

ORDINARY MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

HELD AT COUNTY BUILDINGS, WHITEGATES, WICKLOW TOWN  
AND VIA TEAMS

ON

ON MONDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2023, AT 2:00PM

STENOGRAPHER: Niamh Kelly-Leahy, RMR, MBIVR

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1 PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED ON MONDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER 2023, AT  
2 2:00 PM, AS FOLLOWS:

3  
4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, members. We might get started, members.  
5 Okay. We will get started. So we will just do the roll call.

6 MS PURCELL: I would like to welcome everybody to the meeting, to the members  
7 of the public who are present, and to staff, and to those who are remote. If you have  
8 any technical issues, if you wouldn't mind letting myself or Teresa know, members.  
9 Thank you very much.

10 Now for the roll call.

11 MS PURCELL: Councillor Tom Annesley.

12 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: Present.

13 MS PURCELL: Councillor Mark Barry.

14 COUNCILLOR BARRY: Present.

15 MS PURCELL: Councillor Joe Behan.

16 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Present.

17 MS PURCELL: Councillor Vincent Blake.

18 COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Present.

19 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Sylvester Bourke.

20 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Present.

21 MS PURCELL: Councillor Melanie Corrigan.

22 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: Present.

23 MS PURCELL: Councillor Avril Cronin.

24 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Present.

25 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Shay Cullen.

26 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Present.

27 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Erika Doyle.

28 COUNCILLOR DOYLE: Present.

29 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gail Dunne.

30 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Present.

31 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Anne Ferris.

32 COUNCILLOR FERRIS: Present.

33 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.

34 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: Present.

1 MS PURCELL: Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy.  
2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Present.  
3 MS PURCELL: We have apologies from Councillor Fortune.  
4 Councillor Patsy Glennon.  
5 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: Present.  
6 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.  
7 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Here.  
8 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Pat Kennedy.  
9 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Present.  
10 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Peir Leonard.  
11 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Present.  
12 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Derek Mitchell.  
13 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: Here.  
14 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor John Mullen.  
15 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: Present.  
16 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Miriam Murphy.  
17 Will be joining us remotely, I believe.  
18 Councillor Dermot O'Brien.  
19 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Anseo.  
20 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Paul O'Brien.  
21 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Present.  
22 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Rory O'Connor.  
23 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: Anseo.  
24 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gerry O'Neill.  
25 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Anseo.  
26 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Lourda Scott.  
27 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Here.  
28 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor John Snell.  
29 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Present.  
30 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Stephen Stokes.  
31 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Present.  
32 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Edward Timmins.  
33 COUNCILLOR TIMMINS: Here.  
34 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Gerry Walsh.

1 COUNCILLOR WALSH: Present.

2 MS PURCELL: Present. And Councillor Irene Winters.

3 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: Present.

4 MS PURCELL: Thank you.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Helen.

6 Do we have any votes of sympathy?

7 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Yes.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Mary Kavanagh.

9 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: I would just like to extend a vote of sympathy to the

10 family of Michael Quinn, who passed away last week. He was a great community

11 member and very, very popular man in the town, and I want to send condolences to

12 his wife, Anita, and his six children and his grandchildren and extended family.

13 Thank you.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Councillor.

15 Councillor Paul O'Brien.

16 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: I just want to offer my condolences to my own

17 family on the death of my Uncle Paddy's wife, Maura, and my condolences to my

18 cousins, David and Melanie. They have loss their mother, which is always hard to

19 take, and it's a big loss for all of us. So thank you very much.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Absolutely. Thank you, Councillor. Councillor Gail Dunne.

21 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Yes, I would just like to be associated with the vote of

22 sympathy for Michael Quinn. I knew him well. And of course, Debbie works here.

23 So, sad occasion. Thank you.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor. Helen.

25 MS PURCELL: I would also like to add Claire Mullarney, mother of our colleague,

26 Hannah O'Kelly.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. We will take a moment.

28 (Moment of silence).

29 MS PURCELL: May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through

30 the mercy of God, rest in peace.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Amen.

32

33 Thank you, members. Members, we have three suspensions -- thank you very much,

34 Chief Executive -- we have three suspensions of signing orders, so I am going to

1 propose that we take them at half four, if that is agreed with the members. Agreed?  
2 (Agreed). Okay.

3

4 We are going to go through them now. Helen is going to read them out.

5 MS PURCELL: I will just read the actual request. So the first request is proposed  
6 by Councillor Paul O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Gail Dunne, to discuss the  
7 ongoing destruction and deterioration of The Murrough in Wicklow town. Is  
8 everybody agreed that we talk about that at half four? (Agreed).

9

10 The second suspension is submitted by Councillor Shay Cullen, seconded by  
11 Councillor Irene Winters, to discuss the 950-bed temporary accommodation at  
12 Glendalough Estate at Annamoe. The concerns are the process, scale, location and  
13 the impact on the local communities. Do we all agree to discuss that at half four?  
14 (Agreed). Thank you.

15

16 And then the third is proposed by Councillor Gerry O'Neill, seconded by  
17 Councillor John Snell, that Wicklow County Council calls on the Irish Government  
18 to expel the Israeli Ambassador until there is a permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

19

20 Are we all agreed to discuss that at half four? (No.)

21 Okay. We need a two-thirds majority to discuss a suspension of standing order. So I  
22 can --

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Can we take it to a vote?

24 MS PURCELL: So the proposed suspension of standing orders is that Wicklow  
25 County Council calls on the Irish Government to expel the Israeli Ambassador until  
26 there is a permanent ceasefire in Gaza, proposed by Councillor Gerry O'Neill,  
27 seconded by Councillor John Snell. If you are in favour of discussing it at half four,  
28 or thereafter, can you vote for, and if you are not, can you vote against.

29

30 Councillor Tom Annesley.

31 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: Against.

32 MS PURCELL: Councillor Mark Barry.

33 He is not present.

34 MS PURCELL: Councillor Joe Behan.

1 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Against.  
2 MS PURCELL: Is against. Councillor Vincent Blake.  
3 COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Against.  
4 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Sylvester Bourke.  
5 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Against.  
6 MS PURCELL: Councillor Melanie Corrigan.  
7 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: Against.  
8 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Avril Cronin.  
9 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Against.  
10 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Shay Cullen.  
11 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Against.  
12 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Erika Doyle.  
13 COUNCILLOR DOYLE: Abstain.  
14 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gail Dunne.  
15 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Against.  
16 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Anne Ferris.  
17 COUNCILLOR FERRIS: Against.  
18 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.  
19 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: Against.  
20 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy.  
21 Councillor Flynn Kennedy: Against.  
22 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Tom Fortune.  
23 Oh, sorry, he's not present.  
24 Councillor Patsy Glennon.  
25 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: Against.  
26 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.  
27 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Against.  
28 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Pat Kennedy.  
29 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Against.  
30 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Peir Leonard.  
31 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Against.  
32 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Derek Mitchell.  
33 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: Against.  
34 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor John Mullen.

1 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: Against.  
2 MS PURCELL: Councillor Miriam Murphy.  
3 Hasn't joined us yet.  
4 Councillor Dermot O'Brien.  
5 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: For.  
6 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Paul O'Brien.  
7 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Against.  
8 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Rory O'Connor.  
9 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: Against.  
10 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gerry O'Neill.  
11 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: For.  
12 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Lourda Scott.  
13 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Against.  
14 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor John Snell.  
15 COUNCILLOR SNELL: For.  
16 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Stephen Stokes.  
17 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Against.  
18 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Edward Timmins.  
19 COUNCILLOR TIMMINS: Against.  
20 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Gerry Walsh.  
21 COUNCILLOR WALSH: Against.  
22 MS PURCELL: Against. And Councillor Irene Winters.  
23 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: Against.  
24 MS PURCELL: Sorry, Councillor Barry, are you back? Councillor Barry, do you  
25 want to cast your vote? We have three for, 24 against, three not present, and one  
26 abstaining. As we don't have the two-thirds majority required by the standing order  
27 to discuss, it won't be discussed at half four.  
28 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Councillor, can I just say --  
29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Helen.  
30 Councillor O'Neill, I know your light is on now, but if I let you in, I have to ask that  
31 you don't enter into discussions on this because a vote has already been taken in the  
32 chamber. Is that agreed?  
33 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Are you saying this won't be discussed at half past four?  
34 CATHAOIRLEACH: It is not going to be discussed at half past four, Councillor

1 O'Neill.

2 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: I think that is a disgrace.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Unfortunately, Councillor O'Neill, a vote has been taken on it.

4 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: I can't understand Fianna Fáil here. They wine and  
5 dine -- the excuse for murder and --

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, a vote has been taken on it, so I'll have to  
7 ask you to cease, please.

8 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: The Labour Party over there --

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, again, I'd have to ask you to stop talking  
10 on the matter, please.

11 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: A response --

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, I'll have to ask you again, please --

13 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: I'd like --

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: I know. But, Councillor O'Neill, a vote has been taken, and a  
15 democratic decision has been made.

16 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: (Inaudible).

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, I will have to ask you to cease talking  
18 about that.

19 We are going to move on, Councillor O'Neill, respectfully, but a decision has been  
20 taken by the elected members.

21 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Shame on every one of you that voted against that. That  
22 is lovely, beautiful --

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay, members.

24 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: A pure disgrace altogether.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: We're not -- okay. Okay. Councillor O'Neill.

26

27 Okay, members, before we get into the full meeting, I just want to acknowledge  
28 somebody that's in the chamber here with us who has stepped down from her  
29 role -- Councillor O'Neill, please. Councillor O'Neill --

30 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: A pure disgrace.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, a decision has been taken  
32 democratically --

33 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: To discuss --

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, this is really unfair.

1 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Women and children in the Gaza -- and we haven't got  
2 the guts to discuss it.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, please, I am asking you to cease talking  
4 on the matter.

5 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: And the wining and dining on the murder --

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, I am asking you again, for probably the  
7 sixth time, to please refrain from discussing this item. We would like to move on to  
8 other items in the chamber, Councillor O'Neill.

9 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: -- the children of Gaza. Hang your heads in shame --

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, please stop. Okay. We are going to move  
11 on now to the next item on the agenda -- before we move on to the --

12 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: I don't think we should move on at all.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill.

14 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: I don't understand.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, will you please stop?

16 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: The Labour Party and their own leaders --

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, will you please stop interrupting the  
18 meeting? That is not fair, Councillor O'Neill. A democratic decision has been taken  
19 in this chamber, and we are all obliged to respect it.

20 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: We are only looking for five minutes to discuss the  
21 situation in Gaza, of women and children --

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Neill, please cease interrupting the meeting.

23 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: -- bombs landed on them last night.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We are going to move on to the rest of the agenda  
25 items, and the most important item we are going to discuss right now is a colleague  
26 of ours who has taken the decision to step down, and she is with us in the chamber  
27 today, and I would like to thank Grace McManus for joining us in the chamber  
28 today.

29 I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Grace for all the work she has done  
30 in her term of office so far, for the passion she showed, and the commitment she  
31 showed to the role, and I have no doubt that Grace is going to go on to do absolutely  
32 amazing things in her new role and in her advocacy.

33 So I want to thank her for joining us in the chamber today, and I open it up to the  
34 members.

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Councillor Dermot O'Brien

COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yes, I was wondering, you know, was -- Grace had that weekend just gone where she didn't get to read the 224-page document that we were all consuming and looking forward to the meeting today, so I am sure it was a tough, tough old weekend.

But, yes, I just want to very quickly, I mean, I have spoken a lot and I have known Grace for a very, very long time. We have done a lot of good stuff over the years together, and I just want to express how proud I was to serve with Grace. We kind of decided to stand together, we campaigned together, we got elected together, and we have been on a journey in this space. And it's been a real privilege for me.

We shared the good times, we debriefed on the tough times, and we were both, I believe, committed to serving the people who elected us and beyond. And I really sincerely think that there is great things ahead for Grace. And while I sometimes, you know, wonder whether people should be considering me, I'm the one that's been abandoned here, rather than celebrating Grace, who is going off to change the world.

But she has got great things ahead of her, and I think she's been a gift to this space while she was here, and I think there is a lot to take from that. Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

Councillor Anne Ferris.

COUNCILLOR FERRIS: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I, too, would like to join with you, Cathaoirleach, in thanking Grace for all the work that she has done over the past four years, over four years, and to say that she will be greatly missed. I didn't get to know Grace all that well on a personal level, but her passion, and particularly for housing and for the homelessness issue shone through all the time. You could see how passionate she was about it and how concerned she was about people being affected.

I think generally -- sorry, I do wish Grace the very best in what she is going to do, and I am sure she will do great, whatever she chooses. But I just wanted to make a

1 point that it is terrible, I think, if you look at the bigger picture, this is the fourth  
2 woman that we have lost from the Council, you know, since 2019, since the  
3 elections, and, you know, I think that's very, very regrettable and regressive. So I  
4 don't know who is going to replace Grace. I haven't heard. But, you know, not  
5 knowing, I am going to say now that I hope it is a woman, but I am sure, whoever  
6 her replacement will be, will be very welcome.

7

8 But just, again, to thank Grace for her commitment to all the people that she  
9 represented, and to say that she will be missed.

10 Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

12 Councillor Rory O'Connor.

13 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I just want to come in and  
14 say that I've been at nearly every meeting with Grace, and she always  
15 raised -- (inaudible) --

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor O'Connor, you have just muted yourself there.  
17 Sorry. Perfect. No, you have just done it again. Sorry.

18 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: Can you hear me?

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, we can hear you now perfect.

20 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: I was saying that, I don't think there was a meeting  
21 when Councillor Grace didn't talk about housing or homelessness, and I always  
22 thought that was quite admirable that she was constantly raising it. And I thought,  
23 you know, she's a wonderful councillor, and it's a real big shame to see her go. But  
24 also, on a personal level, she was always very kind, and it was great to have a chat to  
25 her about all issues around Bray and what we are facing. She would always give  
26 honest answers and stuff.

27

28 I think it is a big shame to see someone talented and young to leave like that. But I  
29 know, whatever she does, will always be the best decision. So best of luck in the  
30 future, Grace, and I know you will be greatly missed. Thank you.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

32 Councillor Stephen Stokes.

33 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach. And I would also  
34 join and thank Grace for all of her wonderful service to the county. Somebody who,

1 you know, always did her very best for people, you know, particularly in housing,  
2 and I really appreciated your passion, you know, that you brought to the chamber.  
3 And I thought you did a superb job. And I just want to wish you the very best for the  
4 future.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.  
6 Councillor Gail Dunne.

7 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. On behalf of the Fianna Fáil  
8 group, I would just like to wish Grace the very, very best of luck in the future. I only  
9 got to know Grace in 2019 when she was first elected, and if there was an item on  
10 the agenda that Grace wanted to come in on, she was so well informed and so  
11 passionate about that item, and always it was well worth listening, because you  
12 would have learned something off her.

13

14 I was just talking to her a few seconds ago there, and she is going to pastures new,  
15 and, as I said to her, what's for you won't pass you. And I hope that she is successful  
16 in whatever she does going forward. And on behalf of our group, I just want to wish  
17 her the very best of luck. Thank you.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Councillor.  
19 Councillor Irene winters.

20 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: Thanks. And on behalf of the Fine Gael group, I  
21 would just like to wish Grace every success in whatever she puts her hand to in the  
22 future. During her time in the Council, she has been hard-working, diligent, she is  
23 always good humoured, and was prepared to work with people of all parties, and  
24 none, for the good of her constituents. I found her extremely pleasant and  
25 cooperative in anything that I worked with her on, and I know that she will succeed  
26 at anything she puts her mind to. Thank you.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.  
28 Councillor Lourda Scott.

29 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yes, I just want to join my voice  
30 to that. I am very sad to see Grace go. I met her first when she was in more of an  
31 activist role during the Repeal campaign, and I was delighted when she got elected,  
32 and we both sort of joined very new and green into the chamber in 2019, and I  
33 always found her very supportive on a personal level. She was very supportive in  
34 helping set up the women's councillors' caucus, and did great work on the family

1 friendly scheme with the women's council as well.

2 As people have said, Grace is incredibly passionate. She was always very, very  
3 compassionate about the work she did through the Council, and that always shone  
4 out as she spoke on the various issues that were close to her heart; and that  
5 compassion is something I think that's sorely needed more of in politics.

6

7 Above all else, she was also -- despite being really passionate about everything that  
8 she believed in and rose, she was also respectful in all of her dealings in the  
9 Chamber, and on a personal level as well, and, again, it is probably something we  
10 need to see more of in politics.

11

12 So, look, I am really disappointed to see her go. I think it is a loss to the chamber  
13 here. I think it is very disappointing to see yet another female councillor leaving. I  
14 do wish her the best of success in her future role, and I know whatever she turns her  
15 hand to, she will be great at, and I hope in the future, perhaps, she will be able to turn  
16 back into politics again.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

18 Councillor John Snell.

19 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. On behalf of myself and  
20 Councillor O'Neill, I want to commend Grace for her contribution to the chambers  
21 and to her municipal district of Bray, but also the County Council. She's a very fair,  
22 level-headed person, and she represented a broad spectrum of the public. There's  
23 many diversity groups out there that wouldn't have had a voice only for Grace, and I  
24 know she will be missed.

25

26 I have to say, Councillor Dunne had a wrong choice of words in regards to pastures  
27 new. I just want to clarify that, Grace, you're not going to work for the company that  
28 is going to manage 950 Ukrainian people who are going into Annamoe, because  
29 that's the name of that company, Pastures New. But Grace was always a voice for  
30 the homeless, irrespective of their nationality, and I really appreciated her input on  
31 behalf of the SPC, and she was a very valued member of the housing SPC. She  
32 always made her feelings known. She was very fair. She listened to every side of  
33 the argument. And, you know, her contribution was really, really valued.

34

1 I have just spoken to Grace there as I came into the chambers, and I know that you  
2 are going on to something that you love. You've represented young people your  
3 lifetime. And, indeed, I can recall you being in the chambers here with young people  
4 many years ago, before you had any inkling that you were going to get involved in  
5 this type of politics.

6

7 So I just want to wish you -- really, I want to wish you well on behalf of myself and  
8 Gerry, and all the members are sharing in the same sentiment. And also to Dermot,  
9 you're losing a valued member of your team, but, you know, I know she won't be too  
10 far away. And just to thank Grace personally.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

12 Councillor Joe Behan.

13 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Well, I just want to agree with  
14 everything that has been said already about Grace, and Grace knows how strongly I  
15 feel about her contribution to Wicklow County Council since she became a member.

16

17 I think, above all, as other members have highlighted, her laser-like focus on  
18 housing, and particularly homelessness, and particularly homeless children, was  
19 sincere and genuine at every meeting. And I have to say I really commend you,  
20 Grace, for that, for keeping your focus on that issue all of the time that you were a  
21 member of the Council.

22

23 I wish you well in the future, and hopefully we will see you back here again, in some  
24 form, in the future. Thank you.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

26 Councillor Paul O'Brien.

27 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Can I just echo the  
28 sentiments that have gone before me, in terms of Grace's contribution here?

29

30 I worked with Grace on the housing SPC, and it is no secret that I learned a lot from  
31 her, because she done her homework, she was ready, she was prepared, and I  
32 genuinely learned a lot from you.

33 But, on a personal note, I have listened to the female councillors losing an ally, and I  
34 feel, on a personal note, I also am losing an ally here in the Council, because we did

1 work well together in terms of LGBTQ rights. And I feel like -- like Dermot there,  
2 I'm being abandoned a little bit. But I know through yourself, Cathaoirleach, I have  
3 a great ally and others among the chamber as well.

4 But it is a sad day for Wicklow County Council, and a sad day for Dermot and  
5 myself and everybody else here as well. So thank you. And I wish you well.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

7 Councillor Pier Leonard.

8 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Yes. I just want to wish Grace the best, and I am  
9 really sorry that I never got to sit on any committees really with you, only the  
10 protocol. But I found Grace to be very genuine, and she had great integrity in the  
11 chamber, and was very compassionate, and really, we do need those voices for the  
12 people that have no, I suppose, avenue to -- for their voice to be heard. And I think  
13 Grace did that really well.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

15 Councillor Melanie Corrigan.

16 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I just want to echo  
17 everyone else's sentiments here to Grace, and wish her all the best. It has been an  
18 absolute pleasure working with you and getting to know you, and I know you will  
19 bring huge experience and passion to your new position. And they are very lucky to  
20 have you. And don't be a stranger to us all. And we will be watching from afar.  
21 But, really, best of wishes to your future career. Thanks, Grace.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

23 Councillor Mary Kavanagh.

24 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Thanks, Chair. Yes, I just want to add my voice to  
25 everything that's gone ahead. I didn't have that many conversations with Grace  
26 because I wasn't on any committees with her, but I was here in the chamber with her,  
27 and I was always impressed with her. I was impressed with her integrity, I was  
28 impressed with her compassion, and it's -- when you're in a minority group, which,  
29 you know, the women in this Council are, it is hard to lose, not one, not two, but  
30 three in one term.

31

32 Grace is a young woman, she is a dynamic young woman, and she is going to be a  
33 big loss. She's the kind of loss that we don't need from local politics. But I know  
34 she is doing this for all the right reasons, and I wish her all the best. And I do have

1 commiserations with Dermot because, you know, they had a great friendship and a  
2 great bond, and hopefully he will get an equally good buddy to sit alongside. So best  
3 of luck, Grace.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

5 I am just going to invite the Bray Municipal District manager, Lorraine Gallagher,  
6 in.

7 MS GALLAGHER: Thank you very much, Cathaoirleach. So I just want to say,  
8 Grace, what an absolute pleasure it has been to work with you. I am very, very sorry  
9 to see you go, but very happy that the decision you made is your decision, and I wish  
10 you well. You carried out your duties as an elected member with courage and  
11 conviction and with respect for everybody around you. And I know it's been  
12 mentioned before about the causes that you championed that were close to your  
13 heart, and that was the whole issue of homelessness and housing. So you can be  
14 very, very proud of what you achieved as an elected member and an elected member  
15 of Bray MD.

16 And I just want to say, on behalf of myself and the staff of Bray Municipal District, I  
17 want to thank you for your contribution, wish you well for the future, and if you ever  
18 need to reach out in your future working environment, don't be behind the door. I  
19 wish you well, Grace.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Lorraine. And the Chief Executive.

21 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just to say to Grace, I've only, I  
22 suppose, worked with you for a very, very short time, but I suppose what really  
23 shone through to me during that time is your absolute passion for the role and the  
24 people that you represent, your pragmatic approach to problem solving, and just your  
25 absolute determination and drive behind all that you were behind here in the  
26 chamber.

27

28 So I am very, very sorry to see you go. And I know we had a conversation about  
29 that. And I just really want to wish you well. You have been a benefit to this  
30 Council, and it is our loss losing you today. So just to wish you well with your  
31 future. Thank you.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Chief Executive.

33 Grace, I don't know if you want to say anything. You're not obliged in any way. But  
34 if you do want to say anything, you are more than welcome.

1 COUNCILLOR McMANUS: It is very overwhelming.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: If you come up and we will turn on a mic. Press Erika's there.  
3 Now, there you go.

4 COUNCILLOR McMANUS: It is really weird doing that. Like, it feels very  
5 strange. Oh, god! Oh, my god! But it felt -- even though it is awkward, it felt  
6 important to do. And just everybody who took the time to send messages or speak  
7 today, it really, really made a difference to me, and I will carry those words with me.

8

9 It's been a huge learning curve over the four and a half years, but it's made all the  
10 easier by being able to talk to anybody in the chamber and say, do you know about  
11 this? Or this is in your area. Or even, we disagree on this, but tell me why we  
12 disagree so that I can maybe move my position or learn something.

13

14 So I just want to say a really, really heartfelt thank you. And you'll -- I won't be  
15 going far, I imagine. I will always be in the politics world in some sense. So I will  
16 be keeping an eye, and hopefully we will be able to stay in touch.

17 And to the executive, as well, thank you so much for all of your support over the four  
18 and a half years. And to you, Cathaoirleach, for helping me even know what to do  
19 today. I really, really do appreciate it. So thank you (applause).

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: So, Grace, you might come into the middle there. We just  
21 have a small presentation. And your Toblerone, obviously, as well. I didn't know  
22 these were referred to as Toblerone. (Photographs taken and applause).

23

24 Now. So now we move on to the first item, which is to confirm and sign the minutes  
25 of the ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday, 2nd October,  
26 a copy of which was circulated, proposed by Pat Fitzgerald, seconded by Paul  
27 O'Brien.

28 Is that agreed? (Agreed). Agreed. Thank you.

29

30 Item number 2 is to confirm and sign the minutes of the Special meeting of Wicklow  
31 County Council held on Monday, 9th October.

32 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Proposed.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Proposed by John Snell. Seconded by Gerry Walsh. Is that  
34 agreed? (Agreed). Thank you.

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Item number 3 is to consider the casual vacancy arising from the resignation of Councillor Grace McManus in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

Helen?

MS PURCELL: Just to advise, we haven't actually received a nomination for the co-option from Sinn Féin as yet, but they do hope to have somebody proposed in time for the December meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH: So this item is deferred. Is that okay with everyone?

MS PURCELL: Yes, we're happy to defer.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Happy to defer, everyone? Yes? Perfect.

Item number 4 is to consider the vacancy to the Housing and Corporate Estate SPC arising from the resignation of Councillor Grace McManus.

Councillor John Snell? Oh, sorry. Hold on. We're looking to defer this as well.

But, sorry, John.

COUNCILLOR SNELL: Yes. Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I said it when Councillor Barry came on, and before that as well, when Councillor Stephen Stokes came in to replace Councillor Mags Korean.

I believe, genuinely, that those positions should be held by the person who is replacing the councillor that is leaving. So whoever Grace McManus -- replacing her on this Council, or if Sinn Féin decide that they want to put somebody on. But I think it should be in their hands, really, to be fair.

CATHAOIRLEACH: So are we agreeable to defer this, then, to --

COUNCILLOR SNELL: And I think item 4 and 5, Cathaoirleach --

CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes.

COUNCILLOR SNELL: -- the vacancy and the Bray area council, I think we should defer the two of them.

CATHAOIRLEACH: That is the proposal. So are we agreement to defer item number 4? (Agreed.) That's agreed?

And then item number 5, to consider the vacancy of the Bray Area Partnership arising from the resignation of Councillor Grace McManus. The proposal is to defer that item as well. Are we agreed? (Agreed.)

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Sorry, we need to actually get a proposer and a seconder to defer those three items. So proposed by Councillor O'Brien, seconded by Councillor John Snell, for all three items.

Is that okay, Helen?

MS PURCELL: Yes.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Perfect. Is that agreed by everyone? (Agreed.) Agreed. Great. Okay.

Item number 6 is to consider the Chief Executive's Report in accordance with section 13(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, on submissions to Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (Rathdrum Town Plan) and to consider making, not making or modifying the Proposed Variation.

And I know Sorcha is going to cover this item. So we will open the floor to you, Sorcha.

SORCHA: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. We have a short presentation, if that could be put on the overhead.

So, members, this relates to proposed variation number 1 to the Wicklow County Development Plan, which is a proposed variation to volume 2, which is the Rathdrum Town Plan.

Next slide, please.

The proposal is to rezone 0.81 hectares of land at Ballygannon, Rathdrum from new residential to OS2, passive open space, and to amend the written text of the Rathdrum Town Plan to reflect those changes.

The background to this is that, in the preparation of the first set of maps for the residential zoned land tax, landowners who have land that is considered to be in scope for the new tax may make a submission to request change in zoning of their land, and such requests are facilitated under Section 653 of the Taxes Consolidation Act; that is in order to provide landowners an opportunity to have the status of their

1 land reviewed in light of the new taxation measure.

2

3 A circular letter has also been received from the Minister with regard to how such  
4 requests should be considered. We did receive a submission from this landowner,  
5 submission number 14, in relation to this land, seeking for the land zoning to be  
6 changed to open space. This submission was evaluated at the time, you know,  
7 submissions were allowed to be sent in until 1st January of this year. It was  
8 evaluated at the time by the Chief Executive and discussed with the Municipal  
9 District members, and, on foot of those conversations and that assessment, it was  
10 decided to proceed with a proposal to consider varying the plan to change the zoning  
11 of this land.

12

13 So the land is shown on the overhead there. The land that is circled in red there, that  
14 is bright yellow, that's the current land use zoning, which is RN, which is zoning for  
15 new residential use. So that is the current County Development Plan adopted last  
16 year.

17

18 If we go on to the next slide.

19

20 The proposal is to change the zoning to open space 2. So that is just green zoning.  
21 Sorry, could we go back one? Yes. So that is it there.

22

23 The land is just to the south of Fair Green in Rathdrum, just to the west of the town  
24 centre. Across the north of the land is a row of existing dwellings. So they are  
25 zoned RE, which is existing residential. No change is proposed to that. And the land  
26 to the rear of the subject land is zoned open space, which is along a stream. So the  
27 proposal is to essentially zone the land OS2, which is the same zoning as the stream  
28 behind it, and that objective is to protect, enhance and manage existing open,  
29 undeveloped lands. These lands are being used by the landowner as a sort of  
30 biodiversity and nature reserve, a private biodiversity and nature reserve, where the  
31 landowner has undertaken a project for many decades of restoring the land, planting  
32 lots of different trees and other plants, and trying to bring biodiversity back to the  
33 area.

34

1 If you go on to the next slide, piece.

2

3 So the proposed -- there are also some proposed changes to the text of the plan, and  
4 that would just be changing any tables or any text that refer to the amount of land  
5 zoned for new residential development. Just to point out that the amount of land that  
6 would remain zoned for residential development more than enough meets the needs  
7 for Rathdrum moving forward during the next period -- during this period of the  
8 development plan and into the future, and is fully compliant with the core strategy.

9

10 The next slide, please.

11

12 The proposed amendment has also undergone SEA and appropriate assessment, and  
13 it was deemed in both cases that full SEA and full appropriate assessment wouldn't  
14 be required, because no significant adverse environmental impacts would be  
15 envisaged from changing the land zoning from residential to open space.

16

17 So the proposed variation -- next slide, please, Theresa.

18

19 The proposed variation went on display on the 6th of September until 3rd of October  
20 this year just gone. We received nine submissions. They were all from State  
21 authorities. You can see the list there. The report on these submissions has already  
22 been circulated to you earlier this month. On foot of those submissions, the Chief  
23 Executive is not recommending any modifications to the proposed variation and is  
24 recommending that you proceed to make the proposed variation.

25

26 That is it, Cathaoirleach.

27

28 The members have already been supplied with the report on the submissions and a  
29 copy of the variation in advance of the meeting

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: That is great, Sorcha. Thank you so much for that. I am  
31 going to open it up to the floor.

32 So Councillor Pat Kennedy.

33 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And if I could just from  
34 the outset, just thank Sorcha and the planning team for all the work they have done

1 on this. This is a very unique situation, where we are coming for a variation to the  
2 County Development Plan.

3 I also want to acknowledge the work, the commitment of the Arklow MD members.  
4 All six members were invited up to see this site and to, I suppose, view and get an  
5 understanding of the nature and the environmental importance of this site to  
6 Rathdrum.

7  
8 So I am going to propose the variation as it is, on the recommendation of the Chief  
9 Executive.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.  
11 Councillor Sylvester Bourke.

12 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: I would like to second this proposal. As Councillor  
13 Kennedy said there, we went up to visit it, and I have no problem with it; I think it is  
14 an excellent idea that this piece of ground should be preserved as open space. So I  
15 am formally seconding it.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.  
17 Okay. Councillor John Snell.

18 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Quite unusual, really, to be  
19 honest, you know, land going from new residential to open space. But, look it, I  
20 have full faith in the six members of the Arklow Municipal District, and they are  
21 doing the right thing for Rathdrum.

22  
23 I have a question, and it is just a bit of clarification, if I could, from Sorcha. There  
24 was nine submissions, and one was received from Meath County Council. Could I  
25 ask, what would the logic of the submission from Meath County Council be?

26 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We have no other lights showing, so maybe you might  
27 just answer that, Sorcha, before we go to...

28  
29 Sorcha: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. All adjoining local authorities, by law, have to  
30 be advised where there is a proposal to vary a County Development Plan, and we  
31 advise all authorities in our -- adjoining us and in our region. So Meath and Kildare  
32 and Wicklow and Louth are in a joint region, I suppose, within our region. So their  
33 submission is simply acknowledging that the variation is proposed and they have no  
34 input, no comment.

1 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Thank you.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Perfect. That is great. Thanks, Sorcha.

3 Okay. Do we need to -- we've got a proposer and a seconder.

4 MS PURCELL: Required to take a vote. So it's making the variation as circulated in

5 accordance with the Chief Executive's report. Proposed by Councillor Pat Kennedy,

6 seconded by Councillor Sylvester Bourke. If you are in favour, please vote for, and

7 if you are against, vote against.

8 Councillor Tom Annesley.

9 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: For.

10 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mark Barry.

11 COUNCILLOR BARRY: (Not present).

12 MS PURCELL: He's not present. Councillor Joe Behan.

13 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: For.

14 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Vincent Blake.

15 COUNCILLOR BLAKE: For.

16 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Sylvester Bourke.

17 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: For.

18 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Melanie Corrigan.

19 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: For.

20 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Avril Cronin.

21 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: For.

22 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Shay Cullen.

23 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: For.

24 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Erika Doyle.

25 COUNCILLOR DOYLE: For.

26 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gail Dunne.

27 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: For.

28 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Anne Ferris.

29 COUNCILLOR FERRIS: For.

30 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.

31 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: For.

32 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: For.

34 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Tom Fortune is not present.

1 Councillor Patsy Glennon.  
2 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: For.  
3 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.  
4 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: For.  
5 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Pat Kennedy.  
6 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: For.  
7 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Peir Leonard.  
8 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: For.  
9 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Derek Mitchell.  
10 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: For:  
11 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor John Mullen.  
12 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: For.  
13 MS PURCELL: Councillor Miriam Murphy.  
14 MS MURPHY: For.  
15 MS PURCELL: Councillor Dermot O'Brien.  
16 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: For.  
17 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Paul O'Brien.  
18 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: For.  
19 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Rory O'Connor.  
20 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: For.  
21 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Gerry O'Neill.  
22 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: For.  
23 MS PURCELL: Councillor Lourda Scott.  
24 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: For.  
25 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor John Snell.  
26 COUNCILLOR SNELL: For.  
27 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Stephen Stokes.  
28 COUNCILLOR STOKES: For.  
29 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Edward Timmins.  
30 COUNCILLOR TIMMINS: For.  
31 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Gerry Walsh.  
32 COUNCILLOR WALSH: For.  
33 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Irene Winters.  
34 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: For.

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Twenty-nine in favour and two not present. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Thank you, members.

Item number 7. To consider the Chief Executive's Report in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for a bus based park and ride facility located to the west of M11 Junction 6 at Fassaroe.

And John is at the podium already, ready to go, so I will hand it over to yourself.

JOHN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Good afternoon. I am joined here this afternoon by my colleagues from the NTA park and ride delivery office, Barry Dorgan and Oliver Dalton, and I am going to give a brief outline of the CE's report on the proposed bus park and ride at Fassaroe and the outcomes of the statutory public consultation under Part 8.

The full details of the -- are contained in the CE's report and also in the Part 8 documents, which are still available on the Council website.

The proposed development is for a strategic bus park and ride facility located to the west of the M11 Junction 6 in the townland of Fassaroe. The proposed development comprises a car park of 388 spaces, including 26 spaces for mobility impaired users, 42 for EV charging, 40 bicycle parking stands and 20 bike lockers. The project also includes public lighting, CCTV and two bus bays, two passenger shelters and a bus turning area.

We can move on maybe to the next drawing there. It shows the general arrangement.

A new all-movement junction is proposed at Fassaroe lane, incorporating a dedicated lane for right-turning traffic. The proposed park and ride is in accordance with objectives in the County Development Plan and the Bray Local Area Plan, in particular, one objective which states that, to facilitate the development of park and ride facilities at appropriate locations along strategic transport corridors which will be identified through the carrying out of required coordinated plan-led transport studies and consultation with the appropriate transport agencies and/or regional

1 authority.

2

3 The aim of the park and ride at this location is to intercept N11 traffic that originates  
4 further south and to transfer these journeys to bus from this location to Dublin City  
5 centre and vice-versa.

6

7 The new bus service from the proposed facility would be an express service, with a  
8 frequency of three buses per hour in each direction during peak periods.

9

10 The proposed facility would not compromise the function of the N11 and would be  
11 in accordance with the objectives -- with objectives to reduce carbon emissions and  
12 to promote greater use of sustainable transport.

13

14 An environmental impact assessment screening report concluded that the  
15 development is outside the mandatory requirements for EIA and is considered to be  
16 subthreshold for the relevant project type. It also concluded that there is no likely  
17 significant environmental effects on the receiving environment which would warrant  
18 the preparation of an EIA.

19

20 Also, a flood risk assessment has deemed the proposed development is not at any  
21 significant risk of flooding, and the restricted surface water discharge from the site  
22 does not adversely affect or increase the flood risk to adjacent downstream sites.

23

24 The appropriate assessment screening report concluded that a Stage 2 assessment is  
25 not required. It considered that the proposed development falls alone, or in  
26 combination with other developments, will have no likelihood of direct or indirect  
27 effects on European sites.

28

29 With regard to the statutory consultation process, plans and details for the proposed  
30 development were made available online and in the Council offices from Wednesday  
31 the 23rd of August, with the last day for submitting comments or observations set for  
32 noon on Wednesday, the 4th of October.

33

34 Advance briefings and consultations were provided to elected members at the

1 Council meeting in October '22, at the Bray MD meeting in June '23, and also via an  
2 online briefing in August '23.

3

4 A total of 14 submissions and observations were received during the consultation  
5 period, and a number of recommendations are included in the CE's report on foot of  
6 the submissions.

7

8 So, in consideration of the various studies, reports and designs presented, it is  
9 concluded that the proposed development is found to be consistent with the  
10 principles of proper planning and sustainable development for the area. This  
11 development is, therefore, recommended for approval by the members, subject to the  
12 following recommendations:

13 Review the need for amenity power sources within the site and incorporate into the  
14 proposal, if deemed appropriate;

15 Review and, where appropriate, improve provision for pedestrian and cycle facilities  
16 within the development and in close proximity to the site access junction on Fassaroe  
17 lane.

18 Works are due to be carried out in -- are to be carried out in line with the appropriate  
19 standards and procedures for works on or around Gas Networks Ireland, Uisce  
20 Eireann or TII infrastructure.

21 A comprehensive construction management -- sorry. A comprehensive construction  
22 environmental management plan will be prepared prior to the commencement of  
23 works, and review the need for a public toilet facility within the site and incorporate  
24 into the proposal, if deemed necessary.

25

26 So thanks, and I am happy to take any questions.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry. My apologies. I am just going to open it up to the  
28 floor there. Just so members know, we will be looking for a proposer and a seconder  
29 on this, if people are agreeable, and we will also be going to a vote.

30 Councillor Rory O'Connor.

31 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: Thank you very much, Chair. I am happy to propose  
32 this, firstly. I just wanted to raise something within the report: At nearly every  
33 presentation about this project I raised it as a possibility about using solar panels on  
34 the site to maximise the usage of -- for projects like this, for renewable energy.

1 I think -- I know within the report they make the point about the demand not being  
2 there, but I do think going forward when, you know, potentially there is a huge  
3 housing development happening across the road from there, I think the demand for  
4 energy could be very, very high, and I think it would be great having some new  
5 energy produced beside the housing estate. And also, just the fact there are 42 EV  
6 parking spots there, that I think, you know, at peak hours, I think every single one of  
7 the spots will be used, and people will be charging their cars, and I think the  
8 potential to turn parking spots into something more useful; because, you know, all  
9 across Ireland, in many spots, parking is underused -- underused land, you know,  
10 overall, it's just used for parking, when it could be used for a lot more than just  
11 parking.

12

13 Yes, I just want to make that point. Just happy to be within that. That is great.

14 Thank you very much.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

16 Councillor Stephen Stokes.

17 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach. Thank you very  
18 much for the presentation. It's very positive. I am looking forward to this, hopefully,  
19 being implemented. Last time we were here, I just raised a good concern is that, you  
20 know, people want good, reliable and efficient services, and I think if this works  
21 well, my only real concern is that the demand could outstrip the spaces in the future.

22

23 So I am interested in the future as to, is there an option to scale up? I mentioned the  
24 example of, you know, the tram stops in Manchester in the UK. They often have, for  
25 their car parks, a two-storey facility. So I am wondering about is there potential to  
26 scale this up in the future?

27

28 And then the second thing is, as you're here, I would be very interested to see where  
29 we are at in relation to the proposed park and rides for Greystones and also for  
30 Ashford, because I think it is absolutely essential that we reduce car journeys.

31 So, thank you very much.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

33 Councillor Derek Mitchell.

34 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Yes, I very much

1 welcome this as very necessary. I would also just like to ask, as the last speaker did,  
2 about progress on the one at Willow Grove, which is intended to be -- have the same  
3 function, and I am just wondering what the bus arrangements will be for both the  
4 special shuttle buses, but also buses like the 133 and the 84X, are they going to call  
5 in here, or what is going to happen?

6 Thank you.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

8 Councillor Lourda Scott.

9 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Yes, thank you very much for the presentation. And  
10 again, I very much welcome this, and it is great to see it progressing and having such  
11 positivity on the submissions going into it.

12

13 I suppose just raising up, like Councillor O'Connor, at the last presentation we had  
14 on this, I raised the question as to whether or not this facility could be a zero carbon  
15 site, and it is good to see the discussion on potentially solar panels in the report there.  
16 I suppose I would say I'm slightly disappointed there's not a little bit more ambition  
17 around that, and I understand the logic as presented. But I'm also looking -- like, you  
18 have 42 spaces for electric vehicles, with a further 39 planned, which is quite  
19 significant. And, again, I'm presuming there will be, if not sort of straight away, but  
20 in the near future, will be electric buses that would be used, possibly, from the park  
21 and ride as well.

22 And I am just wondering -- I just understand that, sort of, time is of the essence as  
23 well, that you don't want to get bogged down and trying to sort of overreach while  
24 you're trying to get this off the ground.

25

26 But I just would like to stress again that importance of future-proofing this, that there  
27 is a lot of potential, you know, for generating energy from cars that are literally  
28 sitting there, like, with solar panels during the day. I mean, it's something that's been  
29 done quite successfully, as I understand, in various areas in the UK.

30

31 And even if the solar panels weren't possible at the moment, I am just wondering  
32 again have you looked at doing some further work on green planting or even green  
33 roofs, for example. Because we are taking a greenfield site and filling it with  
34 cement. And while it's great removing cars potentially from the road, I am just

1 wondering if a bit more work could be done on the design phase to try and make this  
2 a little bit more towards zero carbon.

3 Thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

5 Councillor Melanie Corrigan.

6 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Yes, I would like to  
7 second this, if it hasn't already been seconded. I think it is going to be very -- very  
8 well used and it's a great adver -- great for the community.

9

10 I would like to see possible linkage with the 185 bus, that it is calling in coming from  
11 Enniskerry. We have a huge problem with the buses being cancelled at the last  
12 minute, so it could add to the connectivity of the whole area.

13

14 As Councillor Mitchell was saying, with the 133 as well, that is a very heavily used  
15 route. Quite often, when it hits, kind of Kilmacanogue, it's full, so it would be nice if  
16 there was some way of connecting that up as well. But I think, in general, I am  
17 very -- very supportive of it and -- thank you.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much. Just members who have their mics on, I  
19 might get you to turn them off. Councillor Scott, there's just a little bit of feedback.

20 Thank you very much. Councillor Dermot O'Brien.

21 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Again, thank you  
22 for the presentation. Particularly, I thought it was -- it is great to see how, when  
23 people put the effort into making a submission and it is great to see how that is  
24 responded to positively and proactively, and things emerge from that; like, the idea  
25 of a power source for somebody, maybe, to set up a coffee van or something like  
26 that. And I think that the emerging stuff has potential.

27

28 One question, Cathaoirleach only is just, like, how do we make decisions around the  
29 toilet facilities? I can imagine that if somebody -- I'm not going to say is stuck in  
30 traffic on a bus, because they won't be -- but someone's on a bus for a period of time,  
31 and then they have to go and jump into their car and then maybe travel another  
32 distance, like, what is the rationale for deciding -- or is it more about viability and  
33 costs? But how do we make a decision about the toilets? Thanks.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: John, just one more. Is that okay? Can you remember all

1 those questions?

2 Councillor Miriam Murphy.

3 COUNCILLOR MURPHY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Yes, I am just not familiar  
4 with the park and ride, but I would presume and hope that disabled parking would be  
5 in this area, but also that the bus accessibility for a person with immobility or even  
6 children with parents, with buggies, have the level of access to the bus from the area,  
7 because that is a problem. At bus stops there, the level has to be taken into account  
8 for CIE buses, for the ramps to come down to a proper level. I hope that is included  
9 in all of the projects going forward, because it is a big issue for disabled drivers as  
10 well who are going to work or wherever, and want to use the park and ride facilities,  
11 and also as a passenger as well. So I really hope they are improved.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

13 John, maybe you might answer some of those questions for us, if you can.

14 JOHN: Yes, I will answer some of them, and I might invite my colleagues from the  
15 NTA as well, because there were some specific ones there on bus service as well.

16

17 But just on the -- obviously, this is the first of three park and rides. There's two more  
18 planned at Kilpedder, at Junction 11, and Ashford Rathnew at Junction 16, and  
19 they're in the process. Ashford Rathnew at Junction 16, we'll probably be following  
20 this with a Part 8 on that possibly in the new year, and then to be possibly followed  
21 then by Kilpedder shortly thereafter.

22

23 Just on the zero carbon, we are looking -- I suppose there -- we have been looking at  
24 the solar PV panels large scale, but also small scale, just to serve the needs of the site  
25 as well. And there has been discussions with the ESB about electric charging, and  
26 them providing infrastructure there. So that's something that the NTA are kind of  
27 actively pursuing, and will continue to pursue, to see what the viable solutions might  
28 be.

29

30 I might just ask --

31 MR DARGAN: Barry Dargan from the park and ride development office. I know  
32 that there was some comment on surface water. So as part of the development of the  
33 site, we are incorporating SUDS, which is Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, and  
34 that is to try and minimise the flow off the site. It is attenuated, but we are also

1 looking to infiltrate locally as much as possible. So we are using those latest  
2 drainage techniques.

3

4 In terms of future expansion, certainly, back to what John was saying; this is one of  
5 three sites we're looking at along the corridor. So between the sites, I think we're  
6 looking at coming back for Part 8s on the other two sites. Next year, hopefully,  
7 Ashford Rathnew Junction 16 will be the first of those. I'm not sure if there any  
8 other...

9 JOHN: Just on the question of the toilet, I suppose that will be tied up as well with  
10 how the site is operated, the operating model for the site, and that is something to be  
11 kind of yet worked out. There's various operating models that we are looking at with  
12 the NTA on that.

13

14 As well, just on the expansion, you know, obviously, this is a first step in the park  
15 and rides. If it is a success, obviously, we will be looking at expansion, if that is  
16 feasible.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just clarity on the accessibility, John.

18 JOHN: The accessibility, we do have -- there are 26 spaces for mobility impaired  
19 spaces, and bus facilities, they will be designed to be fully accessible.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We just have one other member looking to come in, so  
21 I might get the three of you to just hold there for one second.

22 Councillor Pier Leonard.

23 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: It was just probably -- maybe it'll be more the  
24 operational side of things when you -- when you pin down that, but just the health  
25 and safety on it. Will there be CCTV there, just for people are kind of getting off the  
26 bus late at night and their car's parked there? And then just also just the maintenance  
27 of it going forward, is that going to be NTA funded or will it be Wicklow County  
28 Council have to contribute to that? Thanks.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

30 John, I might let you come in?

31 JOHN: Yes. There is CCTV. That's included in the proposal, and it's covered in the  
32 Part 8. The operation and the maintenance, that is kind of tied up with the op -- the  
33 maintenance is tied up with the operation, and it will be under the ownership -- the  
34 intention that it will be under the ownership of Wicklow County Council, but the

1 operation of it has yet to be decided, whether that's -- how that's -- whether  
2 it -- there's various models that could be incorporated or whether there's a -- whether,  
3 I suppose -- and they are tied in with the cost of it, how the cost of it is covered.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. That is great. Thank you very much, John. We have  
5 someone -- oh, sorry, Councillor Gerry Walsh.

6 COUNCILLOR WALSH: Just one question, John. On the operational side of  
7 things, is it envisaged and assumed that there will be a charge associated with the  
8 parking, the use of the park and ride facility for motorists?

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: And I will just take the last question before you come in  
10 there, John.

11 Councillor, Stephen Stokes.

12 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach. Just to follow up, I  
13 didn't quite catch if there was potential for future expansion. If you could just  
14 elaborate on that. Thank you, John.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just those two, John. Thank you.

16 JOHN: Yes, the cost -- again, the cost of it is tied up with the model that is adopted  
17 for the operation, whether there is a cost per use or whether the cost is part of  
18 the -- is included in the cost of the service, using the service. So that is something  
19 that the NTA -- I don't know whether Oliver might be able to expand on that for you.

20 MR DALTON: Cathaoirleach, Councillors, thank you for the opportunity. Just to  
21 pick up on some of the points. Oliver Dalton from the NTA. I work in the transport  
22 investment arm of the NTA, so we're hoping to fund this particular facility with your  
23 support from Wicklow County Council.

24

25 In relation to the future demand for these facilities along the corridor, we have used  
26 what is called the Eastern Regional Model, which is a transport model to assess the  
27 demand at various strategic locations, and I suppose the degree of success is a full  
28 car park. And I suppose, coming out of that analysis, we have identified that there is  
29 sufficient capacity on the site to cater for the demand up to the end of the GDA  
30 transport strategy, in collaboration, then, with the other facilities that are planned  
31 along the M11 at Kilpedder and at Ashford.

32

33 There was a question in relation to rail-based park and ride in Greystones. And  
34 again, we are working with our colleagues in Irish Rail to identify the most optimal

1 solutions there, and Barry has been tasked with -- as part of the park and ride office,  
2 to look at those facilities and identify what is the most appropriate intervention at  
3 that location.

4  
5 Ashford has been mentioned.

6  
7 In terms of bus services, the 133 service has been identified. It is the intention of the  
8 park and ride facility at Fassaroe that it will have its own dedicated services and that  
9 it won't leverage the abilities of the other services, which we know and appreciate are  
10 at capacity, and there is a body of work underway with our transport planning team  
11 to identify efficiencies in that network and to avoid the scenarios of buses not  
12 arriving, and so on and so forth.

13  
14 In terms of the toilet facilities and the wider maintenance and operational programme  
15 for the park and ride facilities nationwide, as mentioned, we're looking at tendering  
16 those services, but tendering those services on the basis of grouping them into a  
17 number of facilities and the most efficient model for the Exchequer. So we are  
18 looking internationally at what has worked and what has not worked there.

19  
20 And I suppose there's a body of work to be done there in relation to that, and we will  
21 report back. It hasn't been finalised at this point, but there's a lot of work that has  
22 happened there, and we would be hoping to come back to Wicklow County Council  
23 with that model as we roll out the park and ride facilities nationwide.

24  
25 And coupled into that, then, will be the financing model, whether parking charges  
26 will be applied or whether the ticket will capture the parking services and so on and  
27 so forth. So there's a lot of questions there that we are working through at the  
28 moment, and, hopefully, we will get to conclude on that at some point in the near  
29 future.

30  
31 I might stop talking there and just hand it back.

32  
33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Okay, members? We have a proposer, Rory  
34 O'Connor, and a seconder, Melanie Corrigan. So we will go to a vote now.

1 MS PURCELL: So in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and  
2 Development Act 2000, as amended, the development of the M11 Junction 6  
3 Fassaroe bus park and ride scheme may be carried out as recommended in the Chief  
4 Executive's Report.  
5  
6 If you're in favour, please vote for.  
7 Councillor Tom Annesley.  
8 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: For.  
9 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mark Barry.  
10 COUNCILLOR BARRY: For.  
11 MS PURCELL: Councillor Joe Behan.  
12 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: For.  
13 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Vincent Blake.  
14 COUNCILLOR BLAKE: For.  
15 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Sylvester Bourke.  
16 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: For.  
17 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Melanie Corrigan.  
18 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: For.  
19 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Avril Cronin.  
20 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: For.  
21 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Shay Cullen.  
22 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: For.  
23 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Erika Doyle.  
24 COUNCILLOR DOYLE: For.  
25 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gail Dunne.  
26 Not present?  
27 Councillor Anne Ferris.  
28 COUNCILLOR FERRIS: For.  
29 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.  
30 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: For.  
31 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy.  
32 CATHAOIRLEACH: For.  
33 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Tom Fortune. Is not present.  
34 Councillor Patsy Glennon.

1 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: For.  
2 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.  
3 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: For.  
4 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Pat Kennedy.  
5 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: For.  
6 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Peir Leonard.  
7 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: For.  
8 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Derek Mitchell.  
9 MR MITCHELL: For.  
10 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor John Mullen.  
11 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: For.  
12 MS PURCELL: Councillor Miriam Murphy.  
13 MS MURPHY: For.  
14 MS PURCELL: Councillor Dermot O'Brien.  
15 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: For.  
16 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Paul O'Brien.  
17 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: For.  
18 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Rory O'Connor.  
19 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: For.  
20 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gerry O'Neill. Not present.  
21 Councillor Lourda Scott.  
22 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: For.  
23 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor John Snell.  
24 COUNCILLOR SNELL: For.  
25 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Stephen Stokes.  
26 COUNCILLOR STOKES: For.  
27 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Edward Timmins. Not present.  
28 Councillor Gerry Walsh.  
29 COUNCILLOR WALSH: For.  
30 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Irene Winters.  
31 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: For.  
32 MS PURCELL: For.  
33  
34 Twenty-seven for and four not present. Thank you.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: So that is passed. Thank you very much, John, and both of  
2 you for coming today. Appreciated.

3

4 Okay, members, we are moving on to item number 8, and that is to enter into a  
5 Section 85 agreement for the provision of Social Housing via a Public Private  
6 Partnership - Bundle 6 of the National Social Housing PPP Programme. And Joe  
7 Lane is going to put us through that.

8

9 And just for the record, members, as you know, I work for an approved housing  
10 body. I have checked if there is any conflict here, and there is none. So just for the  
11 record as well.

12 Joe, I will hand it over to yourself.

13 MR LANE: Okay. This is the fourth time Wicklow County Council has been  
14 included in bundles in a PPP. PPPs, as people know, have a number of advantages.  
15 It is part of Government policy to include units for delivery under this delivery  
16 stream. It is part of a suite of delivery, as people know, including local authority  
17 delivery, approved housing bodies, turnkeys, acquisitions, and, in this case, a  
18 percentage of the Housing For All units to be delivered will be delivered under this  
19 stream. And it increases the capacity both within the Housing For All, because it  
20 doesn't have to prove there the capital and the local authority.

21

22 As detailed previously -- sorry. People will remember, for bundle 1, we included  
23 units in bundle 1, the ones that were in (inaudible). Dublin City Council was the  
24 lead authority there. Bundle 2, we weren't included. That's included in the report  
25 went out to you. But Cork County Council were the lead in that one.

26 Bundle 3, we have units in Blessington, and Dublin City Council is the lead. I will  
27 come back to that. And we also units in bundle 5 in Rehill in the Burnaby. That's  
28 led by Dublin City.

29 In bundle 6, which is included, we have included for some of our lands in Tinahask,  
30 Arklow. Wicklow County Council, we have indicated that we are amenable to 100  
31 units being delivered by this method.

32

33 The PPP model requires that "a" authority be the lead authority for tendering  
34 procurement, and all the other issues that's required in delivering units of this

1 magnitude. So in this particular case, Cork County Council were proposed to be the  
2 lead authority.

3

4 As detailed in our previous discussions and the issues that came up with the  
5 members, the nominations will be Wicklow County Council staff -- Wicklow County  
6 Council, from the Wicklow County Council housing list. Ownership of the land  
7 remains with the County Council. There will not be any transfer of land. We will  
8 not be coming back to ye for a disposal of land in this. And Wicklow County  
9 Council has membership of the steering committee, I'm on it, and we're also the  
10 technical working group. As detailed, section 5 is required because you need "an  
11 entity" to be tendering in the procurement, and I, therefore, recommend that we enter  
12 into an agreement with Cork to be the lead authority in this case, and act as the  
13 housing authority.

14

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Joe. I am going to open this up out on  
16 to the floor.

17 Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.

18 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: Yes, just listening to Joe there, and I have to say it  
19 is a very welcome development for Arklow. We are short -- we haven't got that  
20 many spare houses, so it is an exciting time, and it has been included in bundle 6 of  
21 the NDFA Public Private Partnership, and has a delivery target of 100 social houses,  
22 as part of National Social Housing Programmes.

23

24 And as with all products, there are a number of sites across Ireland. Cork will be the  
25 leader. And for -- in order for Cork to agree this partnership with Wicklow, we must  
26 vote on it. So I think we should vote on it, and I am proposing to the members that  
27 we vote yes on this proposal.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor. Councillor Sylvester  
29 Bourke.

30 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to second this  
31 proposal. I think it is really important, because we have been looking forward to this  
32 for the last year, since Joe first mooted it here about a year ago, and we have  
33 reminded him several times since then about where it was. So I am delighted it's on  
34 the agenda; it's come this far.

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I think it's really important, because we have a dearth of housing in Arklow. Every one of us in this chamber is getting representations day in, day out from people who have nowhere to live, where they're in overcrowded situations, and they are very worried, and they are facing potentially homelessness. And it is very difficult to give people encouragement, because we haven't got the houses to give out.

I think if we could build these sooner rather than later, it will be a bit of a help, a significant help. Because it is dreadful when you can't give people hope when -- when they're in a desperate situation.

And I think we should really be sending a strong signal to developers in Arklow from today, that we should be welcoming them to lodge planning applications for housing in Arklow. The sewage plant is nearing completion. People need lead-in times to make plans, to get projects up and running, and to get finance in place. And I do strongly believe that we should be more encouraging to potential developers who have land and sites in our town, who can make a significant speedy contribution to alleviating a lot of the housing difficulties people face, that we should be giving them the encouragement and definitely saying we're open for business, we're prepared to grant the plannings from now on.

Because if we delay much longer, we are just delaying people's misery. And it is misery for an awful lot of people. And it is misery trying to solve these problems when you can't. Because the underlying problem is, we haven't the supply of housing. And we've -- it's up to us. It starts here in this office block. We can make a huge difference in encouraging people to bring forward plans and bring the right mix of housing as well.

Because I'm getting representations were active retired groups in Arklow, looking for -- with members who want to downsize, they want to be able to move to one-bed and two-bed units, and we need to encourage that, to satisfy everybody's housing need. So I really am happy that this is happening, and I do congratulate Joe on the 200 houses he has -- approximately 200 houses that -- between KAF and Council housing that have been delivered in Arklow over the last four or five years. It's a credit to him and his team. But there's a lot more work to be done. And I think we're on the cusp of a major breakthrough, and this needs to be speeded up, and the ball

1 has to start rolling, and rolling fast.

2 Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much.

4 Councillor John Snell.

5 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. First off, I'd like to commend the  
6 six Municipal District councillors from Arklow for obviously engaging in the  
7 process to date, and I encourage all councillors in the chamber to support this, as I  
8 will be. And it's not because I believe it can be a success, it is because I know it is a  
9 success. We have it here in this town, in Wicklow town here, in a previous bundle,  
10 under this same Section 85; there's people actually living and rearing their families in  
11 houses in Wicklow town here, produced and delivered by this Local Authority, in  
12 conjunction with this national strategy.

13

14 I think it was raised before in regard to, you know, why Dublin was the lead agency,  
15 and why does it have to be Cork, and the reality is that it frees up our staff to get on  
16 with other important projects. This is just a mechanism to achieving units, high  
17 quality units, to people who are on our social waiting list. It is a win-win for County  
18 Wicklow.

19

20 And it is no different than the HAP scheme being micromanaged from Limerick. No  
21 different at all. We all know that it can be quite troublesome in regards of, you  
22 know, having staff tied up and tendering processes, and the likes of the red tape that's  
23 engaged in that. So there's nothing untoward here. And, to date, north, east, south,  
24 and hopefully, you know, west as well, we've all had sections of this county in  
25 bundles, previous bundles, and this bundle as well.

26

27 So I will be encouraging it. Because I see it with my own eyes, and people who we  
28 represent here are benefiting and already living in houses that are two and three years  
29 old. So I would recommend it as well, and I support Councillor Fitzgerald and  
30 Councillor Bourke on proposing and seconding this.

31 Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

33 Councillor Joe Behan.

34 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Yes. Well, Cathaoirleach, I won't delay everybody by

1 giving the same speech I gave the last time. But I think it shows an extreme lack of  
2 confidence in our staff that we now have to go to Cork to get them to help us put our  
3 schemes together.

4  
5 We have already outsourced a scheme in Bray to Dublin City Council. I just had a  
6 look at the Chief Executive's report today. There's been no progress. Absolutely  
7 nothing has happened in the last six months. I'd have far more confidence in our  
8 own staff to move these projects. Councillor Bourke talked about 200 houses  
9 already produced by our staff in Arklow. Well, why can't we do the rest? We're  
10 talking about keeping our powers as local councillors, and we are obeying  
11 Government instructions and encouragement to send them off to some other council.  
12 Outsource again.

13

14 I, like everybody else, wants to see the houses delivered, but I would like the people  
15 responsible for delivering them to be sitting here in this room, rather than down in  
16 Cork County Council chamber or Cork City Council; the same as Dublin City  
17 Council. We're getting second-hand reports.

18

19 And, with the greatest of respect to the housing director, when he says he's sitting on  
20 a management committee or some kind of a steering committee; well, we have  
21 officials from this Council sitting on a steering committee with officials from the  
22 NRA, from TII, from Dun Laoghaire, Rathdown, from Kildare County Council about  
23 the N11 and the absolute bags they're making of the proposal to have bus lanes on  
24 the N11. So it looks to me like Wicklow County Council staff are outvoted,  
25 out-maneuvred, out-voiced every single time they're on these committees.

26 I know I'm in a minority, but I feel we, at some day, some point have to say, are we  
27 going to be councillors for County Wicklow or are we going to give everything away  
28 to other counties and let them get on with the business?

29 So, on that basis, I am opposing this particular proposal. Thank you.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

31 Councillor Pier Leonard.

32 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: I have to concur with a lot of what Joe Behan says.  
33 I've worked in architecture most of my life, and actually dealt with the Council  
34 brilliantly, and saw first-hand how good the Council worked building houses and

1 doing it the old way, before the new system kind of came into place.  
2 Saying that, I am in Arklow, and I realise that we have a real shortage of houses  
3 down there, so I do welcome the scheme. I suppose I have to put up with the format  
4 that it is coming in at the moment, but, until things change at a national level, this is  
5 what is being laid out before us, so I would like to support it.

6  
7 I would like to just kind of get on record that, at design stage of the houses at  
8 Tinahask, that it would be really important to bring any vehicular access out onto the  
9 M11/N11 rather than down through housing estates that exist in the town. You  
10 know, we have only one bridge to access the -- from one side of the town to the  
11 other, and the town -- the congestion in the town is pretty bad, the traffic.

12 So -- and I know, I have spoken to a lot of people that are concerned about new  
13 construction in the Tinahask area, and that would be a really important message to  
14 send to the designers.

15 I know that it will probably be public consultation, but I'd just like to put it on record  
16 that I think that should be really prioritised, and it could be tied into the port road as  
17 well that needs to be done in Arklow.

18 Thank you very much.

19 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. Okay. We have no more speakers on  
20 the item. We have a proposer and we have a seconder, so we will go to a vote.

21 MS PURCELL: Okay. It is to enter into a Section 85 agreement for the provision of  
22 public housing via a Public Private Partnership bundle 6 of the National Social  
23 Housing PPP Programme, proposed by Councillor Pat Fitzgerald, seconded by  
24 Councillor Sylvester Bourke. If you're in favour, please vote for.

25 Councillor Tom Annesley.

26 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: For.

27 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mark Barry.

28 COUNCILLOR BARRY: For.

29 MS PURCELL: Councillor Joe Behan.

30 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Against.

31 MS PURCELL: Against. Councillor Vincent Blake.

32 COUNCILLOR BLAKE: For.

33 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Sylvester Bourke.

34 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: For.

1 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Melanie Corrigan.  
2 MS CORRIGAN: For.  
3 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Avril Cronin. Is not present.  
4 Councillor Shay Cullen. Is not present.  
5 Councillor Erika Doyle.  
6 COUNCILLOR DOYLE: For.  
7 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gail Dunne.  
8 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: For.  
9 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Anne Ferris.  
10 COUNCILLOR FERRIS: For.  
11 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.  
12 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: For.  
13 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy.  
14 CATHAOIRLEACH: For.  
15 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Tom Fortune is not present. Councillor Patsy  
16 Glennon.  
17 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: For.  
18 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.  
19 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: For.  
20 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Pat Kennedy.  
21 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: For.  
22 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Peir Leonard.  
23 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: For.  
24 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Derek Mitchell.  
25 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: For.  
26 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor John Mullen.  
27 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: For.  
28 MS PURCELL: Councillor Miriam Murphy.  
29 COUNCILLOR MURPHY: For.  
30 MS PURCELL: Councillor Dermot O'Brien.  
31 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: For.  
32 MS PURCELL: Councillor Paul O'Brien.  
33 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: For.  
34 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Rory O'Connor.

1 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: For.  
2 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Gerry O'Neill. Is not present.  
3 Councillor Lourda Scott.  
4 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: For.  
5 MS PURCELL: Councillor John Snell.  
6 COUNCILLOR SNELL: For.  
7 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Stephen Stokes.  
8 COUNCILLOR STOKES: For.  
9 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Edward Timmins.  
10 COUNCILLOR TIMMINS: For.  
11 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Gerry Walsh.  
12 COUNCILLOR WALSH: For.  
13 MS PURCELL: For. And Councillor Irene Winters.  
14 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: For.  
15  
16 MS PURCELL: We have 26 in favour, four not present. So it is carried. Thank  
17 you.  
18 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's great. Thank you, members. Thank you, Helen.  
19  
20 Okay. Item number 9 is to consider the Chief Executive's Monthly Management  
21 Report, October 2023. So I will hand over to the Chief Executive.  
22  
23 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. It's been a very busy month, the  
24 month of October. I take the report as read. Obviously, staff -- our team here are  
25 happy to take questions.  
26 Just a couple of things to highlight. We had -- our carport was selected by NOAC  
27 to -- as an exemplar of best practice in public service, so our team went and  
28 presented at the NOAC good practice event in Kilkenny Castle. And, in fairness to  
29 Gillian, she did a superb job of explaining the benefits to Wicklow County Council  
30 of the carport and the innovative thinking that went behind it, and also highlighted, I  
31 suppose, some of the issues that we had around it in terms of, you know,  
32 getting -- extending the supply over to the swimming pool, for example, and just,  
33 you know, how sometimes we, as a State, we need to think bigger and bolder.  
34 But it is the biggest carport in the country, it's the only one in a local authority. So I

1 have to say, the staff have to be commended for it. I can take absolutely no credit for  
2 it whatsoever. But it was a great example of just how innovative the staff of  
3 Wicklow are.

4  
5 Secondly, I suppose, a really important day for us was actually the same day. We  
6 opened the Claremont screen hub in Rathnew. Fabulous facility. Already full. Just  
7 demonstrates, I suppose, how important the screen industry is to Wicklow and to  
8 Ireland. A number of small productions in residence.

9 And that's the big thing, you know, we have Ashford, we have Ardmore, and we  
10 have new facilities to come on soon in Greystones as well, which cater with the very,  
11 very large productions, but it is the smaller kind of independent productions that  
12 need a home for their post-production, so Claremont offers that. We had Minister  
13 Coveney and Minister Harris there at it as well.

14  
15 And I suppose just another thing I want to highlight - it is not in the foreground of  
16 the report - but it was the Pure Awards. I wasn't able to make it that night. But it's a  
17 real testament, I suppose, to the people of Wicklow, particularly the people that live  
18 in the uplands, and all the work that they do in trying to keep the county as clean and  
19 as green as possible. So just to congratulate all of those who received awards that  
20 night.

21 So happy to take questions, Cathaoirleach, thank you.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. I'll open it up to the members.

23 Councillor --

24 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: Sorry, Cathaoirleach. My mic is not working.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: It's just because there's too many people on, Tommy. So once  
26 somebody knocks theirs off, it will let you in. Keep an eye on it, Tommy.

27 Councillor John Mullen.

28 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And thanks for the Chief  
29 Executive's report. Two recent weather warnings we have had in the county, and  
30 floods, particularly in southwest Wicklow. I want to, first of all, commend our  
31 outdoor crews who did heroic work a few weeks ago, and we have three villages,  
32 Tinahely, Shillelagh and Carnew, subject to flooding, for about a 20 minutes to an  
33 hour period, and they had to do lot of work over a very long time to try and keep the  
34 roads reasonably safe for people.

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But, in that regard, it becomes obvious, and again, having talked to people, that the current infrastructure we have under our roads for safe water is not up to the climate that we are experiencing, and will continue to experience, as climate change adapts; and, therefore, we do have to make a plan, so we do have to make now budgetary changes to effect where we have had (inaudible) the bottom of Shillelagh, the business centre and the park, the Shillelagh Carnew Road, where significant work will have to be done. It will have to be done to prevent further flooding, which will happen. It is only the start of the winter. It will happen again. We need to make sure that we not only have budgetary provisions in place, but we also have staffing in place, to liaise maybe a bit better.

I did make a criticism at the time that the yellow, green and red warnings that we are all used to, so (inaudible) Bray and getting rain down in Tinahely, sometime the warning (inaudible). The yellow alert be given and the orange -- (inaudible).

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

Councillor Vincent Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. And thank the CEO for the presentation. I can concur with her in regards the Ian Davis and Pure Mile Awards, that have been going for quite a number of years, and they have certainly done a huge amount of work out there in preserving the beauty of County Wicklow.

Just two points I would like to bring to your attention. First of all, I'm going back a number of years, probably five or six years ago, I approached the -- our engineer concerning a house we had near Carnew. It has since got into a derelict state. And in June, we actually proposed a motion here to have the property disposed to a local person. That was in June.

And, look it, we're in November now, and the person in question has already taken out a mortgage on it. A mortgage only lasts so long. So, look it, I am asking that we try and progress that particular site and progress the documentation in the Housing Department and the Legal Department to ensure that that person can actually draw down the mortgage to do up that particular house for herself and her family, her young children.

1 The second one I ask as well is in regards to the fact that we have five private sites in  
2 Tinahely that we were looking to dispose of, they have been fenced off and cleared  
3 off by the local engineer recently. And I'd just ask can we actually propose that we  
4 actually go ahead and do whatever needs to be done in terms of disposing of those  
5 private sites.

6

7 Thanks, Chair.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Councillor.

9 Councillor Stephen Stokes.

10 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach. Can I join the Chief  
11 Executive in the success of the carport and Claremont screen hub. It is good to hear  
12 that the screen hub is full. It shows the great demand for amenities and infrastructure  
13 in the county, and especially with our growing population. I see it every day in the  
14 Greystones district.

15

16 Just a couple of things I would like to raise. I haven't heard anything for a while  
17 about the east coast Greenway. I just wanted to see if there was an update on that.  
18 And also particularly concerned -- I know that this was raised at the recent  
19 Greystones Municipal District meeting. Just very concerned about the coastal  
20 erosion at the north beach in Greystones. I believe that it's a Sispar. But, you know,  
21 can -- is there an update, and can we write to Sispar? Because, I mean, the cliffs are  
22 just falling in on the north beach, and it is a big, big concern.

23

24 I suppose the next item, just in relation to vacant houses in Hawkins Wood. I believe  
25 that the Council has a couple of houses in Hawkins Wood. I believe that it was  
26 actually raised last month, but the minutes just say discussion on vacant houses, and  
27 I am wondering if there is an update.

28

29 And then -- and just, finally, Cathaoirleach, it will just take me a couple of moments.  
30 I just want to raise the land clearance between the Burnaby Mill and Charlesland  
31 Wood in Greystones.

32 I have to say that I am shocked and appalled by the scale of the annihilation of the  
33 trees and shrubs on that site. To give a sense to the members of the scale, we're  
34 talking about the Carlisle Grounds in Bray, and I certainly believe that, you know,

1 this site regularly experiences flooding, and it seems to fly in the face of the County  
2 Development Plan and the tree management policy that places great value on trees  
3 and shrubs and hedges.

4 In fact, Greystones Tidy Towns commissioned a report in 2021 which said that this  
5 site was one of the most important sites for biodiversity and wildlife left in the town  
6 of Greystones. You know, we often talk about a housing crisis, but this clearance of  
7 the site has created an immediate crisis for the wildlife that was living there, and one  
8 of the last few bio diverse sites in central Greystones.

9

10 Now, Cathaoirleach, I cannot understand how we are trying to decarbonise one town  
11 in the south of the county, and at the other end of the county, we are carbonising  
12 Greystones by taking out so many trees and hedges; bearing in mind that this site is  
13 adjacent to the Charlesland Dual Carriageway, so trees, hedges and shrubs are  
14 absolutely vital to fighting local carbon.

15

16 Yes, we need homes, but we need to do a heck of a lot more to be careful in working  
17 with the environment. And I would actually request that the Chief Executive and the  
18 Director of services for housing come and visit the damage for themselves. The lack  
19 of transparency around the decision-making on this has been a big concern for me,  
20 and I would ask the Council to publish any report about this site.

21

22 You know, the Chief Executive's report says that there will be 75 houses, you know,  
23 on the site. Another email that was circulated to the Greystones Municipal District  
24 councillors advised that there's going to be 270 houses. So, you know, there's been a  
25 suggestion that it was needed to survey the site. But it certainly seems to me to be  
26 very excessive.

27

28 So the questions I have on this, to conclude: Like, who signed off on this? You  
29 know, did the Council staff actually carry out the work? Will any of the site be sold  
30 off to a developer? Will the site be replanted? Will the site be fenced off to prevent  
31 antisocial behaviour? Last time I was there, it was wide open, Cathaoirleach. I  
32 mean, I cycled in. You could have driven a bus in there, it was that wide open. And  
33 I would be very concerned, come next summer, when all that wood that's lying  
34 around is just going to -- you know, if it's not fenced off, there's going to be

1 antisocial behaviour and people lighting fires, and we have seen that in Charlesland  
2 Golf Club.

3

4 And so I would ask, does Wicklow County Council wish to volunteer any additional  
5 information about this? I feel very strongly about this matter.

6 Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor. I will take one more in.

8 And Councillor Annesley, maybe you might just hit your button once I bring the next  
9 person in.

10 Councillor Paul O'Brien.

11 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, and to the Chief

12 Executive for that very comprehensive report. I would like to also echo the

13 sentiments of our staff. It has been a tough couple of months, weather-wise, and

14 they have been out, and they have done Trojan work.

15

16 What I am going to bring up might sound trivial now, compared to our last speaker.

17 And credit to Councillor Stokes for his passion there.

18

19 We have a building here in Wicklow town, in the Market Square, on the verge of

20 collapsing into the Market Square. And I know there was a similar building in

21 Arklow that collapsed. And I just don't seem to be getting anywhere in the sense

22 that, in fairness to the MD staff, and, again, credit where credit is due, the plaster was

23 just about to fall off it; it's not our building, so they went up and they took the plaster

24 off it, and before someone was literally killed, because a large amount fell off.

25

26 What we don't want to do is wait and wait and wait until something happens, and we

27 don't want to close off the footpath either in an already, you know, underprivileged

28 kind of area. We are trying our best with the Market Square, but with the closure of

29 the courthouse and so forth, it is becoming an area that we need to kind of invest in.

30 The last thing we need now is a building collapsing down. And certainly, the last

31 thing we need is someone getting hurt, or even worse.

32

33 So I would implore the Chief Executive to do all she can. And I understand it's a

34 private building and there's restrictions to what the Council can do. But I would

1 implore the Chief Executive and all the staff to see what they can do before it is too  
2 late.

3 Thank you very much.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

5 Chief Executive, I will just let you come in on those ones.

6 MS O'GORMAN: Yes, I will come in on some of the points, and then I might ask  
7 Mr Lane to come in on the housing issues.

8

9 Just in relation to the weather events - and yes, to commend the staff in every district  
10 that was dealing with flooding and putting out sandbags and clearance of issues. I  
11 mean, it really is -- it is climate action. You know, it's -- it is climate change in  
12 action. We are really seeing it everywhere at the moment, and the storms are getting  
13 more ferocious and more devastating with every step.

14 I have invited Minister O'Donoghue, who is the minister with the responsibility for  
15 the Office of Public Works to the county. I think it is very important that he sees  
16 first-hand what is going on in the county; from what is happening on our coast, you  
17 know, from the Greystones north breach, to The Murrough, to Brittas Bay, all along  
18 the coast. What's happening inland. Our roads are being destroyed. So I've  
19 extended that invitation to him. So when I get a response, members, I will certainly  
20 let you know and we'll make a programme of events, hopefully to have him around  
21 the county.

22

23 In relation just to the issues that you raised, Councillor Blake, around the two  
24 disposal issues. I will follow those up and I will come back to you directly on that.  
25 Yes. I mean, certainly, the house that was disposed of in June should be moving  
26 along, but sometimes there are small issues. But I will follow them up and I'll come  
27 back to you on it.

28

29 The Greenway, the east coast Greenway, I might ask Leonora to come in on that in a  
30 moment. And, as I said, on the north beach in Greystones, we do have some plans  
31 around that, and Breege might speak to that in a moment as well. And I will just  
32 pass to Joe now on the housing issues.

33

34 And just on that house in Market Square, Councillor O'Brien, I will certainly look

1 and see what we can do under other powers. We have powers under dangerous  
2 buildings. And other than dereliction. So we will exhaust what options we have  
3 there.

4  
5 So I will pass to Joe first, then Leonora, and then back to Breege. Thank you.

6 MR LANE: The house in Cronyhorn, yes, I believe there is a number of legal issues,  
7 and we will take a look at that this week.

8 The sites in Tinahely, we will progress those. I don't know what the exact delay is,  
9 but I will get a progress report on those.

10

11 As regarding the site investigation and something that Councillor Behan asked a  
12 couple of moments ago, and where there was no progress in bundle 5. A couple of  
13 the issues, there has been progress. Consultants have been appointed looking at a  
14 master plan, and part of that is site investigation in both the Burnaby and the Rehills.

15

16 On the Burnaby site, I don't know were maps circulated to members when it was  
17 discussed last week - I'm trying to count very quickly - but there was an extensive  
18 requirement for site investigation, including trial pits, boreholes, percolation area,  
19 boreholes, and the trenches.

20

21 So across the site, there's areas of interest to them. Again, we will circulate that map,  
22 if it hasn't been circulated, but it may have been circulated in the Greystones area.

23 But, in general, that site has been included. It's zoned for housing. It has been  
24 included in the PPP bundle, which would include affordable and social. At the  
25 moment, there's 75 social, which is probably an older report is -- is -- the units will  
26 be -- the consultants are trying to maximise the number of units, which will include,  
27 at a minimum, social and affordable purchase, and we are also looking at affordable  
28 rental, cost rental, if possible on that site. And that is what we're looking at, is what  
29 is the maximum number within the design that they can build on, what they can take.  
30 That will be coming back to the councillors in Greystones first.

31

32 But it is part of the PPP. You are required, when you are doing a -- when you are  
33 trying to work out what yield, how many units, you need extensive site investigation,  
34 and that is why that is being done at that site. But there will be houses across that

1 site. That's what that site's for, it's zoned for housing; and particularly in Greystones,  
2 when people are looking for both affordable and social, that's what will be on those  
3 sites.

4 This -- the works that were required, were required to undertake a survey to populate  
5 all the reports that are part of the developments of that site. Thanks.

6 MS EARLS: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just going back to Councillor Mullen, and I  
7 suppose, also, I want to acknowledge the work of the outdoor crews and the  
8 engineering staff. I mean, aside from the amount of hours and the weather  
9 conditions that they were out in, the amount of experience and knowledge and skills  
10 that our crews have is incredible. And they have worked many situations over the  
11 last number of months with the weather conditions.

12

13 In relation to the -- we do receive an annual climate change adaptation grant. This  
14 year, we got 400,000. We are gathering information now at the moment for the  
15 Department, because it is important now that, as you say, to look at this whole area.  
16 So we do Met Eireann briefings, and we attend all those. We then feed that  
17 information to our SWAT team, which is the Severe Weather Awareness Team here  
18 within the Council, and that includes all the District engineers, and we share that  
19 information through them.

20 At the moment, we are gathering information from all the districts, just to see what  
21 are the issues that have come up, and that is information we will be feeding back to  
22 the Department. So, from that point of view, you know, we will be pushing to see  
23 what money may be available.

24

25 In relation to the east coast Greenway update. So there's ongoing engagement with  
26 our consultants and the consultants around data gathering and information, and  
27 they're also carrying out the environmental surveys. There's extensive engagement  
28 with the Irish Rail and the national parks and wildlife, and just trying to share  
29 information and gathering information from each of those.

30 So we are progressing to the route corridor assessment piece. And thereafter that  
31 then, we are currently drafting the public consultation documents. So we do hope to  
32 go out to public consultation before the end of the year or early next year.

33 Thank you.

34 MS KILKENNY: I will just come in there on -- with regard to Councillor Stokes'

1 query in relation to the north beach coastal erosion in Greystones. It's not just in  
2 Greystones. We also have it, as they know, down in -- the Arklow members, in  
3 Reilly Beach as well. We have our Brittas Bay issue. And then again, you know, we  
4 will have the suspension of standing orders, talking about The Murrough later on.

5

6 What we are trying to do is pull all the players together, and one of those players is  
7 the OPW. They have a scheme in terms of minor works, or small works, up to -- you  
8 know, to a certain value. So we are hoping to progress some of these schemes on  
9 a -- on a -- I don't want to say a piecemeal fashion, but maybe breaking up the project  
10 so that we can access some of that funding, and that is what we would consider  
11 would be the appropriate way of dealing with Greystones north beach.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Councillor Sylvester Bourke.

13 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just Chief Executive, thank  
14 you very much for your detailed report.

15

16 Just in relation to the recent announcement about the increase in the grant rate for  
17 septic tanks for rural areas, I believe this could be of a great help to an awful lot of  
18 people in rural parts of Wicklow, because one of the best kept secrets is poorly  
19 functioning septic tanks out there, and I think there is probably a lot more out there  
20 than we think. And I just hope that you'll promote this scheme as energetically as  
21 possible, because I think it is a really timely and a very, very good scheme to help  
22 people in rural Wicklow to improve water quality.

23 So I just hope that that will be achievable. Thank you.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

25 Councillor Mary Kavanagh.

26 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I have two queries. One is  
27 in relation to Ashford Park. Do we have an update on where we are with finding a  
28 site and funding to try and reinstate some kind of facility out there for the children of  
29 Ashford and for the -- for all the citizens out there, for all the residents who like to sit  
30 and use the park?

31

32 Now, my other query is in connection with -- I was contacted by a group of residents  
33 who live out there, near Balinclare Quarry, about an application that was made for a  
34 waste licence permit by Kilsaran concrete in February of this year.

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At that time, you will be aware that we were still awaiting the outcome of the decision from An Bord Pleanála with regard to that planning application. So on the 22nd of February, Kilsaran lodged an application for a waste licence for the Ballinclare Quarry to the EPA. On the 3rd of March, they wrote to Wicklow County Council, notifying them of the application, this is the EPA, and requesting Wicklow County Council to respond to the agency within four weeks of receipt of the notice, and furnish any observations they may have.

To date, no submission from Wicklow County Council has been lodged on the EPA's website.

On September the 8th, An Bord Pleanála refused the planning application, stating that the Board was not satisfied that adverse impacts on water quality, habitat and species can be avoided, managed and mitigated to non-significant levels. The proposed development would have unacceptable direct and indirect impacts on biodiversity.

The reason why the residents contacted me was because (a) they had only just discovered about this waste licence permit, and (b), given that An Bord Pleanála has turned down the application, they're now afraid that the holding of a waste licence permit would give this company a golden ticket for a second application, and they are very, very concerned about that. And if anybody wants to have a look at their submissions, it's on the EPA website reference W0311.

I want to clarify for anybody who doesn't know or understand or realise that inert waste is not harmless waste. I thought it was. I thought it was, you know, just basically harmless waste taken from greenfield sites. But inert waste is waste that cannot disintegrate naturally, and includes glass, plaster, metal, wood and concrete, such as is found in brownfield sites.

There are also many contaminants found in brownfield sites, including lead, arsenic, potassium, iron and other metals. Asbestos is also present in the existing quarry rock, and these are potential leachates. And leachates are materials which, with heavy rainfall, will run off groundwater into the quarry and will build up until it

1           overtops the side walls. This can cause severe or catastrophic contamination to local  
2           surface waters and groundwaters.

3

4           There's also a risk that contaminants could leach into the nearby Potters River, which  
5           flows to an SAC at Brittas Bay and potentially contaminate the soil, the water and  
6           the ecology of the area.

7

8           So these are the reasons why the residents and other people, including myself, are  
9           very concerned.

10

11          So I have three questions:

12

13          Given that the decision from An Bord Pleanála wasn't made public until September,  
14          did Wicklow County Council respond to the EPA's letter to make any observation?  
15          And, if not, why not?

16

17          Further to An Bord Pleanála's decision, does Wicklow County Council consider it  
18          prudent to evaluate the application to the EPA, to ensure the best outcomes for  
19          residents, Wicklow County Council and County Wicklow?

20

21          And does the environment section have any concerns, in view of An Bord Pleanála's  
22          planning decision, especially with regard to potential effects on the environment?

23

24          Thank you.

25          CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

26          Councillor Gerry Walsh.

27          COUNCILLOR WALSH: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. And thanks to the Chief  
28          Executive for the report. Just firstly on the housing section and the -- the notice to  
29          quit's figure there, and the year-to-date figure. Just wondering, is there any  
30          updated -- update information on the tenant in situ purchase scheme? You know,  
31          have landlords been engaging with that? If there's any information on that particular  
32          scheme, that would be great.

33

34          And the Greystones Enterprise Centre purchase from Cairn, I believe, that was due to

1 complete last month, just wondering is there an update on that one?  
2 Just on the Local Area Plan, I just got an update on that there from Sorcha there. It is  
3 good to see that the pre-draft plan, public consultation process will be commencing  
4 before yearend.

5  
6 And also, I had a question about the coastal protection issue raised there by  
7 Councillor Stokes, the north beach Greystones; I raised that at our Municipal  
8 meeting last week in Greystones. There's been a considerable erosion incident there  
9 following the recent storm. It's actually dangerous there at the moment. Access has  
10 been cut off to the north beach.

11  
12 We were led to believe it might be the responsibility of SISK. But, look it, I  
13 welcome the director's update on that. Thanks very much.

14  
15 So I just ask that we be kept updated on that particular  
16 intervention from the OPW with the minor work scheme there.

17 Thank you.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

19 Councillor Derek Mitchell.

20 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. First, just I want to praise  
21 the outdoor and engineering staff over the flooding issues and the work that was  
22 done in what was very heavy rainfall, and, from what I have heard, there were not  
23 enormous problems in Wicklow. So congratulations to them.

24  
25 The other aspect was mentioned by Councillor Stokes about the site at the Burnaby.  
26 I am concerned that it was just cleared. A very large area was completely cleared,  
27 and left loads of combustible material there, bushes and all sorts of things, in an area  
28 which is quite contentious beside the Three Trout Stream. It is zoned for housing,  
29 and houses will be built there. Something I would support in general. And I still  
30 think, though, that this was badly done, and leaving a large amount of wood just on  
31 the site, unfenced; whereas, if you look across the road from there, the site for the  
32 film studio was fenced immediately they took it over. So I think it does need to be  
33 fenced and secured.

34

1 Now, the Chief Executive's report says 75 houses. We were told no, no, no, 250. I  
2 made a submission to the consultation process in 1979, incidentally, just before the  
3 last local elections, that there were about 120 houses to be built on the site, and the  
4 neighbours were extremely concerned about various aspects of that, and the scheme  
5 was adjusted a bit so it didn't overlook the neighbours too much. And that was quite  
6 contentious.

7  
8 Next to there, there's the 41 social houses being built, which were exceptionally  
9 controversial, and only just went through with a 3/2 majority, which I voted in  
10 favour of, in Greystones. And it needs to be handled sensitively, this sort of thing.  
11 Just to go in and clear the whole thing, with no plan.

12  
13 Normally, when a builder clears a site, there's a landscape plan which has been  
14 agreed and planning permission got, et cetera. But just to go in without any plan at  
15 all for the residents and every other people is very foolish. It only stirs up opposition  
16 to this. So we need much more consultation. We need to know what is happening,  
17 and we need the site to be secured, now that it has been left vacant and cleared. So  
18 that is important.

19  
20 On the erosion on the north beach in Greystones, it looks fairly serious. Certainly,  
21 the track down is, and it is probably the responsibility of Sisk. But the erosion of the  
22 north beach is a process that has been going on since records started in 1838, and so  
23 at nearly a metre a year.

24  
25 But there was a plan which I read about two years ago, I think, to protect the rail line  
26 from Booterstown down to Wicklow town, which was an enormous plan, which was  
27 going to go to Government to get capital funding. I have heard nothing about it since  
28 the plan was produced. It's the only way which the north beach in Greystones is  
29 going to be protected; and, possibly, smaller schemes might work for The Murrough,  
30 I don't know, but certainly, for that place, we need that big scheme done. And I think  
31 we should be trying to take things out of it and get them implemented in the places  
32 where the erosion is worse.

33 Thank you.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

1 Councillor Pier Leonard.

2 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would just like to thank  
3 the Chief Executive for her report. And I just want to touch on something that  
4 Councillor Mary Kavanagh spoke about in relation to Kilsaran. I just want to  
5 commend Mary. She put an awful lot of work that nobody might know, you know,  
6 in researching and liaising with the people who live around the area as well.

7

8 This was -- like, we had meetings about this last year when it went to An Bord  
9 Pleanála, or earlier in the year, and there was a lot of concern in the local  
10 community, a lot of concern from environmental ecologists and everybody about the  
11 impact of this super dump at the time, with the inert waste coming to Kilsaran to  
12 Ballinclare Quarry.

13

14 I suppose what I would like to see is that the trust in the community is built up  
15 between the community and the residents and the people in Wicklow and Wicklow  
16 County Council. I think, you know, a lot more communication needs to happen, and  
17 I think that it doesn't serve anybody -- I'm on the climate SPC, and we are trying to  
18 work towards, you know, working with the communities to try and protect our  
19 biodiversity and improve it.

20

21 You know, with schemes like this coming in, where, you know, we know the end  
22 result will be that developers are going to end up -- you know, they're the ones that  
23 are earning the big money, the quarry will make money out of it, but it's the voices  
24 and the people that don't have the voice, nature, the people, the residents that are  
25 there, they are the ones that end up having to pay the price for -- and all of us -- for  
26 people making big profit out of schemes like this.

27

28 So I would just urge Wicklow County Council to really come on board with trying to  
29 protect, and not let what's happened in the past, like, you know, the Avoca river and  
30 the Avoca mines, that we have seen the long-term intergenerational impact on the  
31 environment through schemes, you know, when -- through lack of wisdom, down  
32 along the line; just to have a -- more of a long-term view on things into the next  
33 generations, and the impact of it on it.

34

1 The other two points are just in relation to the flooding issues. In Arklow, we did  
2 have a lot of houses really impact on the Wexford Road, and we have an incredible  
3 staff down there. Some of them are actually due to retire very soon. And I think it is  
4 really important that they are brought in, and their knowledge is recorded, that they  
5 are -- you know, it's knowledge that you will never get back. You know, the -- our  
6 town has increased in size, triple fold over the last 20 years. We have a lot of  
7 construction in the town at the moment. That all went into old infrastructure, old  
8 drainage infrastructure there.

9

10 Prevention and maintenance of those lines are what will keep the towns clear. And I  
11 think if the OPW are coming down, they need to fund, not only building walls for  
12 flood relief on rivers and stuff like that, they need to actually fund the infrastructure  
13 and the preventive and maintenance of the lines, of the gullies, and to record the  
14 knowledge that's there, and map it out as soon as possible; because, if that  
15 knowledge is gone -- like, there's a lot of infrastructure there that's not on maps,  
16 that's not on drawings, that needs to be recorded. But we need the funding and the  
17 services to support, you know, our managers and the staff that they have. They're all  
18 doing a great job with the resources that they have, but we need more, and we need  
19 to kind of think outside the box, and we need to be not so rigid about the -- you  
20 know, not being able to -- not to allow the staff to be able to clean out lines, when  
21 they're cleaning out gullies, that they are able to clean out lines either side to keep  
22 that maintenance there; the unseen work that's probably been done in the past that's  
23 not recorded anywhere, but just to engage with them and get that knowledge.

24

25 And then the last small thing, but it is a -- is an impact, a visual impact on the town,  
26 are the -- and I have brought it up before -- is the safe routes to school schemes. I am  
27 in no way against the children and the schools wanting safe -- they absolutely need  
28 safe entrances into the schools. People need to not park on double yellow lines. And  
29 unfortunately now, because of people's behaviour, we have hundreds of plastic  
30 bollards all over our town in Arklow.

31 I have no opposition to the plastic bollards in front of the school entrances  
32 themselves, but I just want to know, maybe could Wicklow County Council write to  
33 wherever this funding is coming from, An Taisce or the NTA, to see what the  
34 long-term plan is?

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If these schemes are successful, can we replace the plastic bollards with more aesthetically beautiful urban realm, you know, and get investment into that, whether it's planters? We're in a biodiversity crisis. You know, all those plastic planters, I'm sure, cost hundreds of thousands, altogether, the whole scheme. You know, they could have been easily planters with pollinators in them. And it's just something -- I would like to know what the long-term vision is.

It is impacting the town and the aesthetics of the town, and I know there'll probably be more schools next year rolled out. And I just think that there is -- it is not about opposing the safe routes to school, it is about looking for a better version of it, and maybe look into even putting on school buses, which would solve the problem.

Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Councillor.

I will just ask the Chief Executive come in on those ones.

MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, and thank you, members.

Councillor Bourke is not there.

The septic tank scheme, we will certainly promote that through our social media channels, so I will relay that to him when he comes back.

I might get Michael to talk on Ashford Park, and then Breege to talk about the waste licence and that, and then we will go back to Joe on the NTQs and the town (inaudible), and Leonora on the safe routes to school.

MR NICHOLSON: Thank you. Cathaoirleach, despite an exhaustive search of every conceivable piece of land we could see in Ashford, we have yet to find a suitable site. So we're looking for half an acre at least, ideally not in the flood risk, within walking distance of the town, and not in any area of special conservation or anything like that.

So if anybody knows of any land in Ashford, either private or public, that they're aware of, come and talk to us. We'll continue looking. But, unfortunately, Councillor Kavanagh, we haven't yet found a suitable site, but we will keep on

1 looking.

2 Thank you.

3 MS KILKENNY: Okay. Just to address the questions from Councillor Leonard and  
4 from Councillor Kavanagh. First of all, we are aware of the email that you  
5 submitted, and what I would say is that you will get a very detailed response in  
6 relation to that.

7 But just to say, today, is that the assessment of a licence application is really a matter  
8 for the EPA, who have both the expertise, and it is their role in relation to the control  
9 of such facilities and the protection of the environment.

10

11 Wicklow County Council submitted the CE report to An Bord Pleanála at the time of  
12 the application by the applicants as a strategic infrastructure development, and at that  
13 stage, the report coming from the CE concluded that the proposed development  
14 com -- it was in compliance with proper planning and sustainable development, and  
15 the internal reports that came from the various sections, including the environment  
16 section, was used to inform that report, and did not raise any of concerns.

17

18 So, to answer your specific question as well, in terms of whether the Wicklow  
19 County Council responded the EPA's consultation notice: We didn't, because we  
20 normally don't. And on the basis, as I said, that it is really within the EPA who have  
21 that remit. But just to say, we will have a comprehensive reply to the email that was  
22 submitted by the two councillors.

23 MR LANE: Thank you. Really, I don't want to repeat what I have said at all. First  
24 of all, regarding the Burnaby. On the Burnaby, the 75 units are the social. There's  
25 also affordable houses on that site, as we sat down and talked to the elected  
26 members. So we are trying to put down as many as we can, and there will be  
27 affordable purchase there. The site investigation will inform the detailed design.

28

29 A landscape plan will be done as part of the final Part 8. And again, it is the -- the  
30 works at the moment will inform that. Okay? And again, the social are part of -- the  
31 75 social are units that the elected members have agreed that they're part of the thing,  
32 but we will also be maximising the development on that site.

33

34 The tenant in lieu, nothing has changed. It is still looked at on a case-by-case basis.

1 It is an option to deal with homelessness, the risk of homelessness in particular cases.  
2 So the important thing is to contact us early, either the landlord or the people at risk  
3 if the notice to quit has been served. We are dealing with them in advance. So it is a  
4 case-by-case. There is nothing really changed in that regard. So contact us if there  
5 is any particular issue.

6 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

7 Councillor Leonard, yes, just in relation to the flooding. So we actually have started  
8 in Arklow to look at surveys of infrastructures. So the engineering team in Arklow  
9 are starting to do that work now at the moment. So we have that.

10

11 Just in relation to the safe routes to school. So, just to reiterate that this is -- the  
12 schools themselves apply to An Taisce, and we then, through the NTA, fund the  
13 works, and we, if you like, are the facilitators of that.

14 So there are a number of schools around the county that we have done the works to,  
15 and, in the majority of instances, it's a very kind of positive engagement in relation to  
16 it. I know certainly that the Garda Síochána and the school principals and staff have  
17 been very welcoming of it.

18 With regard to the funding, it is NTA funding. But certainly, we will bring back  
19 your feedback around your concerns to the NTA. We do have a quarterly meeting  
20 with them this month, so we can ask them about the long-term plans and the  
21 concerns that you have.

22 Thank you.

23

24 Cathaoirleach, sorry, just to come back on the fencing of the Burnaby, I think  
25 Councillor Stokes raised it and Councillor Mitchell raised it. We will certainly look  
26 at it. You know, if the site isn't secure, it needs to be secure. So we will certainly  
27 look at that and come back to you both on that.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Chief Executive. Councillor Tommy  
29 Annesley.

30 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: Thank you very much, Cathaoirleach. And sorry for  
31 being so anxious to get in, but I knew flooding was going to be on the top of the  
32 agenda, and, obviously, that's on the top of my agenda here. So I'd like to just bring  
33 it up. And I know it has been talked thoroughly here as well.

34

1 But, hats off to all the Council staff that are out there, that were out, and my god, it  
2 was ferocious weather they were out in, and the flooding was absolutely horrendous.  
3 And my sympathy does go out to the people of Newry and the people of Midleton as  
4 well, as well as Rosslare. That brings me to -- the people of Arklow cannot get flood  
5 insurance, and we have a Flood Relief System that is nearly in place. It just has to  
6 get finished. And I wouldn't like to see anything stopping this flood relief going  
7 forward now, because, my god, if we ever needed it, we need it now.

8

9 Also, coastal erosion. We had Hurricane Charley in 1986, and the north beach got  
10 washed away in Arklow. And I can hear the councillors from Greystones worried  
11 about their beach, and The Murrough in Wicklow. But, if anyone visits Arklow  
12 north beach, which is no longer there, the rock impediment that was there, it is  
13 dropping about three foot now. And Irish Water are protecting their infrastructure in  
14 Arklow. They've got major rock impediment put in, and they brought it in by the  
15 sea. And I would like that to be extended up as well, because it is there in place to  
16 be done.

17

18 The other thing I would like to say, at the last meeting, I brought up derelict sites.  
19 Whether it is a coincidence or not, one of the worst sites in Arklow has been  
20 addressed over the weekend. When I say addressed, they put boards up in the  
21 windows, they've took down the lanterns. They haven't secured the building. And  
22 I'd just like that report. I was promised I'd get something on derelict sites.

23

24 And the final thing I have to say is, I was contacted about a businessman who had  
25 bought a -- sorry, he rented an industrial unit to start a business, to employ 20 people.  
26 He hadn't even the light switched on when he got hit with a rates bill for €30,000 for  
27 vacant possession. Surely, we have to be able to give start-ups a leg up to get going  
28 and employ people and let them sell their product.

29 And I was just -- I was sort of speechless when I heard this, so I said I would  
30 mention it here today, and I know what you are going to say; if they're in the  
31 building, they have to pay rates. But surely, a little bit of grace for businesspeople.  
32 Even though he is a successful businessman, he still needs a bit of a break.

33 Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Councillor.

1 Councillor Lourda Scott.

2 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Yes. Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just a couple of quick  
3 questions there. Just following up on my motion that was passed on the community  
4 gardens and allotments earlier on in the year. And I know, Chief Executive, you said  
5 that the assessment of suitable land had been done, and I was just wondering what  
6 the time scale was to call out for an expression of interest to the public on that.

7

8 I wasn't going to bring up the north beach, because I had raised it at the Greystones  
9 meeting there last week, but I am actually now more confused, having heard the  
10 discussions around it, and I wonder, Breege -- we were told very specifically that it  
11 was under the remit of Sispar. Now, I have sent in several queries into the  
12 environmental section since the summer about erosion of that path, and now it is  
13 completely gone.

14 So I'm just -- I wonder if you could just send an email out, just outlining the exact  
15 sort of pathway, for want of a better word, into that repair to the members of  
16 Greystones District, because there just seems to be sort of some conflict with what  
17 we are receiving.

18

19 I also just had a follow-up query. I asked this at the last month's meeting, just for  
20 Joe, regarding the empty units in Hawkins Wood. I think Councillor Stokes raised it,  
21 but I don't believe that I heard the response to that.

22

23 And, again, I wasn't going to raise -- I know we talked at length about the Burnaby  
24 clearance, but -- and I know probably the rest of the chamber that aren't in our  
25 district are, you know, sick to their teeth of hearing it, but it is about -- it's about, I  
26 suppose -- for the public that are contacting me, it is about the lack of environmental  
27 consideration, when we, as a Council, are going to build stock on our land. And we  
28 are, as the Council, expected to be holding up the very standards that we are putting  
29 out to public consultation to the public.

30

31 We went out to public consultation, extensive public consultation on the County  
32 Development Plan, and there was a huge amount of public response around  
33 biodiversity and protection of biodiversity, and there was a load of really positive,  
34 strong objections got put into the CDP, including stating there has to be 25 metres

1 border buffer zone from the edges of a river to be maintained.

2

3 Now, this is twice that the Council, the housing section, has breached its own  
4 guidelines in the CDP, building social housing in Greystones onto an adjacent site.

5 There was a wall placed down on the banks of the Three Trouts River not so long  
6 ago, and, after a furore that was largely moved back. That shouldn't have been there  
7 in the first place.

8

9 And similarly, with the clearance of the Burnaby site, I don't know if anybody in the  
10 section realises, there was an ancient wood -- ancient hedgerow there, about 200  
11 years old. That's gone now. But yet, we're also, on our other hand, applying for  
12 funding, you know, to map the hedgerows in the county. There's a lack of joined up  
13 thinking going on here.

14

15 There was also another breach. There was bulldozing right down onto the bank of  
16 the Three Trout River. Again, if I was building a house and I did that, I'm pretty  
17 sure, if somebody made a complaint to Planning, they would be very quickly  
18 pointing out the objective in the County Development Plan that says I shouldn't be  
19 doing that. So this is what's causing consternation in our area.

20

21 I'm getting an email that was sent to me during the week, flagging the ongoing  
22 consultation, public consultation to our climate action plan, telling me this seems to  
23 be empty nonsense, when this is what the Council is doing.

24

25 So this is why we're raising it here in this forum, because we haven't had adequate  
26 response, and I am not confident that this won't happen again in another site  
27 anywhere around the county, and that concerns me.

28 Thank you.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

30 Councillor Stephen Stokes, I'll just let you come back in quickly again.

31 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach. Firstly, can I thank  
32 Leonora for a very positive update in relation to the east coast Greenway. It sounds  
33 very good. So thank you.

34

1 Yes, just to concur with Councillor Scott, who raised Hawkins Wood last month.  
2 Didn't get a response on that. I've written in to the Council on a number of  
3 occasions. Residents even living in Hawkins Wood want those houses to be filled,  
4 because they don't want empty houses just lying idle. And whenever I've written in,  
5 nobody in the Council seems to know anything about it, you know, which is very  
6 unusual.

7  
8 Could I thank Joe for the information in relation to the Charlesland site. I do accept  
9 the need for houses. It is the scale of the development and the impact on the  
10 environment that I am very concerned about. The final number of houses is very  
11 unclear to me. I mean, 75 in the Chief Executive's report this month. Again, another  
12 email, I think, says 250 to us. The Director has now advised us that the housing will  
13 be maximised on the site. Very unclear to me. And I believe that there's a lack of  
14 focus on the value of the environment in relation to this.

15  
16 A number of my questions, Cathaoirleach, went unanswered there. I asked if the  
17 Chief Executive and the Director of Services will come and visit the site. I would  
18 like a yes or a no to that. I don't want it just skipped over. Who signed off on this?  
19 No answer. Did the Council staff carry out the work? No answer. Will any of the  
20 site be sold to developer? Not sure. There was some discussion of potentially a cost  
21 rental scheme. So I am not sure about that. Will the site be replanted? No answer.

22  
23 You know, and I asked, you know, in relation, at this stage, does Wicklow County  
24 Council wish to volunteer any additional information? I'm not sure. Will the  
25 relevant reports in relation to the survey, will they be circulated?

26  
27 I do appreciate and acknowledge the Chief Executive's response in relation to  
28 looking at the site, will it be fenced off. I mean, as I said earlier, I just want to  
29 reiterate, at the moment, you could drive a bus in there. You know, it is completely  
30 wide open. And we've had -- I live in Charlesland, and there are a number of -- there  
31 have been antisocial behaviour issues in Charlesland, and I think it is absolutely vital  
32 that we treat this as a priority.

33 So, thank you.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor. I will bring the Chief

1 Executive back in to address any of those queries that weren't answered.

2 Councillor Joe Behan.

3 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I want to compliment  
4 Councillor Kavanagh on her work on the Ballinclare Quarry. I don't like what is  
5 going on here, and I don't like the sound of what we are hearing from the top table.  
6 And with respect to the Chief Executive, I think it is time now that the Chief  
7 Executive starts answering some of the questions rather than all the time deferring to  
8 directors; because the Chief Executive, you are ultimately responsible for the actions  
9 of Wicklow County Council.

10

11 Now, Breege has said that, well, we just don't normally reply to the EPA when they  
12 make a request. This is what the EPA said to the Council: "Please note that a  
13 response to this notice is required even if you have no observations to make, and  
14 your response will be taken into consideration in the assessment of the application."  
15 So, in fact, there is provision for the Council to make a submission, and you are even  
16 told to make a submission, and you didn't make it. That's the first thing.

17

18 Now, I can remember, when Councillor Kennedy was the Cathaoirleach, and your  
19 predecessor, Chief Executive, was in place there, he actually alerted me, and we  
20 went down to Ballinclare to see what was being proposed at that time, which was  
21 basically a landfill. We were never told, until the following day at Wicklow County  
22 Council, that, actually, Wicklow County Council planners had more or less given the  
23 nod for that particular proposal, and there was one day left for third parties to make  
24 submissions, including us as the elected representatives, and, in particular, the  
25 elected representatives of that area.

26

27 In fairness to Councillor Kavanagh and Councillor Leonard, they went and they put  
28 in a huge amount of work on that day, and made the submission, and now we see An  
29 Bord Pleanála actually agrees with them, and has refused it.

30

31 And apart from anything else, if An Bord Pleanála has refused it, I would have  
32 thought, therefore, Wicklow County Council would see it as very necessary to take  
33 on board what the Board has said and to make a submission to the EPA, as they have  
34 been requested to do.

1 Now, a question I asked the last Chief Executive, and I am putting to you directly,  
2 Chief Executive: Is there any connection between this proposed landfill and the  
3 Whitestown dump, illegal dump in west Wicklow? And is there any suggestion, or  
4 do you have any knowledge that there is some proposal somewhere to use this  
5 particular proposed landfill, if it ever gets permission, as the place to deposit the  
6 Whitestown rubbish?

7  
8 If you could answer that question directly, because, as I recall it, when I asked Frank  
9 Curran, I wasn't quite sure at the end of it whether that was a yes or a no. I would  
10 certainly appreciate an answer, a straight answer on that one.

11  
12 But I think, to go back to what Councillor Kavanagh has said, as far as she is  
13 concerned, and as far as the local people are concerned, we are not doing our duty as  
14 a Council by the local people, when we don't take the concerns that those people  
15 have already expressed. And while the EPA has ultimate responsibility, there is a  
16 route for us to make our submissions known, as a Council. And it does appear, and  
17 it seems to be very disappointing that, on this occasion, the senior management of  
18 Wicklow County Council have decided, no, we're going to let that one pass. Why?  
19 Why is this happening? Is there something else going on here that we are not being  
20 told? I think we should get the full, absolute and total truth here today.

21 Thank you.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

23 Chief Executive, I will just let you come in on those couple of ones.

24 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I will ask Brian to talk about the rates  
25 on that particular site in Arklow.

26  
27 Councillor Scott, the expressions of interest in the community gardens. Yes. I  
28 suppose, to say I was a bit disappointed in what came back to us in terms of land that  
29 is available, you know, and suitable. So I'd probably slowed down going out for an  
30 expression of interest on it on that basis, trying to see were there any more sites  
31 suitable. So I will work through with the management team and I will email you and  
32 let you know kind of where we are at with it in terms of just getting it out for a  
33 public expression of interest as soon as we possibly can.

34

1 I will have to defer to Joe on Hawkins Wood, that both yourself and  
2 Councillor Stokes have raised in relation to the units being vacant there.

3

4 Councillor Stokes, in relation to the Burnaby, I have no problem visiting the site. I  
5 have been to the site. You know, I will come visit it with you. Absolutely no  
6 problem at all.

7

8 In terms of site, I suppose, some of the questions that you asked, Joe did say that a  
9 landscaping scheme will be part of the planning application, the Part 8 application  
10 for the scheme. The site was cleared for site investigations works. It is zoned for  
11 housing. And that's the reason -- I suppose, again, the number of units on the site,  
12 the report says 75 for social. What will be there in affordable or cost rental is yet to  
13 be determined. That will be dependent on the design of the site, what the site can  
14 accommodate, and obviously having due regard to core strategy and development  
15 plan, and what is suitable in that location.

16

17 If it was to be for cost rental or anything like that, most likely, it would be in  
18 partnership with an approved housing body or with the LDA, not likely to be a  
19 private developer, you know, a private landowner, as such. But, as I said, I have  
20 absolutely no problem coming out to the site. We can organise a time next week,  
21 potentially.

22

23 In relation to the quarry and Whitestown, the remediation of Whitestown, I have no  
24 knowledge of any plan to move waste from Whitestown to that quarry site. It's not  
25 ideal to move waste from one location to another. Whitestown, as you're aware, is  
26 currently subject to legal proceedings at the moment, and a plan to be put in place  
27 where we have to remediate the site. But there are no plans, to my knowledge, to  
28 move any waste from Whitestown to any other location. I can't be any more  
29 definitive than that, Councillor Behan.

30

31 In relation, I suppose, to making a submission on -- to the EPA, as Breege has said,  
32 we tend not to, because they take in -- they have their statutory function in that role.  
33 I do note what you are saying, that they're asking us to either say if we have no  
34 submission, much in the same way as Meath County Council made an observation

1 on that variation saying they had nothing to say; so we probably should amend our  
2 procedures and policies to do that at the very minimum. But, look, I am hearing  
3 what you are saying, what the room is saying here on it, and we will certainly take  
4 that into consideration.

5

6 But the fact that it hasn't been granted planning permission is a big full stop on that  
7 application, you know, in my view. I don't know what the EPA will take into their  
8 consideration, but I can't see how they would then give a permit for a site that hasn't  
9 got planning permission. That wouldn't make any sense to me at all.

10 I might just go to Brian on the rates, and then back to Joe on Hawkins Wood. Thank  
11 you, Cathaoirleach.

12 MR GLEESON: Thank you, Chief Executive. Just in relation to the commercial  
13 rates. Obviously, once a property has been valued by the valuation office, we are  
14 legally obliged to issue rate demands in respect of those premises. I thought you  
15 said -- Council, you might clarify. Was it on the main street?

16 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: No, no, it was an industrial unit -- (inaudible).

17 MR GLEESON: Okay. Grand. But I suppose this may not qualify, but we do have,  
18 for new businesses, we do have an incentive scheme, whereby, if a new business  
19 goes into a vacant premises that's been vacant for 12 months, that they can get 50%  
20 of their rates off for the first year and 25 for the second year, and it's not until the  
21 third year that they're actually paying full rates.

22

23 But I'm not sure, I'd have to know the details. I can talk to you afterwards, get the  
24 details, and see if that actually qualifies. But that's -- I suppose, as I say, that's the  
25 situation it is at the moment. But whatever schemes are there, and they qualify for it,  
26 they can obviously avail of.

27 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: Thank you.

28 MR GLEESON: Thank you.

29 MR LANE: We have been in extensive communications over the last couple of  
30 months with Tuath, the approved housing body in that particular site. As of last  
31 week, the last email, they said there were 12 units outstanding, where they were just  
32 asking us about nominations. I'm not quite sure of the status of those 12. But I think  
33 there was -- on and off, there was delays, there were nominations, there were a  
34 number of issues. But we have been dealing directly with the approved, and have

1 had a number of meetings with the approved housing body, and there's nothing  
2 outstanding.

3

4 There are 12, I think, in abyss, and there will always be. There is another one that  
5 has become free, so there's always a little bit of fluency in that regard.

6

7 As regard the Burnaby, just to clarify, it would have been me or Helena, acting on  
8 my behalf, who would have authorised that, as part of my Housing Authorising  
9 delegated function to get the works done. Weekly, we are looking for progress -- or  
10 I mean sought progress for housing programmes, including affordable programmes.  
11 This site investigation is an integral part of that development.

12

13 You are right, something -- actually, when I was answering your question, I didn't  
14 think it out logically.

15

16 If we were doing - which I suggest we will be doing - affordable purchase, yes,  
17 individual sites would be disposed of to private -- but that's not the question. I know  
18 that is not the point you're making.

19

20 And again, the entity, the -- going back to the confusion regarding the 75. The  
21 entity -- the afford -- so PPP only currently does social housing. It doesn't do  
22 affordable cost rental, which we think is -- is a glitch in the system. And that would  
23 have an entity buying that apartments or building that apartments there. We're not at  
24 that status yet, and we will be back to the elected members.

25

26 But there will be -- and going back to something Derek -- Councillor Mitchell asked.  
27 There would be affordable -- at the moment, the plans have affordable purchase units  
28 at the north end, closer to Burnaby Mills. That's what the current design is.

29

30 Any other questions I missed? Specific questions I missed?

31 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Would the reports be circulated?

32 MR LANE: The site investigation report will be quite technical. It can be -- it can  
33 be, or a precis of it. I'll just have to look at that particular list, see what's involved on  
34 it.

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But I think -- have ye been circulated the map of the 20 sites you were looking for?  
I'll get that to you -- what you request -- was that sent to the Greystones councillors?  
Sorry.

CATHAOIRLEACH: We mightn't get into a discussion here, Joe, just to try and --

MR LANE: Okay. I'll get that to you no problem. I can give it to you after this.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Hold on one second. The Chief Executive just wants to come back in on this issue as well.

MS O'GORMAN: Just on the site investigation, again, and the clearance on adherence, I suppose, and the development plan, I will have a look at it, and I will write to all of the Greystones members on it, okay, and give you a full report on it. And if there are -- I know you asked for reports as well. Whatever we can make publicly available, we will certainly make available to you all.

Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Breege.

MS KILKENNY: Yes. I just wanted to get back to Councillor Lourda Scott who said there is some confusion over the protection of Greystones north beach. There are aspects which come under the control of Sispar. That includes the path coming from the public park.

However, what Councillor Mitchell is talking about is the long-standing erosion of the beach. A large part of it is due to the surface runoff. It's that aspect that we will be looking for in terms of seeking funding from the OPW. That's not within Sispar's remit.

But the other aspect, in relation to the park and the path that they were dealing with, that's still their responsibility. So I will get an email out to ye on that, just to give clarity on it, okay?

MS O'GORMAN: Cathaoirleach, sorry, apologies. Something else that Councillor Mitchell raised about the scheme from Booterstown to Wicklow and beyond.

So that's part of the ECRIPP project, the Irish Rail Emergency Coastal Route Infrastructure Project. I think I have that right. So that is a large-scale government

1 investment programme. I only recently met with Joe Meade, the Chief Executive of  
2 Iarnród Éireann, to discuss how Wicklow County Council would work with their  
3 team and their consultants, who are Jacobs Engineering, to see how we could  
4 progress it. They are very keen to progress the Wicklow -- anything that's in  
5 Wicklow county first, because I think the sites are easier, I suppose, in terms of land  
6 ownership. A lot of it is in the Council's ownership, so it will make that project, I  
7 suppose, more viable.

8

9 So part of that will involve us entering into various agreements with them to allow  
10 them on to our land to do investigation, and then, ultimately, to start their  
11 infrastructure protection, which will feed into the coastal protection work as well.  
12 But that is a longer-term project, as you know. Obviously, the events of the  
13 last -- well, the last couple of months, in terms of storms, have probably accelerated  
14 some of that. There has been some commentary in the press about Irish Rail kind of  
15 moving ahead more quickly now; but, look, we are working with them on it.

16

17 But that large-scale project is planned. The capital envelope has been assigned, it's  
18 my understanding, from Government, and they are intending to start in Wicklow, in  
19 the county, before they go into Dun Laoghaire, Rathdown and then, indeed, into the  
20 Dublin City Council area.

21

22 Thank you.

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Chief Executive.

24 Members, I am just proposing a time extension, because we are going to stop at half  
25 four just to take the suspension of standing orders. Can I just get a seconder for that?  
26 Perfect. Councillor Paul O'Brien? Is that agreed with everyone, to go till half five?  
27 Brilliant. Okay. Thank you.

28

29 Councillor Pat Kennedy, I'll take you in and then we will do the suspension standing  
30 orders, and then I'll come back in and get yourselves, Councillor Stokes and  
31 Councillor O'Neill.

32 So Councillor Pat Kennedy.

33 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I won't hold you up very long.  
34 It's just I have one question for the Chief Executive. And before I get to that, I just

1 want to -- just in relation to the volume of water that has fell, and the rainfall that  
2 we -- it has been mentioned here, so I won't -- I won't hold up the meeting on it.

3

4 But there's over nine inches of rain has fell in the last month of October. The bulk of  
5 that fell in the second half of the month, right? That's the equivalent of a thousand  
6 tons per acre, or thereabouts. And I just have to compliment the staff, and especially  
7 the outdoor staff, and the way they managed that, and the experience they have in the  
8 way the watercourse has run over the last month. We're very lucky to have them,  
9 and I just want to put it on the record, my appreciation for them.

10

11 But my question is, just following on from what Councillor Bourke said earlier on in  
12 relation to the increase in funding for the septic tanks grant from 5,000 to 12,000, I  
13 am just wondering how is that going to be managed, and is that going to be an open  
14 call within the county for people, or how is that going to be managed? Because I am  
15 sure we won't have an endless pot of money for that either. And, in fairness, if you  
16 haven't had time to think about that, that's fine today as well. Thank you,  
17 Cathaoirleach.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor. I don't know if anybody  
19 can respond to that quickly there before we --

20 MS O'GORMAN: We will come back on the details of the scheme. We will  
21 promote it widely, but I will come back to the members on the detail of the scheme.

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Perfect. Thanks so much. Okay. We're just going to take the  
23 first --

24 Councillor O'Neill.

25 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just two items there. In the  
26 Troopersfield area of Blessington, and Mountain View, some three year ago, CARE  
27 engineers of Wicklow County Council here, the planning section, came up with a  
28 plan for ten units at the site at Troopersfield, and it's just lying there since. There's  
29 been no movement.

30

31 So I am just looking for when would the Part 8 be moved on this? I believe it's -- the  
32 last I heard of it was in the -- with our law agents here, and I think it's there a long,  
33 long time. But there are people there, you know, constantly ringing me on news,  
34 people with disabilities or whatever, are asking, it's going on a long, long time with

1 seemingly nothing happening, you know?

2

3 So maybe if we could get a confirmation on when that Part 8 will be moving?

4

5 Just another one there, briefly. Cairn Homes there in the town, they have got  
6 a -- their application for 329 houses are -- it's gone out for further information. But,  
7 included in the further information, it points out that, you know, that Wicklow  
8 County Council housing section have raised concerns as regards the distribution of  
9 Part 5.

10

11 So, I would like to know the story, and I know my fellow councillors would, exactly  
12 what is happening here with Cairn Homes? They've already built, I think it's 74  
13 houses. So we're talking about over 400 houses. But we don't know what allocation  
14 of these, is it 10, is it 20% that will be going to the social?

15

16 Also, I believe that Cairn Homes would be open to discussions as regards including  
17 affordable houses in these 400 houses. So maybe an update to brief us on what is  
18 happening there and what are we really looking for.

19

20 It's very vague at the moment, where the housing section are raising concerns as  
21 regards the distribution of Part 5, but what does -- if we could get some clarification  
22 on that?

23 CATHAOIRLEACH: No problem. Thank you, Councillor.

24 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Thank you.

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We are going to take the suspension of standing orders  
26 now. Then the Chief Executive can respond to you, Gerry. And we have two others  
27 looking to come in.

28 So, Helen.

29 MS PURCELL: The first suspension of standing orders was submitted by  
30 Councillor Paul O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Gail Dunne, to discuss the ongoing  
31 destruction and deterioration of The Murrough in Wicklow town.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: So Councillor Paul O'Brien.

33 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach, for allowing the  
34 suspension of standing orders and to my colleagues for their support. Can I also just

1 thank Councillor Dunne for seconding it. This is not politics for us. This is  
2 personal. Both our families hail from The Murrough, so what we speak here today,  
3 we speak from the heart, not for anything else other than that.

4  
5 Can I just thank the Chief Executive as well. I know you've only been here a short  
6 time with us. But it's obvious from talking to you over the last few months about  
7 The Murrough that you know, and you get it, and you know what it means to the  
8 town and the people of the town.

9  
10 We have had a parade of ministers, MEPs, TDs down for the last number of years,  
11 and the same with the courthouse here in Wicklow, and yet we are where we are here  
12 today. We are forced to do this, in my opinion. I didn't want to have to raise this  
13 today. I would rather the works be done.

14  
15 I want to acknowledge and thank Deputy Stephen Matthews, who came down shortly  
16 after the last storm we had, and I believe he has secured either funding, or he has got  
17 the go-ahead from Irish Rail to proceed with some works, and I genuinely appreciate  
18 the interest he has shown here. It would have been nice to meet him down there, but,  
19 look it, it is what it is, and I do appreciate him coming down.

20 The Murrough, for anyone who doesn't know, it's -- we've spoke about it extensively  
21 today, and we have got a lot of our answers here, but it means so much to the fabric  
22 of the town. You know, the town has become so built up, and especially during  
23 Covid and the pandemic, that it was the only point where people could get out and go  
24 for a walk and clear their head. We really are at a loss here.

25 We have heard that Irish Rail have taken the initiative and will work alongside  
26 Wicklow County Council. Thank god we have the railway line there, because, if this  
27 is a sense of urgency by Irish Rail, I wouldn't like to see The Murrough if we hadn't  
28 got the railway station -- or the railway line. I think, you know, we would just lose  
29 it.

30  
31 So, can I urge everyone to support us in getting on to Irish Rail and getting the works  
32 done, because we have heard about a lot of investigation work that has to be done,  
33 but the reality is, if the investigations keep going on, there will be nothing to  
34 investigate, because there's going to be nothing left. And I know it is an area of

1 special conservation and I know everything has to be looked at, but the reality is, and  
2 especially after the last storm, and the monkey pole having to be moved again, we  
3 are on the verge of losing something so precious to the people of Wicklow, it is  
4 unbelievable.

5 Can I just also finally, because I know it has been a long day, and people want to get  
6 home, but even with the current armour we have down there, it's actually -- that is  
7 starting to slip as well, and it is starting to -- because we know the power of Mother  
8 Nature here, that it can -- it is very hard to hold it back.

9

10 I heard an expert during the week saying, we're going to have to accept that we are  
11 going to have to surrender land. But not in this case. I think she was talking in  
12 general about the country. But we can't really afford to lose any more of The  
13 Murrough. And this is passionate to all of us that are from the town.

14

15 Can I just ask, then, in terms -- we had a great presentation here a couple of years  
16 ago; has the money been allocated? And, if so, how much, for the works? As I've  
17 said already, we have investigations going on, but we need to speed them up before  
18 there is nothing to investigate.

19

20 So can we have a -- the most current update we have on that? And I know this is  
21 going to be very difficult to answer, but, can we get a start date? Because it's the  
22 people that are getting on to us. They think we have the power to just click our  
23 fingers and this will all happen.

24

25 Wicklow County Council is getting the blame for this, unfairly, in my opinion,  
26 because it's the -- if we're talking hundreds of millions, we all know Wicklow  
27 County Council hasn't that kind of resources or budget. So we need to know who are  
28 making these decisions? When are they going to be making them? And I would  
29 urge everyone in particular to get on board with this. Because, if we don't, we're  
30 going to lose an amenity that we are never going to get back.

31

32 So again, thank you, Chief Executive, for your time on this, and thank you to my  
33 colleagues for their support as well.

34

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor.

1 Councillor Gail Dunne.

2 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to second  
3 Councillor O'Brien's suspension of standing orders.

4 I won't say too much more, but it is a very important part, it is an historic part of  
5 Wicklow town. I think we all grew up with it. And I suppose, when you are used to  
6 something, you take it for granted. But to see the amount of destruction over the last  
7 number of years, and, you know what I mean, at this stage, we're worried whether  
8 there will be a Murrough there anymore. And so many people use it. And this is not  
9 being political here, because I know my colleagues in the district that, you know  
10 what I mean, we're all getting it, like, you know what I mean?

11

12 And even though we're not holding the purse strings here, we're expected to do  
13 something. We're the local people. We're the first point of contact that people come  
14 to. And, in fairness, you know, we need answers, because the people on the ground  
15 who are concerned about this, like us all, want to know where this is going, and it is  
16 very, very important that we are able to go out and tell them that this is what is  
17 happening, this is the plan of action, and it is really important.

18

19 I kept my mouth closed earlier when one of the other councillors suggested about our  
20 Chief Executive not answering the questions or deflecting, and I would just like to  
21 say, I'm here a long time, and this Chief Executive always answers questions, always  
22 gets back to you. And I am sitting in this chamber a long time, both as an employee  
23 of the Council, and there was Chief Executives up there wouldn't even answer one  
24 question.

25

26 So I would like to compliment our Chief Executive and her staff for the courtesy  
27 they show us all of the time when we go with our questions.

28

29 Thank you.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

31 Councillor Mary Kavanagh.

32 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Thanks, Chair. Okay. I just briefly just wrote this.  
33 Because The Murrough has been taking up my time for at least almost the last ten  
34 years. I was involved in the Save The Murrough campaign after a major storm. I'm

1 not sure if it was Storm Emma; there's been that many of them, I can't remember  
2 which one it was. But it was when we first lost access to The Murrough.

3

4 Anyway, to anyone living in or around Wicklow, The Murrough is a precious  
5 amenity. It is our national park. It is as important to us as Killarney National Park is  
6 to Kerry. To lose it would be to deny the local people the opportunity to walk in a  
7 very special place beside the sea, and it is well documented what the health and  
8 mental benefits the sea has on our lives. It changes the tides, it changes the seasons,  
9 it changes day to night. It is so important, the effects that it has. And to lose this  
10 opportunity to be able to walk close to that would be a tragedy.

11

12 We're only at year three of the ECRIPP plan. It's a coastal erosion protection works  
13 for the railway line. Ten years is too long to wait. I don't think The Murrough has  
14 seven years left. I'm not even sure if it has a year left. So something has to be done.  
15 And while I appreciate Stephen Matthews; in fairness to him, he has, you know, sped  
16 up the process to get the next section of rock armour in, and he told me that it will  
17 probably take at least ten weeks to get all the procurement process into place, he did  
18 say that what it would probably do is just push the problem further up. And I  
19 understand that, because that's what happened, and that's what local maritime experts  
20 say and local fishermen, and people like that.

21 I just want to make the point, our Chief Executive wouldn't be aware of this, but,  
22 many years ago, around about the time we had a meeting in the Grand Hotel, which  
23 was attended by about 300 people, a young man who grew up here in Wicklow, and  
24 who is a marine engineer, who now works in New York, and who does land  
25 reclamation, got in touch with Wicklow County Council, offering his services, and,  
26 to my knowledge, they were free of charge because he had such an affinity with the  
27 place.

28

29 I don't think anything was taken on board. I think it was a shame, because it was  
30 eight years ago, and it could have made such a difference. Now, this man was  
31 offering his services to the town that he loved, and it was ignored.

32

33 Wicklow County Council is aware of the importance of the area as an amenity, and  
34 should have accessed funding over the years to try to prolong the life of The

1 Murrough. I know we can't hold back coastal erosion, but we could have done  
2 something to try to prolong the life of this much beloved spot.

3

4 We have lost the lighthouse walk. We've lost the Greystones walk. We're  
5 potentially going to lose The Murrough. And we're potentially going to lose a walk  
6 from Tinahely to Broad Lough.

7

8 Now, this has all happened over the last few years. It doesn't augur very well for the  
9 local people in all these towns and villages to lose these major natural routes.

10 There's nothing artificial about these. They're all there in nature, and people love  
11 them.

12 So I would just ask the County Council to please up the ante, to try and get the land  
13 that is needed to reopen the Bray to Greystones walk, to try and sort out whatever is  
14 going on at the lighthouse walk, to try and get some kind of an access deal done to  
15 get people able to walk in there, to try and deal with the one out at Tinahely to Broad  
16 Lough, which is so beloved of the people of Rathnew in particular, and the wider  
17 area. Soon, there will be nothing left for people to enjoy.

18

19 And I just want to finish with a line -- it's a line from a little poem that has always  
20 resonated with me, and the last line is -- this is why it is so important that we don't  
21 lose these coastal routes: "Whatever you lose like a you or a me, it's always  
22 ourselves we find at the sea."

23

24 I would just like the Council to take that on board; that we cannot lose these vital  
25 natural amenities.

26

27 Thank you.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

29 Councillor Pier Leonard.

30 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: I suppose we can see how passionate everybody is  
31 about this. It is not just The Murrough. It is the whole east coast of Ireland. And I  
32 think the elephant in the room is, where's nature in all of this? All the answers are  
33 hard engineering and rock armour that doesn't work. Like, you know, we have lost  
34 80% or more of our natural forests in Ireland. Our seabed is gone. There was a

1 natural reef that ran down from Dublin to Wexford, I think, and -- I am not an  
2 engineer, I'm not an environmentalist, I'm not an ecologist or anything like that, but,  
3 for me, it's the loss of our natural infrastructures that have actually -- and human  
4 interaction with that as well, built things, built infrastructure, that impact the coast as  
5 well.

6  
7 So I suppose I would love to see something happen really quickly, but I think it is  
8 really important to understand what is going on first. And I think the more  
9 studies -- and I know Breege and the whole team there, I am on the climate SPC, and  
10 I know they have been putting a lot of work in trying to speed up things, but I think  
11 they need help. They need help at a higher level, to kind of get the right resources  
12 there and the right funding there to be able to give them the -- you know, to be able  
13 to get these feasibility studies.

14 There's a lot of surveys done. INFOMAR do the surveys on the coastal bed. You  
15 know, we have got the wind farms coming in soon, and, like, what impact is that  
16 going to have on the coastal protection as well?

17  
18 I think the sooner we get a really good comprehensive feasibility study done on the  
19 whole lot, but it needs to have nature-based solutions incorporated into it. Nature  
20 grows faster than anything. It doesn't cost anything. You could put reefs out there  
21 on the rock armour. The oyster NORRI project would be ideal. But all these  
22 projects need support of the Council, and they needs support of the ministers and the  
23 people in -- that have the power in government. And a lot of councillors here are  
24 part of their parties.

25 So it would be those people that I would be urging to kind of try and put the pressure  
26 on their own parties to get this for -- not just Wicklow, the whole east coast of  
27 Ireland.

28  
29 Thanks.

30  
31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.  
32 Councillor John Snell?

33 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Yes. Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Look it, it is very  
34 disappointing that we are reduced to this. I mean that in the best possible way.

1 Because the reality is that, this is like a hot potato that is being handed around, not  
2 just from month to month, but from year to year and decade to decade.

3

4 And the reality is that I'm on record as saying, that we have had so many visitors to  
5 The Murrough and Wicklow town, all with the political clout at the time to deliver  
6 on this.

7

8 In 2016, Minister Andrew Doyle had an MEP, Séan Kelly, down looking at The  
9 Murrough. Deputy John Brady had MEP Liadh Ní Riada down looking at The  
10 Murrough. Senator Pat Casey. Minister Stephen Donnelly. They, with a number of  
11 local councillors, walked The Murrough, with the Minister with responsibility at the  
12 time, Boxer Moran. That's how long this is going on.

13

14 I attended a public meeting in the Grand Hotel, I believe it was in early 2014, where  
15 there was over 400 people attended, and the call went out then. And the reality is  
16 that, you know, we're calling on Wicklow County Council to do something that they  
17 don't have the power to do.

18

19 Yes, we can call on you to do what you can, but the reality is that it's EU funding  
20 that's needed here. It's national funding that's needed here. And to put the onus back  
21 on Wicklow County Council, yes, we have a role and we have a function, and we do  
22 what we can, but a lot of you sitting around this chamber are members of political  
23 parties with government ministers. Go and ask them what are they doing, or what  
24 have they done, not just for the last decade. Some of them are in government for 14  
25 years. Some of them are in a hell of a lot longer before that. And The Murrough has  
26 been neglected. Neglected of funding and a proper strategy. A special area of -- a  
27 special protection area, an area of outstanding natural beauty.

28

29 We discussed in regards to Kildare earlier, and what Kildare have in comparison to  
30 Wicklow, and the reality is that, if Kildare had this coastline, they wouldn't be sitting  
31 on their laurels watching it being washed away out to sea. Yes, there is a natural  
32 occurrence. But the reality is that you can -- you can stave away nature; you can, by  
33 putting in some infrastructure.

34

1 But, unfortunately, the political will is not there. Whether it is not there at a national  
2 level, it definitely doesn't seem to be there at an EU level. And I've chased up some  
3 of these MEPs over the years, I fell out with some of them over the years, because  
4 the reality is, they come here for the photo opportunity, they get their photograph  
5 taken, they will send the literature around the county here, how they are going to  
6 protect this Murrough and they are going to use their influence, and the reality is  
7 they done damn all. Nothing.

8

9 And even if they couldn't do anything, at least let us know they can't do anything.  
10 They can't deliver on the promises. So don't promise what you can't deliver. And  
11 we're sitting here today taking up time discussing this, which is a very, very  
12 important issue for us, the people that live locally, that have used this for  
13 generations. But the truth is, we are basically taking the heat off where it should be,  
14 and that's at national level and at EU level. So bringing it down to grass-roots here is  
15 implicating ourselves and the management of this local authority, in some way we  
16 have a magic wand that we are going to muster up money to protect The Murrough.  
17 I welcome the announcement that there's funding, a small level of funding there to  
18 protect the railway line, but it is not going to be enough.

19

20 And we seen it in years gone past, where protection works was done, and it just  
21 moved the issue further up and further up. And until some day, somebody with the  
22 political clout, that we don't have, and an awful lot of you do have, you have the ear  
23 of the people who should be able to deliver this; but, unfortunately, we pick and  
24 choose the issues we want to discuss.

25

26 But Cathaoirleach, I wish you well in regard to trying to chase money for this with  
27 senior management, but the reality is that whoever sits in this seat, in four years'  
28 time, in ten years' time, in 20 years' time, will still deal with the same issues, because  
29 nobody, and I mean nobody, at a national level is doing anything about The  
30 Murrough in Wicklow town.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

32 Councillor Shay Cullen.

33 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I'm going to be brief, because I  
34 just want to really support my fellow district councillors, and I agree with everything

1 that has been said.

2 I suppose it goes without saying, The Murrough is a treasure, both in terms of  
3 Wicklow town, but also Wicklow as a county. And we cannot underestimate its  
4 importance to the area and its importance to the county.

5

6 And I suppose my question is: Look, how long can we wait? Because I don't think  
7 we can wait any longer. Firstly, we're at the start of the winter season. If we get  
8 another couple of storms over the next three, four, five months, this is going to end  
9 up having no railway tracks left, never mind a walkway beside them.

10

11 So we need to act, and we need to act now. And I am hopeful that, you know, the  
12 Chief Executive, and I have spoken to her about this issue, I am hopeful that, you  
13 know, something can be done to speed up the process in terms of getting the relevant  
14 authorities involved to solve this problem as quickly as possible, because I can't  
15 underestimate the importance.

16

17 And I attended that meeting with other councillors in 2014, and it was an urgent -- an  
18 urgency at that point. And here we are in 2023, and nothing has happened. And we  
19 really now are up against it, in my view.

20

21 And again, I want to agree with my fellow councillors in that there's been a long line  
22 of ministers, TDs, MEPs; everybody that is anybody has looked at this and done  
23 nothing. And I am not ashamed to say that. That's the reality. Nothing has been  
24 done. And, unfortunately, you know, it's like a lot of these things, we're on the  
25 bottom end of the ladder, and we don't have the clout to make something happen  
26 here. But I suppose, in terms of my support with the rest of my councillors, I want to  
27 see it happening, and I will do anything I can to support the Chief Executive and the  
28 relevant people to try and get something done.

29

30 Thank you.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor.

32 Councillor Irene Winters.

33 COUNCILLOR WINTERS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I would also like to agree with  
34 my fellow councillors in relation to the fact that nothing has happened. And I have

1 read transcripts from the Seanad back when former Minister Dick Roche was in the  
2 Seanad at that stage.

3

4 However, the government have made a certain amount of funding available to Irish  
5 Rail to protect the railway, but I think that we should ask the Government and ask  
6 Irish Rail to spend that money now when they can save both the railway and at least  
7 a section of The Murrough, and not wait until it is literally just protecting the  
8 railway.

9

10 They're going to spend the money, they're going to put the rock armour in, that's all  
11 they're going to do; but if they do it now, we will be left with some piece of a  
12 walkway. If they wait for another two or three easterlies, we will literally just be  
13 protecting the railway, and there will be no walk, and there will be no coastal  
14 amenity, and it would put in great jeopardy the idea of a Greystones to Wicklow  
15 Greenway.

16

17 So, if they have made the money available, the work is going to get done, let's do it  
18 while there's an amenity to protect with the railway.

19

20 Thank you.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor. Councillor O'Brien, you  
22 are the last person to come in. I am just wondering, would you prefer to let the Chief  
23 Executive come in first, and then I can give you the last word?

24 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: I would prefer to --

25 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, no, absolutely. Yes, no, I was going to bring you in  
26 either way. Go ahead.

27 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Thank you. And I appreciate that the Chief  
28 Executive will answer a few, and Mark as well. Just two very quick things.

29

30 I understand this is a national issue, but I can't sit on my hands and do nothing and  
31 say nothing either. I appreciate the other councillors were here before me, but, as  
32 someone whose family hailed from The Murrough, born, actually, up on The  
33 Murrough, and lived on The Murrough, I just -- I can't sit here in silence.

34

1 And I don't mean to bring it on this house. The issue, I am raising it is so we can go  
2 on and work as a unit together, to national level, and get the level of funding required  
3 both nationally and at EU.

4  
5 There was a comment passed earlier, and I'm just looking for clarity of our own  
6 district manager, Brian, if that's all right, in terms of the lighthouse walk. It's closed.  
7 It was, I think, Councillor Kavanagh brought it up. Maybe if Brian would give us a  
8 clarification on that and an update on that, because I know Brian has been  
9 working very hard in terms of -- what?

10 COUNCILLOR SNELL: That's a different issue, in fairness, Cathaoirleach.

11 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Well, it was raised by someone earlier on here, so  
12 I am entitled to ask what the...

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: And then we just get the clarity. No discussion, but just the  
14 clarity.

15 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: That is all I'm looking for. Thank you.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much. Chief Executive, I will bring you in  
17 now.

18 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And look, thank you, members. It's a  
19 hugely, hugely important issue. You know, there is no doubting it. From the day I  
20 arrived in Wicklow, it was apparent to me how important The Murrough is to the  
21 town and the county. I've run along it, I enjoy the amenity myself while I'm here in  
22 work. You know, it's a beautiful natural amenity. But we are in very serious danger  
23 of losing it.

24  
25 I mentioned briefly earlier on, in response to Councillor Mitchell, about the ECRIPP  
26 project, and that is, I suppose, the overall capital fund which is to deal with all things  
27 along the railway, but the urgency and the emergency that we have now is kind of  
28 superseding that at the moment.

29  
30 So we have -- I suppose Deputy Matthews rang me about a week or so ago about  
31 saying he was going to try and get additional funding or emergency funding secured.  
32 We have had conversations around that, and with Irish Rail, and I will get Mark to  
33 kind of come in a bit more of the detail in a moment.

34

1 The difficulty I have, I would love to be able to go and do this work ourselves, and  
2 just get on and get it done. The funding has been given, largely, to Irish Rail. I am  
3 talking to the OPW to see will they release additional funding or will they do the  
4 work, you know, on our behalf and to see can we do that.

5

6 Because, yes, Irish Rail have emergency powers and we'll be encouraging them to  
7 use them to do the work, but my understanding of their emergency powers is that  
8 they can only be invoked if waves are actually hitting the rail line, which would  
9 mean The Murrough would be gone, which is not a solution at all.

10

11 So I might get Mark to just give a little bit more detail about the discussions that are  
12 ongoing at the moment. You know, it is -- it's emergency at this stage. You're right.  
13 The next storm that hits, if it comes from an easterly direction, it is going to wash  
14 away any bit of Murrough that is left.

15

16 So while rock armour is not an ideal solution -- I know Councillor Leonard talked  
17 about nature-based solutions, and, yes, in the long-term, that is absolutely the way to  
18 go about it, but I think we have to plug what is happening at the moment and try and  
19 work to a longer-term plan, which the ECRIPP plan is.

20

21 So Mark, if you want to come in? Thanks.

22 MARK: Yes. I will go back over some of the questions. The Chief Executive is  
23 correct, the bottom line is the matter is being dealt with by Irish Rail. They have the  
24 funding. They have capital funding. There are various figures that have been touted,  
25 and it is a bit risky. I don't like quoting figures in a public forum, because these very  
26 figures will be changed before the project is finished, which is the nature of business.

27

28 But the order of magnitude is of the order of a couple of hundred million euros has  
29 been granted to Irish Rail, in principle, by the NTA, which that funding comes  
30 through the Department of Transport. That's the project that's looking at  
31 medium-term, and the medium-term being 30 to 100 years.

32

33 The timing of getting that works up and running takes a lot of -- a detailed process,  
34 and they're working on that at the moment. This week, Irish Rail are carrying out

1 site investigation works. I met them last week in Kilcoole, and walked from  
2 Kilcoole to Newcastle, so that they could get access; like, I have some local  
3 knowledge, they have some local knowledge from their local engineers.  
4 They are getting in to do site investigation works in the coming weeks. So the big  
5 project is underway, and Irish Rail are not shy about it, and they are not taking their  
6 time, they're working away at it.

7  
8 I have had conversations with Jacobs as late as Friday about the detail of how they're  
9 going to get in and do the site investigation works. So that is underway.

10  
11 And the Chief Executive has asked me to sit on a group, along with the colleagues  
12 from OPW and other local authorities, invited by Irish Rail to sit on a steering group,  
13 so that the project -- we have to be very careful always about our statutory processes.  
14 We're the planning authority, so we can't interfere in the planning process when the  
15 planning process goes to the Board in particular. But we are project partners in the  
16 sense that we are invited to sit in and discuss the project on a regular basis. We've  
17 had one of those steering meetings already.

18  
19 All of those things are happening, and we're not sitting on our hands in relation to,  
20 where we can, we have gone in to help Irish Rail.

21  
22 Councillor Kavanagh, you mentioned a local person who made a submission  
23 suggesting a solution. That solution was discussed by a Irish Rail, a colleague in  
24 Irish Rail, and myself at the time, and that thought process, which is to put in a hard  
25 solution at The Murrrough, it wasn't entirely ruled out. It's incorporated in the  
26 scheme that is being developed, and that's at discussion stage and is going to go to  
27 planning stage, and that is the use of rock armour and harder defences strategically  
28 either at the railway, on the beach or in the water. And there's different versions of  
29 that solution going to be used all the way up along the coast.

30  
31 So the suggestion that was made by our resident, who's now working in the States,  
32 hasn't been ignored. It's been taken on board. And I fed that in to Irish Rail 2019, or  
33 thereabouts.

34

1 The emergency works are the works that Deputy Matthews has mentioned. I have  
2 had two phone calls today with Irish Rail about what we can do to assist with that.  
3 And what we can do is, where we have land or property around The Murrough,  
4 places like the car parks, the spaces that we are in control of at the moment, they  
5 have asked can we make some of that space available to them, if they need -- if and  
6 when they need to do emergency works.

7  
8 The question about the pathway has been raised with Irish Rail. They're aware of the  
9 amenity value of the pathway. In the past, when they did works, they put a  
10 temporary path in so that people could continue to pass, even though they were  
11 working in that area. The CB units that were put in 2016, they were funded by the  
12 OPW. The concrete units that were put in by both Irish Rail and Wicklow County  
13 Council, we worked together on that project, and Irish Rail created a new path in the  
14 short-term, while the work were being done on the coast.

15  
16 So all the issues you've raised today, Irish Rail are well aware of them, and they are  
17 in the mix, if you like, for the interim, the longer solution project, and they are also  
18 in the mix for conversations that we're having at the moment about emergency  
19 works.

20  
21 The different organisations have different statutory powers, and Irish Rail's statutory  
22 powers are linked to the railway, and we are working with them as best we can, that,  
23 if they do emergency works, they will be relying, to a certain extent, on us for  
24 access, compounds and local knowledge and assistance, and, in return, I am hoping  
25 that they will do their best to protect what they can of the amenity value; bearing in  
26 mind their statutory powers and bearing in mind our statutory powers as well, we'll  
27 do something if we can.

28  
29 So we are doing some work on a -- if you like, on an emergency basis, that if there is  
30 an emergency and they have to go in and do works for the railway, we will assist  
31 them getting in, and then they will assist us, hopefully, in keeping access to The  
32 Murrough open.

33  
34 The long-term process, the kind of issues you've raised here should be raised -- and I

1 will be raising them with Irish Rail in the discussions at the steering meetings,  
2 because they're quite clear, the access issue, the amenity issue, and the nature issue,  
3 the nature-based issue, they're there all the time.

4  
5 Their place to raise them in the medium- to long-term is at the planning process for  
6 the project. I will hopefully get a chance to mention them when the project is being  
7 tidied up before going to planning. That will be our role as consultees, and it will be  
8 our -- the role that I have been assigned by the Chief Executive in the steering  
9 meetings with Irish Rail, and then I will raise them again, and there will be an  
10 opportunity for you to raise them as individuals and as the Council in the statutory  
11 process, where, if we're not happy that those issues have been dealt with in the full  
12 project when it goes to planning, we do have an opportunity at that stage to comment  
13 either as the planning authority, as a statutory consultee to the process as it goes to  
14 the Board, or as individuals, we'll have opportunities.

15  
16 So there's a number of opportunities to take into account the concerns you've had in  
17 relation to the emergency works, or the need -- potential need for emergency works.  
18 Where we can, we are going to assist Irish Rail. Where they can, they are going to  
19 assist us. But we have clear statutory basis for what we do, and I am just hoping we  
20 can merge the two statutory bases, if you like, at the point when it happens.

21  
22 That includes, we may well stockpile rock armour down near The Murrough. We  
23 may well have to ask the public to bear with us for a little bit. There will be  
24 machinery, equipment coming around. There will be materials being dropped. That  
25 could be happening in a matter of weeks, if Deputy Matthews' funding comes  
26 through and Irish Rail act, and I will be there helping them, Irish Rail, to get access  
27 to those either compounds that we own, such as the compound at The Murrough, the  
28 wastewater treatment works, and the spaces that we own.

29  
30 And the public are going to have to bear with us a little bit, too, in that there will be  
31 machinery and equipment moving around. They're going to have to work around  
32 that, and the security around that, and all of that. So there will be activity.

33  
34 Because I'm not privy exactly to the funding that Deputy Matthews has been making

1 efforts to secure, I can't say the exact detail of the works, but the site investigation  
2 works, I have been shown, and I have been told about what the site investigation  
3 works are, and there's a meeting specifically about site investigation works in the  
4 Wicklow area later this week, which I'll attend, and the issue there will all be about  
5 access, about how we can help Irish Rail to get in and do the works; either site  
6 investigation works or emergency works if they need it.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Mark. And thank you to the members  
8 that brought this issue up.

9 Can I ask the Chief Executive, just going forward, and Mark as well, just to keep all  
10 members informed of every single piece that happens, including stuff like  
11 machineries coming in or stuff is being landed, just so that, particularly the members  
12 of the district, but the wider members, have an awareness of that and they can keep  
13 up to date on it.

14 Thank you, members. We are just going to move on to the -- oh, sorry, Brian, would  
15 you just clarify that item? Sorry. Thank you.

16

17 MR GLEESON: Yes. I think it might have just stemmed from, there was a phrase  
18 used that we have lost the lighthouse walk as well. We actually haven't lost the  
19 lighthouse walk. It's temporarily been closed. There's a dispute with the landowner.

20

21 But there has been ongoing communications with the landowner, our own law agent,  
22 and the landowner's solicitor have been in regular contact. I, myself, spoke to the  
23 solicitor last week to try and expedite and progress the matter. We've carried out  
24 evaluation of the site, and we would be hopeful that we can get some sort of  
25 agreement in the short future. Okay?

26 Thank you.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Brian. Sorry about that.

28 Okay. We will just move on to our second suspension of standing orders.

29 MS PURCELL: The second suspension was committed by Councillor Shay Cullen,  
30 seconded by Councillor Irene Winters, to discuss the 950-bed temporary  
31 accommodation at Glendalough Estate at Annamoe. The concerns are the process,  
32 scale and location, and the impact on the local communities.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thanks very much, Helen. So I will open it to the floor.

34 Councillor Shay Cullen.

1 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I suppose, to just give a little bit  
2 of context to this, Cathaoirleach. On the 16th of October, a briefing was sent out to  
3 the councillors and the County Council that 950-bed accommodation was sought for  
4 Glendalough Estate at Annamoe. And I suppose anybody outside the district that  
5 doesn't know where Annamoe is, it is a small, little, I would have called hamlet,  
6 rather than village, between Roundwood and Laragh, with a population of about a  
7 hundred people. And to say this is one of the most shocking decisions ever made in  
8 terms of County Wicklow is an understatement.

9 To bring 950 people into an area, a rural area -- a rural farm, actually, is what this is,  
10 a very rural farm, without any consultation, without any engagement with either the  
11 County Council, the Council representatives, or communities; there is absolutely no  
12 facilities in this rural location, no sewerage, no mains water on this site, no  
13 broadband. As was said by one of my colleagues recently, if you could pick a more  
14 rural area in County Wicklow, I don't think you could pick one.

15

16 So, I suppose I am trying to, I suppose, hide my frustration and annoyance, because  
17 every time I think about this and talk about it, I get more frustrated and more  
18 annoyed. But a company called Pastures New have been awarded a contract to  
19 manage this site, and we had a public meeting last week, and I think the meeting  
20 raised more questions than answers.

21

22 I don't want to get into specifics with the company, but it seemed to me that there's  
23 very little experience in managing such a facility. And I don't blame the company in  
24 this regard, because I think managing a thousand people in any walk of life is very  
25 difficult for any company to take on. Now, there's quite a lot of, I suppose, concerns  
26 locally in that there has been commentary with regards to the owners of the farm,  
27 that this has been done, this agreement has been done behind closed doors, and some  
28 of the owners of this land, I think this land is in a trust, and some of the owners claim  
29 that they weren't aware of this contract.

30

31 And I suppose it has left the community of Roundwood, Annamoe and Laragh in  
32 total shock and dismay, into the scale and numbers that we're talking about.

33

34 I'll give an example here. If you walk outside the gate of this particular farm, if you

1 turn left to go to Roundwood, you don't have a footpath. If you turn right to go to  
2 Laragh, you don't have a footpath. We're talking about bringing 950 people into an  
3 utterly, you know, rural area, with absolutely no facilities, and I can't underestimate  
4 what I am saying in terms of that.

5  
6 They're talking about a 32-week contract and they're talking about this is a temporary  
7 rest area. But the reality is, where do these people go after 32 weeks? Sorry, the  
8 32-week contract is one thing, but they are talking about this being a rest area where  
9 families and individuals will be there for two to three weeks, and my question is,  
10 very clearly: Where will these people leave to go to? Because this country at the  
11 moment has no accommodation available right across the country. So that is one  
12 thing.

13  
14 I want to thank the Chief Executive for her support in this over the last couple of  
15 weeks. We managed to get a meeting with two high-ranking officials of the  
16 Department representing the Department of Integration last week or about ten days  
17 ago, and my colleagues in the Wicklow district attended that meeting and we put  
18 some very clear, precise questions to the individuals at the meeting and to this day  
19 we have got no response whatsoever, nothing back, which is absolutely disgraceful.  
20 And we made it quite clear that evening that it was a matter of urgency to come back  
21 to us and we were all very much expecting that we would have answers within a  
22 couple of days. Nothing has come back to us, which is totally unacceptable.

23  
24 We all sat around this chamber over the last four or five years working on a County  
25 Development Plan and, as far as I am concerned, the County Development Plan  
26 should be thrown in the bin.

27 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Hear! Hear!

28 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: I have completely lost faith in the system that we have.  
29 If I had have went to the planners here two years ago or three years ago and said I  
30 want to build a new town on a farm in rural Wicklow with a thousand people in it  
31 they would have ran me out through the door but yet that is what we are facing. We  
32 are facing a new town in a rural area and nobody can tell me this is temporary.  
33 Because what is temporary? Temporary, is it 32 weeks? Is it three years? Is it ten  
34 years? Nobody can answer that question.

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So effectively the County Development Plan should be thrown in the bin in my view.

So really, where I'm coming from here is, I am asking the Council to intervene with the Department to say how disappointed and how annoyed we are as representatives of this Council, first of all, not to be consulted, secondly, that this is utter madness of what they are trying to do in a rural area of Wicklow. And I want to try and, I suppose, put pressure on the Department to rethink this decision and come back as a matter of urgency to us and give us proper explanations and not have us floundering from one week to the next, and have respect for our position as public representatives and have respect for the communities that you're putting this project on, because it is just unfair without regard that you are going to put a thousand people into an area that has a hundred residents.

Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, councillor. Councillor Irene winters.

COUNCILLOR WINTERS: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I would like to support everything that my colleague, Shay Cullen, has said.

In relation to the County Development Plan, Annamoe was a level 8 in our housing strategy and what can and can't happen and the role and function of it as a village. We try and make some changes to the County Development Plan and we get ministerial orders to say that our opinion as residents and as elected representatives of the citizens of Wicklow don't actually comply with the national strategy and we're not allowed to do them, and yet, here is basically the ministers and the civil servants throwing all of the rules out and telling us, well, that only applies to you, it only applies to the residents in Wicklow, it only applies to people who actually live in the area, we can come in and ride roughshod over it all and you just all have to put up with it.

I understand there is a housing crisis. I understand that we have international obligations. I have great sympathy for people that need to be housed wherever they are from. But 950 people into a level 8 settlement just flies in the face of everything that we have been told we have to abide by as residents of this county and it is

1 wrong.

2

3 Thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, councillor. Councillor Stephen Stokes.

5 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Go raibh maith agat, Cathaoirleach. I would like to  
6 support my colleagues in everything that they have said. I certainly believe that any  
7 town in the county would struggle to accommodate 950 people overnight. And I  
8 personally, I have a lot of empathy for the Ukrainian people; you know, they're here  
9 through no fault of their own. Myself and Councillor O'Connor, you know,  
10 successfully moved a motion here a couple of months ago calling for Russia to  
11 withdraw because many of those people want to return home. And I certainly  
12 believe that until the war ends we're going to continue to have this crisis but I would  
13 just like to reiterate my support for what has been raised here. I think it is not  
14 acceptable to have this development essentially in this particular part of the county.  
15 And again, I think it is unkind to the Ukrainian people that they are going to be  
16 isolated and left with virtually no services out there. I think it is unfair to them as  
17 well as to the local community. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

18 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, councillor. Councillor John Snell.

19 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. And again I will try and not repeat  
20 what has already been said. But the reality is that once again officials of this Council  
21 have been left in limbo. You know, the email came out on the 16th of October at  
22 3:32 and to be fair to the Chief Executive we got an email a minute later, from you,  
23 outlining that you were as wise to this as we were.

24

25 A public representative I have the highest respect for is the only senator we have in  
26 this county, Senator Pat Casey. I have huge respect for him. And it is very  
27 disheartening to sit in really what effectively is his backyard, in Annamoe. The  
28 residents from Glendalough, Laragh, Annamoe and Roundwood. And we attended  
29 at Brockagh Centre last week. And to have our senator sitting up there at the top  
30 table and to confirm to the people who elected him, the same as the people who  
31 elected us, that the only notice he got was an hour and a half's notice, one and a half  
32 hour's notice, as a member of Government that's what he got. That's the only notice  
33 he got. I asked the two representatives that we had met from the Department who  
34 described themselves as they're going to be the Integration Committee - Brendan

1           Kenny, former Deputy Chief Executive Dublin City Council, John Twomey, former  
2           Assistant Garda commissioner - both of whom are coming out of retirement to work  
3           on this project as part of Integration Committee, they had three weeks' notice. They  
4           admitted they had three weeks' notice. But obviously they weren't going to consult  
5           with anybody because they're not familiar with anybody here.

6  
7           To say that the meeting last week was disappointing is an understatement. We had  
8           two officials from Pastures New Limited sat at the top table and I suppose they  
9           thought they would plámás the people, tell them what they maybe want to hear, tell  
10          us what we already know as regards an Irish nation about our own compassion for  
11          people throughout the world, how we can rally around and support them. We're  
12          doing that a lifetime and we will continue to do it. But the reality is that this is the  
13          worst description of a decision made by somebody in Government, with government  
14          knowledge, in the Department who decided that they want to house vulnerable  
15          people, women and children and elderly, in a bog. They call it the flat bog. The  
16          field is a plain bog field in Annamoe. So they're going to be housed in a marquee  
17          with individuals pods within the marquee. 950 people in a village that has a little  
18          over a hundred people of population.

19  
20          This is crazy, what's going on here. And they took exception to fact of us pointing  
21          out about the monetary gain for Pastures New, this limited company. The monetary  
22          gain that the likes of the Grand Hotel have; over 8 million per annum. We have  
23          facilities in Ashford that gets 315,000 per month. Kippure in West Wicklow the  
24          same. We have a hotel that has been purchased in Aughrim. And believe me,  
25          members of South Wicklow, you will be back here bringing up the same issues,  
26          because that has been bought by one of the directors of Pastures New. They're going  
27          around purchasing them. When we asked the question at the meeting are they in  
28          talks with other landowners, other facilities in County Wicklow, they are. They're in  
29          talks with themselves, because they are going around buying up land and the likes of  
30          this. These people have no experience. And anyone that sat at that meeting last  
31          week will understand that they have no experience in looking after 950 people on  
32          this field. They know nothing about Garda vetting, for example. It's not an issue. It  
33          is no problem. Everybody welcome. Come in and you can do yoga classes with the  
34          people. Don't worry about schools. We will have on-site doctors. I have spoken to

1 doctors in our community; they're full to the brim and they don't know where the  
2 doctors are coming from who are going to be on this campus. There is no school  
3 places. There's no shops. One antique shop in Annamoe. That's what's there.  
4 There's no footpath network.

5  
6 And again, as has already been pointed out, we sat here and we argued and fought  
7 and the Minister wrote back to us and told us that some of the decisions made in the  
8 County Development Plan will have to be undone, such as two sites out in  
9 Kilpedder. Two sites. Family homes for daughters that wanted to go live beside  
10 their elderly father. And yet they think it's wise to bring in 950 people on the foothill  
11 of the Wicklow mountains.

12  
13 And an interesting fact that came out of that is that all of these people will vote in the  
14 local election next year. All of these people are entitled to vote in the local elections  
15 next year. All 100,000 people that's come into this State will vote in the local  
16 elections next year. And I wonder is that why some people are afraid to speak out?  
17 Well, I'd be damn sure I would rather stand with the community of Annamoe of a  
18 hundred people and forget about the votes, because the reality is they have been there  
19 for generations and what we are doing is we are unhinging the very fabric that made  
20 us a great country. We are the Ireland of a thousand welcomes, a hundred percent  
21 and we live and die by that. We have been all over the world. We have heard all the  
22 clichés. But the reality is that what we are inheriting now is people who are coming  
23 in through other European countries, who are not leaving Ukraine, they have been in  
24 other EU countries to get here. Over 30 per cent of them have been in other EU  
25 counties before they have come here now. And to hear on the news described as they  
26 can go home for Christmas and it won't affect their payments, that just is very  
27 disingenuous to the Ukrainian people themselves because it makes a mockery of it.

28  
29 I sat in this chamber in March of 2022 when we had a discussion about expelling the  
30 Russian ambassador from the country. And we had that debate. And at that  
31 meeting, go back on your records and you'll see, that I asked to attached expel the  
32 Israeli ambassador at the time as well.

33 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Hear! Hear!

34 COUNCILLOR SNELL: And I was asked to separate it and I did for the sake of

1 harmony within the chamber. But to sit here and say that we're not prepared to have  
2 a conversation today -- and I respect democracy, and that's gone --

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: That has been --

4 COUNCILLOR SNELL: But in regards to this issue on Annamoe, there's people out  
5 there who know more than we know and they're the people who are making the  
6 money. There's wealthy people coming out of what's happening in Ireland. And a  
7 lot of them are on our doorstep. And it is coming to West Wicklow as well as South  
8 Wicklow, East Wicklow and North Wicklow unfortunately.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, councillor. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.

10 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Thanks, chair. Yes, I was at both the zoom meeting  
11 with the representatives from the Integration Committee and also at the meeting that  
12 was the public meeting up in Annamoe last week, and it didn't make for very  
13 comfortable listening. The place was full of local residents. I'd say nearly every  
14 resident from the village was at it. There was probably about a hundred people at it.  
15 They spoke about their fears. A lot of them, you know they're quite elderly. They're  
16 worried about all kinds of issues. Some are parents of young children. They're  
17 worried about the extra buses that are going to be going up and down the roads  
18 because they're not going to be able to -- these people aren't going to be able to do  
19 anything within that community. There's nothing to do. So they're going to have to  
20 be bussed to Bray and to Wicklow and to Greystones for social welfare payments  
21 and do all -- probably join libraries and do all kinds of things. So there's going to be  
22 an awful lot more traffic on the road. So that means people lose what they have  
23 which is the ability to just take nice little country walks or whatever.

24

25 It was hard to believe a lot of what we were being told, because a lot of it seemed  
26 very unrealistic. They were talking about moving people in on the 22nd of  
27 November into cabins within marquees. Now I don't know an awful lot about  
28 constructing cabins within marquees but I imagine if it has to be liveable, if it has to  
29 be weather-proofed, if has to be insulated, if there has to be water, because they say  
30 that within every cubicle there's going to be a shower and toilet facility, but they  
31 don't have any water on-site, so they're going to have to tank in water every day and  
32 tank out effluent. Now I mean if that doesn't tell you that this is the wrong facility in  
33 the wrong place then I don't know what does. I don't know how they're going to be  
34 up and running for even one person never mind a hundred or two hundred because

1           apparently they're going to come in not all together.

2

3           The position is that they are going to have to look for accommodation when they get  
4 here and they're going to have to be given six to eight weeks to find it and then move  
5 on. And I raised the question, as Councillor Cullen also referred to, what happens  
6 when the six to eight weeks have passed in this country with a housing crisis and  
7 they don't have anywhere to go? Are you going to put them out? And he couldn't  
8 answer that.

9

10          So I think the bottom line is, if we want to draw our own conclusion we probably  
11 have to assume that 950 people will stay there and it will rollover from the 32 weeks,  
12 because we were told that by the two people from the Integration Committee, that  
13 no, no, it will probably rollover to two years, but the two from Pastures New, the two  
14 representatives, were adamant no, no, it's only for 32 weeks. That brings us up to  
15 May 2024. Would anybody really go to the trouble of spending all that money,  
16 investing it in tents and cabins and toilets and showers within cabins and tanks,  
17 bringing water in and out, to finish in eight months time? It just doesn't make any  
18 sense. It beggars belief. And it kind of makes a laughing stock of people that are  
19 sitting there listening to them because not one person in the place believed a word  
20 that they said.

21

22          And I spoke to a lot of people afterwards. One lady, as Councillor Snell quite rightly  
23 said, said, Mary, this is what is known as the bog meadow. It has slopes down into  
24 it. She said even on the driest day there's dampness in this. Can you imagine after a  
25 few days of rain the place would be like a quagmire. It would be like a mud bath. It  
26 would be like -- I mean, you wouldn't go to a three-day music festival and walk,  
27 tramp around in the rain and they're expecting people to live there for two years or  
28 more.

29          I am just wondering, I mean, we can go on and on about it --

30          CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Kavanagh, I'm just conscious that we have two  
31 more people to come in so I might ask you to --

32          COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Okay. I just want to know is there anything more  
33 that Wicklow County Council can do to send out a clear message that this is not the  
34 place to bring 950 people, a field? It's just not acceptable in a village of a hundred

1 people.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you.

3 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: Thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. I'm sorry, councillor, but I am conscious we two  
5 more people to come in and we do actually have a request in terms of  
6 Councillor Cullen, what you have actually asked here, so I just want to make sure  
7 that we get that covered as well. I know we said we will finish at half, we have four  
8 minutes. I want to let Councillor O'Neill and Councillor Dunne come in if the  
9 members are okay with that. Councillor O'Neill.

10 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yes. Just on this issue I raised  
11 these concerns going back months and months. In West Wicklow there, the Kilbride  
12 area, next to the Sally Gap, we have up to 700. And they're there months. There's  
13 huge concern. The local gardaí were never informed they were coming in. The  
14 schools in the area were never informed they were coming in. There's massive  
15 problems. Councillor Cullen talks about footpaths. There's no even roads out this  
16 way. At the top of the Sally Gap. And this happened. I got it raised in here, I didn't  
17 get much hearing on it. And it is absolutely ruthless what is going on at the moment.

18

19 As regards the Annamoe site, you know it is well-known that the same business  
20 people who are in the west are using that site as well. And it is right throughout the  
21 county. And I think every law -- it will take me a lot more than four minutes, but I  
22 think every rule in the book has been broken here. It is scandalous to see the amount  
23 of money that one group -- and then I'm censored by this free state media of  
24 disclosing the exact figures. You or I cannot. We are bound by the laws of this -- I  
25 don't know what sort of state we're living in. But I do know for a fact that one group  
26 within Wicklow here housing 233 refugees collects 618,000 a month. I know of  
27 another house in the area, a four-bed house with 34 people living in it. What is going  
28 on is absolutely rotten to the core.

29

30 When I brought this up before, it was mentioned by Councillor -- the Labour Party  
31 councillor over there, you know, that I could be described or I could be described as  
32 right wing this and the right wingers will be on the radio the following morning. It  
33 was Councillor O'Brien that was on the radio the following morning at ten o'clock on  
34 the button. So I don't think that we or the genuine people in our area, our

1 councillors, who raised the issues over Baltinglass and Dunlavin, I don't think they  
2 should be described as right wing. We have as much concern whether they are  
3 Ukrainians or direct provision people. I am very much involved in their life here. I  
4 do everything I can. But the problem that we have here is huge and it is really  
5 people who are making big, big money and that's what it is all about.

6  
7 Every issue that I brought up about planning, about the likes of the environment in  
8 areas where I know that before the issue happens business people could not upgrade  
9 their sewerage facilities because of objections from Dublin Corporation, yet 700 can  
10 go in around the same area and there's no rules or regulations, there's no nothing.

11  
12 So I'd advise -- and I'm listening to people here today and they're mainly people from  
13 the Government parties, you know. The issue is don't be throwing it back into the  
14 Council here. The Council officials are under -- it's the Government of the day, lads  
15 and lassies. The Government, the Fianna Fáil and the Fine Gael Government, that  
16 are imposing this on you. They turn around and say, okay, but it is EU stuff. We  
17 have warnings from Mícheál Martin the other day about the sceptics within the  
18 European Union. Anyone that sees what is happening now as regards the refugee  
19 issues and what the EU have called on Ireland to do would definitely be a sceptic of  
20 the whole lot.

21  
22 So I would ask the people in here who do have the clout within political parties to go  
23 after your masters once and for all, put a stop to it.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, Councillor O'Neill. And Finally,  
25 Councillor Dunne.

26 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: I won't keep you too long. I just want to thank  
27 Councillor Cullen for bringing this to the table. Unbelievable. 950 people going  
28 into, I won't say a village, an area of a hundred people. Unbelievable what's going  
29 on there.

30  
31 For anybody thinking that this is going to be a quick fix you can forget about that.  
32 We were told the Grand Hotel, a number of years, was for 12 months and I think that  
33 was four years ago, three years ago. This is not a quick fix. This is here  
34 unfortunately to the end. And this is not about people caring about other people.

1 This is -- for the people who are doing this, it's all about money. And lots of it. And  
2 there's lots of money being involved in this. And people are prepared to do this into  
3 a small village in Wicklow. A very, very small village in Wicklow.

4  
5 I feel that this is going to be there for a long while. I don't think it is the right way it  
6 should happen. I think people should be given proper accommodation and properly  
7 looked after. But at the moment I think the Government has lost control of the  
8 situation. We have open borders and people can come in if they want. And we have  
9 to put them up somewhere. And we are just full. We are full. And it is terrible. We  
10 would like to give people proper accommodation if they really, really need it. And a  
11 lot of Ukrainians do. Don't get me wrong. But we have lost control. And there's  
12 people jumping on the bandwagon and making loads and loads of money. Thank  
13 you.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Thank you very much, Councillor Dunne. Okay,  
15 members, thank you for bearing with me. There is a call from Councillor Cullen. I  
16 am going to get Helen to call it out and if everybody is agreeable.

17 MS PURCELL: That we send a letter to the Department saying how disappointed  
18 Wicklow County Council with the lack of engagement with the Council and also the  
19 lack of facilities in the area for this development.

20 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Cullen?

21 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes. Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I think if it's okay with the  
22 members I would like to elaborate and put a proper letter together to send in to  
23 Helen, if that is okay? Because I haven't really had time to put --

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: No, I appreciate that. I suppose if we could get agreement  
25 from the members in terms of that's the kind of context --

26 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes. And I want to go a lot further than what Helen has  
27 read out. I want this stopped, if possible. I want this stopped. Because it just makes  
28 no sense. As I say -- I don't want to go over what I said because of time.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes.

30 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: But if the members are agreeable for me to put  
31 something together and it can be circulated, if that is okay? If that is acceptable?

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: I am just going to ask Helen to clarify that, Shay, because I'm  
33 not quite sure.

34 MS PURCELL: The wording would have to be agreed here. If it is going from the

1 Council everybody would have to have an input into it as it is coming out of the  
2 suspension of standing orders.

3 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Can it be circulated to the members?

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: You.

5 MS GALLAGHER: No. You see, the letter will read that -- and you will just have  
6 to bear with us too, Councillor Cullen. The letter will read that at a meeting of  
7 Wicklow County Council held on such a date, elected members suspended standing  
8 orders and agreed the following and it will be in italics and it is a motion that is  
9 passed, it will need a proposer and a seconder and it will need to be resolved. That is  
10 the situation.

11 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: How much time have we got?

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: We're actually five minutes past the end of the meeting,  
13 Councillor Kavanagh. I am going to give Shay one second there.

14

15 Councillor Cullen, would you be happy with a letter that outlined what you have said  
16 there and additional line that the members of Wicklow County Council request that  
17 this process is stopped with immediate effect?

18 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes. But I shouldn't be put in this position where I have  
19 to scramble in the last few minutes of a meeting unfortunately to do this. Because  
20 this, as I said, earlier, it's the worst decision that has ever been made for this county.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: No, Councillor Cullen, I absolutely hear what you are saying  
22 but in terms of the process, to have a letter issued with all of the members here in  
23 agreement with it, we have to be able to put to the members what they are actually  
24 agreeing that is going in that letter. I feel what you have put there with that  
25 additional line --

26 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: -- is really what you are going for, is to be stopped.

28 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: It is, yes.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: So if the members are happy with what Helen has read out  
30 there with the additional line -- I see John Mullen, thumbs up -- with the additional  
31 line that the members of Wicklow County Council hereby request that this process is  
32 stopped with immediate effect.

33 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Correct, yes.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Happy?

1 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Hold on now. We have Councillor Scott coming in. Go  
3 ahead, Councillor Scott.

4 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Yes, sorry, I had my light on there. And, like, with  
5 respect to difficulties, and I agree with the original part of what Councillor Cullen  
6 was saying, but I'm not happy to put my name to something requesting the  
7 accommodation is stopped.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

9 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Because I am very conscious they are coming from a  
10 very vulnerable place.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay.

12 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: I suppose, what I am really trying to stop is this  
13 particular accommodation being stopped in this particular location. As I said quite  
14 earlier when I have spoken, the location that we're talking about here is really, really  
15 remote and rural.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes, I think with all due respect, Councillor Cullen, I think  
17 people understand the rationale behind it but if we have one person that is in dissent  
18 with that proposal we will have to go for a vote. If that is okay.

19

20 So could you just read out again, Helen?

21 MS PURCELL: Okay. So the proposal as it stands at the moment is that we send a  
22 letter to the Department to say how disappointed Wicklow County Council are with  
23 the lack of engagement with the Council and the lack of facilities in the area for the  
24 development and that we request that this process is stopped with immediate effect in  
25 this location.

26 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes. And could we maybe add in a line that alternative  
27 accommodation could be sought, more suitable accommodation could be in sought in  
28 another location?

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: In consultation with the local authority.

30 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Correct.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. We will read that out again. I am sorry about this,  
32 guys. I know it is an important issue and I want to get it right before we send it.

33 MS PURCELL: Okay. We are going to say that a letter issues to the Department to  
34 say how disappointed Wicklow County Council are with the lack of engagement

1 with the Council and also the lack of facilities in the area for the development. We  
2 request that the process is stopped with immediate effect in this location and that  
3 alternative accommodation should be sought in consultation with the relevant local  
4 authority.

5 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: Yes. I am happy with that.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Let's go for a vote.

7

8 Councillor O'Connor, I know you have your hand up but we are actually past the  
9 time for discussing this, so we are going to go for a vote if that is okay.

10 MS PURCELL: So if you are in favour of that letter please vote for and if you are  
11 against it vote against.

12

13 Councillor Tom Annesley.

14 COUNCILLOR ANNESLEY: For.

15 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Mark Barry. Not present.

16 Councillor Joe Behan. Not present.

17 MS PURCELL: Councillor Vincent Blake.

18 COUNCILLOR BLAKE: For.

19 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Sylvester Bourke. Not present.

20 Councillor Melanie Corrigan.

21 COUNCILLOR CORRIGAN: For.

22 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Avril Cronin. Not present.

23 Councillor Shay Cullen.

24 COUNCILLOR CULLEN: For.

25 MS PURCELL: Councillor Erika Doyle.

26 COUNCILLOR DOYLE: Against.

27 MS PURCELL: Thank you. Councillor Gail Dunne.

28 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: For.

29 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Anne Ferris.

30 COUNCILLOR FERRIS: Abstain.

31 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Fitzgerald.

32 COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: For.

33 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: For.

1 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Tom Fortune is not present.  
2 Councillor Patsy Glennon is not present. Councillor Mary Kavanagh.  
3 COUNCILLOR KAVANAGH: For.  
4 MS PURCELL: Councillor Pat Kennedy is not present. Councillor Peir Leonard.  
5 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: For.  
6 MS PURCELL: Councillor Derek Mitchell.  
7 COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: For.  
8 MS PURCELL: Councillor John Mullen. Councillor John Mullen. Sorry, John, it is  
9 your turn.  
10 COUNCILLOR MULLEN: For.  
11 MS PURCELL: Councillor Miriam Murphy is not present. Councillor Dermot  
12 O'Brien is not present. Councillor Paul O'Brien.  
13 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Abstaining.  
14 MS PURCELL: Is abstaining. Councillor Rory O'Connor.  
15 COUNCILLOR O'CONNOR: Against.  
16 MS PURCELL: Councillor Gerry O'Neill.  
17 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: I am just lost with the wording, so I will abstain from  
18 that.  
19 MS PURCELL: Okay. Abstain. Councillor Lourda Scott.  
20 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Against.  
21 MS PURCELL: Against Councillor John Snell.  
22 COUNCILLOR SNELL: For.  
23 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Stephen Stokes.  
24 COUNCILLOR STOKES: For.  
25 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Edwards Timmins.  
26 COUNCILLOR TIMMINS: For.  
27 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Gerry Walsh.  
28 COUNCILLOR WALSH: For.  
29 MS PURCELL: For. Councillor Irene Winters is not present.  
30  
31 They are 15 in favour, three against, ten not present and three abstaining, so the letter  
32 will issue. It is passed.  
33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you very much, members. Councillor O'Neill, I will  
34 ask that the response in relation to the Clare development is sent out to you directly

1 if that is okay? Yes. Perfect.

2 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: The NOAC report, do you want to put that on the next  
3 meeting?

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes. We will have to defer the other items to the next  
5 meeting. Thank you very much.

6

7

(Time noted - 5:39pm)

8

\* \* \* \*

**A**

abandoned 10:20

15:4

abide 95:11

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above 13:9 14:19

absolute 15:20

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