

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council Held on Monday 10th February 2025
in the Council Chamber at 2.30pm (with some remote attendance)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. Pip Breen, Cathaoirleach.**Councillors:**

Barden	Pat	Forde	Tom	O'Brien	Aoife Rose
Barron	Vicky	Kavanagh	Paddy	O'Rourke	John
Boland	Nicky	Kehoe	Pat	Owens	Jackser
Browne	Aidan	Kelly	Leonard	Shannon	Raymond
Carthy	Ger	Kenny	Donal	Sheehan	Michael
Codd	Jim	Laffan	Garry	Staples	Frank
Donohoe	Anthony	McDonald	Darragh	Staples	Robbie
Doyle	Craig	McDonald	Lisa	Sullivan	Joe
Dwyer	John	Murphy	Barbara-Anne	Walsh	Catherine
Farrell	Mary	Murphy	Bridín	Walsh	Oliver
Fleming	John	Murphy	Marty		

Officials:

Ms. A. Byrne, A/Director of Services
 Mr. M. Drea, County Secretary
 Ms. C. Godkin, Director of Services
 Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services
 Ms. L. Hore, Director of Services
 Mr. S. Howell, A/Director of Services
 Ms. L. Lacey, Director of Finance
 Mr. E. Taaffe, Chief Executive

Apologies: There were no apologies recorded.

Votes of sympathy:

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to:

- The family of Imelda Kirby, mother of Vanessa Kirby, Library Service.
- The family of Marie Quirke Fairbairn, sister of Tony Quirke, Executive Engineer, Housing Department.
- The family of Peter Foxe, brother of Caroline Foxe, Housing Section.
- The family of Jason (Jay) Kehoe, Wexford Town.
- The family of Anna Gaffney (née Doran), Ballygalvert, Ballywilliam.
- The family of Carmel McCormack (née Kavanagh) Millhouse, Newtown Commons, New Ross.
- The family of Pat Murphy, Ballyrankin, Bunclody.

Congratulations:

Cllr.'s J. Owens, J. Codd, G. Carthy, O. Walsh, M. Farrell, M. Sheehan, B.A. Murphy, and P. Kavanagh congratulated James Browne on being appointed Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Cllr.'s J. Owens, J. Codd, G. Carthy, O. Walsh, M. Farrell, M. Sheehan, B.A. Murphy, and P. Kavanagh congratulated Cathal Byrne on his election to Seanad Éireann.

Cllr. J. Codd congratulated outgoing chairman of Wexford IFA Jer O'Mahony on his contribution.

Cllr. J. Codd congratulated Ms. Helen Meehan on her impending retirement from the Housing department.

Cllr. G. Carthy congratulated Director of Services Mr. Eamonn Hore on the Wexford e-scooter project being nominated for a national LAMA award.

Cllr.'s J. Dwyer, O. Walsh, M. Farrell, M. Sheehan, B.A. Murphy, and P. Kavanagh congratulated Cllr. B. Murphy on being appointed to the European Committee of the Regions.

Cllr. M. Sheehan congratulated Deputy G. Lawlor on being appointed the Labour Enterprise, Tourism and Employment spokesperson.

Cllr.'s O. Walsh, B.A. Murphy, and P. Kavanagh congratulated Cllr. D. McDonald and his wife on the birth of their son.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 County Council Meeting 13th January, 2025

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. J. Sullivan the Council resolved to confirm the minutes of the County Council Meeting on 13th January, 2025.

Matters Arising:

Cllr. A.R. O'Brien advised that her name was omitted from the list of members to sit on the mental health working group. Mr. M. Drea apologised for the oversight and agreed to amend the minutes accordingly.

Cllr. G. Carthy noted that three applications have been made to Wexford County Council to repurpose properties in Killinick, Tagoat, and Rosslare Harbour for IPAS use. Cllr. Carthy noted that the Tagoat application was withdrawn. He said the communities of Rosslare

Harbour, Kilrane and Tagoat have already hosted numerous international protection applicants and raised serious concerns about the fairness of any further centres in the area. Cllr. Carthy noted that the two properties which are the subject of applications are currently and have always been residential properties. Cllr. F. Staples highlighted the lack of services in the area making it unsuitable for further centres.

Cllr. A. Browne raised serious concerns in relation to a proposed IPAS centre in Templeshannon. Cllr. Browne outlined his belief that an IPAS centre shouldn't be located in Templeshannon as it is an area of economic deprivation. Cllr. P. Kavanagh raised concerns and sought investment in the area. Cllr. B.A. Murphy felt the proposal would lead to an intensification of deprivation. Cllr. J. Owens also expressed his concern.

Cllr. T. Forde agreed with some of the concerns raised but felt care needed to be taken in relation to some of the language and views which were being expressed. Cllr.'s C. Walsh and V. Barron disassociated themselves from some of the comments in relation to single male migrants. Cllr. J. Codd said he was embarrassed by comments online referring to arson attacks on IPAS centres.

2. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001 :

2.1 Intention to dispose of property at Ard na Gaoithe, Whiterock, Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan the Council resolved to dispose of property at Ard na Gaoithe, Whiterock, Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

2.2 Intention to lease property at Castlebridge, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. R. Staples the Council resolved to lease property at Castlebridge, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

2.3 Intention to allow for provision of wayleave at Tagoat, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien the Council resolved to allow for provision of wayleave at Tagoat, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3. Report of Proposed Material Contravention of the Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2017-2023 (as extended to 2026).

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe, the Council resolved to approve the material contravention of the Gorey Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2017-2023 (as extended to 2026) in respect of planning register No. 20240797 for the development of a service station, as circulated.

4. Audit Committee Annual Reports

4.1 Consideration by the Audit Committee of the Audited Financial Statement (AFS) for 2023 and the Local Government Auditor's Statutory Report on the accounts of Wexford County Council for 2023.

4.2 Wexford County Council Audit Committee Annual Report 2024

4.3 Audit Committee Work Programme 2025.

The Members noted the Audit Committee reports.

5. Invitation to Le Cotentin fete l'Irlande Festival March 2025

Ms. L. Hore circulated an invitation for two Councillors to attend the Le Cotentin fete l'Irlande Festival in March 2025. Ms. Hore advised that the Council has previously approved a delegation to travel but she is now seeking the names of those Councillors who will be travelling.

Cllr. G. Laffan was nominated on the proposal of Cllr. L. McDonald, seconded by Cllr. J. Owens.

Cllr. P. Kehoe was nominated on the proposal of Cllr. O. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. F. Staples.

6. Nomination of Sectoral Interest to SPC's

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming, the Council resolved to appoint the following sectoral interests to the Strategic Policy Committees:

ICTU Nominations

Economic Development & Enterprise – Kevin Melinn (Fórsa)

Transportation and Water Services – Emer Ward (INMO)

Housing – Michael Wall (SIPTU)

Community & Rural Affairs – Michael Wall (SIPTU)

Climate Change, Environment & Biodiversity – Joe Ryan (ASTI)

Planning & Building Control – Sean Joyce (Fórsa)

IFA Nominations

Economic Development & Enterprise – John Kelly

Community & Rural Affairs – Elizabeth McDonald

Climate Change, Environment & Biodiversity – Jer O'Mahony

Planning & Building Control – Ned Lyng

CIF Nominations

Economic Development & Enterprise – Michael Bennett

Transportation and Water Services – Brian Byrne

Housing – Daniel Nichol

Climate Change, Environment & Biodiversity – John Doyle

Planning & Building Control – Anthony Neville

Chambers Ireland Nominations

Economic Development & Enterprise – Paula Roche & Ernest Levingston

Transportation and Water Services – Brendan Crowley

Climate Change, Environment & Biodiversity – Mary Walsh

Planning & Building Control – Mary Browne

7. 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:

- Request that the possibility of decoupling the active travel element from the M11/M25 project be explored to establish if there is viability in the active travel components being provided on the existing road. The hope is this would enable the M11/M25 to progress more quickly.
- The Roads staff were commended for their efficiency in erecting new speed limit signage.
- Query if speed limits on local roads can be reviewed by the local authority.
- Will additional funding be available for roads with the abolition of the national 2:1 ratio of expenditure between new public transport infrastructure and new roads?
- When will roads budget for Wexford be available?
- The Roads crews were commended for their work in the aftermath of storm Éowyn.
- Query if a list of vulnerable individuals can be drawn up in consultation with other bodies in light of the fallout around the country from storm Éowyn.
- The potential of getting the Heritage Officer involved in a project to save the priory.
- Request for increased access to the Cornmarket service for clients.
- How many exemptions issued for XL Bullies? How many have been euthanised? How many XL Bullies in Wexford?
- Request that Wexford County Council do as much as it can to deal with coastal erosion in areas where homes are at risk.
- Request for report on taking in charge for the Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District outlining dates of application, timelines and estimated costs.
- Request that Wexford County Council up the ante in relation to the odour issue at Ballyminaun as recent investment has done little to reduce the smell.
- News that Cumas are to become the anchor tenant in St. Josephs, New Ross was welcomed. Query if further groups will be able to use the facility also.
- Cllr. T. Forde proposed a special housing meeting, which was seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien. It was requested that there be no presentations at the special housing meeting.
- Request that senior department representatives attend Municipal District meetings.
- View expressed that Rosslare Municipal District is seriously behind other districts in relation to housing supply.
- Update sought in relation to Kilmore Quay houses which are listed as subject to funding.
- Timeline for completion of works to improve privacy measures in housing.
- Timeline for establishment of Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)?
- Has Wexford County Council been in contact with the IDA in relation to the BNY Mellon site?
- Does Wexford County Council have any sense of the vulnerability or otherwise of the ESB network in County Wexford.
- Could the decoupling of the active travel from the M11/M25 project potentially open up unintended consequences of leaving the project susceptible to judicial review?
- Cllr. M. Sheehan recorded that he is a member of the board of Cumas.
- View expressed that it is very difficult to get two health care professionals to sign a HMD1 form.

- View expressed that the rules around overcrowding need to be reviewed.
- Update sought on the energy retrofit programme.
- Request that a letter be sent to the regulator seeking a review of the mobile network coverage in County Wexford.
- Request that an update be sought from the Department in relation to night time economy officers.
- Is there a backup system if a family is without power for a prolonged period?
- Request that housing clinics be re-introduced.
- Frustration expressed that when an applicant applies through the choice based letting portal, they aren't informed if they are unsuccessful.
- Is there any plan to inspect and identify trees which are dangerous due to ash dieback?
- Is the regeneration of Templeshannon a live project?
- Is Wexford County Council opening an office in the Enniscorthy Technology Park? What are the set-up costs?
- What is the plan for the old courthouse in Enniscorthy?
- Mr. E. Hore and Ms. L. Hore were thanked for their assistance in addressing issues in Ardcolm Drive.
- Can we get specific costs for an additional road gritter to be considered at the 2025 Budget meeting?
- View expressed that there should be a countywide policy on speed bumps.
- Request for public consultation with business owners on Esmonde St. prior to any works commencing.
- Is there an SLA in place for the management of public lighting and is this being monitored for compliance?
- Is it possible to get a map outlining the roads impacted by the new speed limits?
- Wexford County Council thanked for the establishment of community hubs in the aftermath of storm Éowyn.
- Query in relation to an estate which is in the process of being taken in charge but there are conflicting views in relation to the adequacy of the sewerage system.
- Timeline for a coastal erosion strategy for the County.
- Has anything been done to facilitate the use of cctv for illegal dumping?
- Request that those who have to leave RAS through no fault of their own get credit for their time in RAS.
- Report on anti-social behaviour requested outlining what Wexford County Council are doing about it and timelines.
- How long does it take to get an individual well grant paid?
- Request that at least 40% of the properties in the PPP bundle for Bunclody be sold as affordable units.
- Update sought on Clohamon junction.
- How many crash beds are provided during bad weather? How many are used on average? Are they all in Wexford town? Do we need more?
- Will the Mechanics Institute be a community hub or will it be used by just one group?

Mr. E. Taaffe outlined the following proposed changes to the directorates:

- Assign Environment to Mr. E. Hore – with effect from 17th February

- Assign Rural Water to the Environment Department – with effect from 17th February
- Assign Health & Safety to Corporate – timeline to be confirmed
- Assign Integration Unit to Community – timeline to be confirmed

Mr. E. Taaffe informed the Council that Ms. Jackie Carroll will commence as Director of Services in late March and will have responsibility for Corporate Services, Capital Development Programme, and Health and Safety.

Mr. Taaffe thanked Mr. S. Howell and Ms. A. Byrne for their significant contribution during their time as Acting Director of Services.

The meeting adjourned for a comfort break at this point.

Cllr.'s J. Dwyer, L. Kelly, J. O'Rourke, and J. Owens left the meeting at this point.

8. Minutes of CPG

8.1 Minutes of CPG Meeting 4th February, 2025

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. D. Kenny the Council resolved to adopt the minutes of the CPG Meeting on 4th February, 2025.

9. Minutes of Meetings (for Noting):

9.1 Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meeting – 17th December, 2024

9.2 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 11th December, 2024

9.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 16th December, 2024

9.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 17th December, 2024

9.5 Rosslare Municipal District – 18th December, 2024

The Members noted the minutes, as circulated.

10. Correspondence and Communications

10.1 Email from Private Secretary to Minister Butler re: motion dated 10th January, 2025

10.2 Letter from Roscommon County Council re motion dated 17th January, 2025

10.3 Update provided by the HSE to Regional Health Forum members on capital projects in the Wexford/Waterford area.

The Members noted the correspondence, as circulated.

Cllr. J. Fleming circulated a report from the HSE outlining capital projects in the Wexford/Waterford area. Cllr. Fleming said he or any of his fellow Regional Health Forum members are happy to bring any issues the Councillors may have to the Regional Health Forum for discussion.

Mr. M. Drea read out correspondence received from Deputy Verona Murphy.

Cllr.'s R. Shannon, A.R. O'Brien, and T. Forde expressed their disappointment with Minister Butler's response in relation to the provision of 24-hour mental health care in Wexford.

11. Councillor's Conferences and Training

11.1 List of Conferences/Training – List Attached

Training

2nd – 3rd April '25 AILG Annual Training Conference, Limerick Strand Hotel.
Fee €175 per attendee.

Various dates AILG Training Programme 2025 (dates/locations attached)

Conference

7th – 9th March '25 Celtic Conferences – “Health Services Entitlements”,
Carlingford, Co. Louth. Fee €130 per attendee.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Laffan, seconded by Cllr. J. Sullivan the Council resolved to approve attendance at the above training and conference.

11.2 Councillors Conference Report

· Report of Cllr. D. Kenny who attended Celtic Conferences “Health Service Entitlements” held in December 2024.

The Members noted the report.

12. Notices of Motion

12.1 Cllr. John Fleming

“I am calling on Wexford County Council environment section, when going to inspect businesses that they contact the owners to arrange a suitable time for access to streamline the process and for health and safety reasons. “

The motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Fleming, seconded by Cllr. J. Sullivan and agreed by all.

12.2 Cllrs. M. Sheehan, L. Kelly, B. Murphy, M. Farrell, C. Walsh

“In an effort to promote greater input and efficiency at the plenary Council meetings, this Council agrees to a Special Protocol meeting to discuss improvements on making meetings more productive; and to accept proposals from elected members, stakeholders and the executive on changes to the agenda items, standing orders, protocols and other areas for consideration to make meetings effective. Upon adoption, this Council would agree the outcomes for implementation from the next AGM.”

The motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell and agreed by all.

12.3 Cllr. Aoife Rose O'Brien

"To ask this council to write to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service requesting regular Blood Donating Services in each district, recognising that blood supplies are currently at a critical

low, ensuring accessibility for all communities is arranged, recognising the urgent need for such."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. C. Doyle and agreed by all.

12.4 Cllr. Tom Forde

"Wexford County Council welcomes the extension of the School Meals Scheme to many schools across our county. However, in light of concerns by the HSE's National Clinical Lead For Childhood Obesity and other medical experts regarding ultra-processed foods, we ask the Ministers for Education and Health to provide much stronger regulation and oversight of these meals by their Departments to ensure that they are replaced by fresh and well-balanced meals that encourage healthy eating habits and choices for children"

The motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde and seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien.

Cllr. V. Barron supported the motion but sought an amendment to request that they do not delegate responsibility for nutritional value to boards of management.

Cllr. J. Codd supported the motion but sought an amendment that ingredients should be sourced locally where possible.

Cllr. T. Forde accepted the amendments, and the following motion was agreed by all:

"Wexford County Council welcomes the extension of the School Meals Scheme to many schools across our county. However, in light of concerns by the HSE's National Clinical Lead for Childhood Obesity and other medical experts regarding ultra-processed foods, we ask the Ministers for Education and Health to provide much stronger regulation and oversight of these meals by their Departments to ensure that they are replaced by fresh and well-balanced meals that encourage healthy eating habits and choices for children. We further ask that responsibility for the nutritional value of the meals not to be delegated to boards of management, and where possible ingredients should be sourced locally."

12.5 Cllr. Paddy Kavanagh

"This council calls on TII to provide parking at or near the M11 to facilitate daily commuters who carpool."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. P. Kavanagh and seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh.

Cllr. D. McDonald proposed an amendment that the NTA provide bus stops at these parking areas to enable public transport companies to stop. This amendment was rejected by Cllr. P. Kavanagh as there are two separate bodies involved, TII and the NTA.

The original motion was agreed by all.

12.6 Cllr. Michael Sheehan

"Recognising the lack of services and patchy medical coverage in parts of the County, this Council invites the Chief Executive of the HSE, Mr. Bernard Gloster or a senior representative to attend a meeting of the County Council to discuss the lack of GP

Coverage, Medical/ Support Services, Specific Therapists (OT, Speech, Physical, Language, Optical, Auditory, Mental Health etc.) and Carer Supports for people in Co. Wexford. "

The motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. R. Shannon and agreed by all.

Cllr. O. Walsh left the meeting at this point.

12.7 Cllr. Tom Forde

"We ask this council to write to the Minister for Housing requesting the introduction of a three year freeze on rents in the private rental market, beginning in 2025."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde and seconded by Cllr. C. Doyle.

The Cathaoirleach advised that there would be a roll call vote on the motion. The outcome was the motion fell with nine in favour and seventeen against. The voting was as follows:

Barden, Pat	A	Kavanagh, Paddy	A	Staples, Frank	A
Barron, Vicky	F	Kehoe, Pat	A	Staples, Robbie	A
Boland, Nicky	A	Kenny, Donal	A	Sullivan, Joe	A
Breen, Pip	A	Laffan, Garry	A	Walsh, Catherine Bidy	F
Browne, Aidan	A	McDonald, Darragh	A		
Codd, Jim	F	Murphy, Barbara - Anne	A		
Donohoe, Anthony	A	Murphy, Bridín	A		
Doyle, Craig	F	Murphy, Marty	A		
Farrell, Mary	F	O'Brien, Aoife Rose	F		
Fleming, John	A	Shannon, Raymond	F		
Forde, Tom	F	Sheehan, Michael	F		

13. Any Other Business

Cllr. J. Codd raised the issue of vehicles being damaged due to overgrown hedges. In particular, mirrors are being broken on tractors, trucks and buses at great expense to the vehicle owner. Cllr. A. Donohoe agreed with Cllr. Codd and proposed that each District Engineer should take a trip around their district in an articulated truck to afford them the visual perspective of driving one of these vehicles.

Cllr. V. Barron highlighted upcoming parents' workshops dealing with Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). These workshops aim to help parents to identify the early signs of EBSA & how to respond.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an

lá de Márta, 2025.

Cllr. Ger Carthy
Leas Cathaoirleach

Michael Drea,
County Secretary