

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING (HYBRID) OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2022, COMMENCING 2.00 PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS S. CULLEN CATHAOIRLEACH, J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, M. CREAN, A. CRONIN, E. DOYLE, A. FERRIS, P. FITZGERALD, A. FLYNN KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE, P. GLENNON, M. KAVANAGH, P. KENNEDY, 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

COUNCILLORS T. ANNESLEY AND CLLR. G. DUNNE

IN ATTENDANCE:

**MR. B. GLEESON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
MS. L. GALLAGHER, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. B. KILKENNY, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. M. NICHOLSON, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. J. LANE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICE
MS. H. DENNEHY, A/DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. B. MCCARTHY, A/HEAD OF FINANCE
MR. S. DOYLE, A/HEAD OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS
MS. D. KENNEDY, LAW AGENT
MR. D. MARNANE, SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. J. BOWES, SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. M. DEVEREUX, SENIOR ENGINEER
MS. H. FALLON, SENIOR ENGINEER
MS. D. FORDE, PROJECT LIAISON OFFICER
MR. C. PAGE, SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MR. R. MULHALL, A/SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MS. H. PURCELL, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR
MS. J. CARROLL, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MS. T. O'BRIEN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MR. D. KEYES, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
MS. K. BOYLE, A/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
MS. A. MINION, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
MS. D. WHITFIELD, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
MS. G. O'NEILL, STAFF OFFICER
MR. T. GREGAN, CHAIR, WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE
MS. H. HOWES, PPN RESOURCE WORKER
MS. T. BYRNE, ASSISTANT STAFF OFFICER**

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.

Votes of Sympathy

Elected Members passed a vote of sympathy to the families of the late Ms. Betty Cullen, Captain William Mates, Mr. Eddie O'Sullivan, Mr. Sonny Cowman and Ms. Florence Myler. A minutes silence was observed for the deceased.

Cllr. G. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. J. Behan, requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the proposed traffic lights on the 3 main bridges over the lake to facilitate the Blessington Greenway. The Meetings Administrator advised that suspension of Standing Orders should be submitted in writing in advance of the meeting and she had not received it. The Cathaoirleach did not allow suspension of standing orders on that basis.

ITEM NO. 1

To confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 10th January 2022.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. P. Kennedy and agreed to confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 10th January 2022.

ITEM NO. 2

To consider the disposal of property comprised in Folio No. WW555L in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow being the property known as 36 Knockenrahan, Arklow, Co. Wicklow by Transfer Order to Edward and Kay O'Connor of 36 Knockenrahan, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, the persons entitled to the freehold interest in the property.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. P. Kennedy and agreed to dispose of property comprised in Folio No. WW555L in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow being the property known as 36 Knockenrahan, Arklow, Co. Wicklow by Transfer Order to Edward and Kay O'Connor of 36 Knockenrahan, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, the persons entitled to the freehold interest in the property as set out in statutory notice circulated.

ITEM NO. 3

To consider the disposal of 0.0023Ha or thereabouts of land comprised within part of Folio WW40424F known as 36 Connolly Square, Bray situated in the townland of Bray, Co. Wicklow by Deed of Transfer and Rectification to Mr. Roy O'Neill.

It was proposed by Cllr. A. Flynn-Kennedy, seconded by Cllr. J. Behan and agreed to dispose of 0.0023Ha or thereabouts of land comprised within part of Folio WW40424F known as 36

Connolly Square, Bray situated in the townland of Bray, Co. Wicklow by Deed of Transfer and Rectification to Mr. Roy O'Neill as set out in statutory notice circulated.

ITEM NO. 4

To consider the disposal of 0.0030 hectares or thereabouts of land comprised in Folio No. WW726F Co. Wicklow in the townland of Blessington, Co. Wicklow being the property known as 37 Carrig Glen, Blessington, Co. Wicklow by Transfer Order to Ms. Monica Slattery of 37 Carrig Glen, Blessington, Co. Wicklow.

It was proposed by Cllr. E. Timmins, seconded by Cllr. G. O'Neill and agreed to dispose of 0.0030 hectares or thereabouts of land comprised in Folio No. WW726F Co. Wicklow in the townland of Blessington, Co. Wicklow being the property known as 37 Carrig Glen, Blessington, Co. Wicklow by Transfer Order to Ms. Monica Slattery of 37 Carrig Glen, Blessington, Co. Wicklow as set out in statutory notice circulated.

ITEM NO. 5

To consider the disposal of 0.0071 hectares or thereabouts of land comprised in Folio WW19074F Co. Wicklow in the townland of Tiknock, Co. Wicklow being a strip of land to the rear of 1 Murrell Drive, Inbhear Mor Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow to Mr. Patrick Dunne and Ms. Patricia Dunne, 1 Murrell Drive, Inbhear Mor Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. M. Murphy and agreed to dispose of 0.0071 hectares or thereabouts of land comprised in Folio WW19074F Co. Wicklow in the townland of Tiknock, Co. Wicklow being a strip of land to the rear of 1 Murrell Drive, Inbhear Mor Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow to Mr. Patrick Dunne and Ms. Patricia Dunne, 1 Murrell Drive, Inbhear Mor Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow as set out in statutory notice circulated.

ITEM NO. 6

To receive a presentation: Wicklow County Council Audit Committee end of year report 2021.

Mr. Tom Gregan, Chairman of the Committee, reported to the elected members as follows:-

To the Cathaoirleach & Each Member of Wicklow County Council

Wicklow County Council Audit Committee – Annual Progress Report for the Year Ended 31st December 2021

Dear Councillor,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Council here today on the work of the Wicklow County Council's Audit Committee for the twelve month period up to 31st December 2021.

The Audit Committee is a statutory committee established in accordance with Section 59 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The Audit Committee has five members who are as follows:

- Mr. Tom Gregan, Chairman
- Mr. Noel Geraghty, Vice Chairman
- Ms. Mary Savage
- Cllr Mary Kavanagh
- Cllr. Gerry Walsh (To June 2021)
- Cllr Edward Timmins (From June 2021)

The role of the Audit Committee is to support the elected members by providing an independent assessment of the corporate governance environment, the quality of the risk management, financial reporting, financial management and internal audit.

The functions of the Audit Committee are set out in the Local Government Audit Committee Regulations 2014.

Internal Audit Assignments for 2021

From 2019 the responsibility for the annual audit of Programme Implementers under SICAP was assigned to the Internal Audit units of Local Authorities. Two Programme Implementers are engaged to administer the SICAP programmes in Wicklow County Council's administrative area and these are Bray Area Partnership (BAP) and County Wicklow Partnership (CWP).

The following Internal Audit Reports were reported on to the Audit Committee during the year:

- Wicklow County Council - Review of Interests in Companies – Governance Structures & Arrangements.

Individual Reports on the following companies were completed:

- Mermaid Arts Centre
- Bray Swimming Pool & Leisure Centre Limited
- Wicklow Recreational Services Limited
- SICAP – Bray Area Partnership – 2020
- SICAP – County Wicklow Partnership – 2020
- Cash Handling Controls

The following audit was also commenced and is due to be finalised shortly:

- Wicklow County Council Review of ICT Security – the objective of this important review is to provide assurance that the ICT controls in place within Wicklow County Council’s ICT infrastructure are operating efficiently and effectively.

Further details are outlined in Appendix 1 to this report

Report to National Oversight & Audit Commission – Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report

Internal Audit, in collaboration with the Procurement Section, completed the annual Quality Assurance Report as part of Wicklow County Council’s compliance with the Public Spending Code (PSC).

The Public Spending Code requires that a number of projects are selected for review in accordance with the objectives of the Public Spending Code. The report submitted included the required “In-Depth Checks” on the following areas:

- Capital Asset Leasing Facility - Payment & Availability Agreement – Revenue Expenditure Being Incurred
- Blessington Greenway– Capital Expenditure Being Incurred
- Part V Bollarney Woods Wicklow Town – Capital Expenditure Being Incurred
- Merrymeeting Rathnew Social Housing Scheme – Capital Expenditure Being Incurred

Further details are outlined in Appendix 1 to this report

Annual Audit Plan

The Annual Audit Plan sets out the proposed assignments for the coming year. The plan is drafted following consultation with the Chief Executive, Directors of Service/Heads of Function. Progress on audits will be reported to the Council in due course.

Meeting with the Local Government Auditor

Mr Daragh McMahon, Local Government Auditor attended at a meeting of the Committee in December.

The Audit Committee was circulated with a copy of the Statutory Audit Report 2020 in advance of the meeting.

The Local Government Auditor outlined the main elements of his report to the Committee and I am pleased to report to the Members that the Audit Report is “Unqualified”

Furthermore, no audit adjustments arose as a result of the audit.

The Audit Committee is pleased to note the progress on the implementation of an updated risk management strategy in the organisation as this is an important area in the governance framework. Progress in relation to the accounting treatment of Development Contributions is also noted.

As required by Section 121 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 60 of the Local Government Act 2014, I have attached a report to the Council on the Committee’s consideration of the Local Government Auditor’s Report in Appendix 2.

Procurement

The December meeting received a report on developments in the Procurement Section and we note and welcome the on-going progress being made by the Council in this area.

The Audit Committee received a report on developments in the Procurement Section and we note and welcome the on-going progress being made by the Council in this area.

This comprehensive report covered the following main areas

- Policy, Governance & Compliance
- Processes & Systems
- Procurement References
- Use of Framework Agreements
- Low Value Purchase Cards
- Objectives & Plans for 2022

Training Day

Regulation 5 of the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014, requires that the training needs of the Audit Committee are reviewed on an annual basis and reported to the Local Authority. I can advise the Members that a training event will be held in collaboration with the Institute of Public Administration. The key themes to be addressed are:

- Responsibilities of Audit Committees
- Update on Developments in Corporate Governance
- Audit Committee Evaluation
- NOAC and its Oversight Role

Audit Committee Effectiveness

Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014, states that the Audit Committee shall undertake annually a review of its own effectiveness and shall report to the Local Authority on its findings.

The Audit Committee has complied with this requirement through the use of an extensive evaluation questionnaire.

I can confirm that the Audit Committee conducts its business in accordance with the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014.

Annual Work Programme

The Committee's annual work programme involves regular meetings throughout the year. The annual work programme may be summarised as follows:

- Periodic meetings as required by statutory regulation
- Consideration and approval of the annual internal audit plan
- Dedicated meetings with the members of the senior management team
- Chairman's meeting with the Chief Executive
- Annual training day

- Review of the Risk Management System
- Consideration of internal audit reports including those prepared in connection with the Public Spending Code
- Consideration of reports issued by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC)
- Consideration of any relevant Departmental Value for Money reports
- Review of the Annual Financial Statement
- Meeting with the Local Government Auditor and consideration of the annual Statutory Audit Report

The Annual Work Programme as outlined above is submitted for adoption by the Local Authority in accordance with Section 9 of the Local Government (Audit Committee) Regulations 2014.

Conclusion

On behalf of the Audit Committee I would like to thank you, the Members of Wicklow County Council for your enduring support and assistance and we assure you of our ongoing commitment to the work of the Committee

We acknowledge the continuous support and encouragement of the outgoing Chief Executive, Mr. Frank Curran and we wish him continued success in his new appointment.

On behalf of the Audit Committee I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Brian Gleeson on his recent appointment as Chief Executive. In his role as Head of Finance Brian became well known to the Audit Committee and we know that we can look forward to his continued support and cooperation.

I also wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the Management Team who give of their time, unstintingly, in their presentations to the Committee. And, in addition, we would like to express our appreciation to Mr Daragh McMahon, Local Government Auditor, for his continued cooperation and input.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Audit Committee to wish you, the Members of Wicklow County Council, every success in the year ahead,

Go raibh mile maith agaibh.

Tom Gregan
Chairman
Wicklow County Council Audit Committee

7th February 2022

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chief Executive joined with the Cathaoirleach in thanking the Audit Committee for the work that they carry out for the council describing their work as extremely important and thorough.

ITEM NO. 7

To consider the nomination of an Elected Member to County Wicklow Partnership arising from the resignation of Cllr. P. O'Brien

It was proposed by Cllr. T. Fortune, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien and agreed to nominate Cllr. J. Behan to County Wicklow Partnership, vacancy arising from the resignation of Cllr. P. O'Brien.

ITEM NO. 8

To consider the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report, January 2022

Elected Members were circulated with the Chief Executive Monthly Management Report January 2022.

Elected Members raised questions which were responded to by the Chief Executive and the relevant Director of Services.

ITEM NO. 9

To receive an update on TII/NTA Road Allocations 2022

The Meetings Administrator read the following statement from the Baltinglass Municipal District:

A special meeting was held on Friday 4th February 2022 to discuss the recent allocation of active travel funding 2022 for Baltinglass Municipal District. The Members would like the following statement noted at Monday's full Council Meeting.

' At a Special meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District held on 4th February 2022, the Members unanimously expressed their dissatisfaction at the lack of funding allocated to the Baltinglass Municipal District under the Active Travel Scheme 2022 and in particular the lack of funding allocated to rural villages and towns within the District'

Ms. D. Forde, Project Liaison Officer gave a presentation on N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme & N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme outlining the following:

- Timeline
- Phase 2 Option Selection
- The basis for the Phase 2 Preferred Options – Assessment consisted of two parts
- Preferred Option Scenario 5a
- Preferred Option Scenario 4
- Phase 3 Design and Environmental Evaluation (due to commence January 2022)
- Funding on Scheme to date

- TII Allocation for 2022
- Benefits of the scheme
- N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme
- BPIS Phase 2 Option Selection
- Preferred Option Cross section consists of near side bus lane
- BPIS Journey Time Savings

Mr. C. Page, Senior Executive Engineer gave a presentation on Active Travel Investment Grants Allocations 2022 covering the following areas:

- NTA Active Travel Investment Programme aims to:
 - Promote awareness and uptake of travelling with a purpose
 - Improve transport options
- Active Travel Team Structure
- 2021 Active Travel Projects
 - Bray Seafront Plaza
 - Rathnew to Ashford
 - Greystones Road Windgates
 - Rathdrum Train Station
 - Blessington Improvement Works
- 2022 Project Selection Process:
 - Projects considered
 - Project review
 - Criteria for selection for Wicklow County Council Proposal
- Project Funding Application
 - Applied for 79 projects
 - Allocation of €11,692,000 sought
- Project Awarding Process
- Active Travel – Rural Minor Schemes
- NTA Allocations - 63 Projects awarded - Allocation of €9,007,500
 - 44 existing projects
 - 19 new projects
 - 36 design team projects
 - 27 implementation team projects

The presentations were followed by a discussion where some of the following concerns were expressed by the Elected Members:

- Pausing of the N11/M11 upgrade
- Lack of funding allocated to the Baltinglass Municipal District and particularly lack of funding in rural areas within the District
- Imbalance of the allocation of funding across County Wicklow
- Noise pollution intolerable for residents living beside slip road, Kilmacanogue
- Need for improved public transport south of Bray
- How was the prioritisation process implemented and who made the decisions?

- Lack of public transport within the county

Mr. B. Gleeson, Chief Executive responded to the issues raised and advised it is his intention to introduce a new funding stream to target rural areas, with a projected budget of up to €1 million over the next 2 years.

Time Extension: On the proposal of the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. S. Cullen and seconded by Cllr. J. Behan a time extension to 5.30 p.m. was agreed.

ITEM NO. 10

To receive presentations on the new Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2023 to 2028 – Preparation of the new plan – The role of the Public Participation Network (PPN) in the LECP

Ms. D. Whitfield, Administrative Officer, Community Cultural & Social Development Directorate gave a presentation outlining the following:

- Context of the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP)
- An agile and flexible approach
- Framework LECPs
- Implementation Plan
- 6 Stages – Overseen by Advisory Steering Group
 - Stage 1 – Preparation
 - Stage 2 – Consultation
- Development of Objectives and Outcomes
- Finalisation of Framework LECP
- Triangular Basis

Ms. H. Howes, PPN Resource Worker gave a presentation on County Wicklow Public Participation Network as follows:

- A collaborative journey
- A brief history –
 - Established in 2014
 - Positive growth
 - Developed good relationships –
 - Strong communities and dedicated leadership, openness to collaborative working well, functioning PPN
- What we are and what we do
 - participatory & representative structure
 - a network/networking body
 - information provision

- capacity building & training
- Collaborative & Adding Value
 - The Big Hello Funding Stream
 - Disability & Inclusion Project
 - Covid 19 Community Call
 - Sustainable Development Goals
 - PPN Stakeholder Training/Finding Your Way Around Local Government
 - Consultations – Wicklow Tree Management Strategy, County Development Plan
 - Community Climate Action Programme
 - National PPN Conference
 - Vision for Community Wellbeing & Wicklow Local Economic & Community Plan

ITEM NO. 11

To set date and time for Council Meeting: Consideration of draft County Development Plan and Chief Executive’s report by Elected Members.

The Meetings Administrator advised the Elected Members that the Corporate Policy Group had met on Monday 31st January 2022 and suggested the date of Monday 28th March 2022 commencing at 10.00 a.m. running to conclusion or if business is not concluded on that day, recommencing the following day 29th March for consideration of the draft County Development Plan.

It was proposed by Cllr. I. Winters, seconded by Cllr. A. Flynn-Kennedy and agreed by all to hold a special meeting on Monday 28th March 2022 commencing at 10.00 a.m. to consider the draft County Development Plan.

ITEM NO. 12

Correspondence

Ms. H. Purcell advised the Elected Members of the following:

- Protocol and Corporate Policy Group have approved the attendance of the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. S. Cullen at the St. Patrick’s Parade in New York and of Cllr. A. Flynn-Kennedy at the St. Patrick Celebrations in Dublin, California.
- Elected Members were circulated with CPG minutes of meetings held on 15th and 29th November 2021 and Protocol minutes of meeting held on 6th December 2021.
- Circular F01/22 - Political Donations statements were due to be returned on 31st January 2022. Some remain outstanding.
- Ethical Framework for Local Government Service annual declaration form in accordance with Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 - Annual Declaration Forms are to be submitted on or before 28th February 2022

- Wicklow Women Councillors Caucus are organising walk, talk and support events to mark International Women's Day on Sunday 6th March 2022. Further details will be publicised by the Caucus Members on social media.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

**CLLR. SHAY CULLEN
CATHAOIRLEACH
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MS. HELEN PURCELL
SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/
MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

Confirmed at meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday the 7th March 2022