

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council held on Monday 9th October, 2023
in the Council Chamber at 2.30pm (with some remote attendance via Microsoft Teams)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. John Fleming, Cathaoirleach**Councillors:**

Barden	Pat (on-line)	Donohoe	Anthony	Moore	Jim
Bell	Maura (on-line)	Farrell	Mary	Murphy	Barbara- Anne
Bolger	Andrew (on-line)	Forde	Tom	Murphy	Bridín
Breen	Pip	Hegarty	John (on-line)	O'Rourke	John
Browne	Aidan	Hynes	David	O'Súilleabháin	Fionntáin
Byrne	Cathal	Kavanagh	Willie	Owens	Jackser
Carthy	Ger	Kelly	Leonard	Sheehan	Michael
Codd	Jim	Kenny	Donal	Staples	Frank (on-line)
Codd- Nolan	Kathleen	Laffan	Garry	Sullivan	Joe
Connick	Anthony	Lawlor	George	Walsh	Oliver (on-line)
Devereux	Diarmuid	McDonald	Lisa	Whelan	Michael

Officials:

Mr. M. Drea, County Secretary
 Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive
 Ms. C. Godkin, Director of Service
 Mr. E. Hore, Director of Service
 Ms. E. Hore, Director of Service
 Ms. L. Lacey, A/Head of Finance
 Mr. E. Taaffe, Director of Service

Apologies:

Ms. A. Byrne, A/Director of Service

1. Presentations

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. M. Whelan, standing orders were suspended to allow the presentations to be taken as the first agenda item.

1.1 Wexford Walking Trails

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Peter O'Connor, Wexford Walking Trails, Ann Murphy, Wexford Walking Trails, and Rory O'Mahony, Wexford County Council.

Peter O'Connor gave a presentation on Wexford Walking Trails outlining:

- What Wexford Walking Trails is.
- Trail design and marketing.
- Trail infrastructure.
- Benefits of walking trails.
- Sustainability of the network.

Peter O'Connor responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Timeline for work at Kelly's wood and Arthurstown.
- Are there restrictions on height above sea level that trails can be developed for insurance reasons?
- Can the Rocks walking trail be included on the brochure?
- More investment in urban walking trails is needed.
- Timeline for commencement of work on walking trails in Enniscorthy.
- Request for increased advertising of trails.
- Timeline for works on Edenvale to Castlebridge walking loop.
- Request that the trail on Vinegar Hill be kept cut back for accessibility.
- What are Wexford Walking Trails administrative costs?
- Request that greenway from Wexford Town to Curraclloe be considered.
- What are the plans for new trails for the next 3 to 5 years?
- If trail crosses private land, how long does it take to get permission?

Mr. T. Enright thanked Peter O'Connor and Ann Murphy for all their work on Wexford Walking Trails.

1.2 Fleadh Cheoil na h'Éireann

Mr. T. Enright welcomed back Mr. E. Taaffe after a three-and-a-half-year secondment, and thanked Ms. S. Casey for all her work. Mr. Enright advised that Mr. Taaffe has been appointed as Chair of the Fleadh Executive Committee.

Mr. Taaffe gave a presentation outlining:

- Event organisation.
- Main events in Fleadh week.

- Venues.
- Event management.
- Consultations.
- Traffic management.
- Next steps.

Mr. E. Taaffe responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Concerns raised that districts outside of Wexford need to be included in discussions.
- Request that park & ride facilities be extended to include a wider range of towns and villages.
- Is there a role for campervan sites around the county?
- Could St. Patrick's Day parades be used as a warmup for the Fleadh?
- When developing a waste management plan for the event, could a ban on single use plastic be considered?
- Would it be an idea to include the chair of each district at some committee meetings?
- Request that campsites be linked with transport.
- The need for a close working relationship with the Gardaí to tackle the very small minority who will engage in anti-social behaviour.

Votes of Sympathy:

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to:

- The family of Alan Deacon, Water Services Caretaker.
- The family of Jim Spencer, former employee and father of Andy Spencer, former employee.
- The family of Alan Kavanagh - brother of Sean Kavanagh, former employee.
- The family of Rev. Canon Seamus S de Vál, Bunclody.
- The family of John Walshe, formerly of New Ross.

Congratulations:

The Cathaoirleach offered the congratulations of the Council to:

- Blackwater Tidy Towns on winning Wexford's Tidiest Town award.
- Derek "Rebel" Roche on his induction into the British Boxing Hall of Fame.
- The organisers of the New Ross Piano Festival.
- Alan Corcoran on winning a bronze IMRO Speech Broadcaster of the Year award.
- New Ross Tidy Towns on winning a bronze award.
- All those involved with the National Heritage Park relaunch.
- Carrig on Bannow Tidy Towns.
- The parish of Rathangan celebrating its 150th anniversary.
- Wexford Tidy Towns on winning a gold medal.
- Kevin Lewis on his retirement from WWETB.
- Seán Lyng on winning two European racquetball titles.
- Clonroche Tidy Towns.

- Tadhg Furlong on representing Ireland at the rugby World Cup.
- WWETB on opening their facility at Whitemill, Wexford.

2. Confirmation of Minutes:

2.1 County Council Meeting 11th September, 2023

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the County Council Meeting on 11th September, 2023.

2.1a Matters Arising

Cllr. L. Kelly enquired if any guidance had been received from the Minister in relation to the implementation of new speed limits.

Cllr. G. Lawlor asked if the Chief Executive had an update on the timeline for acquisition and development of the SETU campus in Wexford.

2.2 Budget Working Group 2nd October, 2023

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Budget Working Group on 2nd October, 2023.

3. Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001:

3.1 Intention to dispose of property known as “Gladney’s at 5 John Street, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. A. Connick, the Council resolved to dispose of property known as “Gladney’s at 5 John Street, New Ross, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms of the S. 183 Notice, as circulated.

3.2 Intention to dispose of Council owned land at the Promenade, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. A. Browne, the Council resolved to dispose of Council owned land at the Promenade, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms of the S. 183 Notice, as circulated.

3.3 Intention to transfer a piece of Council owned land at Irish Street, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. K. Codd Nolan, seconded by Cllr. J. O’Rourke, the Council resolved to transfer a piece of Council owned land at Irish Street, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms of the S. 183 Notice, as circulated.

4. Approval in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act, 2001 (as amended)

4.1 Borrowing – Overdraft 2024

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Carthy, seconded by Cllr. P. Breen, the Council approved borrowing by way of temporary overdraft accommodation of €20m to 31st December, 2024, in accordance with the provisions of Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001.

5. Draft Wexford County Council (Enniscorthy Municipal District) Traffic & Car Parking Bye Laws, 2023 – For Approval

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke, seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy, the Council resolved to adopt the Wexford County Council (Enniscorthy Municipal District) Traffic & Car Parking Bye Laws, 2023.

6. Draft Wexford County Council Climate Action Plan (2024 – 2029) – Approval for public consultation on 10th October

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Whelan, seconded by Cllr. P. Breen, the Council resolved to put the Draft Wexford County Council Climate Action Plan (2024 – 2029) out to public consultation.

7. Savannah Delegation 2024

Ms. L. Hore outlined the reasons why the CPG recommended sending a strong delegation headed by the Cathaoirleach and the Chair of each Municipal District to Savannah in 2024 and sought the approval of the Council.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Breen, seconded by Cllr. J. O'Rourke, the Council resolved to approve the Savannah delegation.

8. Invite from Fishguard - Goodwick Council to attend memorial service 11th November, 2023 - For Approval

Mr. M. Drea outlined the detail of an invitation received from Deputy Mayor Cllr. William Shaw to attend a memorial service on board the ferry to remember those who lost their lives on the SS St. Patrick sunk on Friday 13th June 1941. That fateful day some 12 passengers and 17 crew lost their lives, and it was a mixture of both Welsh and Irish. The service will take place this year on Saturday 11th November. Stena are covering the cost of the travel.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke, seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell, the Council resolved to approve a delegation to attend the memorial service.

The meeting adjourned for a comfort break and at this point.

Cllr.'s J. O'Rourke and K. Codd Nolan left the meeting at this point.

9. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive and members of the Management Team responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Plans for social housing delivery in the Enniscorthy MD over the next 2 to 3 years.
- Request that Enniscorthy gets a fair share of the active travel funding.
- Timeline for delivery of the St. Aidan's Safe Route to School.
- Request that the Old Dublin Road Business Park be linked to the town.
- Request that group pre-planning clinics be introduced in Co. Hall.
- What is the feedback from users of the Choice Based Letting system?
- How many special lettings are there across the county and who are the special lettings for?
- Request for an update on Killurin bridge.
- Request that the natural gas sign at the bottom of Ballindinas Hill be removed or repurposed for the Fleadh.
- Request that a budget be provided for rural footpath works.
- Does Wexford County Council keep records of people who are unable to access homeless services?
- Does Wexford County Council have figures for the number of people who are approved for HAP but are unable to access accommodation?
- Query as to who is responsible for the signs promoting veganism on the Rosslare Road.
- Congratulations to the housing staff for securing emergency accommodation in Enniscorthy.

Cllr. J. Owens and Cllr. A. Browne left the meeting at this point.

- Can Council prioritise filling of Greenway Development Officer post?
- Under URDF Call 3, can priority be given to first time buyers when properties are put up for sale?
- Has any correspondence been exchanged with Minister Martin re: the appointment of a nighttime economy officer?
- Can a reserve list also be submitted to the Department for the Town & Village Scheme in case additional funding is available?

Cllr. G. Carthy and Cllr. D. Devereux left at this point.

- Can we get a representative from the ESB in to explain delays in addressing issues?

Cllr. G. Laffan left the meeting at this point.

- Will there be movement on Gorey Market House before the end of the year?
- Does the Council envisage affordable housing being built in addition to social housing on the Milehouse Road site in Enniscorthy?
- Does the Council have sufficient resources to deal with Croí Conaithe grants?
- Are there plans to ringfence funds for footpaths?
- Update on street lighting from Ferns to Wexford GAA centre of excellence.

- Request that the Chief Executive write to the Garda Commissioner to expedite approval of the New Ross, Wexford, and Enniscorthy CCTV schemes.
- Request that a communication board be placed in each park in Wexford.
- Is there any indication of funding for the Carrigfoyle boat house project?
- Is there a need to seek funding for the dredging of Crescent Quay?
- Will the inclusion of services on the N11/N25 delay the delivery of the road?
- View expressed that there is a need for additional emergency accommodation.

Cllr. L. Kelly left the meeting at this point.

- Can a breakdown of vacant properties per district be provided?
- Concern that there is a drug issue in some of the emergency accommodation.
- Timeline for development of affordable housing in St. Walerans, Gorey.

Cllr. G. Lawlor left the meeting at this point.

- How does Wexford compare in relation to relet times and costs nationally?
- How much of relet costs are grant aided?
- Has the issue with delays in fixing streetlights been addressed?
- What are timelines for planning enforcement?

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. A. Connick and agreed by all, the Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue past 5.30pm.

- Timeline for works on the N30 at Rathturin.
- Request that Leech's Bend be examined to see if there are works required as there have been a number of accidents.

10. Minutes of CPG Meeting

10.1 Minutes of CPG Meeting 2nd October, 2023

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Breen, seconded by Cllr. M. Whelan, the Council resolved to adopt the Minutes of the meeting of the CPG of 2nd October 2023.

11. Minutes of Meetings (For Noting):

- 11.1 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 12th July, 2023**
- 11.2 Rosslare Municipal District Meeting – 19th July, 2023**
- 11.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 17th July, 2023**
- 11.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 17th July, 2023**
- 11.5 Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meeting – 18th July, 2023**
- 11.6 Housing and Community SPC Meeting 3rd July, 2023**

The Members noted the above correspondence.

12. Correspondence and Communications

- 12.1 Letter from Clare County Council re: motion dated 12th September, 2023**
- 12.2 Email from Office of Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, D.D. re motion dated 8th September, 2023**
- 12.3 Letter from Leitrim County Council re motion dated 12th September, 2023.**
- 12.4 Letter from Sligo County Council re motion dated 19th September, 2023**
- 12.5 Letter from Cork City Council re motion dated 20th September, 2023**
- 12.6 Letter from Limerick City & County Council re motion dated 26th September, 2023**
- 12.7 Letter from Limerick City & County Council re motion dated 27th September, 2023**
- 12.8 Letter from Limerick City & County Council re motion dated 27th September, 2023**

The Members noted the above correspondence.

13. Councillor's Conferences and Training

13.1 List of Conferences/Training – List Attached

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. A. Connick, the Council approved attendance for the following training and conference:

- LAMA Autumn Seminar, Ard Rí Hotel, Tuam, Co. Galway – 25th to 26th October, 2023
- Celtic Conferences – Modular Housing in Ireland, Carlingford, Co. Louth – 3rd to 5th November

13.2 Councillor's Conference Reports:

- Danville Delegation Report - September, 2023

The Members noted the report above, as circulated.

14. Notices of Motion

14.1 Cllr. T. Forde & Cllr. D. Hynes

"This council acknowledges the need for good landlords in the rental market but also commits to take appropriate action against landlords who fail in their legal duty to provide tenants with a property that provides a safe and healthy environment for tenants to live in. This council notes that in 2022 the council did not issue any Prohibition Notices or initiate any legal proceedings and will ensure that in future swift action is taken to issue Prohibition Notices and initiate legal proceedings for landlords who breach the minimum standards regulations and who fail to comply with an Improvement Notice".

Executive Response:

In accordance with the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1992 as amended, it shall be the duty of the Landlord to ensure that the property complies with the requirements of the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019.

Wexford County Council have carried out 818 private rented inspections from the 01/01/2023 to 30/09/2023, of which, 12% have been deemed compliant with the Housing

(Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019. Approximately 700 Improvement Letters and 85 Reminder Letters have been issued in 2023.

Experience from the inspection process to date would indicate that the majority of properties were in reasonable condition, with the most common breaches being Fire Blanket, Smoke Alarms, Mechanical Extractor Fans, Wall and Window Vents, Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Windows Restrictors.

Wexford County Council strives to achieve compliance through resolution and meaningful engagement with landlords, however, is committed to commencing Enforcement proceedings, in cases where landlords have continuously failed to comply with the Regulations.

Wexford County Council acknowledges that it has not issued any Prohibition Notices or initiate any legal proceeding in 2022, however, enforcement proceedings nationally were very low, with only 1,746 Improvement Notices and 170 Prohibition Notices issued following 49,308 inspections.

Wexford County Council commits to take the appropriate action against landlords who fail to comply with the Regulations and has identified a number of properties which will be escalated to enforcement proceedings imminently.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. D. Hynes and carried.

14.2 Cllr. M. Whelan

"This Council calls on the Minister for Transport to help fund much needed development at Waterford Airport in the 2024 budget"

Executive Response:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Transport, for consideration.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Whelan, seconded by Cllr. A. Conncik and carried.

14.3 Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin

"Wexford County Council warmly welcomes plans by Tara Film Studios to commence construction in this county next Spring. We acknowledge that this will see employment opportunities for local people, and we commit this council to work closely with WWETB, SETU, Gorey School of Art, as well as groups such as Screen Ireland and the Irish Film and Television Network this year, and over the coming years, to help develop apprenticeships, training programmes and academic courses in film production and any related areas."

Executive Response:

Wexford County Council is fully committed to film production within the County. Screen Wexford is the film office for Wexford County Council and delivers a comprehensive support service for all levels of production within the County. Their role is to assist in making content a seamless and simple experience.

Screen Wexford foster talent in Film, TV, Animation and video production and help kick-start or progress careers. Screen Wexford's focus includes sharing the abundance of fabu-

lous locations offered by the county, along with facilitating local, national and international productions. They are heavily invested in the growth and development of our local crew base through the design and delivery of a range of world-class training programmes.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. F. Ó'Súilleabháin, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde and carried.

14.4 Cllr. L. McDonald & Cllr. B.A. Murphy

"That this council supports the calls from the Judiciary, The Law Reform Commission and most recently highlighted by former state pathologist Dr Marie Cassidy in her documentary " Dr Marie Cassidy's casebook, the femicide cases " for the fundamental and immediate reform of the defence of provocation (which is used as a defence in a 1/4 of murder trials in this jurisdiction) in order to bring Ireland in line with all other common law jurisdictions."

Executive Response:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Justice, for consideration.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. L. McDonald, seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy and carried.

14.5 Cllr. B. Murphy

"That Wexford County Council calls on the Minister for Social Protection to immediately review the Carers Allowance application process and income threshold, with a view to completely reforming this allowance to support an individual caring for a family member."

Executive Response:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Social Protection, for consideration.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. B. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. C. Byrne and carried.

14.6 The Fianna Fáil Group

"That this council calls upon the government departments of Agriculture and Transport in conjunction with our local authorities and utility companies to urgently devise a scheme to address the pressing issue of rotting and diseased trees on our roadsides to include a replacement programme to support replacing the depleted hedgerows which will result from same."Executive Response:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, for consideration.

Executive Response:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the relevant bodies outlined, for consideration.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. P. Breen, seconded by Cllr. M. Whelan and carried.

15. Any Other Business.

Cllr. D. Hynes enquired why a motion submitted by him was redirected to the Housing SPC. Mr. M. Drea advised that in his capacity as Meetings Administrator he made the decision to redirect the motion as it was seeking to amend the housing allocation policy, which had been approved by the Housing SPC earlier this year. Mr. Drea confirmed that standing order 16. (a) provides that "If any Notice of Motion of which notice has been duly given relates to a matter normally dealt with by a Municipal District or any other Committee, or comes within the terms of reference of any Committee or Committees, it shall be referred to such Committee or Committees as the Meetings Administrator may determine."

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an lá de Samhain, 2023.

Cllr. John Fleming

Cathaoirleach

Susan Doran,

A/ County Secretary