

**Minutes of the New Ross Municipal District Monthly Meeting  
held on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 14:30hrs in the  
Council Chamber, The Tholsel, Quay Street, New Ross.**

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**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  
Eamonn Hore – District Director  
Padraig Lyng – Senior Executive Engineer (District)  
David Murphy – Executive Engineer (Roads)  
Michelle Duffin – Assistant Staff Officer  
Áine Waters – Staff Officer

**Remote:** Martina Donoghue – Administrative Officer (Housing)  
Melissa Goff – Senior Staff Officer (Environment)

**Apologies:** David Wall – Executive Planner

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**

### ***1.1 Monthly Meeting***

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, were proposed by Cllr Pat Barden and seconded by Cllr John Dwyer.

### ***Congratulations***

Cllr Bridin Murphy afforded congratulations to the district staff, particularly Director Eamonn Hore, for their great achievement at the ELG Awards where the Emigrant Park won Best Municipal District Initiative.

Cllr John Fleming congratulated Rathnure GAA Club for winning the AIB Intermediate Club Hurling Championship, and all of the candidates that ran in the recent General Election.

Cllr Michael Sheehan added his congratulations to Fr Don Kenny, who celebrates 40 years of priesthood, and to Cumas as they recently had their open day at Town & Country, a great local enterprise.

Cllr Pat Barden also congratulated the candidates in the General Election, in particular Deputy Verona Murphy for topping the poll, and the district staff for the ELG Award win.

The District Manager, Director, and Members all expressed their support for Cllr Bridin Murphy regarding the unwarranted negativity towards her surrounding the turning on of the Christmas Lights.

### *Sympathies*

The Members collectively expressed their sympathies to the following:

- The family of Malika Al Kattib, a tragic, devastating loss in the community.
- The family of our crew member Tom Byrne, his wife Aoife, daughters Cliona & Saoirse, and his mother Eileen.
- The family of Anita Bolger, who was previously a staff member in the Tholsel.
- The family of Margaret O’Gorman.
- The family of Tom Kavanagh.
- The family of Marian Cashin.
- Cllr John Fleming for two recent bereavements of his sister, Mary, and niece, Katie.

Cllr Michael Sheehan proposed the suspension of Standing Orders to discuss the Advance Factory project. Seconded by Cllr John Dwyer, standing Orders were duly suspended.

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

Cllr Michael Sheehan noted that the Advance Factory status is now on hold as the investor has determined it no longer viable. Cllr Sheehan requested that the Members hold a special meeting with representatives from the IDA, Chamber and LEO to try to progress this matter.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed that the Director of Services for Economic Development would be invited to the January Members meeting to provide an update on the matter to the Members.

## **2. Consideration of Reports and Recommendations**

### ***2.1 District Managers Report***

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

### **Nollaig New Ross 2024**

Our Christmas campaign has launched and continues throughout the Town. We managed a very successful Christmas lights “Switch On” on Saturday 23rd November,

where 800+ selection boxes were given out to children by Santa, including the almost 70 children who visited the Sensory Santa earlier in the day.

Even though the weather tried to beat us, the lights were illuminated in front of a large crowd by Santa himself, with South East Radio DJ Lee Hynes on the decks. Live music followed on stage and our Christmas Post Box returned this year, with letters given out to the children for Santa. Massive thanks to all the team who worked on the event, but a particular mention of sincere thanks goes to Eadaoin “Mrs Claus” Kavanagh here at the Tholsel, who took the baton from Ger Walsh in style.

A huge amount of work and investment went into the lights & Christmas trees this year and last, regarding long overdue repair, upgrades and additions, and we think they look fantastic for it. In addition to the lights, the Rathnure Panto Society are holding two free shows in St Michael’s Theatre, funded with thanks to Mary Browne and the Chamber, by some of the town businesses. A free film screening was also held last weekend for children. This is an excellent initiative that sees hundreds of children come to town for the show, with the hope that their families stay & shop locally once they have dropped the children.

To further support local retailers, we are again offering concessions on parking charges, with Free Parking in all Public Car Parks on set days and times.

Our Remembrance Tree in Pearse Park returns and this year our chosen charity is the Irish Kidney Association. Blank baubles are available from the Tholsel, Tirlan, Dermot Kehoe’s and the Dunbrody for a small donation to the charity.

As always, we would ask everyone to support New Ross and District again this year, to come and enjoy the festive season and to shop local.

### **New Ross Tidy Towns Recognition**

We were thrilled to see that New Ross Tidy Towns received a bronze medal in the 2024 competition, securing for the second year in a row, the highest place ever achieved. A massive well done again to all the committee and volunteers, WCC town crew and supporters for this excellent result.

### **Small Things Like These**

At the last meeting I announced four projects to mark and highlight the making of the ‘Small Things Like These’ film in New Ross. I am delighted to say that three of these are now completed or operational, being the Cillian Murphy & Claire Keegan Mural on the Quay, the walking tour of film locations by New Ross Street Focus, and of course the wonderful screening event in St Michaels Theatre held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November. A massive word of public thanks to the team here in the Tholsel and St

Michael's Theatre for the screening, with particular thanks to Ger Walsh for coming out of retirement for one last event.

All received huge coverage, local, national and international and we hope to see some benefit in the months to come in the form of visitors to New Ross. The fourth project involves an exhibition of still photography from the film and we plan to see that delivered early in the New Year. Our thanks as always to the Councillors of New Ross Municipal District for their support on these projects.

## **PROJECTS**

### **Brennan's Lane/Shambles**

Works at Brennan's Lane are nearing substantial completion with the final area being paved and a covered structure due to be installed by contractors MJS. The Shambles works continue and completion is planned for Q1 in 2025.

### **CCTV**

As requested by the Elected members, a letter has been sent to the Garda Commissioner Drew Harris requesting the New Ross CCTV Scheme be given final sign off (see correspondence). This letter was also sent to the Wexford/Wicklow Divisional Office. Since our last meeting, Enniscorthy MD has received confirmation of their approval, leaving just New Ross & Bunclody left to be approved.

### **Duncannon Fort Works**

Works at Duncannon Fort continue and are on target to be completed by Q1 2025.

### **Motorhome Park**

The Flood Risk Assessment being completed now allows for final preparations to submit the approved Motorhome Park for Part VIII. It is planned to bring this to members in early 2025.

### **Quay Street**

A draft brief has been prepared & submitted to the Project Team and is currently being reviewed. Once signed off, it will be released for initial tender of a design consultant, with contractor tender then to follow.

### **Sports Capital Funding Confirmed**

We were recently disappointed to receive notification that our District Sports Capital application for improvements at Pearce Park was unsuccessful. However, we have subsequently appealed and received confirmation of €140,000 in funding.

This funding will cover the resurfacing of the MUGA and improvements to this playing area, resurfacing of the long jump area, the extension of a storage building and additional lighting for the park. Work on these projects will begin in the New Year.

## **OTHER**

### **Age Well Expo New Ross**

Following the success of the 'Age Well Expo' in Wexford, the Age Friendly Programme Manager is looking to roll it out to the other districts. The next Expo will be held in New Ross on the 7th of March 2025 from 10:30 to 13:00 in the Youth Centre, Nunnery Lane.

The Expo will showcase services, supports and activities for those of an advanced age, and will incorporate an Energy Clinic where people can bring their energy bills and be given advice on how to reduce their bills.

### **Chamber Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2024**

I am delighted to confirm that the Emigrant Park project won the award for Best Municipal District Initiative at the Excellence in Local Government Awards in November. The awards, sponsored by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are held to recognise and celebrate the outstanding work being carried out by Local Authorities all over Ireland. The Emigrant Park was successful again, having already picked up a LAMA award earlier this year. Sincere thanks and congratulations to all who worked on this transformative project.

### **Arrow Ceremony at Hook Lighthouse**

The Cathaoirleach and Elected Members of New Ross Municipal District are invited to take part in the centuries old, traditional arrow ceremony at Hook Head. Assisted by members of the Dunbrody Archers, An Cathaoirleach Cllr Bridin Murphy will cast an arrow into the sea, claiming the Estuary for the people of New Ross at 1pm on New Year's Day.

Finally, I want to wish all the Elected Members and staff of the District, a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I hope you and your families have a peaceful time and get to enjoy a bit of a break after a very busy year.

The District Manager responded to queries raised by the members. A discussion ensued.

#### ***2.1a Special Projects Report***

Noted.

#### ***2.2 Roads Report***

The District Engineer referred to the previously circulated report before responding to queries raised by the Members.

Cllr Michael Sheehan raised a concern regarding roads issues in a private estate in the process of being taken in charge by the Council. The District Engineer

confirmed that the Council cannot take any action until the estate is in charge of the Council.

Cllr John Dwyer complimented the District Engineer on the repairs and adjustments to the Irishtown traffic lights and raised a concern regarding future proofing same.

Cllr Pat Barden requested that the Members be advised of start dates and diversions prior to repair works commencing on two bridges, Aughnaglaur and Little Cullenstown.

The District Engineer commended the crew for their hard work in dealing with Storm Darragh, attending over 40 trees down from Friday to Sunday. The District Manager added his compliments to the crew also.

### ***2.3 Housing Report***

The Administrative Officer referred to the previously circulated report before responding to queries raised by the Members.

Cllr John Dwyer raised a concern regarding the Council's response to a case of anti-social behaviour directed at one of our tenants.

Cllr Michael Sheehan raised the issue of tenants leaving social houses vacant without the knowledge of the Council and requested that the Rental Agreement be amended to shorten the time that tenants can leave their homes vacant.

The Administrative Officer clarified the Council's position on both anti-social behaviour and the length of time a tenant can vacate a property before the Council can act.

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

Noted.

#### ***2.3b Housing Capital***

Noted.

### ***2.4 Planning Report***

The District Manager advised that the Area Planner could not attend due to illness and there was no availability for another Planner to attend in his absence.

The District Manager further advised that the Area Planner, David Wall, is leaving Wexford County Council to take up a position in his home county of Galway.

The District Manager advised that any planning queries can be directed to Senior Executive Planner, James Lavin, until a replacement planner is appointed to the District.

The Members, Director, and District Manager all wished David Wall the best of luck in his new role in Galway County Council.

**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**

The Senior Staff Officer referred to the previously circulated report before responding to queries raised by the Members.

Cllr Marty Murphy commended the Environment Staff for their clean-up of the area around Stokestown.

**2.10 Fire Services Report**

Noted.

**2.11 Members Portal**

Noted.

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

None.

**4. Other Business**

None.

**5. Notice of Motion/s**

None

**6. Correspondence**

6.1 Correspondence re Wexford/Wicklow Garda Policing Plan 2025

6.2 Garda Commissioner Harris CCTV Letter

**7. AOB**

**THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING**

Signed on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025

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**Cllr Bridin Murphy  
An Cathaoirleach  
New Ross Municipal District**