# Minutes of the New Ross Municipal District Monthly Meeting

**held on the 26th March 2025 at 14:30hrs in the**

**Council Chamber, The Tholsel, Quay Street, New Ross.**

**Presiding:** Cllr Bridin Murphy – An Cathaoirleach

**Councillors:** Cllr John Dwyer – Leas Cathaoirleach

 Cllr Pat Barden

Cllr John Fleming

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

Liam O’Donovan – Community Safety Co-Ordinator

Tom Banville – SEO Planning

Eoghan Nolan – Executive Planner

**Remote:** Martina Donoghue – Administrative Officer (Housing)

**Apologies:**  Melissa Goff – Senior Staff Officer (Environment)

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

1. **Confirmation of Minutes**
	1. ***Monthly Meeting***

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of 12th February 2025 were proposed by Cllr Dwyer and seconded by Cllr Sheehan.

*Congratulations*

Cllr Sheehan congratulated the organisers of the St Patricks Day Parade on a fantastic day, congratulations to the organisers, the Gardaí, the service personnel and particularly our own outdoor crew for getting it set up and cleaned up so well.

Cllr Barden congratulated the Wexford Senior Football Team and John Hegarty on reaching the league final.

Cllr Fleming congratulated David Redmond and Kevin Cowman on winning the All-Ireland Golden Masters B Doubles Final in handball, all the Ladies and Mens GAA players who travelled to Cherbourg to promote the Norman connection, and also wished the best of luck to the Senior Football ahead of the weekend.

An Cathaoirleach congratulated Sean Flanagan on winning a grade 1 in Cheltenham.

*Sympathies*

An Cathaoirleach expressed sympathies to:

* Philippe Bares Tricoire, the President of the Moncoutant Twinning Committee, on the passing of his mother.
* Eileen Dunne, Chair of the Kennedy Summer School, on the passing of her mother, Lilly Fox.
* The family of Ray Shannon, talented set designer in the town.

Cllr Dwyer offered condolences to the family of Tommy Dwyer, a tenant of the Council in New Ross.

Cllr Fleming offered condolences to the family of Eddie Kavanagh, Robinstown, and also the family of Paul O’Brien, Adamstown.

Cllr Murphy offered condolences to the family of Michael and Mai Power of Coole, an also to the family of Ray Shannon.

Cllr Barden offered condolences to the families of Paul O’Brien, Adamstown, Betty Broaders of Michael Street, John Kearns of Cullenstown, and Mick Casey of Clongeen.

Cllr Sheehan wished to be associated with all the above sympathies and remarks and also extended sympathies to the family of Daisy Doyle, to Jo Flood on the passing of her mother, to the Order of Carmelite Nuns on the passing of Sr. Ann O’Donoghue, and also to the family of Noel Power.

The District Manager expressed sympathies to Bernard Wadding on the passing of his mother, Mary.

Due to the scheduled presentations on the Local Community Safety Partnership and the updated Taking in Charge Programme, An Cathaoirleach recommended the suspension of Standing Orders.

Cllr Barden proposed the suspension of Standing Orders, seconded by Cllr Sheehan. Standing Orders were duly suspended.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Bridin Murphy, requested the order of business to be reflected in the minutes.

***4.2 Local Community Safety Partnership Presentation by Community Safety Coordinator***

The Community Safety Co-Ordinator delivered his report before responding to queries raised by the Members.

An Cathaoirleach welcomed the inter-agency approach in this new initiative.

Cllr Sheehan wished Liam well in his new position and is looking forward to seeing it in practice.

Cllr Fleming thanked Liam for the presentation and asked if the JPC meetings should continue. Liam confirmed the meetings should continue and it may be possible to simply rebrand under the Community Safety Partnership once legislation is in place.

An Cathaoirleach asked if the Members will sit on this new committee. Liam advised that the Minister has yet to prescribe the makeup of this new initiative.

Cllr Dwyer asked if this new initiative would feed into the Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

An Cathaoirleach thanked Liam for his attendance and presentation. Liam departed the meeting at this point.

***4.1 Taking in Charge Programme 2025***

Tom Banville, Senior Executive Officer, delivered his report before responding to queries raised by the Members.

Cllr Sheen enquired about the status of the taking in charge of Parkville, as this application has been going on for almost two and a half years, and the possibility of simplifying the process of taking in charge.

Cllr Dwyer enquired about Rathroe Meadows in Ramsgrange and why this isn’t on the list to be taken in charge and also raised the point that there are estates from the 1970s that have yet to be taken in charge, and the Council should prioritise the older estates rather than newer estates.

Cllr Fleming enquired about the costs involved for treatment plants to be upgraded in order for estates to be taken in charge, and the delay this can cause as well as the knock on affects on the sale of private houses.

Cllr Barden enquired about a plan in place for the taking in charge of Hillview estate in Ballinaboola as the treatment plant is not working and it is costing the residents to have it emptied on a continual basis.

Cllr Murphy raised a query regarding DPIs and whether these will be done first.

Mr Banville advised he is hopeful that Parkville is close to coming before the members for taking in charge and confirmed that there are 12 of the 19 estates in New Ross that will be prioritised for taking in charge.

Mr Banville advised that there is no application from Rathroe Meadows to be taken in charge and advised that the residents can make an application.

Mr Banville confirmed Hillview is not on the list to be taken in charge due to lack of funding for the infrastructure upgrades required but can be included in the next round of funding applications.

Mr Banville advised that the older estates require more upgrade works and that the funding is not there currently, and therefore newer estates are prioritised.

Mr Hore clarified that Uisce Éireann is responsible for the DPI process and funding allocations for upgrade works and that the Council cannot instruct Uisce Éireann to carry out works.

Mr Banville confirmed that there are eight DPI applications awaiting funding to be taken in charge.

An Cathaoirleach thanked Mr Banville for his attendance and presentation. Mr Banville departed the meeting at this point.

**2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations**

***2.1 District Managers Report***

The District Manager delivered his monthly report and highlighted the following information;

**Arts & Amenities and Residents Association Grants 2025**

The deadline for the 2025 Arts & Amenity and Residents Association Grants has now passed and the applications circulated to the members.

The report with the allocations for both grants will be brought to the April meeting, for final approval by the Members.

**EVENTS**

**New Ross St Patricks Day Parades 2025**

Just a quick note of sincere thanks to all involved in our very well attended St Patricks Day Parades throughout the District. A great show of colour and pride was on display and the weather stayed dry thankfully! Congratulations to all those who won awards and thank you to the organising committees, the Gardai and our own team of staff here in WCC for their efforts. Congratulations also to our Sister City of Hartford, Connecticut for another wonderful parade with c.60,000 in attendance.

**Age Friendly: Living Well / Ageing Smart Expo New Ross**

Our thanks must also go to the Age Friendly Programme Manager Niamh Bolger and the team in the Community Section for the recent Living Well / Ageing Smart Expo, held in the Youth Centre, Nunnery Lane on the 7th March.

They had over 20 Exhibitors at this free event, and it was great to see so many local people attend. The feedback was excellent on the day.

**PROJECTS**

**CCTV**

The tender for the Civil & Electrical works has completed and a contractor appointed. Al Reid Electrical was the successful tenderer. Work has commenced in March as planned. The aim is to see the work completed by May.

**Brennan’s Lane/Shambles**

Works at Brennan’s Lane are near substantial completion with the steel for the covered structure installed since our last meeting. The roof is now also in place. Final cleaning up and finishing touches will be done in the coming weeks. We plan to open Brennan’s Lane first and the District has written to the Ministers Office seeking a date for official opening in April. The Shambles works continue with the steel due to be installed here in April and completion is planned for May 2025.

**Duncannon Fort Works**

Works as described previously at Duncannon Fort continue and are planned to be completed by May 2025. There are multiple contractors on site currently.

**Motorhome Park**

All documentation for the planned motorhome park is now complete. The Members voted unanimously in favour of proceeding with the plan as proposed.

**Quay Street Regeneration**

The deadline for the Design & Construction related Consultancy Services tender for Quay Street was Friday 14th February last. No tenders were received via the eTenders system. The District team are now engaging directly with a number of consultants seeking quotes. The plan is to have a consultant appointed by May to start the detailed design process.

**Sports Capital Pearse Park**

The District Team has met on site at the Park since our last meeting and project preparation continues. Updated quotes are currently being sought on each element of the works which include a resurfacing of the MUGA, storage building extension, improvements to the long jump, a teenage space and public lighting.

**New Ross Skate Park**

This project is “shovel ready” and awaiting a funding opportunity from the Government.

**OTHER ITEMS**

**Library Update**

As requested at the last meeting, I asked Eileen Morrissey for an update on the New Ross Library Project:

“The tender for Integrated Design Team for this project has issued. The evaluation process for this tender is ongoing with appointment of the design team expected in the next few weeks. A more detailed schedule for the project is expected following this appointment and can be provided to elected members. The aim is for the project to commence in 2025.”

**Walkability Audit**

A Walkability Audit was undertaken in the town on the 10th March. 18 people took part, including people with varied disabilities. A report is being prepared and will be brought to the April meeting.

**TVRS Project Development Measure St Michael’s Theatre**

The NRMD was delighted to support St Michael’s Theatre in their successful application under the 2024 Town & Village Renewal Scheme – Project Development Measure. TRO Mick McCormack is overseeing this scheme and Conroy Architects have just been appointed as Design & Architectural Consultants. They will now work closely with the Theatre and WCC to design the new roof and other elements, in order to get it “shovel ready” for a contractor.

Cllr Dwyer raised a query regarding the availability of grants for individual sports people representing Ireland, as most grants are aimed at sports clubs and organisations.

Cllr Fleming enquired about an E-bike programme similar to Hartford, and also if the tenders for the Dunbrody Centre extension are in.

Cllr Sheehan enquired about the garden centre on the road into town and if there has been any interest in taking this on, and what the latest update is on the Active Travel scheme from Kents Cross to Oaklands roundabout, and when will design proposals be available for the Norman building and Quay Street.

Cllr Barden queried if there is land in the district liable to the Residential Zoned Land Tax.

The District Manager responded to the Members as follows:

There are grants available for individual sports people from the Sports Active Section.

Our own E-bike system is a GPS tracker system, and Eamonn Hore confirmed that there is a 3 strike system in place for users.

The District Manager will chase an update from Special Projects with regards the Dunbrody Centre extension, while the Norman Centre and Quay Street are progressing to design stage and quotes are being sought.

The District Manager will request the RZLT Map for circulation, and the Planner advised that the New Ross district is not subject to zoning.

Eamonn Hore confirmed that the Active Travel scheme requires a Part 8 application, which will be submitted this year.

***2.1a Special Projects Report***

Noted.

***2.2 Roads Report***

The Executive Engineer delivered his report before responding to queries raised by the members.

Cllr Dwyer raised a complaint regarding the lack of public lighting on the quay and the quality of the lights that are working is not sufficient, and there is no public lighting on the greenway. Mr Hore confirmed that lighting is being put in place along the greenway, awaiting ESB commissioning. Mr Hore added that the lighting company, Killaree Lighting are taking on extra staff to meet the demand.

Cllr Barden congratulated the roads crew for their work on repairing the Aughnaglaur Bridge, but enquired about the resurfacing of the Kellystown road due to the extra traffic on this road due to the diversion during the works on the bridge. Cllr Barden also reported that the road in Newbawn from Heutaces corner to Foley’s pub is in need of resurfacing.

Cllr Murphy raised a concern regarding the surface of the straight by Crosbie Trans into New Ross due to there being 4 separate road incidents since Christmas.

Cllr Sheehan enquired about several states in the town that are in LA ownership but the road surface is not being maintained.

The Engineer advised that a meeting was held to discuss the resurfacing following the diversion however there is no update on the Kellystown road, a section of the Newbawn road is being worked on. The Engineer will review the roads and estates raised by Cllr Murphy and Cllr Sheehan, but that due to the lack of sufficient funding, works must be prioritised.

***2.3 Housing Report***

The Administrative Officer delivered her report before responding to queries raised by the Members.

Cllr Dwyer raised a concern regarding a long-term HAP tenant who was struck off the housing list due to not responding to a Council questionnaire due to her post being stolen and signing an affidavit to this effect. Cllr Dwyer also enquired about a rent-freeze for elderly tenants and enquired about the requirement to be a tenant for 10 years to apply for TIPS, noting a case that this rule was applied incorrectly. Cllr Dwyer also raised concerns regarding the Council’s policy of dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Sheehan requested a breakdown of the 161 houses to be delivered by 2031, and also requested more details on the anti-social behaviour cases.

Cllr Barden requested the number of affordable housing applications in the District.

The AO advised a reply has been given regarding the HAP tenant explaining the appeal denial but will look back at the case.

The AO is not aware of any rent-freeze for elderly tenants.

The AO will look into the TIPS application referred to by Cllr Dwyer and respond directly.

Regarding transferring anti-social behaviour tenants, the AO advised that it is a grey area as some complainants look to transfer on medical grounds rather than anti-social behaviour issues.

The AO advised that she would get more details on the Affordable Housing Scheme for Cllr Barden, and will get clarification on the differences between this and the Shared Ownership Scheme.

The AO will also get a breakdown of the 161 houses to be delivered and the anti-social behaviour cases for the next meeting.

***2.3a Housing Report – New Ross Only***

Noted.

***2.3b Housing Capital***

In the absence of the Engineer from Housing Capital, the District Manager took note of queries from the Members.

Cllr Dwyer enquired about the plans to build Affordable Housing in the District.

The Cathaoirleach suggested a short break in proceedings. This was proposed by Cllr Dwyer and seconded by Cllr Sheehan. The Standing Orders were duly suspended for a short break.

 ***2.4 Planning Report***

The Executive Planner delivered his report before clarifying certain matters for the Members.

Cllr Sheehan noted that he and other Members were tagged online in stories relating to the news of an application for an exemption of planning permission to convert the Kennedy Boutique Hotel into an IPAS centre. Cllr Sheehan went on to say that he wholeheartedly opposes such a centre in a prominent Quay front location and called on all members of the Council and Oireachtas to show their opposition also while noting that the town is in need of a town centre hotel.

Cllr Dwyer seconded Cllr Sheehan’s points while adding that the town does not currently have the resources and facilities to cater for the current population, and queried whether the planner would take such factors into account when deciding on these planning applications.

The Planner advised that this is a national issue, and that there are national guidelines for such exemptions. The Planner further advised that the Senior Executive Planner, James Lavin, is currently dealing with all Section 5 Exemption applications.

An Cathaoirleach noted that the Planner cannot advise any further in relation to this specific exemption application and that it may be more appropriate to invite Mr Lavin to a meeting with the Members to offer further advice on the guidelines in place.

The Planner agreed to request a meeting with the Senior Executive Planner and the Members to discuss this matter further.

Cllr Barden enquired about the new planning updates relating to log-cabins.

The Planner advised that applications for log-cabins are currently assessed on a case-by-case basis and that any persons looking to apply for these types of units should arrange a pre-planning meeting.

Cllr Fleming enquired about the waiting time for pre-planning meetings, the number of large private development applications in the District and if there are serviced sites in the town.

The Planner advised that a large volume of pre-planning meetings recently and the waiting time is down to 2 months, there are some major pre-planning meetings due to be held but none currently, and that the Senior Planner deals with the large development applications.

Cllr Barden wished Eoghan best of luck in his upcoming match in Croke Park. The Planner then departed the meeting.

Cllr Sheehan proposed the extension of Standing Orders, seconded by Cllr Fleming, the Standing Orders were duly extended.

***2.5 Planning Decisions – Grants***

Noted.

***2.6 Planning Decisions – Refusals***

Noted.

 ***2.7 Libraries Archives & Arts Report***

Noted.

***2.8 Community Development Report***

Noted.

***2.9 Environment Report***

 Noted.

***2.10 Fire Services Report***

 In the absence of a representative from Fire Services, the District Manager took

 note of queries from the Members.

 Cllr Dwyer enquired about inspections of HAP properties for Fire Regulations.

***2.11 Members Portal***

Noted.

**3. Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the**

 **Municipal District Members**

3.1 S183- 22 High Hill Street, New Ross

3.2 S183- 16 Chapel Lane, New Ross

3.3 S183- 16 Haughton Place, New Ross

On the proposal of Cllr Sheehan, seconded by Cllr Dwyer, all three Section 183 notices were endorsed, unanimously agreed, and allowed to proceed to the plenary session as presented.

**4. Other Business**

 4.1 Taking in Charge Programme 2025

 4.2 Local Community Safety Partnership Presentation by Community Safety

 Coordinator

**5. Notice of Motion/s**

 None.

**6. Correspondence**

6.1 Invitation from F.C.A. Association to an Easter Sunday ceremony to celebrate anniversary of the Easter Rising 1916.

**7. AOB**

**THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING**

Signed on the 9th April 2025.

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**Cllr Bridin Murphy**

**An Cathaoirleach**

**New Ross Municipal District**