

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING (HYBRID) OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 11TH MAY 2026, COMMENCING 2.00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS M. CORRIGAN CATHAOIRLEACH, D, ALVEY, M. BARRY, J. BEHAN, S. BOURKE, A. CRONIN, E. DOYLE, M. DUDDY, G. DUNNE, L. FENELON GASKIN, O. FINN, P. FITZGERALD, T. FORTUNE, P. GLENNON, P. KENNEDY, S. LANGRELL, P. LEONARD, P. MAHON, J. MULHALL, M. MURPHY, P. O'BRIEN, G. O'NEILL, W. O'TOOLE, G. RICHMOND, L. SCOTT, J. SNELL, P. STAPLETON, J. WARD, N. WHELAN AND C. WINSTANLEY (30)

APOLOGIES

CLLRS. I. NEARY AND S. STOKES (2)

IN ATTENDANCE:

**MS. E. O'GORMAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
MS. J. CARROLL, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. H. DENNEHY, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. L. EARLS, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. B. GLEESON, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. J. LANE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. M. NICHOLSON, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. S. McCULLOUGH, A/DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. H. PURCELL, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR
MR. S. DOYLE, IS PROJECT LEADER
MS. T. BYRNE, ASSISTANT STAFF OFFICER
MR. G. GANLY, TIGLIN**

At the commencement of the meeting a roll call was taken. The Meetings Administrator advised all present they are bound by the Code of Conduct for Councillors and Employees. Also, 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. Maria Magee, Mr. Ronan Griffey, Mr. Stephen Murtagh, Ms. Therese McManus, Mr. Brendan O'Brien, Mr. Bernard Brogan, Ms. Maeve Shanley, Ms. Adrienne Foley, Ms. Mary Gallagher, Mr. Alejo Bescos Vinao and Ms. Lily O'Reilly. A minute's silence was observed for the deceased.

Request for Suspension of Standing Orders: - The Meetings Administrator advised that three requests for suspension of standing orders had been submitted in advance of the meeting. In accordance with the protocol adopted the requests were read to the meeting as proposed and seconded: -

Suspension No. 1

Cllr. G. Richmond, seconded by Cllr. G. Dunne and supported by Cllrs. A. Cronin, S. Langrell, P. Stapleton, M. Corrigan, S. Bourke, P. Mahon, L. Fenelon Gaskin and N. Whelan requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the following motion:

'Re: Review of Court Facilities and Resource Allocation for County Wicklow

PREAMBLE: *WHEREAS the population of County Wicklow has reached approximately 150,000 residents, the current judicial infrastructure is insufficient to meet the legal and administrative needs of the growing community.*

MOTION: *That the Members of Wicklow County Council request the Executive to formally seek from the Minister for Justice and the Courts Service of Ireland a time-bound capital investment plan to address the significant disparity in judicial resources allocated to County Wicklow.*

GROUNDINGS FOR MOTION:

1. **Population vs. Infrastructure:** *Despite a population of 150,000, County Wicklow is currently served by only one operational Circuit Court and two District Courts.*
2. **Comparative Inequity:** *County Louth, with a lower population of approximately 139,000, possesses superior judicial infrastructure, including:*
 - a. *Two fully functioning Circuit Court venues (Dundalk and Drogheda).*
 - b. *Three District Court locations.*
3. **Capital Investment Discrepancy:** *Note is taken of the significant investment in neighbouring regions, such as the €9 million courthouse delivered in Drogheda in 2017, highlighting a lack of equivalent capital expenditure in Wicklow.*
4. **Access to Justice:** *The current deficit in operational venues within Wicklow risks causing delays in the administration of justice, increasing travel burdens for legal professionals and citizens, and straining existing facilities.*

ACTION REQUIRED:

That the executive requests a formal review of the Courts Service's capital plan to ensure that courthouse provision in County Wicklow is brought into alignment with its demographic requirements and is at least commensurate with that of comparable administrative counties.

It was agreed by all to have a discussion on the topic at 4.30 p.m.

Suspension No. 2

Cllr. P. Leonard, seconded by Cllr. W. O'Toole and supported by Cllrs. P. Fitzgerald, M. Murphy, S. Bourke and P. Kennedy requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the following motion:

'That Wicklow County Council formally writes to the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, and the Minister for Health seeking urgent Government intervention in the case of Arklow teacher Ms. Eimear Byrne, who requires life-saving surgery that can only be carried out in the United States.

This Council acknowledges and commends the extraordinary generosity and community spirit shown by the people of Arklow and the wider public, who have already raised in excess of €160,000 towards the estimated €600,000 cost of Ms. Byrne's treatment.

Given the critical and time-sensitive nature of Ms. Byrne's condition, and the serious risk posed by any further delay, Wicklow County Council calls on the Government and the HSE to urgently examine all available avenues of support to ensure she can access this essential surgery without delay'.

It was agreed by all to have a discussion on the topic at 4.30 p.m.

Suspension No. 3

Cllr. P. Glennon, seconded by Cllr. T. Fortune and supported by Cllr. G. Richmond requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the following motion:

'Letter addressed to Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister for Transport and Environment as follows:

To emphasis cross party support for additional funding to repair and reconstruct the road infrastructure of South and West Wicklow and the entire county where serious damage was caused to road infrastructure resulting from flooding and other elements of Storm Chandra. This matter requires urgent attention.

A letter to issue to each of the seven TDs and senator representing County Wicklow requesting a meeting with all the Members of Wicklow County Council'.

It was agreed by all to have a discussion on the topic at 4.30 p.m.

It was proposed by Cllr. O. Finn, seconded by Cllr. N. Whelan and agreed by all to move to Item 18 following item 16.

Congratulations were extended to Ms. Carolann McDonald on her selection to represent County Wicklow at the Rose of Tralee.

A vote of thanks was also expressed to Mr. Shay Fitzmaurice of the Wicklow Times on his recent retirement.

ITEM NO. 1

To confirm and sign minutes of special meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 30th March 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr. S. Langrell, seconded by Cllr. G. Richmond and agreed by all to confirm and sign minutes of special meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 30th March 2026.

ITEM NO. 2

To confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 13th April 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr. A. Cronin, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien and agreed by all to confirm and sign minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 13th April 2026.

ITEM NO. 3

To consider the disposal of 1.223 acres or thereabouts in the townland of Tinakilly Townland, Aughrim, Co. Wicklow by way of 3-year lease for the period 6th March 2026 to 5th March 2029 to Woodfab Timber Ltd., Aughrim, Co. Wicklow.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Kennedy, seconded by Cllr. P. Fitzgerald and agreed by all to consider the disposal of 1.223 acres or thereabouts in the townland of Tinakilly Townland, Aughrim, Co. Wicklow by way of 3-year lease for the period 6th March 2026 to 5th March 2029 to Woodfab Timber Ltd., Aughrim, Co. Wicklow, as set out in statutory notice previously circulated.

ITEM NO. 4

To consider the disposal of 0.452 hectares or thereabouts in the townland of Talbotstown Lower being part of Folio WW8693F being the property known as the Old Health Centre by way of a 30-year lease to Donard Community Enterprises CLG.

It was proposed by Cllr. A. Cronin, seconded by Cllr. P. Mahon and agreed by all to consider the disposal of 0.452 hectares or thereabouts in the townland of Talbotstown Lower being part of Folio WW8693F being the property known as the Old Health Centre by way of a 30-year lease to Donard Community Enterprises CLG, as set out in statutory notice previously circulated.

ITEM NO. 5

To consider the disposal of 239.50m2 or thereabouts in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow being the property known as Arklow Courthouse to Arklow Business Enterprise Centre (ABEC).

It was proposed by Cllr. P. Kennedy, seconded by Cllr. S. Bourke and agreed by all to consider the disposal of 239.50m2 or thereabouts in the townland of Arklow, Co. Wicklow being the property known as Arklow Courthouse to Arklow Business Enterprise Centre (ABEC), as set out in statutory notice previously circulated.

ITEM NO. 6

To consider the filling of casual vacancy arising from the resignation of Cllr. Dermot O'Brien in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.

It was proposed by Cllr. W. O'Toole, seconded by Cllr. E. Doyle and agreed by all to co-opt Mr. John Ward onto the council.

The Elected Members welcomed Cllr. Ward and wished him well and looked forward to working with him.

Cllr. Ward thanked the Elected Members for their kind words and stated he looked forward to working with everyone.

ITEM NO. 7

To consider the vacancy on the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment, Energy, Marine, Recreation & Amenity Strategic Policy Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien.

Cllr. W. O'Toole proposed Cllr. J. Ward to fill the vacancy on the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment, Energy, Marine, Recreation and Amenity Strategic Policy Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien: this was seconded by Cllr. E. Doyle and agreed by all. Cllr. Ward agreed to fill the vacancy.

ITEM NO. 8

To consider the vacancy on the Special Amenity Area Order for Bray Head arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien.

Cllr. W. O'Toole proposed Cllr. J. Ward to fill the vacancy on the the Special Amenity Area Order for Bray Head arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien; this was seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien and agreed by all. Cllr. Ward agreed to fill the vacancy.

ITEM NO. 9

To consider the vacancy on the Bray Local Drugs Task Force arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien.

It was agreed by all to defer this item to meeting in June.

ITEM NO. 10

To consider the vacancy on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien.

Cllr. W. O'Toole proposed Cllr. J. Ward to fill the vacancy on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) arising from the resignation of Cllr. D. O'Brien; this was seconded by Cllr. M. Duddy and agreed by all. Cllr. Ward agreed to fill the vacancy.

ITEM NO. 11

To consider the vacancy on the Housing Strategic Policy Committee arising from the resignation of Cllr. P. Stapleton.

It was agreed by all to defer this item to meeting in June.

ITEM NO. 12

To consider the vacancy on the County Wicklow Partnership arising from the resignation of Cllr. P. Stapleton.

It was agreed by all to defer this item to meeting in June.

ITEM NO. 13

To note the Wicklow County Council Capital investment Programme 2026 – 2028.

Elected Members were circulated with the Wicklow County Council Capital Investment Programme 2025 – 2027 on 6th May 2026.

Mr. B. Gleeson, Director of Service 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. 14

To consider and adopt the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026 in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

Ms. L. Earls, Director of Services advised the Elected Members that the plan is sets out a high-level strategy taken from the Corporate Plan and sets out the key actions for service delivery during the year. It also gives information in relation to the budget which was adopted in November of 2025. The plan goes through each of the service delivery areas.

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Dunne, seconded by Cllr. P. Leonard and agreed by all to consider and adopt the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Service Delivery Plan 2026 in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

ITEM NO. 15

To note Annual Financial Statement (AFS) 2025 and approve by resolution additional net expenditure in excess of budget in accordance with Section 104(7) of the Local Government Act 2001 (ii) transfers to and from capital.

Mr. B. Gleeson, Director of Services gave an overview of the Annual Financial Statement 2025 as follows:

- Wicklow County Council's overall financial position remained strong throughout 2025.
- The total expenditure incurred in the revenue account last year was €174m, generating a small surplus of €47,000 after transfers. The overall cumulative surplus at the end of the year is just under 50,000.
- Capital account expenditure includes transfers and was €140m in 2025 which represents an increase of over €26m on capital spend in 2024.
- The vast majority of this expenditure was under our housing programme.
- Commercial rates retained its collection level of 93%, despite the reduction in the vacant relief rate from the 16% to the 20% last year.
- Housing rents collection rate has increased from 84% to 87%, and housing loans has increased from 80% to 85%.

It was proposed by Cllr. P. O'Brien, seconded by Cllr. P. Stapleton and agreed by all to approve:

- (i) Additional net expenditure in excess of budget in accordance with Section 104(7) of the Local Government Act 2001 and;

It was proposed by Cllr. G. Dunne, seconded by Cllr. J. Snell and agreed by all to approve:

- (ii) Additional transfers to and from capital in excess of budget.

ITEM NO. 16

To note the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Report 2025 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 2025 on 6th May 2026.

Ms. H. Purcell, Meetings Administrator advised the Elected Members that the draft Wicklow County Council Annual Report 2025 was just for noting. The finalised report will be on the agenda on the 8th June 2026. The Statement of Internal Financial Control will be added to the final document once received.

ITEM NO. 18

To receive a presentation: By Ger Ganly, Tiglin.

Mr. G. Ganly, Tiglin gave a presentation outlining the following:

- Restoring Lives – The work of Tiglin.
- Origin of Tiglin.
- No Bucks Bus.
- Rehabilitation and aftercare services.
- Supported housing services.
- Frontline services.
- Employment and education.
- Youth Café.
- Other services – Homeless Link Worker; Family support and counselling.

The Elected Members thanked Mr. Ganly for his comprehensive presentation and also for all the good work that they do at Tiglin.

Time Extension: It was proposed by Cllr. L. Fenelon Gaskin, seconded by Cllr. J. Behan and agreed by all to extend the meeting to 5.30 p.m.

ITEM NO. 17

To consider the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report, April 2026.

Elected Members were circulated with the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report, April 2026.

The Chief Executive advised she had received an invitation to attend a meeting with the Department of the Taoiseach cabinet sub committee on housing, the agenda items are housing growth target updates and the National Planning Framework.

Some of the issues raised included the following:

- Derelict building, Market Square, Wicklow Town.
- The Murrough.
- Playground, Hollywood.
- Derelict site, Ashford.
- Causeway Meadow, Roundwood.
- Update – An Taisce report.
- Derelict sites, Arklow.
- Housing, Ukrainian evictions.
- Arklow pottery site.
- URDF, Arklow.
- Litter at Magheramore.
- Rehills lands, Bray.
- Overall strategic looking at future orbital route.
- Backland development – retention refused.
- Pro-active clearing of public drains in all towns and villages.
- Farrankelly estate.
- Disposal – Mill Road property, Greystones.
- Energy upgrade – Corballis Road and Connary.
- Dereliction raised by TDs in the Dáil.
- Allocation of monies - Flood Relief Scheme.
- Funding – damage – South Wicklow after flooding.
- Chapel Road, Greystones - roadworks.
- Toilets, Quays, Arklow.
- R772 road to St. Catherine's school.
- Outdoor recreation; trails project, Arklow.
- Parking, Blessington.
- Illegal development, Kippure.
- Rural drainage works.
- Programme of works/toilets main beaches.

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

Suspensions of Standing Orders

Suspension No. 1

Cllr. G. Richmond, seconded by Cllr. G. Dunne and supported by Cllrs. A. Cronin, S. Langrell, P. Stapleton, M. Corrigan, S. Bourke, P. Mahon, L. Fenelon Gaskin and N. Whelan requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the following motion:

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PREAMBLE: WHEREAS the population of County Wicklow has reached approximately **150,000 residents**, the current judicial infrastructure is insufficient to meet the legal and administrative needs of the growing community.

MOTION: That the Members of Wicklow County Council request the Executive to formally seek from the Minister for Justice and the Courts Service of Ireland a time-bound capital investment plan to address the significant disparity in judicial resources allocated to County Wicklow.

GROUND'S FOR MOTION:

- a. ***Population vs. Infrastructure:*** Despite a population of 150,000, County Wicklow is currently served by only one operational Circuit Court and two District Courts.
- b. ***Comparative Inequity:*** County Louth, with a lower population of approximately 139,000, possesses superior judicial infrastructure, including:
 - a. Two fully functioning Circuit Court venues (Dundalk and Drogheda).
 - b. Three District Court locations.
- c. ***Capital Investment Discrepancy:*** Note is taken of the significant investment in neighbouring regions, such as the €9 million courthouse delivered in Drogheda in 2017, highlighting a lack of equivalent capital expenditure in Wicklow.
- d. ***Access to Justice:*** The current deficit in operational venues within Wicklow risks causing delays in the administration of justice, increasing travel burdens for legal professionals and citizens, and straining existing facilities.

ACTION REQUIRED:

That the executive requests a formal review of the Courts Service's capital plan to ensure that courthouse provision in County Wicklow is brought into alignment with its demographic requirements and is at least commensurate with that of comparable administrative counties.

A broad discussion followed. It was proposed by Cllr. J. Behan, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Brien and agreed by all to add an amendment to the motion as follows:

'The Minister for Justice addresses deficit in Garda numbers in County Wicklow compared to other counties, such as Co. Wexford. And that the Headquarters of the Wicklow/Wexford should be located in County Wicklow'.

The Elected Members agreed to write to the Minister for Justice and to the Court Services of Ireland.

Suspension No. 2

Cllr. P. Leonard, seconded by Cllr. W. O'Toole and supported by Cllrs. P. Fitzgerald, M. Murphy, S. Bourke and P. Kennedy requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the following motion:

'That Wicklow County Council formally writes to the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, and the Minister for Health seeking urgent Government intervention in the case of Arklow teacher Ms. Eimear Byrne, who requires life-saving surgery that can only be carried out in the United States.

This Council acknowledges and commends the extraordinary generosity and community spirit shown by the people of Arklow and the wider public, who have already raised in excess of €160,000 towards the estimated €600,000 cost of Ms. Byrne's treatment.

Given the critical and time-sensitive nature of Ms. Byrne's condition, and the serious risk posed by any further delay, Wicklow County Council calls on the Government and the HSE to urgently examine all available avenues of support to ensure she can access this essential surgery without delay'.

Following a short discussion it was agreed to write to the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and to the Minister for Health.

Suspension No. 3

Cllr. P. Glennon, seconded by Cllr. T. Fortune supported by Cllr. G. Richmond requested a suspension of standing orders to discuss the following motion:

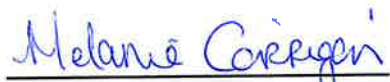
'Letter addressed to Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister for Transport and Environment as follows:

To emphasis cross party support for additional funding to repair and reconstruct the road infrastructure of South and West Wicklow and the entire county where serious damage was caused to road infrastructure resulting from flooding and other elements of Storm Chandra. This matter requires urgent attention.

A letter to issue to each of the seven TDs and senator representing County Wicklow requesting a meeting with all the Members of Wicklow County Council'.

Following a broad discussion it was agreed by all to write to the Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister for Transport and Environment. A letter to also issue to the seven TDs and senator representing the county.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING



**CLLR. MELANIE CORRIGAN
CATHAOIRLEACH
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**



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

Confirmed at meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday the 8th June 2026.