

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of Wexford County Council Held on Monday 13th January 2025
in the Council Chamber at 2.00pm (with some remote attendance)****Attendance:****In the Chair:** Cllr. Pip Breen, Cathaoirleach.**Councillors:**

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

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, Director of Finance
 Mr. E. Taaffe, Chief Executive

Apologies: Cllr. Bridín Murphy

Votes of sympathy:

The Cathaoirleach offered the sympathy of the Council to:

- The family of Monica Corcoran, mother of Dermot Wallace, Roads Department.
- The family of Annette Caffrey, former employee.
- The family of Celine Barrins, mother of Tracy Barrins, Environment Section.
- The family of Margaret - Maggie Lonergan, (Clonmel, Tipperary), mother-in-law of Aoife Lonergan, Finance Section.
- The family of James (Jim) Mulhall, former employee and father of Mark Mulhall, Community Warden.
- The family of Dan Duggan, former Chief Assistant County Engineer with Wexford County Council.
- The family of John Gahan, The Harrow, Ferns.
- The family of Rose St. Ledger, Mount Carmel, New Ross.
- The family of John O'Connor, Mount Ross, New Ross.
- The family of John (King) O'Connor, Cluain Fada, New Ross.

Congratulations:

Cllr.'s J. Codd and A.R. O'Brien commended the roads, housing and Cornmarket staff for their great work during the recent cold snap.

Cllr. P. Kavanagh congratulated Deputy Verona Murphy on her election as Ceann Comhairle, the first female to hold the position.

Cllr. M. Sheehan commended the emergency services for their professionalism and resilience in dealing with some awful incidents recently in New Ross.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. P. Breen welcomed Councillors Vicky Barron and Craig Doyle to their first plenary meeting of Wexford County Council since their co-option. The Cathaoirleach also extended a welcome to Deputy Brian Brennan.

1. Presentation - Healthy County Programme – Annette Dupuy

Ms. Annette Dupuy, Healthy County Co-Ordinator gave a presentation to the Council outlining the work of the Healthy County Committee. Ms. Dupuy explained:

- Why we have Healthy Wexford at Wexford County Council.
- The role and responsibility of the Healthy County Committee.
- Areas of focus.
- Their mental health strategic priority.
- Examples of campaigns and sharing supports.

Ms. Dupuy outlined that Healthy Wexford, and the Healthy County Committee's focus is on providing opportunities for health as well as encouraging healthy behaviours. The focus is upstream and preventative. The mental health strategic priority area is focussed on signposting to mental wellbeing resources and supports.

Ms. Dupuy suggested that a better approach for the Members to bring a focus to Mental Health Service delivery may be to establish a direct working group to the LCDC.

Mr. M. Drea outlined a proposal for a high-level mental health working group which will sit under the LCDC. Mr. Drea advised that an obvious benefit of this is the LCDC is a multi-agency committee. In addition, whilst it was previously stated that Wexford County Council would not be able to service a new committee structure, there is an existing secretariat to the LCDC which can also service the new high level mental health working group. On the proposal of Cllr. T. Forde seconded by Cllr. A.R. O'Brien, it was agreed that the working group as outlined should be established.

On the proposal of Cllr. B.A. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh, the following Councillors were elected to the new mental health working group:

Cllr.'s T. Forde, R. Shannon, F. Staples, A. Browne, M. Sheehan, L. Kelly, J. Owens, C. Doyle, A.R. O'Brien, and M. Farrell.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

2.1 County Council Meeting 9th December, 2024

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 9th December, 2024.

2.2 Special County Council Meeting 16th December, 2024

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy the Council resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Special County Council Meeting on 16th December, 2024.

Matters Arising:

Cllr. J. Owens enquired how his position on the Council would be filled if a casual vacancy arose. Mr. M. Drea advised that the position set out in law is where the person causing the casual vacancy was a non-party candidate at his or her election to the local authority, the vacancy shall be filled by the co-option by the local authority of a person to fill the vacancy in accordance with standing orders.

Mr. Drea outlined that the custom and practice for filling a non-party casual vacancy is the candidate or their family would nominate the replacement. It was agreed that this matter will be considered by the Protocol Committee with a view to clarifying standing orders.

3. Section 85 Agreement under the Local Government Act, 2001:

Mr. E. Hore outlined that Tipperary County Council is nominated as the lead authority in the region to plan and deliver electric vehicle charging infrastructure on major road networks. Mr. Hore sought the agreement of the Council to enter into a Section 85 agreement under the Local Government Act 2001 enabling Tipperary County Council as the lead authority to appoint technical consultants for the purpose of formulating an Electric Vehicle En-Route Charging Strategy for the region.

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. B.A. Murphy the Council resolved to enter into a Section 85 Agreement to allow Tipperary County Council carry out its functions as the lead authority in the region to plan and deliver electric vehicle charging infrastructure on major road networks.

4. Draft Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 - For Adoption

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Sheehan, seconded by Cllr. L. McDonald, the Council resolved to adopt the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025, as circulated.

5. 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 was expressed in relation to the Uisce Éireann emergency call service with poor geographical knowledge of Wexford cited as a problem.
- Disappointment expressed in relation to reoccurring power outages and loss of water in Carrig on Bannow.
- The commencement of installation of rock armour at Seaview was welcomed but the Council was urged to work with local farmers to try and address the issue of coastal erosion.
- Update sought on the timeline for commencing works on the Murphy Floods site.
- Request for increased funding for roads in Enniscorthy.
- The urgent need for the completion of a flood relief scheme in Enniscorthy was highlighted.
- Request that Uisce Éireann establish clear procedures and real time information for outages like ESB Networks.
- Query if lighting is to be provided on the Gorey to Courtown footpath.
- Query in relation to the status of the tenant purchase scheme.
- Timeline sought for commencement of construction on the M11/M25 motorway.
- Update sought on the proposed works at Larkin's Cross and timeline for completion of works.
- Query as to why there isn't any school approved for Wexford district under the Safe Routes to School initiative.
- Is Wexford County Council prepared for the change to the speed limits?
- Will there be an advertising campaign in relation to the revised speed limits?
- Update sought on the Trinity Wharf project.
- Is it feasible to put in real time bus trackers at bus stops?
- Should Wexford County Council consider leaving the social media platform X as it doesn't appear to align with the Council's values?
- Timeline for Uisce Éireann works at Ardcolm and Rectory Hall.
- Update sought on installation of plaque to mark tin whistle world record event.
- Update sought on taking in charge programme plan.
- Query why money was spent installing infrastructure for public lighting on footpaths such as the Gorey to Courtown one if they aren't going to be illuminated.
- Timeline for coastal erosion strategy.

- Request that the regional road from Kilmuckridge through Curracloe and into Wexford be added to the winter maintenance programme.
- Opinion expressed that the proposed cliff stabilisation works at Grange beach, Fethard aren't sufficient, and families will end up losing their homes.
- How much funding has been allocated to coastal erosion? Has all the funding been used? Will Grange beach be prioritised?
- Frustration expressed at the length of time taken to pay out Croí Conaithe grants.
- Dissatisfaction expressed at indicative timeframe for construction of the M11/M25.
- Has Wexford County Council arrangements in place to work with local farmers in the event of severe weather.
- Annoyance expressed that housing aid for older people grant cannot be used to fund the replacement of oil-fired central heating burners.
- Update on Esmonde St. regeneration project.
- Request that the courthouse site in New Ross be considered for infill housing.
- Request for update on provision of bus shelter funding.
- Query if it is local or national policy not to employ school wardens. View expressed that it would be more efficient to employ school wardens than provide safe routes to school.
- Traffic lights reported to be out of action for two months at Wexford Educate Together school.
- Query if traffic lights are assessed for upgrade.
- Query if the issue of Bolt e-scooters will be brought before the Members again once the pilot is complete.
- Request that a receipt-based system be introduced for receiving housing application documentation in Housing.
- Issue of privacy for those presenting as homeless in County Hall was raised with a request for a more discrete solution.
- Query if Wexford County Council is lacking the expertise and skills to deal with air to water heat pumps.
- Request for additional crash beds to be provided in Distillery Road on a year-round basis.
- Does Wexford County Council accommodate those who are unsuccessful in securing tenant in situ rather than allowing them to become homeless?
- Request for clarity on the number of properties offered through CBL in the Rosslare Municipal District and the number of expressions of interest.
- Is it the case if someone accepts a house through HAP that they are removed from the housing list?
- View expressed that it is very unfair on a housing applicant if they are on the housing list for a period of time but when their income exceeds the threshold they are removed from the list and lose their time accrued on the housing list. Request that this be reviewed.
- Does Wexford County Council have a snow plough?
- It was noted that a lot of growth on trees is blocking public lighting.
- Request for update on traffic survey at Clohamon.
- It was noted that the flashing sign on the Bunclody side of Ballycarney has twisted.
- What is being done to combat fly tipping?
- Update sought on Bunclody CCTV scheme.
- Request for financial assistance to help with the reopening of the tourist office in Gorey.
- It was noted that there are no flashing lights at the pedestrian crossing in Riverchapel.

The meeting adjourned for a comfort break at this point.

Cllr.'s G. Carthy, J. Dwyer, C. Byrne, and J. Owens left the meeting at this point.

6. Minutes of Meetings (for Noting):

6.1 Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District Meeting – 19th November, 2024

6.2 New Ross Municipal District Meeting – 13th November, 2024

6.3 Borough District of Wexford Meeting – 18th November, 2024

6.4 Enniscorthy Municipal District Meeting – 19th November, 2024

6.5 Rosslare Municipal District Meeting – 20th November, 2024

The Members noted the minutes, as circulated.

7. Correspondence and Communications

7.1 Email from Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance re: motion dated 11th December, 2024

7.2 Letter to Wexford Mayor re: Nottingham St. Patrick's Day Festival 2025 dated 2nd January, 2025

7.3 Email from Minister O'Brien's Office re motion dated 7th January, 2025

The Members noted the correspondence, as circulated.

8. Councillor's Conferences and Training

8.1 List of Conferences/Training

Training

30/31 January '25 LAMA Spring Seminar – Kilford Arms Hotel, Kilkenny.
Delegate fee €245

5/6 February '25 Association of Irish Regions (AIR) Annual Training Seminar
Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone, Co. Meath. Fee €160

Conference

7/8/9 February '25 Celtic Conferences – "Corporate Governance" Clonakilty,
Co. Cork. Conference Fee €130.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Fleming, seconded by Cllr. O. Walsh the Council resolved to approve attendance at the above training and conference.

8.2 Councillors Conference Report

· Report of Cllr. G. Laffan who attended Celtic Conferences "Health Service Entitlements" held in December 2024.

· Report of Cllr. P. Barden who attended Celtic Conferences "Health Service Entitlements" held in December 2024

The Members noted the reports.

9. Notices of Motion

9.1 Cllr. Aoife Rose O'Brien

"I call on this council to:

- introduce a loan renovation scheme, as has been done by other Local authorities who accommodate tenants needs through the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR).
- to ask that the department support Wexford County Council on this matter."

This motion wasn't moved.

9.2 Cllr. Tom Forde, Cllr. Aoife Rose O' Brien and Cllr. Craig Doyle

"I ask that this council write to An Taoiseach and the incoming government and ask them to ban US military and US military-contracted aircraft from landing at Shannon Airport and to end the use of Shannon Airport for military transport."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde and seconded by Cllr. C. Doyle.

The Cathaoirleach advised that there would be a roll call vote on the motion. The outcome was the motion fell with seven in favour and twenty-two against. The voting was as follows:

Barden, Pat	A	Kavanagh, Paddy	A	Shannon, Raymond	F
Barron, Vicky	A	Kehoe, Pat	A	Sheehan, Michael	A
Boland, Nicky	A	Kelly, Leonard	F	Staples, Frank	A
Breen, Pip	A	Kenny, Donal	A	Staples, Robbie	A
Browne, Aidan	A	Laffan, Garry	A	Sullivan, Joe	A
Codd, Jim	F	McDonald, Darragh	A	Walsh, Catherine Bidy	A
Donohoe, Anthony	A	McDonald, Lisa	A	Walsh, Oliver	A
Doyle, Craig	F	Murphy, Barbara - Anne	A		
Farrell, Mary	A	Murphy, Marty	A		
Fleming, John	A	O'Brien, Aoife Rose	F		
Forde, Tom	F	O'Rourke, John	F		

9.3 Cllr. Tom Forde

"I ask that this council write to the incoming Minister For Housing and request that she/he, on a phased basis, bring local authority tenancies under the remit of the Residential Tenancies Board, to give local authority tenants the same rights as other tenancies and social housing tenants in Approved Housing Body tenancies."

The motion was proposed by Cllr. T. Forde, seconded by Cllr. C. Doyle and defeated on a show of hands with four in favour and nineteen against.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

Daingithe ar an

lá de Feabhra, 2025.

Cllr. Pip Breen
Cathaoirleach

Michael Drea,
County Secretary