

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 8TH APRIL 2024, COMMENCING 2.00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS A. FLYNN KENNEDY CATHAOIRLEACH, T. ANNESLEY, M. BARRY, J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, A. CRONIN, S. CULLEN, G. DUNNE, A. FERRIS, P. FITZGERALD, T. FORTUNE, P. GLENNON, M. KAVANAGH, P. KENNEDY, P. LEONARD, D. MITCHELL, J. MULLEN, M. MURPHY, D. O'BRIEN, P. O'BRIEN, R. O'CONNOR, G. O'NEILL, M. RYAN, L. SCOTT, J. SNELL, S. STOKES, E. TIMMINS AND I. WINTERS (30)

APOLOGIES

CLLRS. E. DOYLE AND G. WALSH (2)

IN ATTENDANCE:

**MS. E. O'GORMAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
MS. L. GALLAGHER, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. J. CARROLL, A/DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. L. EARLS, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. J. LANE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. M. NICHOLSON, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. B. GLEESON, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. H. PURCELL, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR
MS. T. O'BRIEN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MS. S. NICHOLS, A/SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MR. J. BOWES, SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. F. KEOGH, SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. M. FLYNN, SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. S. KEANE, A/SENIOR ENGINEER
MR. M. DEVEREUX, SENIOR ENGINEER
MS. S. WALSH, SENIOR PLANNER
MS. S. WHITE, SENIOR EXECUTIVE PLANNER
MS. D. BURNS, HERITAGE OFFICER
MR. P. O'CONNOR, SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MR. M. WOOD O'ROURKE, ASSISTANT PLANNER
MS. S. O'BRIEN, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
MS. R. WOODS, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
MS. E. BRESLIN, SENIOR STAFF OFFICER
MR. G. MURPHY, IS TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER**

MS. T. BYRNE, ASSISTANT STAFF OFFICER
MR. C. FAY, ASSOCIATE FROM ATKINSRÉALIS

At the commencement of the meeting a roll call was taken.

Votes of Sympathy

Elected Members passed a vote of sympathy to the families of the late Ms. Elizabeth Kavanagh, Ms. Cathy Kenna, Ms. Una Deering, Captain John Barlow, Mr. Abie Jacob, Mr. Niall Keane and Mr. Michael Fitzgerald. A minutes silence was observed for the deceased.

The Elected Members extended their congratulations and good wishes to Minister Simon Harris T.D. on becoming leader of the Fine Gael and his nomination as Taoiseach of Ireland.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. T. Fortune and agreed by all to move to Item No. 13, Notices of Motion at this point, to discuss Notice of Motions No. 2 and No. 6.

ITEM NO. 13

Notice of Motions

2. Notice of motion in the name of Cllr. D. O'Brien (proposer), seconded by Cllr. M. Ryan (1st March 2024)

'This Council acknowledges the harm done by corporations that profit from protracted armed conflict and systematic violations of human rights, particularly in the context of Israel's continuing brutal assault on the people of Gaza and escalating settler terrorism in the West Bank, Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, and other conflicts around the world. With this motion, the Council encourages companies to meet their obligations to avoid contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities, and to prevent or mitigate human rights abuses linked to their operations.

The Council is aware of the crucial role of local authorities and their public procurement procedures in ensuring respect for human rights by companies, as well as their obligations under widely accepted business and human rights norms – as laid down in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Global Sullivan Principles (1999) – to promote respect for human rights by companies with which they do business.

The Council affirms that every endeavour is made to ensure that councils tender processes are consistent with the above principles, including under the Fourth Geneva convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and under customary international humanitarian law, prohibiting the importation or sale of goods or services originating in occupied territories.

This Council resolves to adopt a rights-based Ethical Procurement Policy (EPP) that takes fully into account existing obligations and standards. The EPP will incorporate widely accepted and precisely formulated international standards and explain clearly how the policy will be implemented. The primary aim of the EPP is to ensure that human rights obligations are properly acknowledged, observed and respected at all stages of the procurement process'

Response:

Responsibility for procurement is an executive function and the Chief Executive is obliged to comply with statutory procurement legislation.

The Department of Enterprise and Trade advise that neither Ireland nor the EU have restrictive measures in place in respect of Israel. Ireland has given undertakings as part of its WTO membership to grant non-discriminatory access to its markets in goods and services and has joined the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA), expanding its commitments with regard to market access.

Under the current Irish and EU Procurement regime, suppliers in a country outside of the EU that has signed up to the World Trade Organisation's Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) are eligible to submit tenders for Irish public sector contracts. A full list of GPA members is available from https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/memobs_e.htm

The Department has previously indicated that any move by a public authority to act outside of any agreement may be seen to breach our international trade commitments and also may be seen as discriminatory in relation to goods and services, otherwise legally saleable within the Union.

The Law Agent has advised that it would not be appropriate to interfere with contract law in the way proposed by the motion and this would leave Wicklow County Council open to a specific performance court action and costs. Political assertions are not grounds to alter criteria in the procurement process unless grounded in existing regulations. Furthermore, it is arguable that the subjective consideration alluding to a form of trade sanction regarding another country's actions are outside the remit of the powers of the members and would be an unsubstantiated criteria that does not exist under Procurement Law.

Based on the above advice it is determined that it is not possible to adopt the policy relating to Israel as set out in the motion.

In respect of Russia, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the European Council adopted an amendment regulation, EU Regulation 2022/576 of 08 April, 2022 which amends a 2014 Regulation to include a prohibition on the award and continued execution of public contracts and concessions with Russian nationals and entities or bodies established in Russia.

The Regulation applies restrictions to public procurement falling within the scope of the Public Procurement Directives 2009/81/EU (defence and security), 2014/23/EU (concession contracts), 2014/24/EU (public contracts) and 2014/25/EU (utilities) as provided for in

Article 5k of the Regulation. Hence it applies to any procurement above EU threshold values. It also applies to certain contracts which are outside the scope of the Public Procurement Directives, such as lotteries, real estate transactions, financial instruments, loans and some central bank services.

The Regulation mandates, in effect, that from 9 April 2022 a Russian national, or a natural or legal person, entity or body established in Russia is not allowed to participate in public procurement in Ireland or any other Member State of the Union.

Where more than 50% of the ownership of an economic operator, either directly or indirectly, is owned by a Russian national, or legal person, entity or body established in Russia or a natural or legal person, entity or body acting on behalf or at the direction of such an entity, that economic operator is not allowed to participate in a national public procurement.

It is also prohibited to award a contract to an economic operator which is relying on a subcontractor or supplier or entity which accounts for more than 10% of the contract value where that subcontractor, supplier or entity falls within the category of prohibited entities outlined above. This extends to all subcontractors relied on through the supply chain.

Following a broad discussion it was proposed by Cllr. J. Behan, seconded by Cllr. I. Winters to refer this motion to Government, to the Department of the Taoiseach, Foreign Affairs, Enterprise & Employment, Environment and Local Government for their advice on the legality of the motion and following a role call, it was defeated by a margin of 14 for, 16 against and 2 not present viz:-

FOR 14	CLLRS. J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, A. CRONIN, S. CULLEN, P. FITZGERALD, P. GLENNON, P. KENNEDY, D. MITCHELL, M. MURPHY, S. STOKES, E. TIMMINS AND I. WINTERS
AGAINST 16	CLLRS. T. ANNESLEY, M. BARRY, G. DUNNE, A. FERRIS, A. FLYNN-KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE, M. KAVANAGH, P. LEONARD, J. MULLEN, D. O'BRIEN, P. O'BRIEN, R. O'CONNOR, G. O'NEILL, M. RYAN, L. SCOTT AND J. SNELL
NOT PRESENT 2	CLLRS. E. DOYLE, AND G. WALSH

The motion proposed by Cllr. D. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. M. Ryan:

'This Council acknowledges the harm done by corporations that profit from protracted armed conflict and systematic violations of human rights, particularly in the context of Israel's continuing brutal assault on the people of Gaza and escalating settler terrorism in the West Bank, Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, and other conflicts around the world. With this motion, the Council encourages companies to meet their obligations to avoid contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own

activities, and to prevent or mitigate human rights abuses linked to their operations.

The Council is aware of the crucial role of local authorities and their public procurement procedures in ensuring respect for human rights by companies, as well as their obligations under widely accepted business and human rights norms – as laid down in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Global Sullivan Principles (1999) – to promote respect for human rights by companies with which they do business.

The Council affirms that every endeavour is made to ensure that councils tender processes are consistent with the above principles, including under the Fourth Geneva convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and under customary international humanitarian law, prohibiting the importation or sale of goods or services originating in occupied territories.

This Council resolves to adopt a rights-based Ethical Procurement Policy (EPP) that takes fully into account existing obligations and standards. The EPP will incorporate widely accepted and precisely formulated international standards and explain clearly how the policy will be implemented. The primary aim of the EPP is to ensure that human rights obligations are properly acknowledged, observed and respected at all stages of the procurement process'

was put to a vote and following a roll call the motion was passed by a margin of 18 for, 12 against and 2 not present viz:-

FOR 18	CLLRS. T. ANNESLEY, M. BARRY, G. DUNNE, A. FERRIS, P. FITZGERALD, A. FLYNN-KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE M. KAVANAGH P. KENNEDY, P. LEONARD, J. MULLEN, D. O'BRIEN, P. O'BRIEN, R. O'CONNOR, G. O'NEILL, M. RYAN, L. SCOTT AND J. SNELL
AGAINST 12	CLLRS., J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, A. CRONIN, S. CULLEN, P. GLENNON, D. MITCHELL, M. MURPHY, S. STOKES, E. TIMMINS AND I. WINTERS
NOT PRESENT 2	CLLRS., E. DOYLE, AND G. WALSH

6. Notice of motion in the name of Cllr. T. Fortune (proposer), seconded by Cllr. L. Scott (5th March 2024)

'Many, many people are struggling with the situation taking place in Palestine.

We are constantly watching the sad videos of children, women and male civilians in Palestine suffering under the constant bombing by the IDF.

Their homes, possessions and their family members have been destroyed, maimed or murdered by the brutality of the IDF. Children are denied their education and dying from

malnutrition.

In less than five months, over 100,000 people have being maimed or are dead. The majority of these are children and women.

People are fully aware and disgusted at the atrocities that took place on Oct 7th 2023. This was barbaric in every sense. All loss of lives are sad, people are shocked and saddened as they watch daily the suffering and of the conditions the Palestinian people are living under. A group of people (non-political) have come together, North Wicklow Against Genocide.

A number of meetings has taken place. Many people from different perspectives, persuasions and political backgrounds have joined together in their disgust with what the IDF are doing. It just has to stop.

A request has been made that WCC support the suffering people of Palestine in the following manner.

1. Display the Palestine Flag at all council buildings.

2. Seek across party political support to end the suffering of the Palestinian people by calling an immediate ceasefire and to end the genocide that is taking place in Gaza.

Response:

Requests to fly a flag are normally brought to the Protocol committee for consideration in advance. For example the Pride flag flies for the month of June, following the approval of the protocol committee. It would be normal that a flag is flown for a defined period, e.g. one day or one month. If a decision is made to fly the Palestine flag it should be reviewed on a monthly basis by the Protocol committee.

There followed a discussion in which the Elected Members expressed their views.

Amendment 1 was proposed by Cllr. A. Ferris, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien to include the following additional wording to the motion:

'Wicklow County Council actively supports the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement that targets businesses profiting from the oppression of the Palestinian people – and will exclude such businesses from Council procurement of goods and services'

Amendment 2 was proposed by Cllr. J. Behan, seconded by Cllr. S. Bourke.

The wording of the first line of the original motion to be retained, the balance replaced as follows:

'Many, many people are struggling with the situation taking place in Palestine.

In the light of our common humanity and having witnessed, from afar, the horrific events in Israel and Gaza over the past six months, we the Members of Wicklow County Council

condemn the murders of innocent Israeli and Palestinian human beings, whether by Hamas or the Israeli Defence Force.

We join the worldwide calls for immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and the immediate release of all hostages and we strongly support the position of the Irish Government in favour of establishment of two states living in peace side by side’.

The Meetings Administrator, Ms. H. Purcell referred to Section 18(d) of the Standing Orders which states

‘Every amendment shall be relevant to the motion on which it is moved and shall be either (a) to leave out words (b) to leave out words and insert or add others (c) to insert or add words. An amendment shall not be in order if it is equivalent to a direct negative or if it is not in fact an amendment of the motion it purports to amend’.

Ms. Purcell stated in her opinion this was not an amendment but a new notice of motion.

A vote on the original notice of motion proposed by Cllr. T. Fortune, seconded by Cllr. L. Scott, with the addition of amendment 1 proposed by Cllr. A. Ferris, seconded by Cllr. P. O’Brien was called and following a roll call the motion was passed by a margin of 23 for, 7 against and 2 not present viz:-

FOR 23	CLLR. T. ANNESLEY, M. BARRY, M. CORRIGAN, A. CRONIN, G. DUNNE, A. FERRIS, P. FITZGERALD, A. FLYNN-KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE, P. GLENNON, M. KAVANAGH P. KENNEDY, P. LEONARD, J. MULLEN, M. MURPHY, D. O’BRIEN, P. O’BRIEN, R. O’CONNOR, G. O’NEILL, M. RYAN, L. SCOTT, J. SNELL AND S. STOKES
AGAINST 7	CLLR., J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, S. CULLEN, D. MITCHELL, E. TIMMINS AND I. WINTERS
NOT PRESENT 2	CLLR., E. DOYLE AND G. WALSH

ITEM NO. 1

To confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 4th March 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr. J. Snell, seconded by Cllr. P. O’Brien and agreed to confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 4th March 2024.

ITEM NO. 2

To consider the disposal of property measuring 0.0331 Ha or thereabouts in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow comprised in Folio No. WW2593L being the property known as 24

Fernhill, Arklow, Co. Wicklow by Transfer Order to Ms. Elizabeth Whyte (as LPR of Elizabeth Byrne deceased), the person entitled to the freehold interest in the property.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. P. Kennedy and agreed to consider the disposal of property measuring 0.0331 Ha or thereabouts in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow comprised in Folio No. WW2593L being the property known as 24 Fernhill, Arklow, Co. Wicklow by Transfer Order to Ms. Elizabeth Whyte (as LPR of Elizabeth Byrne deceased), the person entitled to the freehold interest in the property, as set out in statutory notice circulated.

ITEM NO. 3

To consider the disposal of property measuring 0.0905Ha or thereabouts in the townland of Tomcoyle, Co. Wicklow comprised in Folio No. WW2812 Co. Wicklow by Deed of Rectification to Martin Fitzgerald (as LPR to Theresa Fitzgerald) the person entitled to it, being the property known as Tomcoyle, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Kennedy, seconded by Cllr. J. Mullen and agreed to consider the disposal of property measuring 0.0905Ha or thereabouts in the townland of Tomcoyle, Co. Wicklow comprised in Folio No. WW2812 Co. Wicklow by Deed of Rectification to Martin Fitzgerald (as LPR to Theresa Fitzgerald) the person entitled to it, being the property known as Tomcoyle, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow, as set out in statutory notice circulated.

ITEM NO. 4

To consider Material Contravention Report (as circulated) in accordance with Section 34 (6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), in respect of PRR23/689, Cairn Homes Properties Ltd., lands within the townlands of Blessington Demesne, Newpaddocks and Santryhill, Blessington, Co. Wicklow.

The following resolution was proposed by Cllr. E. Timmins, seconded by Cllr. P. Glennon:

'Having considered the Chief Executive's Report of the 02/02/24, prepared in relation to the proposed large scale residential development of 329 residential units and all other works, at Blessington, Co. Wicklow, wherein, the Chief Executive requested the Members approve her recommendation to grant permission, subject to conditions, for the proposed development and having regard to the documentation and details relating to the proposed development and the Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment carried out by the Chief Executive,

in accordance with S 34 (6) (a) (iv) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the Members approve, by resolution, the Chief Executive's proposal to grant permission for the proposed development, subject to the conditions set out in the Chief Executive's Report.

The Members discussed the development and expressed their support for it and following a roll call was passed by a margin of 29 for and 3 not present viz:-

FOR 29	CLLRS. T. ANNESLEY, M. BARRY, J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE, M. CORRIGAN, A. CRONIN, S. CULLEN, G. DUNNE, A. FERRIS, P. FITZGERALD, A. FLYNN-KENNEDY, T. FORTUNE, P. GLENNON, M. KAVANAGH, P. KENNEDY, P. LEONARD, D. MITCHELL, J. MULLEN, M. MURPHY, D. O'BRIEN, P. O'BRIEN, R. O'CONNOR, G. O'NEILL, M. RYAN, L. SCOTT, J. SNELL, E. TIMMINS AND I. WINTERS
AGAINST 0	
NOT PRESENT 3	CLLRS., E. DOYLE, S. STOKES AND G. WALSH

ITEM NO. 5

To note the Wicklow County Council Capital Investment Programme 2024 – 2026

Elected Members were circulated with the Wicklow County Council 3- year Capital Investment Programme 2023-2025 on 3rd April 2024.

Mr. B. Gleeson, Director of Finance gave a summary of the Capital Investment Programme to the Elected Members.

Following a broad discussion the Elected Members raised questions which were responded to by Mr. Gleeson.

ITEM NO. 6

To consider and adopt the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2024, in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.

Ms. H. Purcell, Meetings Administrator advised the Elected Members that the purpose of the Annual Service Delivery Plan is to set out the objectives and the performance standards for the Council's service delivery areas for 2024 having regard to the high level goals contained within the Corporate Plan and also the budget landscape as adopted in the Council's budget in November last year.

Appendix 1 of the plan details the annual performance indicators which are monitored by the National Oversight and Audit Committee (NOAC) and appendix 2 sets out the key baseline data target outputs for 2024 and 2023.'s output there also.

It was proposed by Cllr. D. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien and agreed by all to adopt the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2024, in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.

ITEM NO. 7

To consider and adopt the Mid-East Homeless Action Plan 2024 – 2026 in accordance with Section 37 (1) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, as amended.

Elected Members were circulated with the Mid-East Homeless Action Plan 2024 - 2026 on 3rd April 2024.

Mr. M. Nicholson, Director of Services gave a summary of the Homeless Action Plan to the Elected Members.

It was proposed by Cllr. J. Snell, seconded by Cllr. D. O'Brien and agreed by all to adopt the Mid-East Homeless Action Plan 2024 – 2026 in accordance with Section 37 (1) of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, as amended.

Time Extension: It was proposed by the Cllr. J. Snell, seconded by Cllr. R. O'Connor and agreed by all to extend the meeting to 5.30 p.m.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. J. Mullen and agreed by all to move to Items No. 9, 10 and 11 at this point.

ITEM NO. 9

To note the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Report 2023 in accordance with Section 221 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

The Elected Members were circulated with the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Report 2023 on 3rd April 2024.

Ms. H. Purcell, Meetings Administrator advised the Elected Members that this is a reserved function of the Elected Members to adopt an Annual Report each year. The Annual Financial Statement is due to be listed at the May meeting and will then be included in the final annual report, along with NOAC performance indicators, which are due to be submitted by the 19th April 2024.

This report is to be noted today with the finalised Annual Report, 2023 being listed on the agenda for meeting of 1st July 2024.

ITEM NO. 10

Review of Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024

Each of the Directors of Services gave a short outline of the achievements and highlights of the directorates over the previous 5 years of the Corporate Plan. Some of the achievements and highlights were:

Community, Cultural & Social Development

- Wicklow Recreation Strategy, Sports and Recreation Strategy and Expenditure strategy.
- Covid 19 – Set up of community call helpline in March 2020.
- Community response forum – Ukrainian crisis in 2022.
- Disability Inclusive Steering Committee and re-establishment of the social inclusion network.
- Beyond the trees, Avondale – tourist destination.
- Local Economic Community Plan.
- Funding – Wicklow swimming pool and Charlesland athletics track.
- New library – Rathdrum.
- Launch of new mobile library.
- South Beach, Greystones – blue flag amenity.

Enterprise & Corporate Services

- Wicklow County Campus- over 2,500 third level students have graduated from the SETU Lifelong Learning Centre over the last 5 years.
- Construction of the Clermont Screen Hub.
- Local Enterprise Office – assisted in the creation of 225 full-time jobs, approved 173 grant applications, 730 trading online grants, 8,845 participants in a business skills and IT skills training programme.
- Notable awards such as Kate Dempsey, Aqualicence, overall 2022 National Enterprise Award.
- Greystones Enterprise Centre.
- The EcoTrail, Wicklow Passport, Glendalough partnership and County Wicklow Tourism and Marketing Plan.
- Town regeneration.
- Human resources.
- Upgrade of the Chamber, Wurzburg Room, members rooms
- Communications Team.
- Customer Services Innovation Hub.

Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

- Civil Defence.
- Arklow – upgrades to playgrounds, courthouse is now a hub for businesses to use.
- Roundabout Enhancement Scheme- Arklow North.
- Active Travel projects – Seafront plaza, Bray; Cullmullen Junction, Blessington; Arklow North Cycling and Pedestrian Scheme.
- Safe Route to School Scheme.
- N81 – Knockroe Bend alignment Scheme.
- N11's parallel service road completed in 2021.
- Speed limits – first council in the country to adopt 30K periodic speed limits at schools.
- Progressing to get new fire stations in Baltinglass and Dunlavin.

Housing & Corporate Estate

- Provided in excess of a 1,000 new units across a variety of supply, including local authority own builds, PPE approved housing body acquisitions under Part 5.
- Recommended the affordable housing schemes, Greenhills Road.
- Homelessness remains a challenge.
- Number of unforeseen challenges – notices to quit, Ukrainian challenge and Covid.

Finance & ICT

- Annual revenue budget has increased by €64m over the lifetime of the plan – up from €96m to €160m.
- Revenue deficit has reduced by €1.8m from €2.4m down to €600,000.
- Commercial rates have increased from 85% up to 91%.
- Housing loans collection rate has increased from 76% up to 90%.
- Introduction of new risk management system to deliver better decision-making, more efficient use of resources and strengthening of accountability.
- Introduction of commercial rates incentive scheme for new businesses.
- Provision of annual discretionary funding of over €1m across the municipal districts.
- Support maintenance and enhancements of the council's ICT infrastructure, business applications and security environment.
- Continued support of the council's blended working environment.
- Enhancement of services – E-Planning, Parking fine system and legal case management system.
- Enhanced data analysis software on geographical information systems.
- Developed online consultation hubs to support the County Development Plan and local area plans.

Planning, Development & Environment

- E-Planning, digitalisation of processes. Keeping the manual system at the same time.

- Over 5,000 planning applications received and determined during the time.
- Adoption of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022.
- Implementation of the Derelict Sites Act and Vacant Site Levy.
- Conserve nature, built and cultural heritage in County Wicklow.
- Climate Charter signed in 2019.
- First council to establish a Climate & Biodiversity Action SPC.
- Coastal erosion – working with the OPW and Irish Rail to advance projects.
- Waste management – great success in pursuing illegal dumpers through the courts.
- Continue to maintain 35 burial grounds and provided two Columbarium walls in Bray and Arklow.
- Retained three blue flags.
- Carrying out consistent monitoring of waste water discharges, farm surveys and catchment investigations where quality is below standard.
- Refurbishment of the East Pier Lighthouse in Wicklow.
- Wicklow harbour dredging.
- Arklow Flood Relief Scheme.

ITEM NO. 11

To receive a presentation: Briefing in advance of a non-statutory public consultation on the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor for the Wicklow to Greystones Greenway.

MR. C. Fay, Associate of Atkinsréalis gave a presentation outlining the following:

- Project overview.
- Key deliverables.
- Optioneering process.
- Process.
- Route corridor identification.
- East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Projects (ECRIPP).
- Route corridor assessment criteria.
- Emerging preferred route corridor.
- Stage 1 route corridor assessment.
- Public consultation information.
- Next steps.
- Project programme.

Following the presentation the Elected Members raised queries which were responded to by Mr. Fay.

ITEM NO. 12

Correspondence

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

- To note circulation of Circular LG04/2024 Training Events for Elected Members.
- To note circulation of Circular LG(P)03/2024 Eligibility to Contest Local Elections.
- Nomination papers for local elections will issue this week to existing Elected Members and appointment can be made during the nomination period.
- The polling day order has been signed. Local, European and referendum will be held on Friday 7th June 2024.
- Closing date for postal and special votes is Saturday 12th May and the closing date for receipt of voter registration applications is Monday 20th May.

The Cathaoirleach noted the agenda item to consider the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report, March 2024, was not reached and asked the Elected Members to submit their questions in writing with responses to issue to all.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

**CLLR. AOIFE FLYNN KENNEDY
CATHAOIRLEACH
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

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

Confirmed at meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday the 13th May 2024