

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council Held on Monday 9th June, 2025 in the Council Chamber at 2.30 pm (with some remote attendance)

Attendance:

In the Chair: Cllr. Pip, Breen, Cathaoirleach.

Councillors:

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

Officials:

Mr. Tom Banville, A/Director of Services

Ms. Jackie Carroll, Director of Services

Ms. Susan Doran, A/County Secretary

Ms. Carolyne Godkin, Director of Services

Mr. Eamonn Hore, Director of Services

Ms. Lynda Lacey, Director of Finance

Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Chief Executive

Apologies: Ms. Liz Hore, Director of Services, Mr. Michael Drea, County Secretary

Votes of sympathy:

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to:

- The family of Mae Keane, former employee.
- The family of Larry Shannon, brother of Councillor Raymond Shannon.
- The family of Brian Lonergan, father of Michael Lonergan, Motor Tax Department.
- The family of Mariah Brickley, Bellefield, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.
- The family of Martin Waters, Grange Road, New Ross, Co. Wexford.
- The family of Larry Cash, Hewittsland, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Congratulations:

- Cllr.'s J. Fleming and Pip Breen congratulated Mr. Aidan O'Brien who trained the winners of the Epsom Derby and the Oaks.
- Cllr. M. Sheehan wanted to acknowledge the great work of carers in Ireland who provide vital care and support to people.
- Cllr. P. Kehoe congratulated Patrick Hipwell and all involved in the Darkness into Light Tractor Run 2025.
- Cllr. C. Walsh congratulated the Wexford groups attending the Association of Irish Music Societies event in Killarney.
- Cllr. B.A. Murphy congratulated An Garda Síochána on their recent Annual Go Purple Day Initiative to raise awareness of domestic abuse services which the members of the Wexford Women Together Group supported.
- Cllr. B.A. Murphy praised the Department of Education which included a question on Women in Politics on a Junior Certificate Exam Paper which she very much welcomed and noted the historic eight female elected members on the Council now.
- Cllr. T. Forde congratulated St. John's Volunteers and Clonard Volunteers on their amalgamation of the clubs and on the launch of their 7-year strategic plan (2025-2032).
- Cllr. J. Codd congratulated Mr. Lack Bates, Kilmore Quay on his recent 100th Birthday.
- Cllr. J. Codd congratulated the Bannow and Rathangan Show which celebrates its 74th show on the 10th of July at Killag, Duncormick, Co. Wexford.

1. Presentation by ESB Generation about €150m investment in Wexford- the Wexford hub utility solar generation project, together with a new 110kV substation at Dennistown.

Sean Moroney, Eoin Naughton and Conor Sheridan from ESB Generation gave a presentation which included an introduction to the ESB Net Zero Strategy, South-East Region; ESB Utility Scale Solar Electricity Generation; The Wexford Hub Solar Park. Mr. Moroney and colleagues answered a multitude of questions.

Mr. E. Taffee, Chief Executive welcomed the more than €148m investment in infrastructure in the county providing clean, green and renewable energy while also providing €1m in rates to the Council and the approximate €250k Community Benefit Fund.

2. Confirmation of Minutes.

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh the Council resolved to confirm the minutes of the County Council Meeting on 12th May, 2025.

Matters Arising:

Cllr. G. Carthy asked what plan of action will be taken in response to the Lady's Island Lake Survey which was completed in 2022.

Mr. E. Hore advised he would be addressing an Oireachtas Committee on this issue.

Cllr. G. Carthy raised a query in relation to amount of legal action taken by the Council in relation to planning enforcement cases.

3. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001:

3.1 Intention to dispose of property at Butlersland, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. B. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming the Council resolved to dispose of a small portion to land at Butlersland, New Ross, Co. Wexford in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.2 Proposal to transfer property – 1 Windmill Lane, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. B. Murphy the Council resolved to transfer of property at 1 Windmill Lane, New Ross, Co. Wexford in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.3 Intention to dispose of lands at Trinity Wharf, Wexford Town.

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. R. Staples the Council resolved to dispose of land at Trinity Wharf, Wexford Town in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.4 Intention to dispose of property at 55 Davitt Road South, Wexford Town.

On the proposal of Cllr. R. Staples, seconded by Cllr. V. Barron, the Council resolved to dispose of property at 55 Davitt Road South, Wexford Town in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.5 Intention to dispose of property at 6 King Street Upper, Wexford Town.

On the proposal of Cllr. R. Staples, seconded by Cllr. C. Walsh the Council resolved to dispose of property at 6 King Street Upper, Wexford Town in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.6 Intention to lease part of the former Adoration Convent building at Bride Street, Wexford Town

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. C. Walsh the Council resolved to lease part of the former Adoration Convent building at Bride Street, Wexford Town in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

4. Filling of Vacancy on Economic Development and Enterprise SPC (following retirement of Mr. Kevin Melinn, FORSA)

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. C. Walsh, and agreed by all, the nomination of Mr. Stephen Murphy (CONNECT) was ratified by the Council as the Trade Union Sector Representative on the SPC.

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 regarding the following:

- Sandwich Board Policy.
- Update on the Junction at Ballycarney.
- Variable signage for the two N80 Junctions.
- Draft variation on County Development Plan.
- Issue of vacant creches and potential to convert them to residential properties.
- Number of vacant properties overall across the county and whether there is a vacant homes strategy for each district.
- Affordable Housing Schemes- method of allocation.
- Offensive banners/signage at the Bullring Wexford.

- Poor condition of road at Clongeen.
- Traffic review needed at Leeches bend and Clonroche Village.
- Upgrade funding for the Dunbrody Visitors Centre.
- Septic Tank Inspections- Risk based assessments.
- Potential IPAS Centre in Enniscorthy.
- Road funding for Enniscorthy Municipal District.
- Murphy Floods Site Car Park- toilet needed.
- Funding for air to water systems in housing.
- Choice Based Letting- update notifications to applicants.
- HSSU- the advice and support provided.
- Lack of HAP properties available in the county.
- Query on reports of people being asked for fees to access their housing files by a 3rd party.
- Update on possible move of Wexford Borough District Office to the Ballast Office.
- Possibility for a Maritime Museum in the Ballast Office.
- New House Kit Out Grants - DSP.
- Access to HAP difficulties for single persons.
- Criminal convictions recording and access to Housing.
- Shop Front Grants - elevated wall mounted signage.
- Update on mobile cameras to prevent dumping.
- Checking microchips in dumped deceased animals before disposal.
- Community Recognition Fund.
- Standards of finish in apartments.

Cllr. J. Owens and Cllr. G. Carthy left the meeting at this point.

- Taking in Charge status a requirement by some mortgage providers.
- Nighttime Economy Officer.
- Upgrading of road from Glenmore to New Ross
- Stones on Rosslare Beach.
- Update on 2027 Norman Commemorations.
- Columbarium Wall for Enniscorthy Cemetery.
- Mobile saunas and beach by-laws and insurance.

The meeting adjourned for a comfort break at this point.

Cllr. R. Shannon left the meeting at this point.

6. Minutes of CPG

Minutes of CPG Meeting 3rd June 2025

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. C. Walsh, the Council resolved to adopt the minutes of the CPG Meeting of 3rd June 2025.

7. Minutes of Meeting (For Noting)

7.1 Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meeting – 15th April, 2025

7.2 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 9th April, 2025

7.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 22nd April, 2025

7.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 15th April, 2025

7.5 Rosslare Municipal District – 16th April, 2025

7.6 Economic SPC - 2nd May, 2025

The Members noted the minutes, as circulated.

8. Correspondence and Communications

8.1 Email from Office of Minister Browne, TD re: motion (HAP) dated 8th May, 2025

8.2 Letter from Office of Minister of State John Cummins re: motion dated 12th May, 2025

8.3 Letter from Fingal County Council re: motion fox hunting dated 15th May, 2025

8.4 Email from Minister for Health re: motion dated 20th May, 2025

8.5 Email from Office to the Minister for Justice re: motion dated 3rd June, 2025

Matters Arising

8.1 Cllr. A.R.O' Brien was disappointed with the Ministers response as it was just an acknowledgement with no indication on whether he agreed or disagreed with the spirit of the motion. Cllr. O'Brien asked that the Minister be written to again.

8.5 Cllr. A.R. O'Brien is happy to read this response from the Minister of Justice but would like a follow up with An Garda Síochána.

The Members noted the correspondence and communications as circulated.

9. Councillor's Conferences and Training

9.1 List of Conferences/Training – List Attached

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O'Rourke, seconded by Cllr. L. McDonald the list of conferences / training was approved.

9.2 Delegation Reports:

- KIMO Board Meeting Denmark – 21st May to 22nd May 2025
- 6th International Symposium of the Remembrance Cities network – Dunkirk (France) and Ypres (Belgium) – 21st May, 2025 to 24th May, 2025
- Fishguard, Wales, 23rd to 26th May, 2025

The Members noted the delegation reports as circulated.

10. Notices of Motion

10.1 Cllr. J. Fleming

"I am calling on the Minister for Transport when allocating roads funding to our County Councils annually to use a funding mechanism which takes account of previous funding allocations, the level of local investment in road maintenance from the Council's own resources, and the results of pavement condition studies as this is the fairest and most practical way."

Cllr. T. Forde proposed an amendment to the motion to seek funding based on the kilometres of road in the county.

The proposed amendment was accepted by Cllr. J. Fleming.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Fleming, seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan and agreed by all, the following amended motion was carried:

"I am calling on the Minister for Transport when allocating roads funding to our County Councils annually to use a funding mechanism which takes account of previous funding allocations, the level of local investment in road maintenance from the Council's own

resources, the total kilometres of road in the county and the results of pavement condition studies as this is the fairest and most practical way."

10.2 Cllr. M. Sheehan

"In an effort to protect our urban centres and to increase transparency in the planning system , this Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne TD to reform the Planning Exemption processes by amending the Planning and Exempted Development Regulations, namely Section 5 and 6 (as amended 2023) to give Planning Authorities greater flexibility to protect our retail and town centres and to introduce an input of public submissions into planning exemption requests."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. J. O'Rourke and defeated on a show of hands.

10.3 Cllr. A.R. O'Brien

"With regard to the emergency rent supplement support for victims of domestic violence, I call on this council to write to the Minister for Social Protection requesting to include referrals from An Garda Síochána in the eligibility criteria; and that a referral from either An Garda Síochána or Tusla is satisfactory and appropriate for both individuals and families experiencing domestic violence; noting that the absence of this referral may exclude some individuals from this vital emergency support."

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

10.4 Cllr. T. Forde

"We ask that this council create a permit system, and standardised designs, that would allow businesses to apply to use signage on bollards/sandwich boards throughout the county, as long as they are not creating an obstacle for any pedestrians or road users. We also ask that the views of elected members be factored into any change of approach from the council towards such signage."

Cllr. V. Barron proposed an amendment to the motion to refer to a solution being the permitting of elevated signage on business premises which was seconded by Cllr. C. Walsh.

On a show of hands, the following amended motion was carried:

"We ask that this council create a permit system, and standardised designs, that would allow businesses to apply to use signage on bollards/sandwich boards throughout the county, as long as they are not creating an obstacle for any pedestrians or road users or to consider the permitting of elevated signage on business premises as an alternative solution. We also ask that the views of elected members be factored into any change of approach from the council towards such signage."

10.5 Cllr. C. Walsh

"This Council, mindful of persistent assault on the Palestinian People by Israeli Defence Forces, calls for the immediate cancellation of the EU/Israel Trade Deal, the enactment of legislation to ban goods from Occupied Territories and the deployment of UN peacekeepers to protect and distribute humanitarian assistance. If passed, this motion is to be forwarded to the Tánaiste, and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. C. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly and agreed by all.

10.6 Cllr. J. Fleming

"I am calling on the Minister for Rural and Community Development to increase the funding allocation for the Local improvement scheme and to allow a choice of either works by the applicants or payment for their percentage contribution."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Fleming, seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy and agreed by all.

10.7 Cllr. M. Sheehan

"That this Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne TD to amend Section 12 of the Residential Tenancy Act 2004 to eliminate blanket bans on pets in tenancy agreements thereby reducing the number of pets being surrendered and abandoned. If passed, this motion is circulated to all Councils nationwide."

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

10.8 Cllr. A.R. O'Brien & Cllr. L. Kelly

"This Council is gravely concerned that the Central Bank of Ireland is regulating the Israel Bonds Issuance Programme and, thereby, facilitating the sale throughout Europe of bonds which are funding genocide in Gaza. The Central Bank is facilitating Israel to allow it to finance its war operations. This Council notes that

(1) the bonds, known as Israel Bonds, have, since 1951, raised funds for the Israeli Treasury for use across the Israeli economy including the financing of the apartheid system, the Israeli military and illegal settlements

(2) the bonds are now being advertised as war bonds and are funding the genocide in Gaza

Wexford County Council further notes that

(1) in January 2024 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed the plausibility of the charge of genocide against Israel

(2) in June 2024 the UN's International Commission of Inquiry on Palestine found that Israel's actions in Gaza "constitute the war crimes of wilful killing and mistreatment, and the crime against humanity of extermination"

(3) in July 2024 an ICJ ruling declared that Israel is committing the crime of apartheid and its entire regime of military occupation of Palestinian territories is illegal and must end immediately

(4) all institutions are under obligation under international law to prevent genocide and abuse of human rights

Wexford County Council, therefore, calls on the Central Bank of Ireland to immediately end the regulation of the Israeli Bond Issuance Programme."

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

10.9 Cllr. T. Forde

"This council calls on Fianna Fáil Minister for Housing James Browne to re-examine the income thresholds for social housing applicants and also to end the practice of including payments such as the Working Family Payment (WFP) as a means of income when applying for housing supports.

Such payments aim to give extra financial support to people on low pay, but this continuing policy is directly resulting in the exclusion of lower income families from qualifying for Social housing supports."

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

A.O.B.

Cllr. L. Kelly welcomed plans to make the Adoration Convent gardens at Bride Street accessible to the public.

Cllr. L. McDonald sought a response from Mr. E. Hore to recent negative commentary from some quarters in relation to the 2027 Year of the Normans Commemorations.

Cllr. Pip Breen informed the chamber that it was his last meeting as Cathaoirleach. He said he enjoyed his time as Cathaoirleach and thanked fellow Members and the Management Team for their support.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUISINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an lá de Iúil, 2025.

Cllr. Joe Sullivan

Cathaoirleach

Michael Drea,

County Secretary