

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of Statutory Budget Meeting of Wexford County Council
Held 10:00am Monday 29 November, 2021 at the Ferrycarrig Hotel, Wexford**

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. B.A. Murphy, Cathaoirleach.

Councillors:

BARDEN	PAT	DONOHUE	ANTHONY		
BELL	MAURA	FARRELL	MARY	MOORE	JIM
BOLGER	ANDREW	FLEMING	JOHN		
BREEN	PIP	FORDE	TOM	O'ROURKE	JOHN
		HEGARTY	JOHN	O'SUILLEABHAIN	FIONNTAIN
BYRNE	CATHAL			OWENS	JACKSER
CARTHY	GER	KAVANAGH	WILLIE	SHEEHAN	MICHAEL
CODD	JIM				
CODD-NOLAN	KATHLEEN	KENNY	DONAL	SULLIVAN	JOE
CONNCIK	ANTHONY	LAFFAN	GARY	WALSH	OLIVER
DEVEREUX	DIARMUID	LAWLOR	GEORGE	WHELAN	MICHAEL

Officials: Mr. T. Enright, Chief Executive, Mr. T. Larkin, Director of Services, Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services, Ms. A. O'Neill, Head of Finance, Ms. A. Byrne, A/Director of Services, Ms. C. Godkin, A/Director of Services, Mr. D. Minogue, County Secretary, Ms. Liz Hore, SEO, Mr. Ms. L. Lacey, Fin. Accountant

Oireachtas: Deputy V. Murphy

Apologies: Cllrs. A. Browne, D. Hynes, L. Kelly, L. McDonald, B. Murphy, F. Staples

All attendees gave evidence to the venue of Covid vaccination certification.

The Cathaoirleach opened the meeting and welcomed all.

1. Chief Executive Introduction

Mr. Tom Enright Chief Executive introduced the draft 2022 Budget to the Council. He thanked the Elected Members for their continued support during the COVID-19 pandemic and outlined the many challenges facing County Wexford in 2022.

Mr. Enright assured the Members that the Council 2022 Budget and the services provided therein offered the way forward for the County as it emerges from Covid 19 restrictions and addresses the statutory roles and responsibilities of the local authority.

2. Presentation by Head of Finance

Ms. A. O'Neill presented the Draft Budget 2022 and outlined some of the circumstances and arrangements which have framed the draft Budget. These include:

- No central funding increase forecast in 2022
- Road grants continue below 2008 level
- Challenges associated with collection of Commercial Rates and possible appeals in respect of rate accounts
- Income uncertainties as result of Covid 19
- Proposal to retain Relief on Vacant premises at the 2021 level
- Proposal to retain GMA's at 2021 level
- Proposal to retain Annual Rate on Valuation at 2021 level
- Decision to retain LPT at 2021 level
- Continuation of Rates Incentive Schemes

Ms. O'Neill then introduced each of the Budget Tables and together with her colleagues from the Management Team responded to queries from the Members on a number of elements of the Draft Budget as the Members considered the draft Budget in detail.

- Housing & Building: Maintenance costs – including Planned maintenance
Homeless arrangements
Maintenance of lanes within local authority estates
- Roads Local Road Maintenance
School Warden Service
Road drainage costs
- Planning / Development Tourist Development & Promotion
Duncannon Fort
Consideration of a County Museum
- Environment Services Slipway charges
Charges to Chartered Boats

The meeting adjourned at this point to allow a comfort break and to allow the room to be properly ventilated in accordance with public health advice.

On resumption of the meeting, and following further consideration of the allocations within the draft budget, the Cathaoirleach put the following decisions before the Council for consideration:

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

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. A. Connick and agreed unanimously, the Council resolved to apply commercial rates relief on vacant premises at the rate of 90%

(b) Decision on Draft Budget

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Breen, seconded by J. O'Rourke and agreed unanimously, the Council resolved to adopt the draft Budget 2022 without amendment.

(c) Decision regarding Annual Rate on Valuation

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Devereux, seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming and agreed unanimously, the Council resolved to determine at 0.246 the annual rate on valuation to be levied in accordance with the local authority budget as adopted above.

In addition to the above, and on the proposal of Cllr. J. Fleming seconded by Cllr. M. Whelan and agreed unanimously, the Council also agreed implement the Rates Incentive Scheme and Special Rates Incentive Scheme in accordance with the criteria set out by the Head of Finance.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an lá de Nollaig, 2021.

Cathaoirleach

County Secretary