

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council held on Monday 13th May 2024 in the Council Chamber at 2.30pm (with some remote attendance via Microsoft Teams)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. John Fleming, Cathaoirleach**Councillors:**

Barden	Pat (Online)	Farrell	Mary	Murphy	Barbara- Anne
Bell	Maura	Forde	Tom	Murphy	Bridín
Bolger	Andrew (Online)	Hegarty	John	O'Rourke	John (Online)
Breen	Pip	Hynes	David (Online)	Ó Súilleabháin	Fionntán
Browne	Aidan	Kavanagh	Willie	Owens	Jackser
Byrne	Cathal	Kelly	Leonard	Sheehan	Michael
Carthy	Ger	Kenny	Donal	Staples	Frank
Codd- Nolan	Kathleen	Laffan	Garry	Sullivan	Joe
Connick	Anthony	Lawlor	George	Walsh	Oliver
Devereux	Diarmuid	McDonald	Lisa	Whelan	Michael
Donohoe	Anthony	Moore	Jim		

Officials:

Ms. Amanda Byrne, A/Director of Services

Mr. Michael Drea, County Secretary

Ms. Carolyne Godkin, Director of Services

Mr. Eamonn Hore, Director of Services

Ms. Elizabeth Hore, Director of Services

Mr. Shay Howell, A/Director of Services

Ms. Lynda Lacey, A/Head of Finance

Mr. Eddie Taaffe, Chief Executive

Apologies: Cllr. Jim Codd

1 Presentation

1.1 Draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy

On the proposal of Cllr. A. Connick, seconded by Cllr. P. Breen standing orders were suspended to allow the presentation on the Draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy to be taken.

Conor McCabe gave a presentation on the Draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy setting out the policy context, south coast DMAP proposal, maritime area identification process, environmental and technical constraints, draft south coast designated maritime area maps, estimated economic value, and next steps.

Conor McCabe and Mark O'Reilly responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Will MARA or An Bord Pleanála make the planning decisions?
- Potential of offshore renewable energy project was welcomed.
- Will all four sites be auctioned off to private investors?
- What engagement has there been with the Fethard and Duncannon communities?
- Have conversations been held with SETU re: establishing a centre of excellence for offshore renewable energy?
- The potential loss of fishing waters and displacement of fishing stocks was highlighted.
- What tax can be applied to the privatised system?
- The community engagement and community benefit fund was commended.
- Timeline for validity of DMAPS?
- Are we in a position at the moment to bring the energy that would be generated on shore?
- Will there be exclusion zones around the sites?
- Could exclusion zones be extended in the future?
- Has any decision been made in relation to the location of the construction? Will it be in Rosslare?
- What is the economic benefit to the South East area?

Cathaoirleach J. Fleming thanked Mr. Conor McCabe and Mr. Mark O'Reilly for their presentation.

Cathaoirleach J. Fleming congratulated Mr. E. Taaffe on the ratification by the Members of Wexford County Council of his appointment as Chief Executive. Mr. E. Taaffe thanked the Members for placing their trust in him and said he is looking forward to working with them on an ambitious programme.

Votes of sympathy:

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to:

- The family of Rory O'Shea, father of Alan O'Shea, Senior Executive Engineer, Roads Section
- The family of Jack Dunne, former employee, father of Brendan Dunne and Derek Dunne, New Ross Municipal District
- The family of Donal Farrell, father of Jan Doran, Library Service
- The family of Michael D'Arcy Senior, former Cathaoirleach and member of Wexford County Council, Dail Éireann, Seanad Éireann and Gorey Town Council
- The death has occurred of Orlagh O'Connor (nee Donegan), sister of David Donegan, Planning Section.
- The family of Eddie Codd, father of Councillor Jim Codd
- The family of John Dunne, Retired Storekeeper, Machinery Yard
- The family of John (Jack) Doran, father of Susan Doran, FOI & Partnership

Congratulations:

- Cllr. G. Laffan congratulated Wexford Wanderers U18 girls on winning the Leinster Cup Final, Wexford Bohs on reaching the Leinster Football Association Junior Cup Final, and North End United on winning the Premier Division title.
- Cllr. T. Forde congratulated North End United on winning the Premier Division title.
- Cllr. K. Codd-Nolan congratulated Lucy Latta on her runner-up finish at the Badminton Horse Trials.
- Cllr. M. Sheehan congratulated the Lawlor family on 60 years in business on North St., New Ross, the Credit Union on 60 years operating in New Ross, the staff of Wexford County Council on securing €3.9m in funding for New Ross.
- Cllr. F. Staples congratulated Ballycogley Players on their third place in the All-Ireland Drama Festival Final, Sean Carthy on winning Best Actor in a Supporting Role, and Wexford Drama and Bridge Drama who competed in the All-Ireland Drama final.
- Cllr. C. Byrne congratulated Castledockrell United youths on winning the Premier Division title.
- Cllr. A. Browne and Cllr. W. Kavanagh congratulated Ballymurn Celtic on winning the Leinster Football Association Junior Shield.
- Cllr. B.A. Murphy congratulated Kilrush on winning the All-Ireland Confined Drama title.
- Cllr. J. Hegarty congratulated Wexford Bohs on reaching the Leinster Football Association Junior Cup Final.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

2.1 County Council Meeting 8th April 2024

On the proposal of Cllr. A. Connick and seconded by Cllr. G. Carthy the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the County Council Meeting on 8th April 2024.

Matters arising:

Cllr. T. Forde expressed frustration that motions hadn't been taken for the past few meetings and outlined his belief that deferred motions should be taken at the start of the next meeting, and suspend standing orders if needed to do so.

3. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001:

3.1 Intention to dispose of the property at Marley, Marshalstown, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. A. Browne, seconded by Cllr. K. Codd-Nolan the Council resolved to dispose of the property at Marley, Marshalstown, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.2 Intention to transfer a portion of land at Ballyboggan, Castlebridge, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. L. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. M. Bell the Council resolved to transfer a portion of land at Ballyboggan, Castlebridge, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

3.3 Intention to dispose of property at Arnestown, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming the Council resolved to dispose of property at Arnestown, New Ross, Co. Wexford., in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

4. Draft Taking In Charge Policy - For Approval

Following a request from the Members, it was agreed that this agenda item be deferred until a future meeting when the Members have had greater time to consider it.

5. Revised Draft Litter Management Plan 2024 - 2027 - For Adoption

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Farrell, seconded by Cllr. J. Moore, the Council resolved to adopt the Draft Litter Management Plan 2024 - 2027, as outlined in the circulated memo.

6. Issuing of polling information cards in accordance with Section 27(8) of the Local Government Act, 2001

Mr. M. Drea informed the Members that the issuing of polling cards for a Local Election is a Reserved Function as outlined in Section 27(8) of the Local Government Act, 2001. Mr. Drea sought the Members approval to issue polling cards for the upcoming election.

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Breen, seconded by Cllr. D. Kenny, the Council resolved to approve the issuing of polling information cards for the Local Election.

7. Annual Report 2023

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan, the Council resolved to adopt the Annual report 2023.

8. Approval for delegation to travel to Moncoutant in France in July 2024

On the proposal of Cllr. A. Connick, seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan the Council resolved to approve to send a delegation to Moncoutant, France in July 2024, as outlined in the circulated memo.

9. Date of Annual Meeting of Wexford County Council

Mr. M. Drea informed the Members that in an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Council is required by law to be held on the 14th day after polling. Mr. Drea confirmed that the date for the 2024 Annual Meeting will be 21st June 2024.

Cllr.'s M. Whelan, G. Carthy and C. Byrne left the meeting at this point.

1.2 Presentation to Wexford County Council on SETU Campus Development

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell standing orders were suspended to allow the presentation to Wexford County Council on SETU Campus Development.

Professor Paddy Prendergast, Chair of SETU outlined the governing framework and governing body. Professor Veronica Cambell, President of SETU gave a presentation outlining the governance approval ladder for capital projects, policy context for SETU Wexford campus, benefits of new campus in Wexford, focus of the SETU campus in Wexford, the preliminary schedule of accommodation for phase 1, and the next steps.

Professor P. Prendergast and Professor V. Cambell responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Are there any concrete timelines on planning and construction of new campus?
- When will proposed new courses, start being offered?
- Will it be a sustainable campus?
- Any sense of diminishing support for a campus in Wexford?
- Huge opportunity to promote how we can assist communities and address coastal erosion.
- Is there confidence that the resources which are required to deliver the campus are still available?
- When will the site be transferred to SETU?
- Has the process of developing new courses begun?
- Will you explore the potential of satellite campus' in other towns such as New Ross?
- Request that SETU show ambition but be realistic with timelines.
- How are links with Georgia Southern University developing?
- Are you actively pursuing sporting links?

Cathaoirleach J. Fleming thanked Professors Prendergast and Cambell for their presentation and implored them to progress the proposed new Wexford SETU campus as a matter of priority.

Cllr.'s B.A. Murphy, J. Sullivan and L. Kelly left the meeting at this point.

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. M. Farrell standing orders were suspended to take agenda items no.'s 11 and 12 out of sequence.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh standing orders were suspended to allow the meeting continue past 5.30pm.

Cllr. W. Kavanagh left the meeting at this point.

11. Annual Financial Statement 2023 and AFS Report

Ms. L. Lacey gave an overview of the 2023 Wexford County Council Final Accounts Report to Members, as circulated. In accordance with Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2001, Ms. Lacey sought the approval of the Council to:

- Budget adjustments in respect of exceptional items together with the 2023 roads grant movement and additional expenditure over 2023 budget, as outlined in the report.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Lawlor, seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy, the Council resolved to approve the Annual Financial Statement 2023 and the budget adjustments in respect of exceptional items.

12. Borrowing Requirement

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Bell, seconded by Cllr. A. Connick, in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Council resolved to approve borrowing of €20 million for land acquisitions, as outlined in the circulated memo.

13. Any Other Business.

Cathaoirleach J. Fleming acknowledged the many positive developments such as the Fleadh, acquisition of lands for SETU campus, Trinity Wharf project, Rosslare Port development, the Technology Park, acquisition of Murphy Floods site, parks in New Ross, the greenway and the visitor centre.

The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the progress being made in the delivery of housing and welcomed the grant funding for Rathgarogue and Cushinstown. He thanked the executive and staff for all their assistance during his 12 months as Cathaoirleach.

Cllr. O. Walsh congratulated the Cathaoirleach on an excellent job and wished all Members the best of luck in the election. Cllr. Walsh also wished those not standing all the best, in particular Cllr. K. Codd-Nolan given the length of her service.

Cllr. K. Codd-Nolan thanked all the Members, the media and the executive for their help throughout the years.

Cllr. M. Whelan thanked the Cathaoirleach and wished all Members well in the upcoming election.

Cllr. M. Sheehan congratulated the Cathaoirleach and all those who held the position over the life of the Council. Cllr. Sheehan congratulated the outgoing Members, thanked the staff, and spoke of his pride at the achievements of the Council.

Cllr. G. Lawlor said the Council could be proud of its achievements, particularly during Covid. Cllr. Lawlor wished all candidates well and offered best wishes to those not standing.

Mr. E. Taaffe thanked all the Cathaoirligh over the term of the Council on behalf of all the staff for their work. Mr. Taaffe acknowledged the contribution of those Members who aren't seeking re-election and wished all candidates well in the upcoming election.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an lá de Deireadh Fómhair, 2024.

Cllr. Pip Breen

Cathaoirleach

Michael Drea,

County Secretary