

**Minutes of the New Ross Municipal District Monthly Meeting
held on the 13th May 2026 at 14:30hrs in the
Council Chamber, The Tholsel, Quay Street, New Ross.**

Presiding:	Cllr John Dwyer – An Cathaoirleach
Councillors:	Cllr John Fleming – Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr Pat Barden Cllr Marty Murphy Cllr Michael Sheehan
Officials:	Alan Fitzhenry – District Manager Áine Waters – Staff Officer Michelle Duffin – Assistant Staff Officer David Murphy – Executive Engineer (Roads) Eamonn Hore – Director of Services Abigail Nuzum – Executive Planner Fran Ronan – Sports Co-Ordinator William Doyle – Sports Programme Manager Alina Andrei - Community Sports Hub Development Officer
Remote:	Cllr Bridin Murphy Martina Donoghue – Administrative Officer (Housing) Melissa Goff – Senior Staff Officer (Environment)
Apologies:	n/a

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr John Dwyer, confirmed that the requisite quorum was in place, welcomed all those in attendance and commenced the meeting.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Monthly Meeting

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of 8th April, 2026, were proposed by Cllr John Fleming and seconded by Cllr Pat Barden.

1.2 Draft Special Meeting Minutes 20th April, 2026

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of 20th April, 2026, were proposed by Cllr John Fleming and seconded by Cllr Marty Murphy.

1.3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meetings.

Sympathies

Cllr Fleming expressed sympathies with the families of Jack Egan of Adamstown, and Margaret Kinsella of Saltmills.

Cllr Barden wished to be associated with the above remarks, and further expressed sympathies with the families of John Bradley of Knockavilla,

Cllr Sheehan wished to be associated with the above remarks, and further expressed sympathy with the family of Louise Hennessy of Southknock.

Congratulations

Cllr Fleming congratulated the Wexford Senior Footballers on their recent win against Limerick in the Tailteann Cup, wished best of luck to the Wexford U20 hurling and football teams in their games this weekend, and congratulated all who took part in the various Darkness into Light events last weekend.

Cllr Dwyer congratulated the District Manager and the district staff on the recent Civic Awards night, complimenting the seamless running of the event.

Cllr Barden also commended Mr Fitzhenry and the staff for organising such a great night, noting the positive feedback he has received from attendees.

Cllr Sheehan congratulated the Wexford Normandy Cultural Association on the recent talk entitled *New Ross - The Norman Town*, commending Director Eamonn Hore for his opening address at the event, and also congratulated the district staff on a great Civic Awards night.

Due to a scheduled presentation by Sports Active, An Cathaoirleach recommended the suspension of Standing Orders. Cllr Marty Murphy proposed the suspension of Standing Orders, seconded by Cllr John Fleming. Standing Orders were duly suspended. An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Dwyer, requested the order of business to be reflected in the minutes.

4.1 Sports Active presentation - A Playful Street

Alina Andrei, of the Sports Active team, delivered the presentation before taking queries from the members:

Cllr Dwyer thanked Alina for her presentation, noted the new community in Hewitsland would benefit from the same programme, and enquired if funding is available for communities to purchase equipment.

Cllr Sheehan thanked Alina noting that this scheme is needed, especially in newer estates, and asked what activities are available.

Cllr Barden enquired if this scheme is solely for urban communities or if it will be rolled out to rural communities.

The Sports Active team responded to the members queries as follows:

- Ms Ronan advised that a call for funding applications will open in June to assist with purchasing equipment, while Sports Active offer small grants.

- Mr Doyle advised the members that this initiative is a throw-back to the 1990's with activities such as hopscotch and skipping ropes, promoting safe, outdoor play without structure.
- Ms Ronan advised that this project is funded by Healthy Ireland, that it is a good example of how to achieve the Healthy Wexford goals. Ownership of the initiative lies with the community with the Sports Active team supporting them.

The members complimented the initiative, noting the positive impact this will have on communities, and requested they are kept updated as it is rolled out further.

On separate Sports Active matters, Cllr Dwyer enquired about funding for sports such as martial arts or motorbike racing.

Cllr Barden enquired about swimming lessons for disabled children, noting the case of a young girl that was in swimming lessons, but they have now ceased.

Ms Ronan advised Cllr Dwyer that all requests for funding will be considered as long as they meet the criteria for the funding.

Ms Ronan advised Cllr Barden that there is a possibility of the classes for disabled children returning but that there is no funding at present, and highlighted that there is a 'quiet hour' for classes for children with sensory issues. Ms Ronan asked Cllr Barden to send more details of the case he is representing so she may bring it to the board for review.

The Councillors thanked the Sports Active team for their presentation. Ms Ronan, Ms Andrei and Mr Doyle left the meeting.

2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations

2.1. District Manager Report

The District Manager delivered his monthly report to the members, highlighting the following information:

Annual Meeting

As set out in the Standing Orders, we suggest a date for the NRMD Annual Meeting of Wednesday 24th June at 3.30pm. This is a matter for the Members to decide, and we are happy to facilitate any date as directed.

EVENTS

AIMS

The AIMS Choral Festival will take place in New Ross from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th May. Now in its 41st year, the festival is firmly established and attracts choirs, musical societies and soloists from all over Ireland. A great weekend is planned. Supported by the District under the Festivals budget, we wish the organisers every success with this year's event.

London Wexford Association Dinner Dance

The Cathaoirleach and I were delighted to represent NRMD at the London Wexford Association's Annual Dinner Dance in Hendon, London on 18th April, as well as visiting McGovern GAA Park on the 17th to meet with the Fr. Murphys GAA Club.

It was an ideal opportunity to engage with the Wexford diaspora and show our support for the great work that these organisations do for Wexford & Irish people in London. They are very grateful for the continued support that we provide them.

Civic Awards Evening 2026

Congratulations once again to all who received Civic Awards on the 30th April at the Civic Awards Evening in the Brandon House Hotel. Thank you to the Members for their nominations and their speeches on the night, where we recognised and honoured the outstanding achievement of individuals and groups within the New Ross District. The feedback was excellent from all who attended, with a lot of gratitude expressed. Thanks again to Aine, Michelle and team here for their work on the event.

Official Opening of Duncannon Fort

Works at Duncannon Fort are now complete and the location has been officially opened by the Minister and Cathaoirleach since our last meeting. We were delighted to welcome the Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht & Minister for Social Protection, Dara Calleary TD to a sun-drenched Duncannon, as well as Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, James Browne TD. Thank you most sincerely to everyone who worked on this project and on the opening event. The feedback from the public has been excellent and we look forward to seeing many tourists enjoy the refreshed Fort. Opening times and other details are currently being discussed and finalised, ahead of the tourist season.

PROJECTS

Outdoor Biodiversity Classroom

Works are nearing completion on this lovely new addition to Pearse Park. The specialist outdoor biodiversity classroom is creating a space for schools and groups to use for children and others to explore and learn about the natural world. The classroom has colourful seating, protective flooring, interactive displays and signage. Fencing and final planting are outstanding, and we are on course to complete and open by the end of Q2 this year.

Quay Street Regeneration

The tender pack is ready for advertising on eTenders, subject to stage approval by the RRDF Section of the Dept. As part of the preparations for this stage approval, an updated QS report on potential cost was required. This new report has seen an increase in costs based on a variety of ground factors following surveys and detailed design, in addition to construction cost increases since the original Feb 2024 QS report.

The NRMD has supplied all relevant documents to the Dept. and has held two meetings outlining the current status. We hope to have an update soon in relation to the additional funding required and the permission to go to tender on the construction phase.

Sports Capital Pearse Park

The NRMD Project Team are delighted to announce that formal approval to begin the planned works under Sports Capital was received last Friday from the Dept. of Culture, Communications & Sport. This follows an almost year long procurement process.

A grant of €140,000 has been secured with match funding of €60,000 by WCC and will see the following delivered at the town park:

- MUGA full resurface and upgrades to basketball/football equipment. Second entrance/exit added to fence for additional access/security.
- Floodlights/additional lighting around park to fully light in evenings.
- Storage Shed Extension at Athletics Track.
- Artificial Playing Surface Development (Longjump refurbishment).
- Teenspace - Crveball table, fixed outdoor exercise equipment & safety surface.

The Project Team have already started scheduling the successful contractors as we aim to deliver these works before the end of the year.

OTHER ITEMS

New Ross Library Extension

Wexford County Council continues to progress the New Ross Library extension and refurbishment through the Four Stage Capital Management Process. The Stage 2 Application has now received Pre-Statutory Approval from the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht.

The Council will now continue to progress this project to Stage 3 (Pre-Tender Approval). First stage of procurement will begin in the next few weeks. We aim for tender to issue early Autumn and for construction to commence before the end of the year.

America 250

On 4 July 2026, the United States of America will mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the American Declaration of Independence.

Ireland is to join the US in marking this historic anniversary and to highlight the remarkable Irish contribution, not only to the foundation of the US, but also to its political, economic and social development over the past 250 years.

€5,500 in funding has been confirmed by the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport for 'America at 250' in New Ross, to be administered through the JFK Trust. As part of a nationwide events programme, the JFK Trust will hold a series of talks at the Kennedy Homestead and then live music and food at the Dunbrody Visitor Centre on 27th June. Further details to be confirmed.

Neil Tully Event at NR Library

Author Neil Tully of 'The Visit', a newly published book set around the time of the JFK visit to New Ross, gave a great public talk at the library recently. Well attended, with lots of interesting questions, Neil will return to New Ross for the Kennedy Summer School later this year. A copy of the book is provided to Members today to enjoy.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Dwyer, proposed Wednesday 24th June at 3.30pm for the Annual General Meeting, seconded by Cllr Sheehan, and agreed by all members.

The District Manager then took queries from the members:

Cllr Sheehan asked that we make a request with the Chamber of Commerce that they urge cafés and shops to open late during the AIMS Choral Festival, asked that we ensure we are ready to apply for Sports Capital funding for the skate park, enquired about a completion date and budget for the Library extension, and further enquired when the new parking byelaws would be back before the members.

Cllr M. Murphy congratulated the district team on the opening of Duncannon Fort, and highlighted that the lifeguard station at Baginbun beach needs replacing.

Cllr Dwyer enquired about the next phase of funding for Duncannon Fort, and if there are plans for a John Dwyer Trad Festival.

Cllr Barden enquired if the Norman Visitor Centre will be open for 2027 Year of the Normans, and noted that the Shambles should display recent history and information about the old brewery and meat markets.

Cllr Dwyer enquired if there had been any anti-social behaviour in the Shambles.

Cllr Barden enquired about the plans for 2027 Year of The Normans.

The District Manager responded to the members queries as follows:

- O'Briens and Bearú already confirmed to open Sunday during AIMS, street will be closed with outdoor seating.
- Will need to check Library extension timeline with Special Projects.
- The skate park is shovel ready and has part 8 planning permission.
- The parking byelaws are at public consultation until June 15th, will know more after that.
- Now that Duncannon Fort is open, we will continue to finalise the set up there, once finished we will look at further funding.
- Plans to establish a 'John Dwyer' trad festival, will bring details to the next meeting.
- Additional funding for the NVC has been requested, having had a positive meeting with the Dept. & given our history of successful project completion we are hopeful.
- District staff are working on putting together a panel of historical information about the Shambles to be displayed there, note that the walls are protected structures and the limited space available to display this information.
- There has been no anti-social behaviour in the Shambles to date, the CCTV in town is having an impact.
- Plans for 2027 are still being finalised, will have usual calendar of events with a Norman theme plus some new events.

Director of Services Eamonn Hore provided the members with further information on the Quay Street project, noting the recent positive meeting with them regarding extra funding for the increased project costs and how this will affect the timeline for completion.

Mr Hore further advised that the meeting with the Dept regarding the Norman Visitor Centre was also positive but that this project will also be affected by delays, however everything will be done to have it open in 2027 for the Year of the Norman celebrations.

2.2. Roads Report

The Executive Engineer delivered his report before taking queries from the members:

Cllr Sheehan requested an update on the taking in charge of Parkfield estate, and thanked the engineer, Director, and Ger Kielthy for the return of the refurbished canons at the Three Bullet Gate.

Cllr Barden requested an update on the national funding for the flood damaged roads, and if the works are carried out by our crew or contractors.

Cllr Dwyer noted the Cushinstown to Lacken road is in particularly bad condition.

Cllr M. Murphy enquired about the DPI connection in Farrin Carrig estate.

Cllr Dwyer enquired if there is an update on the Ferry Bridge closure.

Cllr Sheehan highlighted the need for a road safety review at Camblin Hill due to the speed of traffic there.

Cllr M. Murphy also requested a review of the speed limit at Rathimney.

Cllr Barden enquired about margin posts and boulders outside of houses and if the council can take these away due to safety concerns.

Cllr Dwyer added to Cllr Barden's point enquiring about who would be liable in the case of an accident involving such margin posts or boulders.

The Executive Engineer responded to the members as follows:

- The PEP for Parkfields is nearing approval.
- No national funding for flood damaged roads yet, but all roads are now open and works continue in anticipation of funding.
- 90% of road works carried out by our crew and savings put back into works.
- Can review specific cases of margin posts outside houses with homeowners, as liability would lie with the homeowners and the council cannot remove them unless they are a danger to road safety.

Director Eamonn Hore clarified the following points for the members:

- The Council are fighting the connection fee with Uisce Eireann for the Farrin Carrig DPI works.
- Kilkenny County Council have advised that the Ferry Bridge will be closed for up to 6 weeks, working 7 days a week, they expect it to take less time. They cannot do one side at a time due to size limitations and working over water.
- The Road Safety Officer has advised of the timelines for speed limit reviews.

The members highlighted concerns regarding the effect of the Ferry Bridge closure on workers and visitors to the town, and the lack of communication from Kilkenny County Council. It was agreed to invite a delegation from KCC to the next meeting.

2.3. Housing Report

The Administrative Officer delivered her report before taking queries from the members:

Cllr Dwyer raised concerns regarding anti-social behaviour in Ard an Bhile noting serious breaches in tenancy conditions, and enquired about the allocation of these houses.

Cllr Barden enquired if the Lacken development is on target for delivery, and asked for an update on the four units in Adamstown.

Cllr Sheehan echoed Cllr Dwyer's comments regarding anti-social behavior, and noted that seven properties in Hewitsland seem to be at a standstill on CBL. Cllr M. Murphy enquired about email updates from CBL and allocations not corroborating.

Cllr Barden enquired about the replacement of internal doors under the HOP grant.

Cllr Sheehan further raised concerns about the Respond units at the Mercy convent and asked that we now write to the Minister for Housing with a formal complaint about same.

Cllr Dwyer enquired if housing construction is on target, and two vacant units in Hewitsland with plastic covering the windows.

The AO responded to the members queries as follows:

- All social housing applicants are vetted prior to allocation.
- Will check with Housing Capital for an update on Lacken.
- Tenders for the Adamstown units are received and contractor is to be appointed in Q2, will have further update on timeline once appointed.
- Currently assessing and vetting applications for the Hewitsland units on CBL.
- Some properties are not allocated through CBL, such as RAS tenancies or transfers.
- The HOP grant doesn't cover internal door replacement.
- Housing construction is ahead of their targets.
- The vacant units were to be a creche, will need to check with Planning if they can be used for residential.

A discussion ensued amongst the members regarding the Respond units at the Mercy Convent and contacting the Housing Minister. It was agreed between the members to write to the Minister with a formal complaint about Respond and the vacant units.

2.3a. Housing Report - New Ross only

Read.

2.3b. Housing Construction

Read.

An Cathaoirleach called for a vote to extend Standing Orders. Proposed by Cllr Sheehan, and seconded by Cllr M. Murphy, Standing Orders were extended.

2.4. Planning Report

The Executive Planner delivered her report before taking queries from the members.

Cllr M. Murphy enquired about an update on the new legislation for modular homes.

Cllr Barden also enquired about the new legislation, and asked about a specific case of having to change from commercial to residential to install a stairs. Cllr Dwyer raised concerns regarding planning exemptions for converting to residential and developers self-certifying the works noting the potential for danger.

A discussion ensued amongst the members regarding the conversion of some commercial properties into residential, highlighting the need to get more people living in town while balancing the commercial viability of the main streets.

The Executive Planner responded to the members queries as follows:

- No update on when the new legislation will come into effect.
- Can't discuss specific cases, however the regulations allow for change of use to convert vacant commercial premises to residential once they meet the minimum requirements for rented properties.
- Article 10.6 of the regulations sets out the developer must notify the planning authority of their plans.

2.4a. Planning – Grants

Read.

2.4b. Planning – Refusals

Read.

2.5. Environment Report

The Senior Staff Officer delivered her report before taking queries from the members.

Cllr Sheehan raised a case of a dispute between neighbours and requested attendance of the Warden to assist.

Cllr Dwyer highlighted the issue of wheelie bins being left out on paths, noting the district has tried to resolve this, and enquired if the warden had called to the offending properties.

Cllr Barden advised he had reported dumping at Camross hill three times but it still hasn't been picked up, and enquired about using mobile cameras at dumping hotspots.

Cllr Fleming welcomed the increase in dumping fines to €250.

The SSO responded to the members queries as follows:

- Aware of the neighbour dispute and can discuss in private, the warden has called but has limited powers and it is a civil matter.
- The warden has investigated the wheelie bins being left out and they are due to sit down to go through findings.
- Dumping at Camross hill is on Coillte land and therefore it is their responsibility to clean up.
- WCC add the cost of clean-up to the fine if not paid and goes to court.

Director Eamonn Hore advised the members that a mobile CCTV system is to be tendered and will have more information at the next meeting.

The District Manager advised that the district has issued notices to the properties and has gathered information on the waste company collection days which can be shared with Environment.

2.6. Special Projects Report

Read.

2.7. Libraries, Archives & Arts Report

Read.

2.8. Community Development Report

Read.

2.9. Fire Services Report

Read.

2.10. Members Portal Report

Read.

3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District Members

4. Other Business

4.1 Sports Active presentation - A Playful Street

5. Notice of Motion/s

6. Correspondence

6.1 Letter to CE regarding annual berth fee to New Ross River Search & Rescue

6.2 Letter to Minister of Transport regarding storm funding

6.3 Letter to An Taoiseach regarding current crisis in rural Ireland

6.4 Letter to Minister regarding support for search & rescue and the Minister's acknowledgement

7. AOB

Cllr Sheehan requested that we write to the Department of Rural and Community Development asking that they consider CLÁR adjacent areas for the funding, and asked for the members support for the Duncannon Action Group petition to be included in the Local Link routes.

Cllr Sheehan further requested that we review the parking permit areas due to teething issues regarding security and age of residents.

THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

Signed on the 10th June 2026.

**Cllr John Dwyer
An Cathaoirleach
New Ross Municipal District**