

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council
held on Monday 14th May, 2018 – 2.30 p.m.
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Wexford.**

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. J. Hegarty, Cathaoirleach.

Councillors:

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

Officials: Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive;
Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services;
Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services;
Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services;
Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services;
Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance;
Mr. P. O'Gorman, Senior Executive Officer;
Ms. E. Morrissey, County Librarian,
Ms. A. Larkin, Senior Staff Officer;
Mr. P. Collins, County Secretary.

Apologies: Councillors: J. O'Rourke; O. Walsh.

At the outset the Cathaoirleach welcomed a number of visitors to the Council Chamber.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

1.1 County Council Meeting – 9th April, 2018.

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

Expressions of Sympathy:

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

- The family of Johnny Beary, who was a Member of the Fife and Drum band
- The family of Aidan Browne, husband of Aideen Hassett, H&S Dept, WCC
- The family of Caroline Murphy who had been head of the Carlow Campus in St. Peter's College

- The family of Toddy Moore, father of Cllr. Jim Moore.
- The family of Joe Phillips, former employee WCC.
- The family of Angela Colgan, mother of Bernard Colgan, Machinery Yard.
- The family of Eamonn Butler, brother of Helen Butler, Planning Department.
- The family of Elizabeth Carthy, mother in law, Claude Clancy, New Ross TC and Sean Kavanagh, Community Dept
- The family of Emily Stafford, sister of Frances Stafford, Environment Dept and Mary Reck, Retired.

Vóta Comhghairdeas

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

- The players and Manager John Godkin of North End United who recently won the FAI New Balance Junior Cup Final
- Enniscorthy Rugby Team – winners of the Towns Cup for the eighth time
- Mayglass National Schoolgirls taking part in the Leinster Final in 5 aside soccer
- All of the County Wexford drama groups who took part in the Finals of the All Ireland Drama Festival 2018, including the Bridge Drama Group who won a number of awards and Ballycogley who won the confined finals.
- Gateway Orchestra and Male Voice Choir for their recent concert in Wexford Opera House and the help given by Liz Burns, Arts Officer to that event.
- St. Mary's CBS Soccer Team, Enniscorthy on winning the All Ireland under 17 Schoolboy Cup
- St. Leonard's soccer club in New Ross who won the Neil O' Sullivan Cup
- Wexford Ladies Football who won the National Football League Final Division 3 title.
- Enniscorthy United on winning the Division 3 Wexford & District League title
- North End Squad Members Shane Dempsey and Lee Smith
- The recent Darkness into Light events held around the county in support of Pieta House.
- Enniscorthy Rugby Club U13's and U15's on their recent success
- Tadhg Furlong's part in Leinster's victory in the European Rugby Champions Cup.

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

2.1 Proposed transfer of land at Hill Street, Wexford to Ard Aoibhinn Services Ltd, Belvedere Road, Wexford.

The Council considered the Notice circulated under Section 183 of the Local Government Act.

On the proposal of Councillor W. Fitzharris, seconded by Councillor W. Kavanagh and agreed by all, the proposed disposal was agreed.

2.2 Proposal to sub-lease a building at Wellington Place, Wexford to Ard Aoibhinn Services Ltd, Belvedere Road, Wexford.

The Council considered the Notice circulated under Section 183 of the Local Government Act.

On the proposal of Councillor G. Carthy, seconded by Councillor T. Forde and agreed by all, the proposed disposal was agreed.

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 1801 – Proposed Development of Enniscorthy Technology Park at Killagoley, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

The Members noted the report of Mr. T. Larkin, D/Chief Executive dated 30th April, 2018. Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services, advised that no submissions had been received with regard to this development and he recommended that the Part 8 proceed without amendment.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Mythen, seconded by Cllr. K. Doyle the Members agreed and approved the proposed development as outlined in the report.

3.2 LAC1712 – proposed extension to the Market House (protected Structure) to provide a multifunctional space including a retail/exhibition/performance venue at Main Street, Gorey, Co. Wexford

The Members noted the report of Mr. T. Larkin, D/Chief Executive dated 2nd May, 2018. Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services, advised that 6 submissions had been received and that the response to each of those was set out in the report. A number of questions raised by Members were answered by the Director.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe the Members agreed and approved the proposed development as outlined in the report.

4. Fixing of date of Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council will take place on Monday 18th June, 2018 at 11.30 a.m.

5. 2017 Annual Financial Statement and Head of Finance Report

The 2017 Annual Financial Statement and Head of Finance Report had been circulated to the Members. The Head of Finance took the meeting through the report highlighting matters under a number of headings including:

- a. Revenue Account
- b. Capital Account
- c. Fixed Assets
- d. Indebtedness
- e. Income
- f. Spending Over Budget

g. Contingent Liability

She also advised the meeting that the potential liability associated with the agreement entered into with the Council in respect of a road development in Ballynagee in Killeens. Under the Accounting Code of Practice for Local Authorities and in accordance with FRS102 the Council is obliged to report contingent liabilities of this type.

The Head of Finance also advised that a surplus on the operations for 2017 of €530,053 represented the 4th year in succession where a surplus was achieved in the revenue account resulting in an overall reduction in the revenue deficit to €4.7m at 31st December 2017.

The Members congratulated the Head of Finance for reducing the deficit and asked a number of questions regarding various parts of the Report including car parking, costs of recent storms, debtors, overspends on festivals.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Kavanagh seconded by Cllr. J. Moore the Council agreed to the overspend shown on Page 8 of the report in accordance with Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001 and also agreed the Annual Financial Statement 2017.

6. Audit Committee Reports

The Audit Committee Reports which had been circulated to the Members were noted.

7. 2018 Capital Allocation for Publicly Funded Housing Loans

The Head of Finance circulated a letter from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, setting out the 2018 capital allocation for publicly funded housing loans to Wexford County Council in the sum of €5.5m. She also gave an update on activity on the housing loans programme in 2018 to date and answered questions regarding the reasons for refusals in respect of loan applications.

8. Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018 Wexford Local Authorities – Proposed Amendment

The Cathaoirleach advised the meeting that at the CPG Meeting it was agreed that the Cathaoirleach and the Director of Services for Housing would meet with the Mayor of Wexford to discuss the amendment to the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

This meeting had taken place and the matter will now be reviewed by the Borough District of Wexford with a view to solving a number of issues relating to the amendment. The proposals to amend the Programme will then revert to Wexford County Council for a final decision.

This was proposed by Cllr. P. Kavanagh seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all.

9. Rebuilding Ireland – Social Housing Programme

A letter from the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government had been circulated to the Members. Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, advised that the Minister had visited Wexford recently and was pleased with the progress to date in the Council's housing programme and noted that Wexford County Council was meeting the targets set.

A wide ranging discussion took place regarding housing which included the following issues:

- The length of time that it takes for the Department to approve proposals from the Council. The Housing Officer advised that the Department had made improvements recently and after stage 1 it now takes 59 weeks for housing to be provided.
- The over reliance on leasing
- The over reliance on RAS and HAP
- Security of tenure
- Buying houses in private estates
- Reduction in acquisitions over the next couple of years

The Chief Executive paid tribute to the Director of Services and his staff for getting the Programme up and running quickly. He noted that the Council had made a lot of progress – in particular, turnkey housing is working very well in County Wexford and is a quick way to get numbers of good quality houses across the line.

He also explained that WCC will exceed its target by 26% in 2018 and the Minister has assured the Council that there is no issue with funding.

The Chief Executive also advised the Minister that the Council has had issues with cash flow when there is a delay with funding from the Department.

10. Storm Emma Debrief Report

Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, presented the Debrief Report on Storm Emma which had been circulated to the Members. He advised that the Council had made a claim for €4.1m. He also noted that information regarding coastal storm damage is also been sent to the Department. He expects a letter from the Department to confirm when the money will be paid to Wexford County Council. The Members congratulated the Council on their work during Storm Emma and raised a number of issues regarding the collaboration between services and reliance on communication.

Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services, advised that €1.23m was spend on plant and machinery and also the Council put forward an application for €2.89m for repairs to roads damaged as a result of the weather event.

The report was noted by the Members.

11. Wexford Draft Culture & Creativity Strategy 2018-2022

Mr. J. Carley, Director of Services, referred to a letter circulated to the Members which sets out the background and context of the Draft Strategy. The County Librarian, Eileen Morrissey then gave a detailed presentation highlighting 5 strategic priorities as follows:

1. Cultural engagement
2. Economy and Culture
3. Our Place our Identity
4. Culture and Learning
5. Culture creativity and wellbeing

The Members asked a number of questions regarding the Strategy including the the following:

- Use of the Irish language,
- Wellbeing,
- Culture night for Councillors and Staff Members,
- Access via education,
- P.J. McCall, Yola and mumming,
- The development of the arts and the involvement of young people in the Arts,
- Fleadh Ceoil na hÉireann bid by Wexford
- The use of exhibition space on the Street after hours from time to time.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Moore seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all Wexford Draft Culture & Creativity Strategy 2018-2022 was adopted.

12. Annual Services Delivery Plan 2018

Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Services, presented the Annual Services Delivery Plan 2018 which had been circulated previously.

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Dempsey seconded by Cllr. P. Kavanagh the Plan was agreed.

13. Performance Indicator Report 2016

Mr. P. Collins, County Secretary, presented the Performance Indicator Report 2016 to the meeting. He advised that the NOAC Report was part of the documentation circulated which set out the results for the whole country for 2016.

He advised that the Council would be presenting their own document at the June 2018 meeting regarding the figures for Wexford in comparison to other counties with a similar population. He then went on to advise on the update of the key indicators for 2017 which had been selected by the Council for particular attention.

He noted that improvements in the use of online motor tax, mobilisation times for the Fire Service and an improvement in the number of organizations on public participation network (PPN) had all been achieved. He also advised that the Programme for Housing had improved as set out earlier in the meeting and that the 3 bin service had been increased to a higher number of households in County Wexford.

A number of issues were raised by Members including private housing, roads maintenance outcomes/results for County Wexford, issues with regard to Irish Water and provision for septic tanks in rural parts of Wexford, and the conducting of elections by the PPN.

It was agreed that all of the candidates standing for election for the PPN should receive a list of the groups who will have a vote in the elections.

The report was noted by the Members.

14. Draft Skip Bye Laws 2018

The Draft Skip Bye Laws 2018 as circulated to the meeting were proposed by Cllr. L. O'Brien seconded by Cllr. T. Dempsey and agreed by all.

15. Report of Corporate Policy Group

The Report of Corporate Policy Group of 8th May 2018 was noted by the meeting.

16. 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 in relation to the following:

- The future use of Holmestown and whether or not it will come back into commercial operation
- Rubbish being dumped at Council bins at beaches
- Current status with regard to Min Ryan Park
- Bi-monthly report for capital investment projects per district
- Refusal of one off housing
- State of rural roads
- Park in Enniscorthy update
- Issues with Seaview beach and slipway arising from storm damage

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne in accordance with standing orders the meeting was extended to 6.00 p.m.

- 1798 Centre link with other historical events
- Road maintenance

At 5.35 p.m. Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services, left the meeting.

- Timescale for the courthouse in Enniscorthy
- Major investment decisions in Enniscorthy regarding strategic sites
- Development of Duncannon Fort
- Draft waste bye laws
- Update on Gorey Town Park
- Update on the meeting with TD's arising from a motion put by Cllr. L. McDonald

- Historical house damage by Storm Emma
- Paperless County Council
- It was agreed that a report on Solar Farms be prepared on foot of a request by Cllr. J. Fleming.

17. List of Councillors' Conferences and Training

The list of Councillors' Conferences and Training as submitted to the meeting was approved by the Members. The report from Cllr. G. Lawlor on the visit to Willie Redmond's Grave and the Fleurus Twinning Trip were also noted by the Members.

The Members also approved the Vinegar Hill Archeology Conference 25-27 May 2018, details of which had been circulated by Cllr. Keith Doyle.

18. Minutes of Meetings:

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

- 18.1 Gorey Municipal District Meeting 20.03.18
- 18.2 New Ross Municipal District Meeting 14.03.18
- 18.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting 20.03.18
- 18.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting 26.03.18
- 18.5 Protocol Meeting of the Borough District of Wexford 27.03.18
- 18.6 Planning & Building Control SPC 02.02.18

19. Sealing of Documents

The Sealing of Documents as submitted to the meeting was noted on the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. L. O'Brien.

20. Correspondence and Communications

- Correspondence from Marie Goretti Moylan
- Correspondence from Iarnród Éireann
- Acknowledgement from Private Secretary to the Minister for Justice and Equality
- Correspondence from ESB Networks regarding attending County Council Meeting
- Acknowledgement from Private Secretary to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- Acknowledgement from Private Secretary to Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport regarding Rosslare Europort

The correspondence outlined above was noted by the Members.

Discussion took place regarding the presentation by the ESB which was agreed for the June 2018 County Council Meeting.

Discussion took place regarding Wexford County Council and Wicklow County Council seeking a meeting with Iarnród Éireann. The Chief Executive advised that he is scheduled to meet a senior representative of Iarnród Éireann in the next few weeks and that a meeting with Iarnród Éireann or the Minister could be considered after that meeting.

21. Notices of Motion

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. J. Mythen it was agreed to extend the meeting by another 10 minutes in accordance with Standing Orders.

Furthermore, on the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, it was agreed to defer motions which required debate if the proposer was in agreement.

21.1 Cllr. Malcolm Byrne

“Given the continued efforts of the Department of Local Government to undermine local authorities and the increased centralisation of power in Ireland, this Council calls on the government to establish an independent convention on the future of local government, that will examine powers, autonomy and funding.

In the event of the failure of government to act, this Council calls on LAMA and the AILG to establish such a convention and to seek cross party support.

This motion to be circulated to all other local authorities in the State and to request that a similar motion be adopted.”

This motion was deferred.

21.2 Cllr. Martin Murphy

“That this Council calls on the Government to ban the erection of election posters during our tourist season "April through September" in order to avoid damaging the appearance of our Cities, Towns, Villages and countryside during the main tourist season”.

This motion was deferred.

21.3 Cllr. David Hynes

“This Council calls on the Minister for Environment, Planning and Local Government to review the system operating in the Housing Assistance Payment scheme (HAP) which removes the housing applicant from the Housing List , (as was the case in the older Rent Allowance scheme) as being totally discriminatory (notwithstanding the fact that he or she can apply for a transfer under certain rigid conditions) and places those not on the scheme in a much better position to be offered a council house even though they may not be on ‘the housing list’ as long”.

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

21.4 Cllr. David Hynes

“I call on the Council to look again the method adopted by this Council regarding rates on properties uses by charities whereby the charities in question have to go to the Valuation Office to get a waiver to exempt them for the proposes of paying rates. This is causing major concern to the bona fide charities in Wexford as many of the charities are being told they still have to pay”.

This motion was deferred.

21.5 Cllr. John Fleming

“This Council recommits itself to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, the steps our citizens can take to protect their mental health, and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental health illnesses at all stages”.

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

21.6 Cllr. Malcolm Byrne

“That Wexford County Council would seek to convene a joint meeting with Wicklow County Council and develop a joint campaign to improve east coast transport links”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Byrne seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all present.

21.7 Cllr. Michael Sheehan

“That Wexford County Council explores the possibilities of developing Wexford into a world class Accessible Tourism Destination for All programme to foster sustainable, responsible and inclusive approaches to tourism development for the benefit of the County’s businesses, citizens and tourists”.

The above motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan seconded by Cllr. M. Byrne and agreed by all present.

21.8 Cllr. Ger Carthy

“I call on this Council to immediately reverse the decision of the executive not to gift a small area of land to the Irish Coastguard for the purpose of the construction of a new purpose built station in Kilmore Quay. This decision has put the entire project in jeopardy”.

21.9 Cllr. Lisa McDonald

“That this Council is disappointed with the withdrawal of the offer on an agreed site in Kilmore Quay to the OPW for our Coast Guard (one of our 4 primary response agencies) and hereby directs Wexford County Council to re-engage with the Coast

Guard and the OPW with the view to making the transfer of land as soon as practicable”.

Motions 21.8 and 21.9 were taken together. The Director of Services advised the meeting that he had visited Kilmore and looked at the sites available again and noted that there was a better site on the Council’s own property which would suit the proposed Coast Guard Station.

Cllr. J. Moore advised that a Local Development Plan for Kilmore was being drafted at present and that the location of the Coast Guard Station should be looked at in the overall context of the Plan.

Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive, welcomed the Coast Guard Reps to the meeting and advised that the Council wanted to try to help them to get a new Coast Guard Station. He advised that the site had issues and may not fit into the overall plan for Kilmore Village. He asked that the Council sit down with the Coast Guard to discuss options to allow planning permission to be applied for. It was noted that a formal Section 183 to transfer land would be required and this would require the approval of the Council.

Following discussion, a motion to defer was proposed by Cllr. P. Kavanagh. However, this was not put to the meeting as the proposers of the motions both deferred their motions to allow for a further meeting of Borough District of Wexford to discuss the matter prior to the matter being brought back to the full Council in the form of a Section 183 notice.

22. Any Other Business

None.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

County Secretary

Daingithe ar an lá de Meitheamh, 2018.

Cathaoirleach