

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 22<sup>ND</sup>  
MARCH, 2021, COMMENCING 2PM VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT:**

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

**APOLOGIES:**

**CLLR ERIKA DOYLE**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**MS. L. GALLAGHER, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES/ MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR  
MR. J. LANE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, HOUSING AND CORPORATE ESTATE  
MR. B. GLEESON, HEAD OF FINANCE**

**APOLOGIES**

**MR. FRANK CURRAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE.**

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At the commencement of the meeting a roll call was taken. The Meetings administrator advised of meetings etiquette for online meetings and that the press and some members of the public were also present.

**ITEM NO. 1**

**That the Members of Wicklow County Council call on the Government to reinstate, in the Land Development Agency Bill, the legal requirement that Councillors must consent to the sale of all public land in the ownership of the Council by way of a Disposal Motion (Section 183) voted for by a majority of Councillors in public session.**

At the outset of the meeting the Cathaoirleach welcomed the elected members to the special meeting. He advised of the purpose of the meeting set out in the requisition received on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March, 2021 and circulated on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, as follows:-

*'That the Members of Wicklow County Council call on the Government to reinstate, in the Land Development Agency Bill, the legal requirement that Councillors must consent to the sale of all public land in the ownership of the Council by way of a Disposal Motion (Section 183) voted for by a majority of Councillors in public session.'*

Prior to proceeding with the meeting the Cathaoirleach read to the meeting letter he received from Chief Executive Frank Curran which was noted by the elected members:-

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Dear Cathaoirleach,

16<sup>th</sup> March, 2021

As you are aware, a Special Meeting of Wicklow County Council will be held on Monday, 22nd March 2021, the purpose of which is to discuss the following:

*“That the Members of Wicklow County Council call on the Government to reinstate, in the Land Development Agency Bill, the legal requirement that Councillors must consent to the sale of all Public land in the ownership of the Council, by way of a Disposal Motion (Section 183) voted by a majority of Councillors in Public Session”*

*I am currently Chairman of the County and City Management Association’s Committee on Housing, Building and Land Use and consequently a member of the Board of the Housing Agency and an interim Board Member of the Land Development Agency.*

*In order to avoid any potential conflict of interest, or perceived bias, I will not be attending the above meeting. Mr. Joe Lane, Director of Housing, will be available to take any questions.*

*I trust this is in order.*

Frank Curran  
Chief Executive

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Elected members made the following contributions:-

- Representations have been received from a number of local authorities around the country and strong statements have been made by both LAMA, the Local Authorities Members’ Association of Local Government and by the AILG which are all stating that the provisions of Section 56 of the Land Development Agency Bill is a bridge too far.
- The Bill proposes the removal of requirement for local authority elected members to consider a Section 183 notice under the Local Government Act, for land that is being transferred by Wicklow County Council to the Land Development Agency. The Bill proposes for the by-passing of elected members in this decision.
- This provision requires further scrutiny and concern expressed that elected members who have the democratic mandate to ensure that the local authority gets best value for the sale and transfer of lands in the best interest of the citizens is being removed in this case.
- The programme for Local Government talks about devolving more powers to the elected members through legislative process and strengthening and enhancing local democracy. This measure is a contradiction of this policy.
- It is time for the elected members to unite under one and oppose this attack on local democracy
- Elected members powers are being continuously chipped away and elected members need to unite and act as one unit.
- Reference made to functions removed from elected members and that the proposal in Section 56 of the bill needs to be opposed. Central government should be looking at extending more powers to local government, not decreasing them.

At the conclusion of the discussion the motion as set out on the agenda was proposed by Cllr. J. Behan, Seconded by Cllr. Paul O Brien and unanimously agreed by all present viz:-

*“That the Members of Wicklow County Council call on the Government to reinstate, in the Land Development Agency Bill, the legal requirement that Councillors must consent to the sale of all Public land in the ownership of the Council, by way of a Disposal Motion (Section 183) voted by a majority of Councillors in Public Session”*

It was also agreed to circulate same to all local authorities.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING**

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**CLLR. PAT KENNEDY  
CATHOAIRLEACH  
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**MS. LORRAINE GALLAGHER  
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES/  
MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

**Confirmed at meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of April, 2021.**