

**WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL****Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council Held Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024  
in the Council Chamber at 2.30pm (with some remote attendance)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. Pip Breen, Cathaoirleach.**Councillors:**

<b>Barden</b>	<b>Pat</b>	<b>Kavanagh</b>	<b>Paddy</b>	<b>O'Brien</b>	<b>Aoife Rose</b>
<b>Boland</b>	<b>Nicky</b>	<b>Kehoe</b>	<b>Pat</b>	<b>Ó Súilleabháin</b>	<b>Fionntán</b>
<b>Browne</b>	<b>Aidan (online)</b>	<b>Kelly</b>	<b>Leonard</b>	<b>Owens</b>	<b>Jackser</b>
<b>Byrne</b>	<b>Cathal</b>	<b>Kenny</b>	<b>Donal</b>	<b>Shannon</b>	<b>Raymond</b>
<b>Carthy</b>	<b>Ger</b>	<b>Laffan</b>	<b>Garry</b>	<b>Sheehan</b>	<b>Michael</b>
<b>Codd</b>	<b>Jim</b>	<b>Lawlor</b>	<b>George</b>	<b>Staples</b>	<b>Frank</b>
<b>Donohoe</b>	<b>Anthony</b>	<b>McDonald</b>	<b>Darragh (online)</b>	<b>Staples</b>	<b>Robbie (online)</b>
<b>Dwyer</b>	<b>John</b>	<b>McDonald</b>	<b>Lisa</b>	<b>Sullivan</b>	<b>Joe</b>
<b>Farrell</b>	<b>Mary (online)</b>	<b>Murphy</b>	<b>Barbara- Anne</b>	<b>Walsh</b>	<b>Catherine Bidy</b>
<b>Fleming</b>	<b>John</b>	<b>Murphy</b>	<b>Bridín</b>	<b>Walsh</b>	<b>Oliver</b>
<b>Forde</b>	<b>Tom</b>	<b>Murphy</b>	<b>Marty</b>		

**Officials:**

Ms. A. Byrne, A/Director of Services  
 Mr. M. Drea, County Secretary  
 Ms. C. Godkin, Director of Services  
 Mr. E. Hore, Director of Services  
 Ms. L. Hore, Director of Services  
 Mr. S. Howell, A/Director of Services  
 Ms. L. Lacey, Head of Finance  
 Mr. E. Taaffe, Chief Executive

**Apologies:** Cllr. John O'Rourke

### **Votes of sympathy:**

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to:

- The family of Leonard Warren, Cross St., New Ross, Co. Wexford.
- The family of Steven Wallace, Cleariestown, Co. Wexford.
- The family of Brandon Roche, Wexford Town.
- The family of Felix Nolan, Bunclody, Co. Wexford.
- The family of Terence Aspel, Terrerath, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

### **Congratulations:**

Cllr. J. Sullivan congratulated Castletown Liam Mellows on winning the senior football County Final, Intermediate 'A' hurling County Final, and the girls on winning the Rackard League.

Cllr. J. Fleming congratulated Rathnure on winning the Intermediate hurling County Final, Duffry Rovers on winning the Junior hurling County Final, and all local Tidy Towns groups who won awards at the recent Tidy Towns Awards.

Cllr. J. Dwyer congratulated Celtic Dragon Kickboxing Club in New Ross on winning four medals at the World Kickboxing Championships in Austria.

Cllr. A.R. O'Brien congratulated all children who participated in the Rackard Leagues.

Cllr. G. Lawlor and Cllr. O. Walsh congratulated and commended Brendan Howlin and Paul Kehoe who are retiring from service in the Dáil on their outstanding public service.

Cllr. O. Walsh congratulated Blackwater Tidy Towns group on being Wexford's tidiest village and winning a gold medal at the National Tidy Towns 2024. Cllr. Walsh outlined that Blackwater improved their marks by 10 points and only finished 3 points behind the overall winner. He called on Wexford County Council to row in behind the group for next year's competition.

Cllr. G. Laffan congratulated The Rocks in Wexford town on being named the best urban neighbourhood in the country and Fethard-on-Sea on being named runner-up in the population 1,000-2,000 category at the Pride of Place community awards.

Cllr. B.A. Murphy congratulated Tommy Armstrong on winning the 55+ B Doubles World Handball Final, and Jimmy Dunne and Tom Byrne on winning the 65+ Doubles World Handball Plate Final.

Cllr. L. McDonald and Cllr. J. Codd congratulated St. Martins on winning the Senior Hurling County Final and St. Annes who contested the final.

Cllr. L. McDonald congratulated Wexford Tidy Towns on winning a gold medal at the National Tidy Towns 2024.

Cllr. J. Codd congratulated all Wexford handballers who won medals at the World Handball Championships, reserving special mention for the successful Taghmon handballers and the hard work of Joe Sidney.

Cllr. J. Codd congratulated Fr. Jim Kehoe, Carrig on Bannow on his retirement.

Cllr. J. Owens congratulated Enniscorthy Tidy Towns on winning a gold medal at the National Tidy Towns 2024.

## **1. Confirmation of Minutes**

### **1.1 County Council Meeting 14th October, 2024**

On the proposal of Cllr. O. Walsh, seconded by Cllr. L. McDonald the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the County Council Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2024.

Matters Arising:

Cllr. J. Owens enquired if a school warden will be hired for St. Aidan's school. Mr. E. Taaffe committed to a review once the new arrangements are bedded in and will revert to a Municipal District meeting on the matter.

Cllr. T. Forde enquired if legal opinion was sought in relation to a suggestion from some Councillor's that funding increases should be withheld from Councillor's who voted against the 15% LPT. Mr. E. Taaffe advised that no legal opinion was sought.

Cllr. A.R. O'Brien asked that the establishment of a Mental Health Committee as outlined in Cllr. O'Brien and Cllr. Forde's October motion which was carried be listed as an agenda item at the December meeting. There was a lengthy discussion in which Mr. E. Taaffe outlined that due to resource constraints, a new committee would not be established as there is currently an existing committee which can deal with the issue. Mr. Taaffe advised that the Members could form their own committee but the Executive will be unable to service it.

There were contributions from Cllr.'s A.R. O'Brien, T. Forde, M. Sheehan, G. Carthy, R. Shannon, C. B. Walsh, J. Dwyer, and J. Owens. On the proposal of Cllr. F. Staples, it was agreed that a presentation outlining the remit and work of the Healthy County Committee will be arranged for the Members.

1.2 County Council Meeting 9th September, 2024 – Amendment

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. M. Sheehan the Council resolved to confirm the amended Minutes of the County Council Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2024.

**2. Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001:**

2.1 Intention to dispose of land at Ramsfort Park, Gorey, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. P. Kavanagh the Council resolved to dispose of land at Ramsfort Park, Gorey, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

2.2 Intention to lease newly constructed building to the rear of the former Bank of Ireland premises at St. Martin's Road, Rosslare Harbour.

On the proposal of Cllr. G. Carthy, seconded by Cllr. J. Codd the Council resolved to lease the newly constructed building to the rear of the former Bank of Ireland premises at St. Martin's Road, Rosslare Harbour, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

2.3 Intention to dispose of property known as "The Old Bike Shop", Priory Street, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. J. Fleming the Council resolved to dispose of the property known as "The Old Bike Shop", Priory Street, New Ross, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

2.4 Intention to transfer a portion of land at Marshmeadows, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

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

2.5 Intention to extend the lease of lands at Seamount, Ardamine, Co. Wexford to Courtown Sailing Club.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh the Council resolved to extend the lease of lands at Seamount, Ardamine, Co. Wexford to Courtown Sailing Club, in accordance with the terms set out in the S.183 Notice as circulated.

**3. Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended):**

3.1 LAC2406 - To develop a skate park plaza on the grounds that formed part of the old New Ross rail station located in Rosbercon, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Having considered the report of the Chief Executive, on the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. B. Murphy, the Council resolved to approve the Part 8 to develop a skate park plaza on the grounds that formed part of the old New Ross rail station located in Rosbercon, New Ross, Co. Wexford, in accordance with the terms of LAC2406, as circulated.

**4. Audited AFS 2023 & Audit Report 2023**

Having considered the report of Ms. L. Lacey, on the proposal of Cllr. J. Sullivan, seconded by Cllr. A. Donohoe, the Council resolved to approve the Audited AFS 2023 and Statutory Audit Report to the Members of Wexford County Council for the year ended 31st December 2023, as circulated.

**5. Draft Corporate Plan 2025 - 2029**

Ms. A. Byrne circulated a draft of the Corporate Plan 2025 – 2029. There was a discussion in relation to some of the goals and the language around them. Ms. A. Byrne advised that the final draft will be brought before the December meeting.

**6. Replacement of Cllr. Frank Staples on Healthy County Committee**

This agenda item was deferred.

**7. Chief Executives Report**

The Chief Executive and members of the Management Team responded to a wide range of queries from the Elected Members regarding the following:

- Frustration expressed in relation to recent media reports indicating that the new SETU Wexford campus is unlikely to be a reality before 2028.
- Update sought on the master planning of the lands at Ballynagee.
- Query raised in relation to dereliction in our towns and if Wexford County Council is doing all in its power to address the issue.
- Is priority being given to the delivery of one and two bed units?
- Request that kitchens and wardrobes be assessed when a tenant moves out to establish if they need to be replaced or are sufficient for the incoming tenant.

- Observation that the number of homeless calls outlined in the Chief Executive's report is very high.
- Request that the Housing SPC consider the policy around how an applicant becomes a special category case.
- Frustration that some buildings which are in very poor repair such as the old hospital aren't being pursued as derelict sites because they are protected structures.
- Request that bollards aren't placed outside businesses, and if bollards are to be installed it should be in consultation with the business.
- Query in relation to the rules pertaining to mud being brought out of fields onto the public road during harvesting.
- Request that any design for safety works to address the issues at Tominearly and Leeches bend be shown to the Members before going to tender.
- Request for signage for blackspot areas for illegal dumping.
- Request that the housing allocation scheme be amended to assist families of children with special needs.
- Call for active travel funding for rural areas.
- Status of Ramsgrange wastewater treatment plant in light of funding transfer to Uisce Éireann.
- Update on Enniscorthy and Bunclody CCTV applications.
- Update on Ballycarney junction and Clohamon road works.
- Query why there are no projects listed for Enniscorthy Municipal District in housing capital section of Chief Executive's report.
- Request that IPAS consider level of services available in an area when considering accommodation options.
- Has additional funding been provided for more bus shelters?
- Timeline for RRDF scheme reopening.
- Timeline for affordable housing schemes across County Wexford.
- Funding for Larkin's Cross works welcomed.
- Request that Glenville Road works be prioritised now that Newtown Road Active travel works are completed.
- Request that motion seeking funding for active travel in rural areas be forwarded to TII.
- Query as to what can be done to assist those who are unable to avail of housing services in homelessness.
- Can Wexford County Council assist some handball clubs who don't hold title to their alleys.
- Disappointment expressed that the €3.2m spent on the active travel scheme for Newtown Road exceeds the budget for Rosslare Municipal District roads.
- Frustration expressed that the real extent of housing need isn't reflected in the social housing list numbers.
- When will portal for expressions of interest for affordable housing units in Gorey open?
- Update sought on Gorey Market House.
- Plaque required to mark world tin whistle record set during the fleadh.
- Is it possible to establish a communications portal that individuals and businesses can sign up to for Fleadh 2025?
- Plans for works to Castlebridge grain store.

## **8. Minutes of CPG**

### 8.1 Minutes of CPG Meeting 4th November, 2024

On the proposal of Cllr. A. Donohoe, seconded by Cllr. L. Kelly the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the CPG Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2024.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the budget meeting will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> November at 8.30am.

## **9. Minutes of Meetings (for Noting):**

### 9.1 Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

### 9.2 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

### 9.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

### 9.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

The Members noted the minutes, as circulated.

## **10. Correspondence and Communications**

### 10.1 Letters from Donegal County Council re motions dated 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

### 10.2 Email from Westmeath County Council re motion dated 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

### 10.3 Letters from Roscommon County Council re: motions dated 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

### 10.4 Letter from Fingal County Council re: motion dated 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

### 10.5 Email from Office of Minister for Justice re: motion dated 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2024

The Members noted the correspondence, as circulated.

## **11. Councillor's Conferences and Training**

### 11.1 Councillors Conference Report

- Cllr. Michael Sheehan - Celtic Conferences "A Practical Guide to Budget 2025" - October 2024.
- Cllr. J. Fleming - Celtic Conferences "A Practical Guide to Budget 2025" - October 2024.
- Report from KIMO International Trip – 9<sup>th</sup>– 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2024
- Report on Delegation London / Wexford – October, 2024

The Members noted the reports.

## **12. Notices of Motion**

### 12.1 Wexford County Council Women's Coalition

'We ask that Wexford County Council amend the structure and composition of Wexford Co. Council's Protocol Committee to include a woman in order to ensure both male and female representation on it.'

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien, the motion was carried.

#### 12.2 Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin

“This Council notes that:

- The Housing Commission report recommended a radical reset of housing policy, including the delivery of an average of 60,000 new build homes a year over the next five years
- The Housing Commission also recommended that 20% of all housing stock should be social and affordable, which would require a doubling of public housing output on current levels

This Council agrees to:

- Write to Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage calling on him to double the direct capital funding for social and affordable housing to deliver at least 25,000 social and affordable homes on average over the next five years.
- To introduce the necessary reforms to enable Councils to increase and accelerate the delivery of public housing and to ensure that affordable homes to rent and buy are delivered at prices that working people can actually afford.”

On the proposal of Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde, the motion was put to a show of hands and defeated.

Cllr.'s G. Lawlor and M. Murphy left the meeting at this point.

#### 12.3 Cllr. T. Forde

“This Council deplores those corporations that profit from protracted armed conflict and systematic violations of human rights, particularly in the context of Israel’s continuing brutal assault on the people of Gaza and escalating settler terrorism in the West Bank, Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, and other conflicts around the world. With this motion, the Council encourages companies to meet their obligations to avoid contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities, and to prevent or mitigate human rights abuses linked to their operations.

The Council is aware of the crucial role of local authorities and their public procurement procedures in ensuring respect for human rights by companies, as well as their obligations under widely accepted business and human rights norms – as laid down in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Global Sullivan Principles (1999) – to promote respect for human rights by companies with which they do business.

The Council affirms that every endeavour is made to ensure that councils tender processes are consistent with the above principles, including under the Fourth Geneva convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and under customary international humanitarian law, prohibiting the importation or sale of goods or services originating in occupied territories.

This Council resolves to adopt a rights-based Ethical Procurement Policy (EPP) that takes fully into account existing obligations and standards. The EPP will incorporate widely accepted and precisely formulated international standards and explain clearly how the policy will be implemented. The primary aim of the EPP is to ensure that human rights obligations are properly acknowledged, observed and respected at all stages of the procurement process.”

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien, the motion was put to a show of hands and defeated.

**12.4 Cllr. A.R. O'Brien**

"This council recognises that the current Vacant Homes Tax, currently levied at 5 times the Local Property Tax, is too low to act as an effective deterrent on the scourge of vacancy, and must be increased and, furthermore, should be increased annually in accordance with the length of time properties remain vacant. We ask that this council write to the Ministers for Finance and Housing and request that action is taken on this issue and to provide a written response to this council."

On the proposal of Cllr. A.R. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. T. Forde, the motion was put to a show of hands and defeated.

**12.5 Cllr. P. Kehoe.**

"That Wexford County Council calls on Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances (IPB) to provide affordable underwriting options for insurance cover specifically tailored to the needs of community centres and similar community organizations. These centres are essential to the social fabric of our communities, providing valuable services and facilities that support health, well-being, and social inclusion. However, rising insurance premiums are increasingly limiting the ability of community groups to operate and expand their services.

By offering more affordable insurance options, IPB could enable community centres to continue and enhance their work without the heavy burden of unsustainable insurance costs. Wexford County Council urges IPB to consider the positive impact of such support on communities across the county and to act in the interest of promoting accessible, community-based services for all."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. P. Kehoe and seconded by Cllr. C. Byrne.

Cllr. B.A. Murphy proposed an amendment to include "playgrounds" in the motion which was seconded by Cllr. P. Kehoe and carried.

Cllr. P. Kehoe asked that the motion be forwarded to all local authorities also.

The amended motion which was carried is as follows:

"That Wexford County Council calls on Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances (IPB) to provide affordable underwriting options for insurance cover specifically tailored to the needs of community centres and similar community organisations and playgrounds. These centres are essential to the social fabric of our communities, providing valuable services and facilities that support health, well-being, and social inclusion. However, rising insurance premiums are increasingly limiting the ability of community groups to operate and expand their services.

By offering more affordable insurance options, IPB could enable community centres to continue and enhance their work without the heavy burden of unsustainable insurance costs. Wexford County Council urges IPB to consider the positive impact of such support on communities across the county and to act in the interest of promoting accessible, community-based services for all."



**12.6 Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin**

"That Wexford County Council, in light of the recent ruling by the International Court of Justice on the illegality of Israeli settlements in Occupied Palestinian Territories (and following a similar plea from other local authorities) calls on the Irish Government to enact the Occupied Territories Bill as a matter of urgency, to cut Irish trade ties with Israeli goods and services produced in these illegal settlements."

On the proposal of Cllr. F. Ó Súilleabháin, seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien, the motion was carried.

Cllr.'s L. Kelly, L. McDonald, O. Walsh, and C. Byrne left the meeting at this point.

**12.7 Cllr. T. Forde**

"This Council recognises that the Local Property Tax is not working as a funding model for County Wexford. We ask that the next government fund local authorities through a model that is based on the needs of each county including roads networks, housing need etc."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde and seconded by Cllr. P. Barden.  
Cllr. G. Laffan proposed an amendment removing the first line of the motion which was seconded by Cllr. D. Kenny and carried on a show of hands.

The amended motion which was carried is as follows:

"We ask that the next government fund local authorities through a model that is based on the needs of each county including roads networks, housing need etc."

**13. Any Other Business**

Mr. E. Taaffe offered best wishes to all Councillors who are standing in the upcoming General Election.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.**

Daingithe ar an

lá de Nollaig, 2024.

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*Cllr. Pip Breen*  
*Cathaoirleach*

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*Michael Drea,*  
*County Secretary*