report.
- Strategic Plan for Third-level facility already in place
- Equine Development Centre
- Expansion of the range of Apprenticeships available.

On the proposal of Cllr. K. Doyle, seconded by Cllr. P. Breen and agreed by all Members present, it was proposed to write to the Minister for Health and the HSE to request them to

defer the sale of the property at St. Senan's, Enniscorthy, to give breathing space to allow for the development of a South East University and multi-purpose campus on the site.

At 3.50 p.m. the Chairman left the meeting and the Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr. M. Whelan took the Chair.

1. Presentation – Public Consultation on the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland (2018-2021):

Mr. G. Forde, Senior Engineer, Mr. B. Cooney, Executive Scientist, Anne Phelan and Fran Igoe, both from the Local Authority Waters & Communities Office, then joined the meeting.

Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, gave a presentation to the meeting, a copy of which had previously been circulated to the Members. Following a number of questions from Councillors present, Fran Igoe explained the process for public consultation and hoped that the consultation would be as widespread as possible.

On the proposal of Councillor M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe the Members agreed to go the public consultation phase of the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021.

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

3.1 Proposed lease of land at Camolin, Gorey, Co. Wexford, to Camolin Community Development Association.

3.2 Proposed transfer of land at Mount Carmel, New Ross, Co. Wexford to the Electricity Supply Board.

On the proposal of Councillor R. Ireton seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne the Members agreed to the proposed disposal of land as outlined at 3.1 and 3.2 above in accordance with the notices circulated.

4. Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8, Article 81, of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended):

4.1 LAC1702 – The proposed erection of a single storey dwelling house with associated site works and connection into existing services at Castlemoyle, Healysland, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

The Members noted the report of Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive dated 28th April, 2017. On the proposal of Cllr R. Ireton, seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe the Members agreed and approved the proposed development as outlined in the report.

5. Variation No. 2 to Enniscorthy Town and Environs Development Plan 2008-2014 (as extended):

The members considered the proposed Variation No. 2 to the Enniscorthy Town and Environs 2008 – 2014 (as extended) and on the proposal of Cllr. K. Doyle seconded by Cllr. B.A.

Murphy resolved to proceed to the public display and consultations required under Section 13(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

6. 2016 Annual Financial Statement and Head of Finance Report:

Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance, presented the 2016 Annual Financial Statement and Report to the Members and highlighted a number of issues contained in the Report.

In particular she reported that there was a surplus of over €800,000 for the 2016 financial year in the revenue account.

She also noted that the Council would be writing down the specific Revenue Reserve Transfer against the revenue account. Together with the 2016 end of year surplus and the Reserve Transfer, the Council's overall revenue balance stands at €5.3m at the end of 2016.

She further advised that the formal approval of the Members is required in accordance with Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001 for additional expenditure shown on the table in page 9 of the report. In additional approval for the budget adjustment in respect of road grants of €4.376m is required.

The Head of Finance also reported on the capital account and debt management. Members then raised a number of issues including the following:

- The welcome reduction in the Council's Revenue deficit
- The delay in recoupment of monies from the Department of Environment regarding house purchases.
The Head of Finance agreed that the Council is not in a position to carry capital expenditures on the purchase of houses, as it would require an extension of the Council's overdraft.
- The requirement for improved collections in respect of rents
- Items of overspend – consultancy on wind farms and piers
- Rates collection
- Cost of consultants for monitoring of noise windmills and wind farms
- The effect of the additional expenditure on Municipal District Budgets
- The spending of the traveller accommodation budgets
- Festivals and concerts

In accordance with Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001 approval for additional expenditure shown on the table in page 9 of the report and for the budget adjustment in respect of road grants of €4.376m was proposed by Cllr. A. Donohoe and seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all.

7. Annual Service Delivery Plans 2017:

The County Secretary advised that the Annual Service Delivery Plans must be consistent with the provisions in the Local Authority Budget and also must be consistent with all plans of the Council including the Corporate Plan, Development Plan and other plans.

In accordance with Section 13 (A) of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, the adoption of the Annual Service Delivery Plan is a reserved function of the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. B. A. Murphy the 2017 Annual Service Delivery Plan was adopted.

8. Draft Playground Strategy 2017-2022:

Mr. G. Mackey, Chief Officer LCDC, then joined the meeting. He advised that the Playground Strategy document, as circulated, had previously been presented to the SPC and the four Municipal Districts.

The Chief Executive advised that grants of up to €25,000 (or 49% of Capital costs) will be made available to community groups to develop playgrounds in their local area. It was clarified that community groups can also apply to LEADER for further funding for playgrounds, subject to conditions applying to LEADER funding.

Councillors raised a number of issues with regard to the provision of playgrounds by communities; in particular the cost of insurance and maintenance which causes difficulties for local communities.

Mr. Mackey advised that the Council has 34 playgrounds at present and inspects them once a week. However, for future playgrounds the community groups will be responsible for the maintenance and insurance. The Council provides training for community groups in respect of the weekly inspection of playground equipment. Wexford County Council also carries out an annual inspection on all playgrounds.

Discussion also took place on the Council's policy with regard to planning applications for large private housing developments which should include play areas in line with the Strategy, with the developer being responsible for the ongoing repair/maintenance of the playground equipment.

The Playground Strategy Document, as presented, was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor and agreed by all present.

Mr. G. Mackey also advised that a Department circular on the Town and Villages Renewals Scheme for 2017 had been received recently and that his department would be managing the programme. He advised that expressions of interest are being sought, which will be considered by a steering group. It is proposed that fifteen of those expressions of interest will be selected.

Mr. Mackey emphasised that the timelines for this scheme are very tight.

Mr. Mackey also advised that a circular regarding a new scheme for Trails and Outdoor Recreation has been received; again the timelines are very tight and community groups should contact the Council as soon as possible with their applications.

9. Nomination of Member of Wexford County Council on the County Wexford Drugs & Alcohol Task Force:

Two candidates were proposed:

Cllr. M. Farrell was proposed by Cllr. J. Hegarty, seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne

Cllr. D. Hynes was proposed by Cllr. D. Wadding, seconded by Cllr. J. Mythen.

Cllr. M. Farrell withdrew her nomination and Cllr. D. Hynes was therefore deemed elected.

10. Ratification of Interim PPN Representatives to Wexford County Council Committees:

The report as submitted was proposed by Cllr. A. Donohoe seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all present.

11. Report of Corporate Policy Group:

The report of the Corporate Policy Group was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan and seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe.

13. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training:

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe, the Members noted and approved the List of Councillors' Conferences and Training as circulated to the meeting, including an invitation to a ceremony in Messina Ridge, Belgium on 7th June, 2017.

14. Minutes of Meetings:

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

- 14.1 Special Meeting of Gorey Municipal District 21.03.17
- 14.2 Gorey Municipal District 21.03.17
- 14.3 Enniscorthy Municipal District 20.03.17
- 14.4 Borough District of Wexford 20.03.17
- 14.5 Borough District of Wexford 20.02.17
- 14.6 Protocol Committee Meeting of Borough District of Wexford 31.03.17
- 14.7 New Ross Municipal District 08.03.17

12. Chief Executive's Report:

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

- Commitment of the Council to enforce breaches of litter bye-laws in the gardens of private houses
- The timescale for the expressions of interest in Gorey Market House
- The Hatch Lab in Gorey which opened recently
- National policy on the consideration of RAS/HAP tenants for social housing
- Updates on the business parks in New Ross and Enniscorthy
- It was noted that the Special Projects Manager Ollie Tierney will be leaving the project shortly and his replacement will be Brian Galvin.
- Proposed introduction of charges for recycling centres

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue to 5.45 p.m.

16. Notices of Motion:

16.1 Cllr. A. Kelly (deferred from April Meeting)

“I move that this Council would call on Minister Denis Naughton to introduce the necessary legislation to address the easy accessibility to online gambling”

This motion was proposed by Cllr. A. Kelly seconded by Cllr. G. Lawlor and agreed by all.

16.2 Cllr. J. Mythen:

“That this Council request the Minister to consider placing the voluntary Irish Coast Guard organisation on a legislative footing equal to the other blue light emergency services”.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Mythen seconded by Cllr. A. Kelly and agreed by all.

16.3 Cllr. D. Hynes:

“This Council calls on the Minister Simon Coveney T.D., Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government to urgently review the bill published last year ‘Rebuilding Ireland’ which sets ambitious targets to double the annual level of residential construction to 25,000 homes and deliver 47,000 units of social housing in the period to 2021. As the situation in Wexford is by the day become more and more intolerable, we see people coming forward weekly and sometimes daily to housing clinics and Councillors either homeless or on the verge of homelessness. While we welcome the aspirations of the bill it still is not addressing the absolute need for more social housing. As the majority in Wexford will still not be in a position to take out mortgages even if the houses were there, which they are not. We need to get back to the building of social housing on a large scale”.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Hynes seconded by Cllr. D. Wadding and agreed by all.

16.4 Cllr. D. Hynes:

“This Council calls on the present government to put a referendum to the people calling for the water and the treatment of to remain in public ownership and this to be done as a matter of urgency”.

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

16.5 Cllr. M. Byrne:

“That Wexford County Council expresses concern at the treatment and conditions of members of the Defence Forces and the difficulties faced by the Forces in retaining highly skilled personnel. This Council calls for a comprehensive review to recognise the valuable work of the forces and to ensure that careers are sustainable and attractive”.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming and agreed by all.

16.6 Cllr. M. Sheehan:

“That this Councils calls on the Minister for Social Protection to reinstate the State Transition Pension for those who are the end of their working careers and are awaiting full retirement”.

This motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. K. Doyle and agreed by all.

17. Sealing of Documents:

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

18. Correspondence and Communications:

Cllr. D. Wadding welcomed the comprehensive report from Minister Flanagan with regard to Falun Gong.

Cllr. A. Donohoe acknowledged the comprehensive reply regarding Orkambi from Minister Simon Harris TD.

19. Any Other Business:

Cllr. D. Hynes raised the issue that the meeting should be extended for an hour at the start of the meeting to allow time for presentations.

The issue of broadband in Municipal Districts was addressed by Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, who advised that his team were working on information regarding broadband and this would be made available shortly.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

County Secretary

Daingithe ar an la de , 2017.

Cathaoirleach