

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council Held on Monday 11th July, 2022
in the Council Chamber at 2.30pm (with some remote attendance via Microsoft Teams)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. George Lawlor, Cathaoirleach.**Councillors:**

		DONOHUE	ANTHONY	MOORE	JIM
BELL	MAURA	FARRELL	MARY	MURPHY	BARBARA ANNE
BOLGER	ANDREW	FLEMING	JOHN	MURPHY	BRIDIN
BREEN	PIP	FORDE	TOM	O'ROURKE	JOHN
BROWNE	AIDAN	HEGARTY	JOHN	O'SUILLEABHAIN	FIONNTAIN
BYRNE	CATHAL	HYNES	DAVID (on line)	OWENS	JACKSER
CARTHY	GER	KAVANAGH	WILLIE (on line)	SHEEHAN	MICHAEL
CODD	JIM	KELLY	LEONARD	STAPLES	FRANK
CODD-NOLAN	KATHLEEN	KENNY	DONAL	SULLIVAN	JOE
		LAFFAN	GARY	WALSH	OLIVER
		MCDONALD	LISA	WHELAN	MICHAEL

Officials:

Mr. Eamonn Hore, A/Chief Executive
 Ms. Annette O'Neill, Head of Finance
 Mr. Diarmuid Houston, A/Director of Services
 Mr. Michael Drea, A/Director of Services & County Secretary
 Mr. Brian Galvin, A/Director of Services
 Ms. Amanda Byrne, A/Director of Services

Apologies:

Councillors: Pat Barden
 Diarmuid Devereux

Officials: Tom Enright, Chief Executive
 Carolyne Godkin, Director of Services

Elizabeth Hore, Director of Services

Votes of Sympathy:

The Cathaoirleach advised that votes of sympathy other than the following should go before the relevant Municipal District meeting, as he felt this was more appropriate and respectful:

Employees and former employees, employee's family, Councillors and former Councillors, Councillor's family, Oireachtas members and former Oireachtas members.

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to the families of the following recently deceased:

- The family of Margaret (Peggy) Connick (née Ryan), mother of Councillor Anthony Connick
- The family of Myra Mary Whelan (née Moore), mother of Councillor Michael Whelan
- The family of Declan MacPartlin, Baylands, Camolin, Wexford (Former County Councillor)
- The family of Miriam Hoare (née Gannon), Ruane, Dunganstown, New Ross, Co. Wexford, wife of Gearoid Hoare, Water Services
- The family of Stephen (Stevie) Moran, husband of Susan Montague, Motor Tax
- The family of Henry (Harry) Connolly, St. Aidan's Villas, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford (Former employee)

Votes of Congratulations

The Cathaoirleach advised that votes of congratulations for events other than National and County events, should go before the relevant Municipal District meeting:

- Wexford's National Fleadh Cheoil bid
- Wexford Ladies Football team reaching the Intermediate All-Ireland Final

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

1.1 Special County Council Meeting 13th June, 2022

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. D. Kenny, the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Special County Council Meeting on 13th June, 2022.

1.2 County Council Meeting 13th June, 2022

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan, the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the County Council Meeting on 13th June, 2022.

1.2.1 Matters Arising

Cllr. T. Forde expressed his view that the amendment to his motion at the June meeting, in relation to the Housing For All Plan, should not have been allowed. He believed the amendment of the motion was a direct negative, which is precluded under section 25 of Standing Orders. The Cathaoirleach adjudged that the amendment didn't amount to a direct negative but agreed to refer the matter to the Protocol Committee.

Cllr. M. Sheehan stated that the previous County Secretary indicated that he would try and establish the veracity of a letter received by the Members. The County Secretary advised that he was not made aware of any such matter.

1.3 Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council 20th June, 2022

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh, the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council on 20th June, 2022.

2. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001:

2.1 Proposed intention to dispose of a plot of land at Bridgetown, Co. Wexford to Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Moore, seconded by Cllr. J. Staples, the Council resolved to dispose of the above plot of land at Bridgetown in accordance with the terms of the S. 183 Notice, as circulated.

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 LAC2203 - Proposal to connect properties via a series of communal pumping stations at Kilrane Village, Rosslare Harbour, Co. Wexford.

Having considered the report of the Chief Executive, on the proposal of Cllr. J. Staples, seconded by Cllr. J. Moore, the Council resolved to approve the Part 8 to connect properties via a series of communal pumping stations at Kilrane Village in accordance with the terms of LAC2203, as circulated.

3.2 LAC2204 - Newtown Road Cycle Scheme at Newtown Road, Wexford

Having considered the report of the Chief Executive, on the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell, the Council resolved to approve the Part 8 for a Newtown Road Cycle Scheme in accordance with the terms of LAC2204, as circulated.

3.3 LAC2205 - Proposal to construct new multi storey structure of mixed use development at Main Street, Enniscorthy, Co Wexford

Having considered the report of the Chief Executive, on the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. J. O'Rourke, the Council resolved to approve the Part 8 to construct a new multi storey structure of mixed use development at Main Street, Enniscorthy in accordance with the terms of LAC2205, as circulated.

There were queries from Cllrs. C. Byrne, B.A. Murphy and J. Owens, in relation to two way traffic. D. Houston, A/Director of Services confirmed that the Part 8 provides for the existing traffic arrangements to pertain.

4. CCTV Systems – For Approval

4.1 Enniscorthy

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. J. Owens, the Council resolved to approve the CCTV system for Enniscorthy.

4.2 Bunclody

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan, the Council resolved to approve the CCTV system for Bunclody.

5. Chief Executive's Report

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

- Acquisition of New Ross Court house and former public house, the Bumble Bee
- Provision of bins in Courtown, Kilmore and other popular coastal locations
- Congratulations on National Fleadh Cheoil bid
- Odour concerns and Custom Compost Ballyminaun Hill Gorey
- Issues regarding MICA and PYRITE and quality checks of materials
- Some properties not being occupied by tenants
- Acquisition of houses at Tobair Mhuire, Gorey
- Vacant house at Marley, Enniscorthy
- Bayview Hotel site, Courtown
- Bus Eireann cancellations
- Posters erected by certain touring companies
- Feedback from Housing turnkey advert
- Demolition of houses at Bride St., Wexford
- Delays around pre-planning meetings
- Traffic count for N80
- Member's portal
- Active travel proposals
- Appointment of Healthy Officer

- Airfield Road water supply
- Safe route to school programme
- Plans for Harbour Master's Building and Mechanic's Institute
- Trinity Wharf project
- Staggering of closing of Civic Amenity Centres
- Increase in Local Authority Mortgage interest rate
- Council to seek clarity from ESB re: new connection in Ballinaboola

Cllr. G. Carthy made his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

- Addition of water and sewerage services layers to iMaps
- Enniscorthy town regeneration update
- Erection of solar panels on community buildings
- Progress on Castlelands housing development
- Illumination of Kent's Cross roundabout in New Ross
- Provision of public toilets at Vinegar Hill
- Update on Murphy building in New Ross
- Redmond Park CCTV
- HGV traffic in Kilmore

Cllr. J. Fleming proposed that ESB Networks be invited to a meeting and this was seconded by Cllr. D. Kenny.

The meeting adjourned for a comfort break and at this point, Cllr. O'Rourke made his apologies and left the meeting.

6. Minutes of CPG

6.1 Minutes of CPG Meeting 4th July, 2022

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Breen, seconded by Cllr. J. Hegarty, the Council resolved to adopt the Minutes of the meeting of the CPG of 4th July, 2022.

7. Minutes of Meetings (For Noting):

- 7.1 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 11.05.2022**
- 7.2 Rosslare Municipal District Meeting – 18.05.2022**
- 7.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 18.05.2022**
- 7.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 16.05.2022**
- 7.5 Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meetings – 17.05.2022**
- 7.6 Climate Change, Biodiversity & Environment SPC Meetings 17.02.2022, 10.03.2022, 21.04.2022**
- 7.7 Transportation & Water Services SPC Meeting 17.11.2021**

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. A. Donoghue, the Council resolved to adopt the Minutes of the above meetings.

8. Correspondence and Communications

- 8.1 Letter from Clare County Council re: resolution dated 16.06.2022**
- 8.2 Letter from Private Secretary to the Minister for Justice re: motion dated 17.06.2022**
- 8.3 Letters from Sligo County Council re: resolutions dated 16.06.2022**
- 8.4 Letter from Donegal County Council re: motion extension of culture night dated 24.06.2022**
- 8.5 Letter from Donegal County Council re: motion extension of Tús Scheme dated 24.06.2022**
- 8.6 Letter from Kerry County Council re: long covid clinics dated 23.06.2022**
- 8.7 Letter from Limerick City & County Council dated 30th June, 2022.**

The Members noted the above correspondence items and expressed their appreciation for the responses received.

Cllr. T. Forde asked that an invitation be extended to the Minister for Housing to attend a Council Meeting. It was agreed that an invitation will be extended.

9. Councillor's Conferences and Training

9.1 List of Conferences/Training – List Attached

On the proposal of B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. D. Kenny, the Council approved for attendance the list of conferences and training events, as circulated.

9.2 Councillor Conference Reports:

- Lugo Twinning Report

The Members noted the Report above, as circulated.

10. Deferred Notices of Motions - County Council Meeting 11th April, 2022

10.1 Cllr. L. Kelly

“Wexford County Council call on the relevant minister to fund a Local Coordination Group to support the Ukrainian refugee fleeing the invasion of their homeland, similar to the interagency model which was successfully used for the arrival of Syrian refugees a number of years ago, this Local Coordination group would look at areas of health, education, housing and general integration.”

Response of the Executive:

The Wexford Community Forum has been reconvened to assist in the coordination of the response here in County Wexford to the Ukrainian Displaced persons situation. A number of meetings of the Forum have already taken place and these meeting will continue at

regular intervals over the coming weeks and months. The Cathaoirleach of the Council is a member of the Forum.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell and agreed by all.

11. Deferred Notices of Motions - County Council Meeting 13th June, 2022

11.1 Cllr. J. Moore

“In our efforts to promote the Circular Economy, let us ask our residents who have old and unused musical instruments to donate them so that they can be given a new lease of life.

This venture can employ the support across departments such as the Environment and Climate Change as well as Community. The restored old instruments can be returned to use in our communities, schools etc.”

Response of the Executive:

If passed, this Motion will be passed to the Library / Arts Department for further consideration

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Moore, seconded by Cllr. A. Donoghue and agreed by all.

11.2 Cllr. L. Kelly

“The Council agrees to write to Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, the Oireachtas Health Committee and the HSE CEO Paul Reid requesting that the provision of Long Covid Clinics is retained and expanded.

The Council also agrees to raise it with our regional health board and/or local hospital and at any other suitable juncture.

The Council then agrees to circulate this motion to other Councils asking them to consider the same”.

Response of the Executive:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Health for consideration with a copy to the Oireachtas Health Committee, the HSE CEO Paul Reid and all local authorities for consideration.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. J. Moore and agreed by all.

11.3 Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin

“In April 28th the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh Ó Brien provided the breakdown, by local authority, of the Affordable Housing targets funded by

the Affordable Housing Fund for the period 2022 to 2026. The five-year 2022-2026 total target has been allocated to eighteen local authority areas, where the need for affordable housing is determined as being significant.

This Council expresses our deep disappointment to the Minister that Co. Wexford was omitted from the National Affordable Housing Fund List; we ask that it will be included immediately, and we further ask - how many families in Co. Wexford will be allocated affordable houses this year, and in the years 23, 24 respectively?"

Response of the Executive:

County Wexford does not currently have an affordability constraint at a county level in terms of house purchase. With this in mind, the Council Executive has commissioned KPMG to examine the key urban centers across the County to determine if an affordability constraint can be demonstrated at main town level. Where this occurs, the Council will make a sub-county application for access to the Affordable Housing Fund in respect of these areas.

Independently of this exercise, and where sufficient demand can be demonstrated, the Council is committed to examining the delivery of small number of affordable housing units. The first such affordable housing scheme to be brought on stream will be a 20-unit development of 3-bed semi-detached units in Ramsfort, Gorey with house prices set to not exceed €250,000.

A roadshow to promote this Scheme is scheduled go live in Gorey Civic Centre later this month, allowing people to see the scheme in greater detail and to register their interest.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. F. O'Suilleabhain and seconded by Cllr. T. Forde.

Cllr. J. Sullivan made a counter-proposal that the Motion be brought in September when the KPMG Future Analytics Report is available, to support the case, and this proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan.

The counter-proposal was put to the Meeting, and defeated. The original Motion was carried.

11.4 Cllr. L. Kelly

"Wexford County Council develop a clear policy in relation to how it deals with Rhododendron. It is an invasive non native species that can cause ecosystems to collapse because they do not coexist with our native plants once they get established. They take over and stop a natural plant community developing. With the policy resources should be allocated to ensure it's implementation"

Response of the Executive:

It is recommended that this Motion be directed to the Climate Change, Biodiversity & Environment SPC for consideration, with the results of that consideration process to be brought before Wexford County Council for further review.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde and agreed by all.

11.5 Cllr. D. Hynes

“This calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to increase the criteria for people applying for Social housing as the present situation is forcing people into paying high rents and therefore into poverty and its often a choice between 'rent or food'

Response of the Executive:

As outlined above, the Minister has now announced that the discretion rate for all HAP tenancies will increase from 20% to 35% in all counties. The change means that local authorities can now pay up to 35% more than the current set of HAP rates. In addition, from July 2022, a single person will now also be eligible for the couples HAP rate.

These measures when implemented will significantly increase the ability of those on the Housing List within private rented accommodation to meet their rent commitments.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. D. Hynes, seconded by Cllr. J. Owens and agreed by all.

11.6 Cllr. T. Forde

“This Council calls on the government and Minister Michael McGrath to immediately take action to ensure that every household receives the full €200 energy credit, as was previously guaranteed and we express our unhappiness that some tenants of Wexford County Council who face the same increases in the cost of living as the rest of our community, have been excluded from this full rebate due to shortcomings in the government measure.”

Response of the Executive:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform for consideration

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. C. Byrne and agreed by all.

12. Notices of Motion

12.1 Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin

“This Council notes and welcomes the establishment of two new Citizens’ Assemblies by the Irish Government; it further notes that Citizens’ Assemblies are powerful democratic exercises that inform citizens, allowing them to debate specifics, develop positions and inform policy. They have operated effectively in many jurisdictions across the world. This Council calls on the Irish Government to establish an all-Ireland Citizens’ Assembly to debate and discuss our constitutional future. The debate on Irish Unity is live and growing,

and we must plan for constitutional change, in the context of the Good Friday provision for a Unity referendum.

This Council also invites officials from the Taoiseach's Shared Island Unit to present to Council and provide an update on activity and plans for the future.

That this motion be forwarded to the Office of the Taoiseach."

Response of the Executive:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to the Office of the Taoiseach, for consideration.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde and agreed by all.

12.2 Cllr. T. Forde

"Due to the longterm absence of emergency accommodation in many districts and reaffirming the previously stated will of this council that we have EA in each district, I ask that this council examine the possibility of acquiring units or using some of our existing housing stock for the provision of emergency accommodation and report back to this council at our next meeting on the viability of such a plan. Such an approach could be operated by the council or in coordination with other housing organisations on a pilot basis."

Response of the Executive:

At present, Wexford County Council works with Ozanam House and two private accommodation providers (one in the north and one in the south of the County) to provide emergency accommodation. We are also working closely with an Approved Housing Body who specialise in providing homeless accommodation. The AHB has already delivered 12 units, with a further 6 units to be delivered, at another location. In addition, the Housing Department makes extensive use of its own housing stock to provide transitional accommodation across the County, on a licence agreement. Whilst in emergency and transitional accommodation, our Social Care Workers provide outreach support."

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell and agreed by all.

12.3 Cllrs. Enniscorthy Municipal District

"Ballycarney Inn junction on the N80 is in need of urgent traffic calming. The Members of the EMD propose urgent funds be sought from T.I.I and action taken to ensure that traffic calming measures are implemented as a matter of urgency. Consideration is asked to be given to any and all measures to alleviate incidents at this junction, which have increased greatly in recent months."

Response of the Executive:

Director of Services to respond at Council Meeting.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. K. Codd Nolan, seconded by Cllr. J. Owens and agreed by all.

12.4 Cllr. L. Kelly

“This Council calls on Minister Heather Humphreys to ensure the adequate remuneration of staff in Local Development Companies in order to retain and recruit skilled and experienced staff. This is critical for the effective delivery of key programmes, such as SICAP and LEADER, on behalf of the state.”

The importance and the value of the work carried out by the local development companies has in the last few weeks been acknowledged by the announcement that the SICAP won a 2022 United Nations Public Service Award.

Response of the Executive:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to Minister for Rural and Community Development and Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, for consideration.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. L. Kelly and seconded by Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin.

Cllr.'s J. Moore, M. Sheehan and M. Whelan questioned the appropriateness of the Motion. The following amended wording was proposed and agreed to by Cllr. L. Kelly:

“This Council calls on Minister Heather Humphreys to ensure the adequate remuneration of staff in Local Development Companies.”

The counter-proposal was put to the Meeting and carried.

12.5 Cllr. T. Forde

"This council recognises the important work of the Wexford Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals throughout our county and will endeavour to assist the group where we can with their campaign for a new Animal Rescue Centre in Wexford."

Response of the Executive:

The Executive acknowledges the important role played by WSPCA and are willing to lend their efforts to secure a new Animal Rescue Centre.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly and agreed by all.

(On the proposal of Cllr. M. Farrell, seconded by Cllr. C. Byrne and agreed by all, the Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue past 5.30pm)

12.6 Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin

“This council acknowledges that huge numbers of families in County Wexford are experiencing a cost of living crisis at present, and are under real pressure this summer as they try to cover Back-to-School costs including the price of uniforms, books, voluntary contributions, lunches and transport.

We further acknowledge the need to cut Back-to-School costs this summer to ensure families get a much-needed break from rising expenses.

This council calls for:

a. the Back to School Allowance to be extended to include middle income families, targeting those on a Household income of €80,000 and less.

b. a 50% increase for those receiving the payment already.

(This would increase supports from €160 to €240 for parents with a child aged 4-11 and from €285 to €427.50 for children from the age of 12 up)

c. the government to eventually work towards a fully free schoolbook scheme for children and the elimination of fees in the school transport system on a phased basis, along with the provision of seats for an additional 10,000 children.

d. that we work towards the introduction of a scheme to have affordable school uniforms and the abolishment of the voluntary contribution system which can put families under further pressure to fork out hundreds of euro. “

Response of the Executive:

If passed, this Motion will be forwarded to Minister for Education, Norma Foley, for consideration.

The Motion was proposed by Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde and agreed by all.

13. Any Other Business

Cllr. C. Byrne asked that dates be circulated for a Special Housing meeting.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUISNESS OF THE MEETING

Daingithe ar an

lá de Meán Fomhair, 2022.

Cllr. George Lawlor
Cathaoirleach

Michael Drea,
County Secretary