

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Statutory Budget Meeting of Wexford County Council
Held remotely on Monday 30 November, 2020**

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. Ger Carthy, Cathaoirleach.

Councillors:

		FARRELL	MARY	MOORE	JIM
BELL	MAURA	FLEMING	JOHN	MURPHY	BARBARA-ANNE
BOLGER	ANDREW	FORDE	TOM	MURPHY	BRIDIN
BREEN	PIP	HEGARTY	JOHN	O'ROURKE	JOHN
BROWNE	AIDAN	HYNES	DAVID	O'SUILLEABHAIN	FIONNTAIN
BYRNE	CATHAL	KAVANAGH	WILLIE		
CODD	JIM			SHEEHAN	MICHAEL
CODD-NOLAN	KATHLEEN	KENNY	DONAL		
CONNICK	ANTHONY	LAFFAN	GARY	SULLIVAN	JOE
DEVEREUX	DIARMUID	LAWLOR	GEORGE	WALSH	OLIVER
DONOHUE	ANTHONY			WHELAN	MICHAEL

Officials: Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive, Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services, Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance, Ms. A. Byrne, A/Director of Services, Ms. C. Godkin, A/Director of Services, Mr. D. Minogue, County Secretary, Mr. F. Burke, Mr. A. O'Rourke and Mr. A. Kiely, IT Department, Ms. L. Lacey, Mr. S. Begley – Finance Department

Press: Mr. P. Byrne and Ms. S. Kehoe

Apologies: Cllr. L. Kelly, Cllr. J. Owens

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting and welcomed all. He invited the County Secretary to complete a roll call to record the meeting attendance.

1. Chief Executive Introduction

Mr. Tom Enright CE introduced the Budget to the Council outlining the difficulties encountered in delivering a budget for 2021 in light of the significant financial impact and challenges created by the covid pandemic and associated public health measures. He thanked the Elected Members for their continued support during the COVID-19 pandemic and spoke about the many challenges facing County Wexford in 2021 and beyond as a result.

Mr. Enright assured the Members that the Budget as presented supports the continuity of services in the County for 2021 and that it is important to protect local services for the County and its citizens as we emerge from Covid 19 restrictions and challenges.

2. Presentation by Head of Finance

Ms. A. O'Neill presented an overview of the Draft Budget for 2021 and outlined some of the factors and considerations that have informed Wexford County Council's draft Budget for 2021. These include:

- The exceptional and unprecedented financial impact of 2020.
- Ongoing uncertainties in relation to the track of the pandemic and its continuing impact on Economic activity.
- Ongoing covid impact on expenditure and income of the Council.

She also noted that:

- Central funding remains at 2013 levels.
- Roads and Grants are still below 2008 levels.
- LPT revaluation /review had been postponed again.
- Increased costs across a number of heading.
- Limited buoyancy in LPT and rates income for 2021.

She advised members that the following proposals were included in the Draft Budget:

- General Municipal Allocations (GMA) retained at 2020 levels;
- Annual Rate On Valuation (ARV) retained at 2020 level (€0.246);
- Rates relief per Vacant Premises to be retained at 90% subject to the terms and conditions of the scheme;
- Rates Incentive schemes to be adjusted to:
 - a) Redistribute RIS funding to SME sector.
 - b) Move the remaining 83 New Ross TC accounts another stage back to the general RIS scheme.

Ms. O'Neill then proceeded to take members through each budget line in the Budget Tables and together with her colleagues from the Management Team responded to queries from the Members on a number of elements of the Draft Budget including:

- Housing & Building: Maintenance costs – including Planned maintenance
Grants- breakdown of allocations by grant type
Traveller accommodation
Homeless arrangements
- Roads Contractor Daily Parking Permit charge
Cost of Taking in Charge Certificates
Local Road Maintenance
School Warden Service
Public lighting
Local Improvement/Community Improvement Schemes
- Water Services Public Conveniences
Leak detection and repair services
Domestic Septic Tank – funding for improvement
- Planning Services Operation of Building Control Office
Provision for employment of Heritage Officer
Twinning arrangements for 2021
- Environment Services Prevention of litter
Operation of recycling facilities
Emergency funding for Dangerous / Derelict Buildings
Burial Ground Fees
Emergency works to coastline
Fire Fees
- Recreation / Amenity Swimming Pools
- Agriculture/ Education Veterinary Services
- Miscellaneous Register of Electors costs
Foreign Travel
Motor Tax Operations
Income from NPPR
- Other Service Support Costs
Local Property Tax (LPT)
Rates Incentive Scheme

Following consideration of the draft Budget, the Cathaoirleach then put the following decisions before the Council for consideration:

- (a) Decision of percentage of commercial rates relief to be offered to vacant premises

- (b) Decision regarding Annual Rate on Valuation
- (c) Decision on Draft Budget
- (d) Approve proposed adjustments to the 2021 Rates Incentive Scheme (RIS) 2021 and Special Rates Incentive Scheme (SRIS)

The Council agreed to take a single roll call vote in respect of all four decisions.

On the proposal of Cllr. Pip Breen, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell, and following a roll call vote as noted below, the Council resolved as follows:

- a) To apply rates relief on vacant premises for 2021 at the rate of 90%
- b) To adopt the 2021 Budget of Wexford County Council as presented and without amendment
- c) To Adopt an Annual Rate on Valuation of €0.246 for the year ended 31 December, 2021.
- d) To agree the proposals for the RIS & SRIS schemes as presented.

WCC Statutory Budget Meeting - Monday 30 November, 2020 – Voting Record					
	Councillor Surname	Councillor First Name	To apply rates relief at 90% on vacant premises, to adopt the 2021 Budget as presented, to adopt an Annual Rate on Valuation of €0.246 for the financial year 2021.		
			For	Against	Absent / Apologies
1	BARDEN	PAT			1
2	BELL	MAURA	1		
3	BOLGER	ANDREW	1		
4	BREEN	PIP	1		
5	BROWNE	AIDAN	1		
6	BYRNE	CATHAL	1		
7	CARTHY	GER	1		
8	CODD	JIM	1		
9	CODD-NOLAN	KATHLEEN	1		
10	CONNICK	ANTHONY	1		
11	DEVEREUX	DIARMUID	1		
12	DONOHUE	ANTHONY	1		
13	FARRELL	MARY	1		
14	FLEMING	JOHN	1		
15	FORDE	TOM	1		
16	HEGARTY	JOHN	1		
17	HYNES	DAVID			1
18	KAVANAGH	WILLIE	1		
19	KELLY	LEONARD			1

20	KENNY	DONAL	1		
21	LAFFAN	GARY	1		
22	LAWLOR	GEORGE	1		
23	MCDONALD	LISA			1
24	MOORE	JIM	1		
25	MURPHY	BARBARA-ANNE			1
26	MURPHY	BRIDIN			1
27	O'ROURKE	JOHN	1		
28	O'SUILLEABHAIN	FIONNTAIN	1		
29	OWENS	JACKSER			1
30	SHEEHAN	MICHAEL	1		
31	STAPLES	FRANK			1
32	SULLIVAN	JOE	1		
33	WALSH	OLIVER	1		
34	WHELAN	MICHAEL	1		
Totals			26	0	8

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an lá de Nollaig, 2020.

Cathaoirleach

County Secretary