

**WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council  
held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 – 2.00 p.m.  
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford.**

**Attendance:**

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

**Councillors:**

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;	F. Ó Súilleabháin;
M. Roche;	M. Sheehan;	F. Staples;	J. Sullivan;
O. Walsh;	T. 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. P. Collins, County Secretary;

**Apologies:** Councillors P. Breen; J. O'Rourke

At the outset, the Cathaoirleach welcomed Senator John Dolan, Disability Federation Ireland to the meeting. He also welcomed other guests and members of staff.

**Votes of Sympathy:**

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

- The family of Kathleen Doyle, mother of Mick Doyle, Executive Engineer, Housing Dept.
- The family of Amy Noblett, Hollyfort, Gorey
- The family of David Hasslacher, Clonhaston, Enniscorthy
- The Colfer family New Ross
- The family of Aidan Kehoe, Templeudigan

**Vóta Comhghairdeas:**

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

- St. Martin's Camogie Team, beaten finalists in the AIB All Ireland Senior Club Championship Final.

- Enniscorthy Rugby Club who won the Leinster League Division 1A Junior trophy
- Bunclody Golf Club who will host the Irish PGA Championship in August 2019.
- Wexford CBS for their recent 5k Fundraiser
- Kilmuckridge Vocational College student, Alanna Hammel for her success in the regional public speaking competition hosted by Soroptimists International Ireland.
- Dean Kennedy from New Ross who won the U95kg. Strongman title in Ballynahinch, Co.Down.
- Wexford Senior Hurling Team on their recent victory over Kilkenny

#### **1. Presentation from Wexford Local Development re SICAP and LEADER Programmes:**

The presentation was made by Brian Kehoe and Claire Ryan. Brian Kehoe clarified that this presentation would deal with the SICAP Programme 2018-2022 only and not the LEADER Programme.

The SICAP Programme 2018-2022 was circulated to the Members.

Following the presentation, questions and issues raised by Members included the following:

- The level of collaboration is worrying - certain sections of the community have not got the skill levels or capacity needed to collaborate to avail of the SICAP Programme. This weakness needs to be addressed.
- Barriers stopping collaboration and the need for root and branch reform.
- Participation in third level education/Poverty levels in Co. Wexford
- The question was raised as to whether or not €1.6m per annum can make a huge difference in the county.
- The RAPID Programme which took place in Wexford Town several years ago was mentioned as an example of good practice in obtaining good results for the community.
- It was also noted that there was a drop in funding for community initiatives since the financial crash and a massive amount of investment required.
- Brian Kehoe, WLD, advised that the SICAP Programme is geared to help individuals and groups – WLD will try to measure what the SICAP Programme will do, but he emphasised that the Programme is not looking at the overall community. The impact is not on the overall community but will accrue to individuals and groups. SICAP will not make any impact on the overall disadvantage in the County
- He noted that factors leading to poverty include income, economic development, education, childcare, health, housing and transport.
- Claire Ryan, WLD, noted that the RAPID Programme was highly successful
- Lack of collaboration was mentioned
- Allocation of €1.6m - €1.7m per annum is asking the SICAP Programme to do the impossible
- The decades of total exclusion for Wexford with no 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Education and social deprivation will take a huge amount of investment to sort out
- The need to develop capacity for those communities not benefited from SICAP and other schemes
- Brian Kehoe, WLD, mentioned that the involvement of professional people in community groups is a big help towards the completion of applications for funding and proper governance i.e. GDPR etc.

- There is also a burnout factor for persons who work with community groups over a long period of time
- The lack of improvement change between 2011 and 2019 on 27 small areas of the county which were identified as socially deprived.
- Many of the people coming from those socially deprived areas are not finishing primary or secondary level education
- Many are on social welfare with low incomes and find it difficult to get employment as they would have to give up benefits of being on social welfare.
- The need to have social events to meet with local people rather than calling to their doors
- If the SICAP payments are not making a difference then we need to change how the process is done
- Spend the SICAP money wisely seeing as how it has been reduced over the last 10 years

At 3.15 p.m. Cllr. J. Moore arrived

- It is a big ask for voluntary people to take part in community groups; perhaps a form of mentoring from retired people, who could be motivated to get involved could be an approach to help community groups in some of these disadvantaged areas.
- It was noted that the higher education attainment has been improved – County Wexford participation is now at the national average, but not in deprived areas of the County
- Pobal figures for 2011-2016 show that Wexford is very disadvantaged - the issues are not just about SICAP but there is need for the agencies to work together to reduce disadvantage and social exclusion in the county.
- LEADER funding is not targeted at areas of social exclusion; instead better educated areas are targeted. Capacity building and train the trainer would help the less advantaged areas.
- There is a need to work with the agencies
- The question was raised as to whether or not there would be a reduction in disadvantage by 2021
- Cllr. M. Byrne sought a breakdown of the salaries and administration on WLD programmes.
- It was noted that LCDC collaborates with WLD and there may be a need for Councillors to get involved. There is need for leadership at a local level and there is too much form filling and bureaucracy. Politicians could help by lobbying for extra money for disadvantaged communities.
- The need for further education and after-school services was also highlighted.
- Brian Kehoe, WLD, mentioned that the Community Leadership Programme is in place; he also knows that disadvantaged areas tend to have the same problems all over the country. There is a problem in getting people involved.
- Claire Ryan noted that collaboration via the LCDC is the key to dealing with many of the issues raised.
- The strategy WLD has in place to deal with disadvantaged areas and how they deal with issues such as addiction, mental health – are they referred to agencies to deal with these problems?
- Claire Ryan, WLD clarified that mental health issues are referred to statutory agencies and the Cornmarket Project, where appropriate.
- It was stated that there is a two tier system in operation; there is a need for national recognition of the position and the scale of the problem in County Wexford.

- Cllr. K. Codd Nolan spoke as Chair of LCDC and noted that it was very important to have discussions like today; that the debate was very good and it is open now for the LCDC to see what can be done to deal with issues raised. While there is no easy solution, from today's discussions it is apparent that collaboration is the name of the game - the idea coming through the discussion is the need to work together to achieve as much as possible for disadvantaged communities. She added that it may be possible, working with WLD, to identify opportunities to deal with some of the issues raised on a pilot basis over the next 3 years.
- The Cathaoirleach noted that it was very evident that it is difficult to make an impact on the towns and the urban areas and it was hard to see the wins in urban settings. He also pointed out the need to be careful that the right areas are targeted and to find out what will suit individual areas.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Brian Kehoe and Claire Ryan for their presentation and their comprehensive responses. Finally, the Chief Executive thanked Brian and Claire for their co-operation with Wexford County Council and the work being done throughout the county.

## **2. Presentation of Draft County Wexford Tourism Strategy 2019-2023:**

Tom Banville, SEO, Local Enterprise Office then presented the Draft County Wexford Tourism Strategy 2019-2023, which had previously been circulated to the Members of the Council. He advised the Members that he was seeking their approval to adopt the Strategy at the meeting.

Following the presentation, there was a wide ranging discussion with regard to many aspects of tourism in the county. Following the discussion, the Cathaoirleach proposed that the strategy be deferred to the next meeting of the Council and this was agreed.

It was also agreed that, if Members had concerns with the Strategy, they could email them to the Tourism Office. Such concerns would be discussed at the Economic SPC which will take place next week, and then, if appropriate, referred back as part of the draft Strategy to the April 2019 Meeting of the Council.

Cllr. Tom Forde left the meeting.

Cllr. Paddy Kavanagh left the meeting.

## **3. Confirmation of Minutes**

### **3.1 County Council Meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all, the Council approved the minutes of the meeting as outlined above.

### **3.2 Special County Council Meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all, the Council approved the minutes of the Special meeting as outlined above.

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

LAC1810 – Proposed development of existing site to provide 17 No. Social Housing Units at Carley’s Bridge, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe and agreed by all the proposed development as submitted to the meeting was approved.

**5. Economic Development Programme 2019-2024**

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. J. Mythen the report of the Director of Services dated 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 outlining the Economic Development Programme 2019-2024 was agreed.

**6. 3 Year Capital Programme 2019-2021**

Ms. A. O’Neill, Head of Finance, presented the Programme, which had previously been circulated, to the Members.

The Head of Finance highlighted that the projects in the Programme were broken down under Programme Groups including Special Projects. The Programme sets out proposed capital expenditure for the next three years and it identified the sources of funding for these capital projects. A new designation “Awaiting funding” has also been included to cover projects for which a funding source has not yet been identified.

She noted that €369m will be required from both borrowing and local funding to deliver the 3 Year Capital Programme.

Following discussion, the Chief Executive advised the Members that the 3 Year Capital Programme for 2019-2021 will not be impacted in any material way by the new configuration of the Districts following the upcoming Local Elections. He will bring proposals re the new arrangements to the next Council following the Local Elections.

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

**7. Report of the Mental Health Sub-Committee**

Cllr. Tony Walsh then presented the Mental Health Sub-Committee Report which outlined the work that had been done by the sub-committee and he thanked all those involved.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the recommendations of the sub-committee be dealt with as follows:

- A copy of the report should be sent to the Minister, with a letter seeking a deputation comprising of the members of the Sub-committee and
- The delegation should also seek funding for an expert report to be prepared on the effect of lack of resources in mental health issues in Wexford.

## **8. Local Elections Update**

The County Secretary then advised the Members as follows:

- In accordance with Article 55 of the Local Elections Regulations 1995, the County Secretary sought a formal vote on the allocation of Polling Cards to the 583 persons who only have a vote in the Local Elections in County Wexford.
- The County Secretary then advised the Members that Supplementary Forms must be submitted to get electors onto the Supplementary Register before Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019. A supply of forms was given to each Member of the Council.
- Finally the County Secretary advised that, in the forthcoming elections, the opening of boxes will take place in County Hall and that the count proper for Local Government Elections will take place in St. Joseph's Hall in Bishopswater.
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## **9. Report of Corporate Policy Group.**

The Report of the Corporate Policy Group of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019 was noted by the meeting.

## **10. 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:

- Service Level Agreement with Irish Water
- Issues and problems with Irish Water
- The employment of meter readers by Wexford County Council
- A house in St. Martin's Park which has been vacant for one year
- Sewerage Treatment Plant for Ballycullane
- Illegal dumping
- House building in North County Wexford

The Cathaoirleach then asked for Standing Orders to be suspended to allow the meeting to continue to 6pm – this was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all present.

- The opening date for the N25 By-Pass
- Issues with the HAP contract with regard to clients who are in arrears
- Update on the Curracloe Greenway
- Rent deposit and rent in advance being asked for by landlords for the HAP scheme
- Update on the Rebuilding Ireland Mortgages
- The Enniscorthy By-Pass – the need to alleviate traffic problems in the area
- The expansion of information given to Members in respect of the housing allocation list

## **11. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training**

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

## **12. Minutes of Meetings:**

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

- 12.1 Borough District of Wexford 21.01.19
- 12.2 Gorey Municipal District 15.01.19
- 12.3 Enniscorthy Municipal District 21.01.19
- 12.4 New Ross Municipal District 09.01.19

## **13. Sealing of Documents**

The Sealing of Documents as submitted to the meeting was noted by the Members.

## **14. Correspondence and Communications**

- Correspondence from the Minister for Health concerning the Standing4Women Campaign

The correspondence outlined above was noted by the Members.

## **15. Deferred Notices of Motion:**

### **2.6 Cllr. M. Doyle:**

"In support of events to mark the sitting of the first Dáil and in recognition of its 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."

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Doyle seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes and agreed by all.

### **2.7 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".

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. R. Ireton seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell and agreed by all.

**2.8 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”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Whelan seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming and agreed by all.

Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, advised that the Council had recently adopted changes to its development levies including those on solar farms. He noted also that the Council can't use levies to deal with planning applications. At present the Council is dealing with such applications on a case by case basis and has granted permissions to around 1500 acres of land for solar farms. He also advised that passing the motion doesn't change the Scheme and that the Scheme will need to be reconsidered at some point in the future, perhaps as part of the Development Plan.

**2.9 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”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Hegarty seconded by Cllr. J. Moore and agreed by all.

The Cathaoirleach finished the meeting by saying that the County Secretary would go through the remaining motions listed below and advise whether or not they should be diverted to SPC's or District Meetings. He will inform the press that the motion has been put in by individual Councillors.

**2.10 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.”

**2.11 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”.

**2.12 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."



**2.13 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”.

**2.14 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”

**2.15 Cllr. F. O’ Súilleabháin:**

"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".

**2.16 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”.

**15. Notices of Motion**

**15.1 Cllr. John Fleming**

“That Wexford County Council calls on the Minister for Housing Planning and local Government Mr. Eoghan Murphy to allow pensioners who have resided in a County Council property for many years to purchase that property regardless of income under the tenant purchase scheme”.

**15.2 Cllr. Malcolm Byrne**

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;
- (iv) the further motion carried by this Council in March, 2017, expressing concern at the failure of Government to proceed with this ban and the continued failure since;
- (v) the call in that motion in March 2017 for the introduction of this ban within six months,

(vi) the continued evidence of the damage caused by the burning of smoky fuels being provided by the Council's own assessments,

This Council now resolves,

(vii) to introduce and enforce a Countywide ban on the sale and use of smoky fuels to take effect on 1st May, 2019.

(viii) to provide an information campaign to consumers on the dangers of poor air quality and on this ban.

**15.3 Cllr. David Hynes**

"This Council calls on the relevant Minister or administrators of the HAP scheme to cover the 4 weeks rent in advance that some landlords are demanding from new tenants along with the deposit".

**15.4 Cllr. Ger Carthy**

"That Wexford County Council allow Wexford Fire Service participation in the Fire/co-responder Scheme with the National Ambulance Service (NAS)".

**15.5 Cllr. Johnny Mythen**

"That this Council calls on the Minister of Transport, to double the fixed charge notice ,where illegal parking in a disabled bay is detected and to consider using a penalty points system in such cases".

**15.6 Cllr. Michael Sheehan**

"That Wexford County Council calls for changes to the Housing Aid for Older People Grant to allow applications from people who ordinarily meet the criteria but who are also caring for a resident dependent or family member under the age of 66, who are in receipt of a long term disability payment or someone incapable of living alone requiring full time care of the applicant".

**15.7 Cllr. Fionntán Ó' Súilleabháin**

"That this Council will do a review this Spring on the widespread felling of mature, healthy trees which is taking place across County Wexford. That we will seek to implement measures that will preserve this important part of our natural heritage and landscape".

**15.8 Cllr. Malcolm Byrne**

"That Wexford County Council amend our County Development Plan to permit the construction of log cabins or other structures for housing for a defined period and that the appropriate amendment and regulations be presented at the April meeting of the Council".

**15.9 Cllr. Michael Sheehan**

"That Wexford County Council Housing section will review it's transfer policy of current tenants and consider accepting transfer applications on the grounds of unresolved antisocial behavior as legitimate reasons for requesting a move".

**15.10 Cllr. Fionntán Ó' Súilleabháin**

"In the event of a no-deal Brexit, Wexford County Council will back the growing calls for an All-Ireland Border Poll, as enshrined under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement".

**16. Any Other Business - None**

**This concluded the business of the meeting.**

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County Secretary

Daingithe ar an                      lá de Aibreán, 2019.

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Cathaoirleach