

Minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council held in the Members room 2 & 3, County Buildings, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 on Wednesday 3rd June 2026 at 2:30pm.

In Attendance: Cathaoirleach Graham Richmond, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, Cllr. Caroline Winstanley, Cllr. Mark Barry (via zoom), Cllr. Gerry O'Neill, Ms. Emma McMillen (via zoom), Mr. John Douglas (via zoom), Ms. Kathleen Kelleher, Mr. Paddy Mordaunt, Mr. Michael Nicholson, Ms. Jackie Carroll, Mr. Joe Lane, Mr. Michael Flynn, Ms. Caroline Fox, Mr. Mark O'Neill, Mr. David Reel, Mr. David Porter, Ms. Róisín Carroll

Apologies: Mr. Sean O'Callaghan and Mr. T. J. Foley.

Cathaoirleach Richmond opened the meeting at 2:30pm and welcomed all present.

Joe Lane introduced Mark O'Neill to the members. Mark O'Neill has temporarily taken over from Linda Healy following her retirement.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council dated 25th March 2026.

It was proposed by Paul O'Brien and seconded by Kathleen Kelleher and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of The Housing Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council dated 25th March 2026.

2. Matters Arising - None

3. SPCs Multi Annual Work Programme 2026- 2029

The SPC Multi Annual Work Programme 2026-2029 was agreed at the Corporate Policy Group meeting in June. Members were advised that all SPC work programmes are available and will be circulated in due course.

4. Housing – Capital Delivery

An update was provided:

- Wicklow County Council is on target to exceed its 2022- 2026 housing delivery target of 253 units, with a further 150 units expected to be delivered during the year.
- A new Housing Delivery Plan is expected from the Department, containing future social and affordable housing targets.
- Several housing developments are progressing, including Part V acquisitions and Approved Housing Body schemes.
- In response to a query on the Burgage Development, members were advised that the Council is awaiting a programme of works before confirming construction timelines.
- In response to a query on the Greystones 5 Hectare Site, members were advised that the site was originally planned as a PPP development but has reverted to the Council following

the Government's review of PPP housing projects. The Council is awaiting guidance from the Department before deciding the mix of social, affordable and potentially cost-rental housing.

- Concerns were raised regarding high density housing and the need to provide green space and a good living environment for families. Joe Lane advised that the site is suitable for higher density development due to its location near the town centre and existing services, but that an appropriate balance is required. It was also noted that a significant proportion of housing demand is for smaller one-bedroom units.

5. Housing - Services – Scheme of Letting Priorities 2018 (as attached) & General Update

The SPC discussed reviewing the current Housing Allocation Scheme of Letting Priorities, which has been in place since 2018. The Department has requested that a number of additional categories be considered within the scheme, including:

- Victims of domestic violence
- Survivors of industrial and reformatory schools
- Returning Irish citizens
- People with disabilities
- Travellers
- Older homeless people
- Potentially refugees (subject to national guidance)

The following points were discussed:

- The importance of ensuring applicants needs are properly identified so that suitable housing can be provided, particularly adapted housing for those with additional requirements.
- Michael Nicholson advised that while medical assessments already form part of the application process, it can be difficult to assess varying levels of need and ensure fairness across all applications.
- It was noted that the current scheme works reasonably well overall but could benefit from some updates.
- Caroline Fox suggested increasing the penalty for refusing housing offers, noting that approximately 400 allocations were offered last year, with a quarter of offers being refused.
- Members were invited to review the scheme and submit suggestions before a revised version is brought back to the SPC and subsequently to the full Council for consideration and adoption.
- Members were advised that there is no single housing waiting list. When a property becomes available, applications for that area are assessed and allocated based on the schemes priorities and pointing system. Emergency cases can also be dealt with outside the normal process where necessary.
- In response to a query regarding inter-county transfers, members were advised that this is a national policy matter and is being considered at national level.

David Reel, Senior Engineer, provided an update on the Housing Energy Retrofit Programme 2026:

- Wicklow County Council has received €3.23 million in funding for 2026 and aims to retrofit 85 council houses across the county. The target is to bring homes to a B2 BER standard.

- Works may include insulation upgrades, replacement windows and doors, ventilation improvements and heat pump installations.
- Members were advised of the locations selected for the 2026 retrofit programme across the five municipal districts.
- Participation is voluntary and tenants must agree to the proposed works.
- Successful retrofit projects in estates such as Sycamore Drive, Newtownmountkennedy, were highlighted.

6. Housing – Integration – Presentation from Co. Wicklow Integreation Services

Jackie Carroll gave a presentation on integration services in County Wicklow. Members were advised of the restructuring of the Community Integration Forum and the current challenges facing the service, including housing, transport, school places, childcare, GP access, legal supports and language supports. An update was also provided on supports for Ukrainians under Temporary Protection and the Irish Refugee Protection Programme.

During the discussion, members raised concerns regarding accommodation pressures, housing supply and IPAS centres in the Baltinglass area. It was noted that changes under the EU Migration Pact are expected to reduce asylum processing times.

7. Correspondence:

Members were advised that Mary Rose Walker has been assigned the role of Institutional Survivors Liaison Officer.

8. Any other business:

- Kathleen Kelleher enquired about progress at the Farrankelly site and whether funding remained in place. Michael Nicholson confirmed that works are progressing and funding is in place.
- Kathleen Kelleher asked about councillors identifying local sites. Members were advised that sites are currently being assessed and have not yet been zoned.

The next meeting will take place on 3rd September 2026.

The meeting concluded at 3:55p.m.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH, Cllr. Graham Richmond

Dated: _____