

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW ON MONDAY 7th OCTOBER, 2019, COMMENCING 2PM

PRESENT:

COUNCILLOR I. WINTERS, CATHAOIRLEACH, COUNCILLORS T. ANNESLEY, J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, M. CREAN, S. CULLEN, G. DUNNE, A. FERRIS, P. FITZGERALD, A. FLYNN KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE, P. GLENNON, M. KAVANAGH, P. KENNEDY, P. LEONARD, S. MATTHEWS, G. MCMANUS, D. MITCHELL, J. MULLEN, M. MURPHY, D. O'BRIEN, P. O'BRIEN, R. O'CONNOR, G. O'NEILL, L. SCOTT, J. SNELL, E. TIMMINS, G. WALSH AND J. WHITMORE.

APOLOGIES: COUNCILLOR A. CRONIN.

IN ATTENDANCE:

**MR. F. CURRAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
MR. T. MURPHY, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. S. QUIRKE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. J. LANE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. M. NICHOLSON, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. C. LAVERY, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. B. GLEESON, HEAD OF FINANCE
MR. L. FITZPATRICK, HEAD OF IS
MS. L. GALLAGHER, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR
MS. C. FLOOD, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MS. T. O'BRIEN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MS. J. CARROLL, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MR. M. FLYNN, SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. D. MARNANE, A/SENIOR ENGINEER
MS. J. SINNOTT, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR
MR. T. HUGHES, IS SUPPORT
MS. K. BOYLE, ANALYST DEVELOPER
MR. DONAL O'KEEFE, BROANDBAND OFFICER
MS. G. LANG, ASSISTANT STAFF OFFICER**

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

**DEPUTY S. DONNELLY
MR. DAVID SHANNON, WICKLOW TOWN TEAM
MR. JOHN HORAN, BLESSINGTON TOWN TEAM**

VOTES OF SYMPATHY: Elected Members passed a vote of sympathy to the family of the late Ms. Patricia Kavanagh. A minutes silence was observed for the deceased.

ITEM NO. 1

To confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 2nd September, 2019.

It was proposed by Cllr. J. Snell, seconded by Cllr. S. Matthews and agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 2nd September, 2019.

ITEM NO. 2

To consider the disposal of 2.7496 hectares (6.7945 acres) of land situated at Lotts Lane, Knockroe, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow to St. Anthony's Kilcoole United F.C. , for a period of 30 years by way of a sporting lease.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. Fortune, seconded by Cllr. G. Walsh and agreed to dispose of 2.7496 hectares (6.7945 acres) of land situated at Lotts Lane, Knockroe, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow to St. Anthony's Kilcoole United F.C., for a period of 30 years by way of sporting lease.

ITEM NO. 3

To consider the disposal of 0.034623 hectares (0.08555 acres) of land situated at Sea View Avenue, Arklow, Co. Wicklow to South East Road Cycling Club, for a period of 30 years by way of a sporting lease.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. S. Bourke and agreed to dispose of 0.04623 hectares (0.085555 acres) of land situated at Sea View Avenue, Arklow, Co. Wicklow to South East Road Cycling Club, for a period of 30 years by way of sporting lease.

ITEM NO 4

To consider the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report, September 2019.

The Elected Members were circulated with the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report, September 2019 on 2nd October, 2019. The Chief Executive advised that he would take the report as read and also take any questions in relation to it. He mentioned some of the highlights since the previous meeting, being the launch of the new mobile library, enterprise town awards judging for Ashford and Rathdrum, grant applications submitted for projects and the Eco Trail which took place on the 28th of September starting and finishing on Bray Sea Front.

Elected Members made the following contributions which were responded to by the Chief Executive:

- What is the up to date position in relation to Housing First and what efforts are being made to house the families numbering 32 children in B&B accommodation currently
- Information requested with regard to public lighting in housing estates.
- Comparison figures for housing welcomed within the Chief Executives Report.
- Query as to the current status of the roads project at the N11 Kilmacangou, and have there been changes to the scheme in the tender documents.
- Reference made to the 336 homes to be built in the village of Blessington, but over the border in Kildare, with development levies being paid to Kildare County council and what actions is being taken to discuss the allocations with KCC.
- Reference made to some five boats damaged in the storm in Bray and Wicklow Town and is there anything that can be done by the Harbour Board to notify weather alters to harbour users in the future.
- Reference made to the unfinished garage development and apartment development in Ashford and is there anything the Council can do to bring a solution to the matter.
- Update requested on the proposed CRM system and how the system will affect the municipal districts.
- What role does WCC play in housing asylum seekers and ensuring that they have access to the supports that the need.
- Can WCC liaise with the ESB to try and get a more timely approach to deal with ESB and network faults
- What is the position in relation to unspent monies in Municipal Districts

- Reference made to Dublin City Council redeveloping their market area at Capel Street and is there an opportunity for Wicklow County Council to feed into this initiative with regard to the food strategy.
- Does the Department of Justice get in touch with the Council with regard to the Direct Provision Centres and if so, when was the last time the Department was in communication with the Council.
- Reference made to the recent loss of life on the N81 through a road accident and to highlight the shelving of this project.

Request for Suspension of standing orders: The Cathaoirleach advised that a suspension of standing orders had been received from Cllr. J. Mullen, seconded by Cllr. Paul O'Brien to discuss the issue of personal abuse and threats on social media with the support of the elected members it was proposed to discuss this issue at 4.30 p.m.

This was agreed.

Mr. M. Flynn Senior Engineer responded to the query raised in relation to the N11 and that it was intended to meet the landowner with concerns that week.

ITEM NO. 5

To receive a general update on the work of the Town Teams with short presentation by the Chairs of Blessington Town Team and Wicklow Town Team.

Ms. C. Flood, Senior Executive Officer, Enterprise and Corporate Services gave a presentation in relation to the work of the town teams.

"A Framework for Town Centre Renewal" published by Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Retail Consultation Group, is the driving force behind the formation of Town Teams. This Action Plan was initiated as part of the APJ 2014. The Framework proposes a sustainable model for town centre renewal

The framework proposes 3 steps:

1. Engagement/Health Check
2. Formation of a Town Team /Town Centre Management Partnership
3. Develop a Town Centre Action Plan

"One Vision, One Voice" - collaboration and unity of message

Health Check for Town Teams and indicators

Failte Ireland Destination Towns

1. Access Orientation & Signage
2. Attractiveness of the town
3. Public Realm
4. Interpretation, Storytelling, Animation
5. Things to do and see in the daytime
6. Things to do and see in the evening
7. Accommodation
8. Food and Drink
9. Retail
10. Festivals and Events

11. Sustainability
12. Basic Services and Safety
13. Awareness and Marketing

Town Teams Established in:

- Bray
- Greystones
- Arklow
- Wicklow
- Blessington

Stakeholders Represented on Town Teams

- Business & Retailers
- Landlords
- Employers
- Chambers of Commerce
- Tourism and hospitality
- An Garda Síochána
- Community Voluntary Groups: Tidy Towns/Heritage groups
- Educators
- WCC Members & Officials

Wicklow Action Plans/ Committees

- Public Realm/Tidy Towns
- Business /Retail
- Culture and Heritage
- Greenways and Tourism
- Marketing and Promotion
- Festivals and Events
- Transport - Park and Ride/ Linkages
- Safety and Security
- Finance and Funding

Bray Town Team

- Built on the success of the Purple Flag Team achieving accreditation for Town Centres offering improved evening /night time environment -
- Bray participated in an Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme
- Festivals and Events
- Public Realm/ Wayfinding/Signage
- Produced a guide to doing business in Bray
- Working on a Town Centre Health Check

Greystones 2020

Initiated by local business leaders

- Christmas Lights/Festival
- Greystones Train Station
- Public Realm Plan
- A New Website for Greystones

Arklow Town Team

- Flower baskets

- Town Centre Health Check
- Destination Town Audit
- Design and Development of Parade Ground/ business hub
- Ronnie Delaney Commemorative Statue
- Halloween spooktakular
- CCTV
- Shop Front Painting Scheme
- Applying for charitable status
- Considering Purple Flag application

Arklow Town Team

Arklow were awarded the Dementia Friendly Garden Bronze Medal at Bloom 2018

Wicklow Town Team

Established following the “Kickstart Wicklow”

- Improvement of public realm
- Town Centre Health Check
- Working to develop a Digital hub to attract start up businesses to Wicklow.
- Proposals to develop a Greenway/Blueway from Greystones to Wicklow.
- Development of a park and ride facility close to the M11 aimed at reducing commuting times.
- Development of a high quality heritage trail
- Online retail survey /retail plan for the town
- File
- Parking survey

Blessington Town Team

The Town Team was built on the success in being selected as Leinster’s Most Enterprising Town in 2017.

Collaboration between Blessington Forum and WCC Blessington MD “Health Check” which will lead to a Vision Statement and Action Plan. Community CCTV

Working Groups

- Blessington Greenway and Tourism
- Public Realm and Tidy Towns
- Planning and Infrastructure
- Healthy Blessington
- Business
- Culture and Heritage

Funding and Finance

- Most Town Teams are set up as legal entities, and have appointed accountants
- Sources of Funding
- Wicklow County Council – under discretionary funding
- Leader
- Town and Village Renewal Scheme under Dept of Rural and Community Development
- Department of Justice (CCTV)
- Sponsorship
- Donations in kind e.g expertise/advice

Bank of Ireland National Enterprising Towns Awards

- 2019 Ashford and Rathdrum participated results awaited
- 2018 Roundwood, Wicklow, Arklow and Bray entered. Bray and Arklow won awards
- 2017 Awards Blessington - Most Enterprising Town in Leinster in the 3,000 to 7,000 population category
- Greystones - runner-up in the Leinster region in the over 7,000 population category

Mr. David Shannon, Chair of the Wicklow Town Team presented to the elected members in relation to their work of the Wicklow Town Team, their collaboration with the Municipal District Members, the work carried out to date and future projects in the pipeline.

Mr. John Horan, Chair of the Blessington Town Team played a short video showing the work of the Town Team in Blessington and all that the area has to offer as well as the collaboration between community, business and municipal district.

ITEM NO 6

To receive a presentation on the Draft County Wicklow Digital Strategy 2019-2024.

The Cathaoirleach advised that it was proposed with the agreement of the elected members to hear notice of motion number 3 following the presentation in the Wicklow Digital Strategy 2019 – 2024.

Mr. D. O’Keeffe, Broadband Officer gave the following presentation to the elected members and also responded to queries raised :

- **Why a Digital Strategy?** A Digital Strategy is a fundamental step to help reap the full rewards of a digitally enabled society: It sets out a vision to:
 - Facilitate development of broadband and digital Infrastructure
 - Increase citizen and business digital skills
 - Grow our local digital economy
 - Transform to a digitally enabled Local Authority
- **County Wicklow Digital Strategy**
 - Guidelines from Dept. of Rural and Community Development
 - Policy Context and current Digital Landscape
 - Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement
 - Four Core Strategic Themes
- **Digital Context**
- **Policy Context - EU & Government of Ireland**
- **Wicklow’s Digital Landscape**

Consultation and Engagement

- Strategy working groups
- Stakeholder meetings with focus groups
- Telecoms meetings
- One-to-one consultation
- Digital survey

- **Digital Survey Results**

- Total of c.935 survey submissions over 32 days (91% online)
- Focused on citizen's broadband service, internet and digital technology use, online services and remote working

- **Core Strategic Themes**

1. Broadband & Digital Infrastructure
2. Citizen Smart
3. Digital Economy
4. Digital Council

- **Digital Strategy Delivery:** Establish an oversight and monitoring committee

Responsibilities:

- continually tracking the progress of the implementation plan
- Identifying areas of further opportunity and areas of delayed progress
- Show progress on actions by updating the implementation plan on an annual basis.

This concluded the presentation.

Councillor T. Fortune gave a broad background to the issue and read the following motion to the floor which was seconded by Cllr. M. Kavanagh. *'Wicklow County Council has a social responsibility so serve, inform and protect the public and the environment from exposure to harm, and therefore it opposes the roll-out of unregulated 5G in the County of Wicklow based on the 'precautionary principle' pending the enactment by Dail Eireann of protective legislation. In the meantime, it is proposed that a cross-party '5G Advisory Council Committee' or working group be established (including independent representatives) who would be mandated to report back to Council on the potential harmful health effects of wireless EMF on our environment and in particular on our Carbon Footprint'.*

Elected members raised queries and made the following contributions which were responded to by Mr. D. O Keefe in relation to the presentation on the Digital Strategy:-

- Recognition of the work done with young people during the development of the strategy and will the work of the working groups be continued/expanded?
- Update requested on the roll out of national broadband in rural areas
- View expressed that there should be a greater push towards the development of digital hubs across the County and increased broadband capacity to enable people to work from home.
- Lack of broadband is not just a rural problem, it affects large towns also.

The Cathaoirleach reverted to the motion and suggested that the first part of the motion be discussed and the second part be referred to the Planning and Environment SPC. The Chief Executive advised that the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA) has the responsibility for policy relating to the health effects of non-ionising radiation including electromagnetic fields and that the Minister had recently made new regulations conferring additional responsibilities for public exposure to non-ionising radiation on the EPA. He advised that ComReg is the statutory body responsible for the regulation of the electronic communications sector and the postal sector and has commissioned audit reports to verify that

licensed operators are in compliance with their licence conditions relating to emission limits for non-ionising radiation. In relation to planning policy he advised of the objectives in the County Development Plan for telecommunications in relation to the facilitation of the roll out of the National Broadband Plan and also the development of new masts etc.

Time Extension: It was agreed on the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, seconded by Cllr. J. Behan to extend the meeting to 5.30 p.m.

It was proposed by Cllr. T. Fortune and seconded by Cllr. M. Kavanagh to put the first part of the Notice of Motion to a vote viz: *Wicklow County Council has a social responsibility so serve, inform and protect the public and the environment from exposure to harm, and therefore it opposes the roll-out of unregulated 5G in the County of Wicklow based on the 'precautionary principle' pending the enactment by Dail Eireann of protective legislation*

It was proposed by Cllr. S. Matthews and seconded by Cllr. L. Scott to put the full Notice of Motion to the Planning and Environment SPC.

The motion proposed by Cllr. T. Fortune and seconded by Cllr. M. Kavanagh was put to a vote and following a roll call was agreed by a margin of 17 votes for, 8 against, 5 not present and 2 abstaining viz:-

FOR 17	CLLRS T. ANNESLEY, J. BEHAN, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, P. FITZGERALD, A. FLYNN KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE, M. KAVANAGH, P. KENNEDY, P. LEONARD, G. MCMANUS, J. MULLEN, M. MURPHY, D. O'BRIEN, P. O'BRIEN, J. SNELL AND G. WALSH.
AGAINST 8	CLLRS. V. BLAKE, M. CREAN, S. CULLEN, S. MATTHEWS, R. O'CONNOR, L. SCOTT, J. WHITMORE AND I. WINTERS.
NOT PRESENT 5	CLLRS. A. CRONIN, G. DUNNE, P. GLENNON, G. O'NEILL AND E. TIMMINS.
ABSTAINING 2	CLLRS. A. FERRIS AND D. MITCHELL.

ITEM NO 9

To consider passing a resolution that: Wicklow County Council sanction the borrowing of the sum of €20.18m in respect of the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. S. Bourke and agreed to pass the resolution that Wicklow County Council sanction the borrowing of the sum of €20.18m in respect of the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme.

ITEM NO 10

To adopt the Wicklow County Council Annual Report, 2018

Elected Members were circulated with the Wicklow County Council Annual Report, 2019 on 2nd October, 2019. It was proposed by Cllr. S. Bourke, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien and agreed to adopt the Wicklow County Council Annual Report, 2018.

ITEM NO 11

To set a date for the Annual Budget Meeting of Wicklow County Council

It was proposed by Cllr. A. Ferris, seconded by Cllr. S. Cullen and agreed to set the date for the Annual Budget Meeting of Wicklow County Council for Monday 25th November, 2019 commencing at 10.00a.m.

ITEM NO 12**To consider the ratification of 2 additional Elected Members to the Protocol Committee of Wicklow County Council: Councillor John Snell and Councillor Steven Matthews.**

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Kennedy, seconded by Cllr. G. Walsh and agreed to the ratification of Cllr. John Snell and Cllr. Steven Matthews as 2 additional Elected Members to the Protocol Committee of Wicklow County Council

ITEM NO 7**To receive a presentation on Social Housing**

Mr. Joe Lane, Director of Services, Housing and Corporate Estate referred to the presentation on housing supply the previous month and that D. Marnane would present on supply and construction and that Ms. J. Carroll would present on Housing supports. He advised that the information in the presentation would augment the information in the Chief Executives Report.

Mr. D. Marnane, A/Senior engineer presented on:-

- The five pillars – rebuilding Ireland
- Central garage site in Bray
- Carrig Eden development Greystones
- Supply and leasing
- Affordable housing
- Serviced site funds
- Acquisition programme
- Repair and leasing scheme
- Vacant house scheme
- Disabled persons grants
- Energy upgrade works
- Repairs programme
- Inspection of rental properties

Ms. J. Carroll, Senior Executive Officer presented on:-

- Social Housing need – Eligibility criteria, number of applications
- Scheme of letting priorities, 2018
- Social Housing Tenancies – rent accruals
- Estate Management
- Approach to homelessness
- HAP
- Housing First
- Traveller Accommodation
- Refugee Resettlement Programme
- Private rental social housing options

Elected members made the following contributions/raised queries which were responded to by the presenters:

- Request that the Council consider reintroducing building of rural houses
- In relation to provision of accommodation for homeless women and children view expressed that there should be emergency accommodation and not just a women's refuge

- Affordable housing issue is the most alarming concern and Wicklow County Council should be striving to add value.
- Information on how the points system for social housing is assessed
- Additional detail on stat of 300 vacant properties requested
- What is the average turn around time for relets
- Lack of sewerage and water facilities in areas around the county are putting pressure on housing provision
- Provision of additional social housing by the Council will bring in additional rent, needs to be balanced with the provision by housing bodies
- Of the 4,348 on the housing list, how many are seeking social housing and how many are seeking social housing supports
- It would be helpful to elected members if they were advised of the rationale for work to be done to houses as then it could be related to the tenant.
- In relation to unauthorised encampments, what is the council's policy to secure sites when occupants move on.

Discussion on the matter concluded.

ITEM NO 8

To consider the adoption of the Wicklow County Council Litter Management Plan 2019-2024.

This item was deferred to meeting of November, 2019.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS: Proposed by Cllr. J. Mullen, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien:-

That Wicklow County Council notes the increasing level of personal abuse and threats being made on social media against Public Representatives. Wicklow County Council asks all public representatives to be leaders in ensuring that bullying, abusive and threatening language is not used online and to ask their supporters to engage in online debate in a respectful manner. Wicklow County Council also asks the Executive to provide support to any representative that is being targeted online and engage with An Garda Siochana to ensure that any illegal behaviour is investigated'

Elected members welcomed the motion and incidences and experiences were discussed.

Ms. L. Gallagher, Meetings Administrator read out the following response.

Wicklow County Council has an Acceptable Use Policy. The purpose of this document is to outline the policy for the safe, professional and proper use of Wicklow County Council computing, online and messaging systems.

This procedure applies to all users of the Information Systems and any services accessible from those systems by any users from Wicklow County Council. This includes permanent and temporary staff members, elected members, independent contractors, subcontractors, staff of partner organisations or any other user of the Information Systems and related services provided by Wicklow County Council.

Users of the Information Systems and related services are expected to abide by this Acceptable Usage Procedure, its related Acceptable Usage Policy document and all other appropriate policy and procedure documents related to the use of ICT systems and devices.

All users of Wicklow County Council Information Systems and related services are expected to use these resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, moral and lawful manner.

Urgent Question

Ms. L. Gallagher advised that Cllr. J. Behan had an urgent question regarding the cost to Wicklow County Council of the event hosted by Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall and gave the following response which was noted. Response to be circulated to all members.

The cost to WCC of the event hosted for Their Royal Highnesses Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall was €23,398. The value of the media coverage in Ireland alone is estimated to be 350,000. Based on this estimate, the Nationwide Programme broadcast in July and based on sites visited by the Royals possibly generated another €300K

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

**CLLR. IRENE WINTERS
CATHOAIRLEACH
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MS. LORRAINE GALLAGHER
SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/
MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

Confirmed at meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday the 4th of November, 2019.