

Minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Buildings, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 on Wednesday 5th November 2025.

In Attendance: Cathaoirleach Graham Richmond, Cllr. Paul O'Brien , Cllr. Caroline Winstanley, Mr. John Douglas, Ms. Emma McMillen (via Zoom), Ms. Kathleen Kelleher, Mr. Seán O'Callaghan, Ms. Kathleen Kelleher, Mr. T. J. Foley, Ms. Cici Zheny, Mr. Michael Nicholson, Ms. Jackie Carroll, Mr. Joe Lane Ms. Caroline Fox, Ms. Linda Healy, Mr. David Porter, Mr. David Reel, Mr. Mark Byrne

Apologies:

Cathaoirleach Richmond opened the September meeting of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee and welcomed all present.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council dated 3rd September 2025.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. T.J Foley, and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council dated 3rd September 2025.

2. Matters Arising - None

3. Housing – Capital Delivery

Presentation, by Lynda Doherty, Vacant Homes officer (for circulation to the committee)

Approximately 700 vacant homes in Wicklow. The Vacant Homes Scheme is among the more successful housing schemes launched by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, that has been introduced over the years. It is proposed to enhance the scheme by adding an additional €20,000 grant for over a shop accommodation. This new grant will be under the remit of the Town Regeneration Officer.

Following the presentation, Cllr. O'Neill was informed that the regulations for this scheme was set by the Department and these regulations did not include any no criteria that would benefit locals/native to the area. Ms. Kelleher was advised that under the scheme that a house had to be two years derelict/vacant to qualify under the scheme for the grant.

The Committee were informed that under the scheme, a derelict LA house does not qualify for the grant. Also, Ms. Doherty replied to Mr. Douglas, that a developer can not qualify for this grant.

Mr. O'Callaghan queried why there are only 2 houses in Wicklow on the derelict site register in Wicklow County Council and It was proposed that the planning department should provide the committee with some information on this matter.

Housing Infrastructure

Mr. Porter gave an update on the housing infrastructure and delivery of Social Housings in the County. It was noted that over the 3-year period Wicklow meet the housing delivery targets. There was concerned that the availability of land could hamper the success of the delivery of units. The planning commencements have decreased, reflecting developments are not progressing. There are issues with the availability of serviced sites. A higher density of houses will be required in housing developments, which is a challenge to achieve on these sites.

Schemes on site

- Merrymeeting Phase 3 - Wicklow (7 bunaglows)
- Lott Lane (75 social units) - Construction has commenced
- Carrigoona (11 units) (was originally 13 but 2 units were removed) - Construction has commenced

Affordable units

- 75 Affordable units – Lott Lane, Kilcoole

Part 8 schemes approved in 2024 - progress

- Merrymeeting ph 3, Rathnew (7 units) – Contractor on site
- Ballinahinch, Ashford (19 units) – Contractor on site
- Tinahask, Arklow (74 units) – Detail Design and tender documentation underway

Part 8 Scheme

Barndarrig scheme – Part 8 planning approved in Oct 2025.

4. Housing - Services –

General Update

Mr. Nicholson informed the members of that rent review is continuing and a most of the 7,500 for have been returned. Under the tenancy agreement tenants are obliged to declare changes to their income amounts. The rent review is be based on the new Differential rent scheme, which amalgamated the Bray and Wicklow Differential Rent Scheme. It is proposed to complete this project by end of quarter 2 of 2026.

5. Housing – Integration

Ms. Carroll presented on Integration in the County. This presentation will be circulated after the meeting.

6. Correspondence:

None received.

7. Any other business:

The following brief report has given on the windows and doors programme for Farrankelly Close, Greystones

- A Planned maintenance budget is being utilised to the value of €200k for these works
- Works commencing next week
- This is the first phase of this programme
- Proposal to sell a property to assist with the funding of this works programme.
- It is anticipated that this programme will be completed next year subject to funding.

Ms. Kelleher stated the one-bedroom apartment are not suitable as there is no space for visitors in one bedroom apartments. It was noted that the demand across the Country is 40 percent for 1 bedroom apartments.

In response to Mr.O'Callaghan, Mr. Lane advised that the housing agency's and the Department's website would be a useful resource to access housing policies.

8. Date of next meeting.

The next Housing Strategic Policy Committee meeting of Wicklow County Council will be held on Wednesday, 21st January 2026 at 2:30pm.

There being no other business, Cathaoirleach Graham Richmond, concluded the meeting.

Signed: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH, Cllr. Graham Richmond

Dated: _____