

MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT COUNTY BUILDINGS, WHITEGATES, WICKLOW TOWN
AND VIA TEAMS

ON MONDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 2:00PM

STENOGRAPHER: Niamh Kelly-Leahy, RMR, MBIVR

Transcript provided by
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PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED ON MONDAY, 3RD NOVEMBER 2025 AT
2:00PM, AS FOLLOWS:

CATHAOIRLEACH: Good afternoon, Members. If you would all like to take your seats, please. I would like to welcome you all this afternoon. Welcome to the Members that are attending online, to the public and the press in the gallery. You're all very welcome. I am going to go to Helen now for the ethic and for the roll call.

MS PURCELL: Good afternoon. I would just like to welcome everybody to the meeting. Any of the Members who are online, if you would please keep your cameras on and your microphone off unless you're speaking. Any staff members or members of the public if you please leave your camera off. If anybody has any technical issues if you could please contact me. I would also like to remind all present they are bound by the Code of Conduct for Councillors and for employees. I will now proceed with the roll call. Councillor Danny Alvey?

COUNCILLOR ALVEY: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Mark Barry?

COUNCILLOR BARRY: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Joe Behan?

COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Sylvester Bourke?

COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Melanie Corrigan?

CATHAOIRLEACH: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Avril Cronin?

COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Erika Doyle? Councillor Malachai Duddy? Councillor Gail Dunne?

COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Louise Fenelon Gaskin?

COUNCILLOR FENELON GASKIN: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Orla Finn?

COUNCILLOR FINN: Present.

MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Pat Fitzgerald?

COUNCILLOR FITZGERALD: Present.

- 1 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Tom Fortune?
2 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: Present.
3 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Patsy Glennon?
4 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: Present.
5 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Pat Kennedy?
6 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Present.
7 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Shane Langrell?
8 COUNCILLOR LANGRELL: Present.
9 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Peir Leonard?
10 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Present.
11 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Pat Mahon?
12 COUNCILLOR MAHON: Present.
13 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Jason Mulhall?
14 COUNCILLOR MULHALL: Present.
15 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Miriam Murphy? Councillor Ian Neary?
16 COUNCILLOR NEARY: Present.
17 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Dermot O'Brien?
18 COUNCILLOR O'BRIEN: Anseo.
19 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Paul O'Brien?
20 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Present.
21 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Gerry O'Neill? Councillor Warren O'Toole?
22 COUNCILLOR O'TOOLE: Anseo.
23 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Graham Richmond?
24 COUNCILLOR RICHMOND: Present.
25 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Lourda Scott?
26 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Here.
27 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor John Snell? Councillor Peter Stapleton?
28 COUNCILLOR STAPLETON: Present.
29 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Stephen Stokes?
30 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Present.
31 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Ned Whelan?
32 COUNCILLOR WHELAN: Present.
33 MS PURCELL: Present. Councillor Caroline Winstanley?
34

1 Thank you.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Do we have any expressions of sympathy?

3 Councillor Louise Fenelon Gaskin.

4 COUNCILLOR FENELON GASKIN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Firstly, I would
5 like to express our condolences to our colleague Councillor Lourda Scott on the
6 recent passing of her brother-in-law Séan Brown and to all her extended family on
7 the sad bereavement. And also, to the family of Irene Carey who last month
8 unfortunately I had to express my sympathy to her husband Michael Carey, and
9 unfortunately she passed, his wife Irene passed away in the last few days, and so I
10 would like to express my sympathy to the family of Irene as well. Thank you.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Joe Behan.

12 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I want to propose a vote of
13 sympathy to the family of the late Andrew Tarrant, solicitor from Arklow, to his wife
14 Sinéad and his children Max and Emily. Andrew was a very well-known solicitor in
15 the Arklow area but I got to know him because he was a member of the board of
16 management of Ballycoog National School. A very fine and upstanding member of
17 the community and a great benefit to the school in the term he served on the board of
18 management. He died very suddenly, and his death has been a huge loss to his
19 family and also to commercial life and the people of Arklow, and the community in
20 Ballycoog.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Paul O'Brien.

22 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Can I propose a vote of
23 sympathy for the family of Michael (Mick) Lambert who sadly passed away after a
24 long illness last week. I know he will be sadly missed by his wife May and his two
25 sons Karl and Mark. And Mark Lambert I believe works for Wicklow County
26 Council as well. Thank you very much.

27 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Jason Mulhall.

28 COUNCILLOR MULHALL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would just like to
29 propose a vote of sympathy to the family and friends of Bridget Kenny, Derry Drive,
30 Tinahely. The family would have been involved in GAA. They are quite
31 well-known in Tinahely and Wicklow. Thank you.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Thank you. Councillor Gail Dunne.

33 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to propose a vote
34 of sympathy for Liam Vickers. Liam went to Boston about 35 years ago. He died

1 after a long illness, and for his wife, his five children and his family back in
2 Wicklow, the Vickers family can I just have a vote of sympathy. He happens to be a
3 first cousin of mine as well. Thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Stephen Stokes.

5 COUNCILLOR STOKES: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. If I could please propose a
6 vote of sympathy for Denis Luby of Wicklow Town who was previously a
7 distinguished member of the Irish Defence Forces and was very involved in the
8 Wicklow branch of the United Nations Veteran Association. So he would have been
9 very well regarded right across County Wicklow for the work that he was doing in
10 the community.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Avril Cronin.

12 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Thanks very much, Cathaoirleach. I'd just like to
13 express our sympathies to the family of John Norton. John was a colleague in
14 Wicklow County Council. He worked in the council yard in Dunlavin for a great
15 length of time. He served for 47 years, which I think is a huge service to the local
16 authority. His job obviously meant a huge amount to him, and at his funeral they
17 brought up his jacket that he would have wore on the road, and told many stories
18 about new shovels being given to him and a bit of slagging along the way as well,
19 but John gave great service to Wicklow County Council and he certainly was a very
20 valued member of staff in the Dunlavin team. Thank you.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Miriam Murphy.

22 COUNCILLOR MURPHY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would just like to express
23 sympathy to two very beloved community. One was Anthony Doyle who probably
24 everybody knows for his Christmas decorations, and Halloween. And he donates all
25 his donations to the first responders who is very close to his heart. He fundraised
26 thousands for over charities over the years. The other person was Jim Moore who
27 was a boxing coach, locally and nationally. He put so many children through the
28 discipline of boxing. And both people will be sadly missed in the community of
29 Arklow. Thank you.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Warren O'Toole.

31 COUNCILLOR O'TOOLE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I just want to reiterate what
32 Councillor Murphy said about Anthony Doyle and Jim Moore, who pillars of our
33 community in Arklow. Jim Moore shaped Irish boxing. He had a wealth of
34 knowledge. He was not only a local trainer coach but he was one of the members of

1 the High Performance Team, which led on to international success and a
2 world-renowned boxer. So condolences to their families.

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Have we any staff?

4 MS PURCELL: We extend our sympathies to the families of our former colleague
5 John Norton, who has been mentioned by Councillor Cronin, and to Bridie Delaney,
6 mother of our friend and colleague Alan Delaney, and Michael (Mick) Lambert,
7 father of our colleague and friend Mark Lambert.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: If we stand for a moment's silence please.

9

10 (Moment of silence.)

11

12 MS PURCELL: May their souls and the souls of all the faithfully departed, through
13 the mercy of God, rest in peace.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Members. Before we start, we have had a request
15 for a suspension of standing orders proposed by Councillor Peir Leonard and
16 seconded by Councillor Joe Behan and Councillor Tom Fortune. So I am proposing
17 we bring that at half four, if everyone is in agreement? Thank you.

18

19 And just another item. I am proposing that we bring item 9 forward to after number
20 7, presentation from the Wicklow Civil Defence, before we have the Chief
21 Executive's management report. If I could have a proposer and seconder for that?
22 Proposed by Pat Kennedy, and Paul O'Brien. Thank you.

23

24 And just before we start the meeting, Members, I just want to address something that
25 happened at last month's meeting. So the meetings in the chamber and the conduct
26 of the Members is as set out by the Code of Conduct for Councillors, which we have
27 all been circulated with and which was circulated again on the 25th of September of
28 this year, and is part of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by the Local
29 Government and Reform Act 2014. I am asking all Councillors to abide by this
30 Code of Conduct. We are public representatives and we have a duty to the public.
31 We also meet once a month for three hours in which we have a lot of important
32 matters on behalf of the public that we represent to discuss, and this time I feel is
33 very valuable and it should be used wisely and appropriately. At last month's
34 meetings there was interruptions on each other's speaking time and name calling, and

1 I am not allowing this to continue. I am asking each member to keep their speaking
2 time to three minutes, and if they feel they have not had adequate time to raise their
3 query or make their point that they can speak again -- apply to speak again. I am
4 chairing the meeting and I want to ensure that all Members have the opportunity to
5 speak if they wish to do so, and this can only be done if we are respectful of each
6 other and of the process. And if disruptive conduct continues I will have no option
7 but to suspend the meeting, and I have discussed this with the Chief Executive, and
8 therefore we will be wasting valuable time of this meeting.

9
10 I just want to read out a few items from the Code of Conduct that has been
11 circulated: "The Councillors should abide by this code," and one of the items is:
12 "Treat their colleagues and local authority employees with courtesy, respect and
13 dignity." And: "Courtesy and respect should also be observed when using social
14 media channels, messaging applications and written communications."

15
16 And on that, I just want to note in 2021 we've had a motion which I have asked
17 Helen to circulate after the meeting. I will just read it out as it was in 2021: "That
18 Wicklow County Councillors have a responsibility to show leadership, to improve
19 civility of public discourse on political matters. We, the Elected Members of
20 Wicklow County Council, agree to regulate our own submissions on social media
21 and will ensure that any inappropriate comments left by members of the public are
22 removed in a timely manner. In order to monitor this commitment we propose that
23 all Councillors sign declarations indicating agreement or non-agreement with the
24 measure and that this will be published and updated annually on the Council
25 website."

26
27 So that was agreed in 2021, and I am proposing that we do it again. We're in a new
28 council term. I just feel that the meeting should be conducted in a manner where we
29 can get all the work that is needed over the line. I am asking you all respectfully to
30 work with me and with each other and we will get through the meetings with
31 adequate speaking time for all Members. Thank you.

32
33 So we'll go onto the first item on the agenda then, which is: To confirm and sign
34 minutes of ordinary meeting of Wicklow County Council held on Monday 6th

1 October 2025 (copy attached). Can I have a proposer and seconder, please?

2 Proposed by Orla and seconded by Councillor Avril.

3
4 Item number 2: To consider the disposal of 3.0261 hectares or thereabouts in the
5 townland of Fassaroe, Bray, County Wicklow being the property originally acquired
6 from Borg Developments Unlimited Company by way of lease to The National
7 Transport Authority for a period of 30 years (as per notice previously circulated). A
8 proposer and seconder, please? Proposed by Councillor Whelan. I second it then.
9 All agreed? (Agreed.)

10
11 Item number 3 is: To consider the disposal of 0.0127 hectares or thereabouts in the
12 townland of Knockanrahan Lower Td. being the property known as 8 Pearse Terrace,
13 Arklow, County Wicklow to Ms Gemma Kennedy (as per notice previously
14 circulated). Proposer and seconder, please? Proposed by Councillor O'Toole and
15 seconded by Pat. Did you want to come in on that, Pat?

16 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: No, I don't

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: All agreed? (Agreed.)

18
19 Number 4 is: To consider the disposal of 0.0057 hectares or thereabouts in the
20 townland of Dunlavin Upper Td. being the property known as 2 The Green,
21 Dunlavin, Co. Wicklow to Ms Fiona Kinsella, 2 The Green, Dunlavin, County
22 Wicklow (as per notice previously circulated). So a proposer and a seconder, please?
23 Proposed by Councillor Cronin, and Councillor Glennon. All agreed? (Agreed.)

24
25 Number 5: To consider the disposal of 0.0182 hectares or thereabouts in the
26 townland of Oldcourt Td. being the property known as 9 Wolfe Tone Square North,
27 Bray, County Wicklow to Mr Patrick Breen in the estate of Elizabeth Breen deceased
28 (as per notice previously circulated). Proposer and seconder, please? Councillor
29 Neary and seconded by Councillor Whelan. All agreed? (Agreed.)

30
31 That's great. Thank you. So the next item on the agenda then is: To consider and
32 adopt Wicklow County Council Litter Management Plan in accordance with Section
33 13 of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997.

34

1 I would like to welcome Jim Callery who is going to make a presentation. Thank
2 you.

3 MR CALLERY: The Litter Management Plan, I hope you all got a chance to look at
4 it, and I will welcomes any questions and clarifications at the end of it, but I will try
5 and keep this one brief.

6
7 So under the Litter Pollution Act every local authority is required to have a Litter
8 Management Plan and review that plan on a three-year rolling base. So we currently
9 just completed our review of the plan to cover the period from 2026 to 2029. It is a
10 statutory requirement to undertake that review and go through a process of public
11 consultation on the plan, which we have done, and it should take into account any
12 changes in regulation and policy that have occurred during the lifetime of the last
13 plan. And probably the two key policy changes and regulation changes that have
14 occurred is: One, we now have the Deposit Returns Scheme in place; and also there
15 has been new regulation on the use of CCTV brought in under the Climate Action
16 and the Low Carbon Development Act to facilitate the use of CCTV by local
17 authorities.

18
19 Can I have the next slide, please? It's important to recognise in the Litter
20 Management Plan the responsibilities of everyone in the management of litter. So
21 ourselves as the local authority we have the primary role in the prevention and
22 control of litter in our jurisdiction, but we also need to take account of the
23 responsibilities of businesses in our local authority area and the wider public in
24 implementing litter management. So our role is to ensure the prevention and control,
25 to undertake enforcement action, to investigate and prosecute where littering and
26 dumping occurs, to awareness in education campaigns to have a greater awareness
27 on what are the current issues in litter management and what needs to be done, and to
28 ensure that there's a good provision of facilities for the public when it comes to litter
29 control.

30

31 For business, it is important that businesses play their part first and foremost looking
32 at their own properties and the management of waste and litter around their
33 properties ensuring that it's kept litter-free both on their property and any litter that
34 might be generated by their business in the immediate surroundings of their business

1 area. And it also covers things like the use of advertising and signage, removal of
2 graffiti on their property, and, very importantly, how they manage that, how their
3 waste is transported, ensuring that they use an authorised collector for their waste
4 management.

5
6 Similarly for the public, they have a duty to keep any visible part of their property
7 free of litter, to dispose of their litter correctly using a bin or taking it home. They
8 also have a duty to manage their waste they are collecting and use an authorised
9 waste collection. Under our bye-laws they are required to use an authorised waste
10 collection service for the handling of their waste, and just to refrain from disposing
11 their household waste in our public bins.

12
13 Can I have the next slide, please? The litter composition forms the categorisation of
14 litter. It's a national survey that's undertaken right around the country. Each local
15 authority is undertaking the survey using the same criteria for measuring how much
16 litter is being generated in the county, and it divides up that litter proportionally
17 based on a count of individual items of litter. And cigarettes come up on top there.
18 Forty-five percent of litter surveyed across the country is cigarette-generated, falling
19 slightly on previous surveys, but not much. But we are also seeing a new category
20 added to the litter composition surveys which vaping material, which is a growing
21 issue.

22
23 No big changes in the composition of litter between the last plan and this plan, but
24 we are expecting to see some movement as we are hoping to see a reduction in
25 packaging waste with the introduction of the bottle and can Deposit Return Scheme
26 in future. The latest litter composition survey are the results for 2024. The bottle
27 return scheme came into place.

28
29 Next slide, please. So there's a number of priority issues in our Litter Management
30 Plan to address when it comes to litter management. Top and foremost would be the
31 management of illegal dumping and fly-tipping. Of particular concern for us at the
32 moment is the construction and demolition sector; it is a very active sector of the
33 economy at the moment, and we are concerned where household renovation projects
34 are being undertaken. So that is a big priority for us as well.

1
2 We are also concerned about the issue of dog fouling. I am sure you are all aware it
3 is one that causes a lot of nuisance in many of our communities and it is a source of
4 many complaints on the issue. And then we're also very concerned about the food
5 and drink packaging materials that we find right across the community. Whether
6 they are coming from a pedestrian source or motorists, there's a significant amount of
7 packaging from the food and convenience foods in particular sectors. Another
8 concern would be the management of waste both by businesses and householders,
9 making sure they present their waste in a manner that doesn't cause littering and
10 pollution, so ensuring that bags aren't torn, and we certainly would have a strong
11 focus on discouraging the use of bags for waste collection except where absolutely
12 essential, and to encourage people to ensure that their bins are not overflowing.

13
14 If we go to the next slide, please. So in terms of our strategic focus in the Litter
15 Management Plan, first of all, we have enforcement and regulation measures. We
16 have a team of five enforcement officers working across the country. A primary
17 concern for them would be investigating and prosecuting where there are issues of
18 fly-tipping or dumping. They're also working to ensure that the business community
19 are complying with all with all regulations that impact on them and that producer
20 responsibility schemes are being operated correctly around the county. They
21 undertake inspections at checkpoints with the Gardaí to ensure that waste is being
22 transported correctly in the county, and they work also with -- they're also working
23 with householders to ensure that householders are complying with their obligations
24 to dispose of waste correctly.

25
26 The second area of strategic focus is on litter prevention and control measures. So
27 for waste management this is all about how we work with municipal districts to
28 ensure good litter control and prevention right across our districts. So it's looking at
29 things like the provision of bins, their collection services, servicing of the bins, street
30 cleaning in the main town centres, but also very importantly making sure that there's
31 good collaboration between waste management and the districts to ensure that any
32 issues that arise anywhere in the districts are dealt with promptly and effectively.

33
34 Under education and awareness the environmental awareness officer, who is here,

1 Sarah Rubalcava, is working across many different campaigns on the issue of waste
2 management and litter control. Particularly important is her work with the Green
3 Schools, the Tidy Towns Campaign, such as National Spring Clean. She is taking a
4 targeted approach with campaigns on awareness measure relating to litter. This year
5 the issue of textiles and dog fouling have been priorities in her campaigns. She is
6 currently working with the climate action team on the clampdown of single-use
7 coffee cups. It is very important in terms of changing behaviour in litter
8 management around the county.

9
10 The final area of strategic focus that is very important to us is the community
11 participation. We are very lucky in County Wicklow to have such a strong
12 participation by communities in every community. Every part of the county we have
13 groups involved. There are thousands of volunteers giving up their time to help keep
14 our county clean through a number of different formal campaigns, but also local
15 groups and individuals getting out and doing their bit in their own area to pick up
16 and control litter. So it is very important that we have structures in place to support
17 that community participation, and also very important that we acknowledge and
18 recognise that participation. So it is something that features every year in our
19 sustainable development towards recognising that community participation in
20 tackling and preventing litter.

21
22 Okay. Next slide, please. Just briefly to mention how we reviewed the plan. First of
23 all, we had an internal review with waste management of the plan. We then brought
24 the plan to the Climate Biodiversity Environment Recreational Amenity SPC for
25 consideration, after which we brought the plan out to public consultation in early
26 summer, and then amended the plan based on submissions made by the public at
27 which point the plan was brought back to the SPC, and now we are bringing the plan
28 to yourselves in the Council for consideration.

29
30 Next slide, please. Just to mention briefly some of the topics that came up through
31 the public submission which resulted in changes within the current proposed Litter
32 Management Plan. One, we had concern raised about quarry trucks in particular not
33 being covered. So we have specifically mentioned them in the plan, and to check
34 with waste management or enforcement section to see is it an issue that they're

1 addressing, and it is something that they will address when they're doing those
2 checkpoints with the Gardaí looking at the movement of waste. They will also
3 consider any other materials where covering is inadequate and take action where it is
4 likely to lead to littering.

5
6 We were also requested to investigate dog DNA testing as a means of increasing
7 enforcement on dog fouling, and there was specific reference to Leitrim County
8 Council who undertook a pilot on the use of DNA testing. Unfortunately the
9 feedback from Leitrim has been less than positive. They spent a lot of money. They
10 found it very difficult to actually get samples of DNA from dogs. The only way they
11 could get it was through the dog shelters. So any dog that was being released from
12 the dog shelters, they took a sample there. And then any instance of dog fouling they
13 collected samples which they had to send to the US for analysis, and it proved to be a
14 very expensive project which resulted in zero prosecutions. We will continue to
15 keep this open and if there is any opportunities to find a system that would work to
16 collect samples of DNA from dogs in the county and then have them tested without
17 going to major expense then, yeah, we would love to have dog DNA testing as part
18 of our enforcement process, but at the moment it doesn't look like a viable option.

19
20 Another topic that came up repeatedly in the public submissions was garden and
21 organic waste, which is actually not a material that is classified as part of the
22 composition of litter. We believe it should be, because it is a significant source of
23 dumping and it is unsightly when it is dumped. It is often dumped in quantities that
24 does have an impact on local biodiversity. It can change the composition of
25 vegetation. It can change the quality of soil, enriched soil. So it can have an impact
26 on biodiversity, and most importantly it is leading to the spread of invasive species in
27 the county. So garden and organic waste is one that we have added into the Litter
28 Management Plan and we will be doing campaigns on.

29
30 We were also asked to focus specifically on transport hubs. This one from Bray in
31 particular mentioned as one of the most highly used bus stops and transport hubs
32 where a significant source of litter where people were congregating. Cigarette butts
33 again came up in the submissions and it is something that we will specifically target
34 over the lifetime of this next plan, to do a new campaign on cigarette butts. We're

1 also asked to promote the Re-Turn Deposit Scheme which very are happy to do. We
2 are also asked to do some circular economy projects under the Anti-Dumping
3 Initiative. This is something that we do already but we haven't mentioned
4 specifically in the plan but we have added that into the plan. There is already a
5 project underway this year looking at single-use coffee cups.

6

7 That's me done, is it? Next slide. Yes.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's great, thank you very much, Jim. I think you're right
9 when you said about community participation. We are very lucky in County
10 Wicklow that the Council work well with the community and congratulations on all
11 that work. So there's a few people coming in to speak. The first one is Councillor
12 Miriam Murphy.

13 COUNCILLOR MURPHY: Yeah, thank you, Cathaoirleach. And thank you, Jim,
14 for the great presentation. Just a few things there that I think needs to be highlighted,
15 and I think again it's down to awareness and I think some of your presentation just
16 shows the features that would catch your eye, but I am just a bit concerned about one
17 or two things. Myself recently I actually cleaned out two sheds and we brought them
18 out to the (inaudible) recycling and they wouldn't take them. Now, I had to send
19 them out to Avoca recycling. But I think in the future there's going to be a lot more
20 dumping, because some of -- not our own recycling centres, but independent ones,
21 and I feel there's going to be a major increase on our sad situation of people
22 dumping. And again, just from an estate area as well I think that a lot of people
23 would hoard a lot of their stuff. And I know this particular area where I live we have
24 an annual May Day fire celebration on May Day, and it is a huge, huge cost to the
25 Council, and they have cleaned it up every year. It would cost probably five or six
26 thousand every year. And I mean that is dreadful. But you can see actually other
27 people from the estates coming in here to bring their dumping, and I mean of every
28 type of stuff. So I don't know how we can curtail that. And also the dog fouling.
29 Again, I know from the road here there's not one dog poo container which is crazy on
30 a main road, when people are doing their walk to the beach. Maybe that could be
31 looked at as well as an area to be improved on. Thanks, Jim.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: I'll take three at a time. So the next one is Councillor Orla
33 Finn.

34 COUNCILLOR FINN: Thank you very much. Thanks very much and thank you

1 very much, Jim, for that overview. It was great. I suppose I am concerned about all
2 the issues that you have raised but in particular in relation to Greystones, Kilcoole
3 and Newcastle. As you highlighted, one of our biggest issues is definitely around
4 dog fouling and dog poo bins. And if we could get more dog poo bins that would be
5 fantastic. That also leads to the issue around more dog wardens, which is a
6 countywide problem. Because if you are going to try bring in other measures to
7 make sure that people do adhere to the rules I think more dog wardens are absolutely
8 needed. In relation to the DNA testing, while I appreciate the sentiment behind it I
9 suppose I would personally rather see the money used for dog poo bins, as I said,
10 because I just think that it would be very hard to implement, and it is very interesting
11 that Leitrim have already tried it out and to see the results they got. So thank you.

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Danny Alvey.

13 COUNCILLOR ALVEY: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I just wanted to also commend
14 Jim and all the environment team on their work in this area, and this really
15 comprehensive plan that they have. I want to take the opportunity to commend all of
16 our 31 Tidy Towns groups in the county who recently got their scores in the
17 competition and got very good results, including five gold medals. That is worth
18 noting in the discussion around litter management. I am one of those people that was
19 very curious around the DNA dog testing as Jim knows from our Environment SPC,
20 and it is something that has been successfully done in other regions and countries. I
21 don't think we're quite there yet in Ireland, but I think it is one of those things we
22 need to keep our eye on and if it becomes more cost-effective I think it would end
23 the problem overnight if people thought they are leaving behind evidence that they
24 will be charge on. But look, we're not there yet. I welcome including it to continue
25 looking at it on the plan. I wanted to give positive feedback, Jim. I know we had
26 problems in Tidy Towns in getting a good supply of bags to do the pick-ups we do
27 over the place, and I want to give feedback we're getting rolls now which is great
28 because you were only at one point handing out bags, but I wanted to pass that
29 positive feedback on and congratulate you on a very comprehensive plan. Thank
30 you.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Do you want to come back in?

32 MR CALLERY: Okay. First of all in relation to Miriam's query on the cleaning out
33 of sheds and the like, and disposal of items. Unfortunately our recycling centres
34 aren't set up to take materials for charges, to charge for the taking of materials, for

1 the disposable materials, which is what you would typically require when it comes to
2 those contents of sheds. We're just not set up to handle those materials in terms of
3 the costs involved. It is important that people have outlets that they can bring those
4 materials to. We don't currently have a specific amenity site in Wicklow that takes
5 materials specifically for disposable. We only take recyclable materials and we do
6 offer that free of charge. There are options available for the public in neighbouring
7 counties and we can provide that information to the public on where is their nearest
8 location that they can bring materials. But I do agree with you, there is a need for
9 more information for the public on how they dispose of that kind of item. It is
10 something we can work on, promoting what the options are for that disposal. I do
11 take that on board. It is an issue for members of the public how to dispose of
12 different items and where they can bring them.

13
14 In terms of the dog fouling, again, yeah, the provision of bins that is something that
15 we do work with the districts on the rollout of, specifically dog poo bins where
16 they're needed on dog walks, but we've also always promoted the message of 'any
17 bag, any bin' so that members of the public when they're walking a dog can use any
18 bin they come across for disposing of dog fouling. It is not possible to put bins in all
19 the locations that dog walkers want. We've frequently got requests to put them in
20 areas like down the Murrough, which is a popular work, meanwhile there's three bins
21 available at the car park at the start of the walk. So people need to understand when
22 they take their dog out it is their responsibility to know where the bins are available
23 and to use them, and that sometimes does mean carrying that bag back to the nearest
24 location rather than expecting to have dog bins in natural areas. But it is something
25 that we will continue to work on ensuring that there is an adequate network of bins
26 available for people when they're out and about.

27
28 As I mentioned with the DNA, it is disappointing that there isn't a viable option at
29 the moment but it is something that we will keep an eye on in the future and if we do
30 see any potential to bring in DNA testing in the future with a viable more local
31 service, and an opportunity to collect the samples we would love to have it. Because
32 I think even the threat of having DNA sampling would be an important incentive to
33 householders to pick up after their dog. So, yeah, it's certainly something that we
34 will keep going.

1
2 On the supply of materials, there were some issues last year in relation to the
3 collection of materials. I understand that was why bags at the time were restricted,
4 because we just didn't have the resources to collect those bags afterwards. We're one
5 of the few local authorities that supplies clean up material throughout the year.
6 Many local authorities will only specifically do it during campaigns such as National
7 Spring Clean in April. We're happy to work with any group right throughout the
8 county right throughout the year. And we will continue to support them any time
9 they want. Okay

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Avril Cronin.

11 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Thanks very much, and thank you for the presentation. I
12 was actually going to bring this up later on in the meeting but now that we have this
13 on the agenda I am going to ask for your advice. I have a road in my area,
14 Merrionstown, over the last six weeks there's been a huge amount of fly-tipping and
15 illegal dumping. It's domestic waste being dumped. The residents are doing their
16 best. And, as the Cathaoirleach said, we are very lucky in Wicklow we have huge
17 communities that want to help and everybody wants to do their best to keep their
18 area clean but unfortunately that's not always the case. In this situation the residents
19 on the road, it's a very rural country road and the residents are out every day picking
20 up this rubbish. In fairness to the Council I have reported it, every day I am sending
21 in emails, videos, and photographs to them, and they are going out and they're
22 helping the residents clean it up, but I don't know where to go with it. I don't know
23 what to do next. We've asked for additional signage. It's very hard to catch the
24 person when it's being done in the middle of the night, and that's when it appears to
25 be happening. But over the weekend there was a huge amount of rubbish dumped
26 there, and it's absolutely disgusting what was left there over the weekend. There's
27 been black bags of rubbish and they're all opened out now and they're all along the
28 side of the road. The residents in fairness to them they try their best to keep the road
29 tidy but it gets to a point where it's gone beyond what they can manage now at the
30 moment. I don't know is there anything else we can do. We asked for additional
31 signage and the residents are doing their very best.

32
33 In relation to dog waste, no matter where or how many bins you put up or signs you
34 put up it seems to be that people are going to just -- you know, the people that care

1 will pick it up and bring it home or put it in a bin somewhere, but there are others
2 unfortunately they're not going to take notice. In my own town we put up signs and
3 there are bins, but there are people who are going to ignore it. Also an issue we have
4 is in some of our areas people requested additional bins but we don't have the
5 resources to clean out the bins, and that's a big issue. Thank you.

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Lourda Scott.

7 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Yeah, thanks, Cathaoirleach. And thanks, Jim. I wasn't
8 actually going to speak on dog fouling because I know I raised it previously and I
9 know back in Covid times I raised a question through the Council about DNA testing
10 and I did a bit of a deep dive on it myself at the time. Thanks for acknowledging that
11 possibility I suppose in the strategy. Dog fouling continues to be an issue but, you
12 know, dog waste that's left and not addressed at all. Particularly in our area,
13 particularly along the coast, we find dog waste bagged, where people don't bring it. I
14 do agree with your strategy. I don't think throwing bins everywhere, here, there and
15 everywhere is going to help address this. It's laziness on behalf of some people, and
16 you know more bins isn't going to address it full stop. And again we do have a
17 challenge in our own district as well of limited resources and capabilities to clean out
18 bins, and the more bins we have then it's a difficult situation. My own opinion is I
19 don't think this DNA testing is going to work until there's national legislation which
20 compels dog owners to provide a faecal sample from their dogs, and that would
21 probably need to be linked with micro-chipping. There's no point unless you have a
22 database to match the samples to, until that comes down as a legal requirement. But
23 anyway, putting that aside, I want to stress the issue with cigarette butts. I know you
24 have it there as your number one litter source. I run a clean coast group and we take
25 part in a big beach clean survey every year, cigarette litter is by far at the top of the
26 list. Every time we go out on a beach clean, it's cigarette butts everywhere. I
27 honestly think an awareness campaign is long overdue and would go a long way to
28 really educate the people because I honestly don't think people realise that cigarette
29 butts are litter. I think they bury it in the sand or on the ground, they think it is going
30 to organically compost and isn't causing an issue.

31
32 I want to acknowledge and welcome the work that is going on, the coffee cup
33 initiative that is going in the climate section at the moment. Myself and Tidy Towns
34 in Greystones are working on trying to reduce the use of disposable cups. That is

1 quite a big issue in our area and I welcome an ongoing project that is cooking behind
2 the scenes with the climate team and look forward to when that will get addressed.

3
4 Just a couple of quick notes on the plan itself. I do notice that the town teams are
5 named as a kind of an action group or a stakeholder, and I was just wondering if you
6 had any kind of more thoughts on how the town teams can link in with the roll in
7 litter control or how that will be practically strategised? Because it is certainly not
8 something that has come up at any town team meetings that I have been involved
9 with. I also just want to point out, I know it is a bit late because we're just about to
10 approve the plan, which is, an important group stakeholder that is missing from the
11 management plan are Clean Coast groups. We have very active groups in Bray,
12 Greystones and down in Arklow as well. They obviously take litter from the beaches
13 but the surrounding areas and again have a good kind of eye on what sort of litter is
14 coming up and just I suppose making that known really for the next iteration of the
15 strategy. And other than that, thank you for all your work and particularly in
16 Greystones for the environment team's work on working with the MD office and
17 myself on addressing the issue of dumping around the clothes bins. That was a real,
18 real issue this time last year and at the beginning of the year, and that fortunately
19 seems to be addressed now but it did take collaboration, and I appreciate the work
20 that went into that behind the scenes, thanks.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Joe Behan.

22 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Jim, I don't know how long
23 you're in that job now at this stage but I have heard many presentations that you've
24 given over the years, and I had the pleasure of being involved with you particularly
25 when I was principal of St Fergal's School when you were involved in the Green
26 Schools Committee and Green Schools Project. I want to thank you personally for
27 the work and commitment you have shown in your various tasks working in the
28 public realm. It is quite obvious, even in today's presentation, how committed you
29 are to the work you do. I think a great credit is due to you for continuing your
30 enthusiastic approach to this I suppose never ending issue of controlling litter and
31 improving or environment, but I just want to say a particular well done to you for
32 your work.

33
34 Secondly, if you are looking for a proposal for the plan to be adopted I am happy to

1 propose it, Cathaoirleach, unless the chair of the committee wants to do it which is
2 fine by me, but I think it is an excellent programme and excellent plan. It is also I
3 think an opportunity to congratulate all the members of the team, the Environment
4 team and the Council, but also as has been said by many people the huge numbers of
5 ordinary citizens in this county who play their part and many do a huge amount to
6 improve their local environment through Tidy Towns, Pure Mile and all of the other
7 initiatives that have been mentioned. So well done to everybody who has taken and
8 continues to take part in those activities.

9
10 Just a couple of observations I would like to make. With regard to the dog fouling,
11 there is nothing more disgusting or antisocial as a person who takes a dog out for a
12 walk and allows them to defecate in a public area resulting in litter but also a very
13 serious danger to children particularly if they put their hands in it. I think they
14 should be condemned roundly by all of the public representatives for their
15 irresponsibility, and we should unite in every way we can to try and find the culprits
16 of this disgusting practice. I would be interested to know if we have had any
17 successful prosecutions of people who have been guilty of this? I don't blame the
18 animal. The animals are not responsible for this. It's the owners. Have we had any
19 successful prosecutions of dog owners in that regard? That's the first question.

20
21 And second, I was disappointed that we don't have figures yet on the bottle return
22 scheme, the plastic bottle return scheme, because I think it is a huge scam myself. I'd
23 like to see the evidence that it has actually resulted in an improvement over all of the
24 environment, because let's remember what happened and, and we weren't consulted
25 on this, this was a Government decision in the last Government: The prices were
26 raised on the plastic items, the plastic bottles, an extra tax was put on. There are
27 companies now involved who are making huge profits on this. Not all of the plastic
28 bottles are returned. And what's also happening is there's a cross-over, because
29 anybody who has a contract with a refuse company has a recycling bin. And we
30 were encouraged over many years to put our recyclable plastics in the recycling bin,
31 and you have the recycling trucks going around the estates and yet you have people
32 passing by the recycling truck, driving to the shop with their bag of plastic bottles.
33 So the overall effect on the environment, I just wonder whether it has really made
34 that much difference. But in particular I think sometime and I think somebody has

1 actually been doing some work on this we need to know what profits are being made
2 by the companies who are in the middle here. They're taking the tax from the
3 ordinary punter, they're making huge profits and we may not necessarily be seeing
4 the advantage that we hope to see. But overall, I just want to say again, Jim, thank
5 you, and excellent plan put before us today. Thank you

6 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Jim, do you want to come back on those three
7 queries?

8 MR CALLERY: Okay. In relation to the specific issue of dumping in an area, that
9 is something, yeah, bring that to our attention and we can see whether it is a case of
10 signage or something else. We do have the option now of CCTV. In order to use
11 CCTV we have to prove a case for deployment of it. We have to be able to
12 demonstrate that there is a repeated pattern of dumping occurring in the area, then
13 make our case for use of the CCTV. So, yeah, it is something that we look at where
14 there's a specific area where there's ongoing problems.

15 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Just keep sending in their complaints?

16 MR CALLERY: Yeah. And certainly talk to us about the signage, we can look at
17 that one. Yeah, we'd be happy to look into it.

18 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Thanks very much.

19 MR CALLERY: Yeah, again with relation to the resource to clean out the bins and
20 the provision of the bins, it is important to consider capacity at local level to manage
21 a bin. A bin is not always a solution. And if it is becoming a problem for
22 communities to manage it you would have to question whether it's the right bin in the
23 right place. These services do need keeping up all the time to ensure that the bin is
24 providing a service to the community without actually becoming a problem for the
25 community.

26

27 In relation to the cigarettes, that will be our top priority for next year, to look a
28 campaign on cigarettes. So it is something watch this space in 2026. We hope to
29 deliver a campaign on it as a priority.

30

31 And with relation to the Clean Coast groups, I am surprised to discover that we
32 haven't mentioned them in the plan. It's something we will certainly rectify because
33 we have several very strong Clean Coast groups in the county that go out on a
34 weekly basis or more to undertake clean-ups, and you do notice the difference

1 between a beach that has an active Clean Coast group and one that doesn't. So it is a
2 particularly important requirement when it comes to plastic littering. So the work
3 being done by coast guards is something which we very much recognise and
4 appreciate, and we do have a specific award for the coast guard groups as part of our
5 sustainable development awards.

6
7 With relation to prosecutions for the dog fouling, that is a difficult one. The burden
8 of evidence required to prosecute for dog fouling, you either need the enforcement
9 officer to be standing there beside the dog when it is fouling and being able to chase
10 up the owner, where they live, name and address, get the correct details and then you
11 can take a prosecution, or you need a witness who is prepared to sign a witness
12 statement and if necessary go to court. So it is a very difficult to prosecute. We do
13 get about one or two successful prosecutions every year, but we'd certainly like to
14 see more prosecutions taking place in Wicklow. Unfortunately to date that's not the
15 case.

16
17 On the Re-Turn Deposit Scheme, I can't comment on the national scheme in terms of
18 what proportion of bottles are coming back through the scheme, what's being done
19 with the revenue. I don't have that information. But the one information we are
20 receiving is some of the surveys that are being done to see is it having an impact on
21 the environment, and both An Taisce and Leave No Trace have undertaken surveys
22 to see is it having any impact. The IBAL survey would be another one where they're
23 measuring the impact. And those studies are indicating that it's leading to a 50%
24 reduction in plastic bottles and cans as litter. It is still very common as a litter item.
25 There's still plenty of bottles and cans out there but the surveys are indicating that the
26 numbers are decreasing as a result of the deposit return scheme. Okay.

27 MS PURCELL: Sorry, the Leas Cathaoirleach is just on her way now. We need to
28 keep going. Thanks.

29 COUNCILLOR WINSTANLEY: Councillor Snell.

30 COUNCILLOR SNELL: Thank you, Leas Cathaoirleach. I want to thank you for
31 the presentation today. An awful lot of work has gone into it. I want to support the
32 Litter Management Plan for the next three years. I want to pass on best wishes to all
33 the team because there's a huge amount of work gone into it, and it is obvious from
34 the report. I suppose fortunately, or unfortunately, I am around here a long time and

1 I have seen huge, huge changes in regard to litter management and the amount of
2 works that's gone in it, but the one things that's repetitive year-on-year is the lack of
3 finance as regards giving to the people who are rolling out this plan to actually
4 implement. If you look at the dog fouling, and it's very disappointing to hear that
5 there's only been one or two prosecutions in a year but it is understandable, Jim.
6 And I suppose it is all down to education and awareness. A lack of education, a lack
7 of awareness, and it is not for the want of trying. There's been so many campaigns
8 rolled out there. When I hear about more dog bins, yes, I agree on occasions but
9 when you actually go out and look there's people who go to the hassle of collecting
10 the foul after the dog, bagging it, and actually dumping it beside the bins, hanging it
11 out of trees. It just beggars belief. And when we talk about DNA testing on dogs,
12 until such time as the dogs have the capacity to bag it themselves and put it in the
13 bin, because it is the owners who are irresponsible. And, like, it is never going to be
14 cost-effective to roll out this DNA testing. It will never ever, ever in this country be
15 cost-effective when you're talking about sending it away to USA and the likes.

16
17 I am glad that the report has identified what used to be -- and I say used to be,
18 because it has reduced significantly, certainly, and I don't know whether it is a
19 downturn in the trade as regards public houses or public offices after Covid, but it's
20 certainly going back a decade ago used to be a real black spot for all Tidy Towns
21 throughout the country. I honestly believe people at that time thought they were
22 doing no harm. They were throwing away what was a small item, a cigarette butt.
23 But for the people who are going around to collect that, these volunteers, it's
24 probably the one item that takes the most amount of time to gather up. And
25 thankfully we've an awful lot of responsible business owners now out there who are
26 taking up that mantle themselves and making sure that their staff clean outside their
27 own facilities, but I am glad that you identified it within this litter plan.

28
29 I would ask, Jim, in regards to -- and it is a thing that hasn't been discussed, and if
30 you could step me through it when you get an opportunity to come through it, but it's
31 the abandonment of vehicles throughout the county. We have cars, we have vans
32 that are abandoned. Some are left in prominent positions, as identified, some are left
33 in housing estates, some are left in car parks that are not charging. For the people
34 who are in the know and understand some of these are down to criminality, they're

1 there for the purposes of dropping off and collecting of drugs within particular areas,
2 but the sheer sight of these around, littered around our county is not acceptable. And
3 I have dealt with people who have tried to have them collected and moved for
4 obvious reasons, and the reality is that it's not Wicklow County Council's job alone,
5 but An Garda Síochána are involved. We have situations where vehicles you say
6 you can issue, under the legislation we can issue directives that they have to remove
7 their vehicles, that's if you know who owns the car. Some of these vehicles don't
8 have registration plates on them, some have fake plates on them, some of them can
9 sit in an area depending on how long they can get away with what they're doing for
10 the guts of a year with authorities knowing what is going on. And I understand it
11 might suit An Garda Síochána at times to watch to see what's happening, but purely
12 from an abandoned vehicle in any town or village or any housing estate it is not
13 acceptable, and it must be dealt with accordingly and quickly, and I'd just like to
14 have your opinion on that, if you don't mind. Thank you.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. My apologies for that interruption, Members.
16 Councillor Dermot O'Brien. And I think, sorry, before Councillor O'Brien wants to
17 come in I think Councillor Scott had indicated she wanted to second it. So proposed
18 by Councillor Behan, seconded by Councillor Scott.

19 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Just very briefly, and
20 again thanks to Jim and the team for the production of the plan. And for me I think
21 some of the things worthy of highlighting in terms of this is the process in particular,
22 and I really always feel it's important to acknowledge when a plan goes through a
23 flow that involves really significant (inaudible), and I think that's really clear in the
24 plan. Even when you read the Chief Executive's Report on the submissions from the
25 public and see, as Jim outlined, where the changes came in, I think that's a great
26 example of a process that's worthwhile. A couple of strengths I took from it was the
27 strategic focus, the four key areas; again just shows the challenge but also the
28 balance of how we must consider enforcement prevention, education and community
29 participation. And again, as Councillor Snell alluded to, the challenge of where do
30 we put resources so that we get the outcomes? Cathaoirleach, and not
31 underestimating -- and Jim has been doing this for a long time, but not to
32 underestimate the importance of the education and awareness because we are in the
33 business of needing to change attitudes that will change behaviour, that will flow in
34 attitudinal change but also a new pride about their country, about their community,

1 about their area. I'd love to see along the way when this is rolling out that we include
2 those types of metrics, that we have conversations with the public about where
3 they're at with their attitudes and where they're at with their behaviour and what their
4 sense of it is so that we can engage that change alongside the change that comes with
5 enforcement. I am here to propose that I think every new generation, and children
6 and young people in particular, are worthy of the positive regard that comes with the
7 attitude that we should be -- the attitude towards how precious our environment is. I
8 think if we paid more attention to the messages that they're sending us, I think things
9 would be transformed. A brilliant plan and thanks for all the work, Cathaoirleach.

10 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Silvester Bourke.

11 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I would like to thank Jim for
12 all his hard work over the years in supporting the community groups especially in
13 my own area. He has never failed to supply us with lots of equipment and collect the
14 rubbish that we have picked up. And just a little bit of housekeeping, I was in Brittas
15 Bay there, Jim, twice the last week and the dog poo bins there are overflowing.

16 Other than that you're doing a great job. Keep up the good work.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Do you want to come in on those three
18 comments, Jim?

19 MR CALLERY: Okay. Yeah, again the cigarettes. I would certainly see the
20 cigarettes as being like the dog fouling; they're two smelly items of litter that people
21 don't want to handle. It is a very difficult challenge for us to tackle those with
22 education and awareness, because it is not a simple case of giving them a message
23 about what they need to do, it is about changing behaviour and finding ways to
24 change that behaviour. I think we are making some progress on dog fouling, it is
25 become less and less acceptable to not pick up after your dog, and we need that to be
26 the case across both cigarettes and dog fouling in the future. That it's just not
27 acceptable to behaviour like that and that everyone understands that, and that's why I
28 require that we keep reinforcing that message about the dog fouling and cigarette
29 litter.

30

31 The abandoned cars, yeah, they are mentioned in the plan. I wasn't aware that it is
32 growing as an issue. Abandoned cars tend to wax and wane depending on the scrap
33 value of a car. I will have a chat with the waste team about that and bring those
34 concerns to them about the removal of abandoned cars when they're found. I would

1 be happy to have a discussion with the environment team about that one.

2

3 I think Dermot's suggestion of doing some -- and again, some metrics about attitudes
4 and behaviours is something that's a great idea. It's something that we will certainly
5 look at for the next Litter Management Plan, having conversations with communities
6 across Wicklow, particularly youth, about their attitudes and behaviours when it
7 comes to litter and waste. So yeah, I think that's something we will be quite happy to
8 take on board.

9

10 And then finally, the Brittas Bay dog fouling bin, I will certainly bring that up to see
11 if we can get that one solved quickly. Okay

12 CATHAOIRLEACH: Great. Thank you. There's still a few more Members wanting
13 to come in. Councillor Peir Leonard.

14 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And thank you, Jim. Jim
15 is so knowledgeable across many areas. He's my go to person to ask for advice. And
16 I just think there's a lot of potential with a lot of the waste issues around circular
17 economy and innovation and creativity. I do think something that we should look at
18 going forward is utilising our recycling centres more for using space. The one in
19 Arklow is quite big. There's a huge car park attached to it. I would like to explore
20 the use of that for circular economy and maybe locating our sheds and other things
21 there, that we could use to create that circular economy but also it would have a
22 social value to get involved and tie it in with creativity as well. Sarah is doing great
23 work with the textiles, and, like, I sat in on some of the recent courses that she got
24 funded for and the education around that and the textiles is absolutely brilliant, and
25 there's so much potential with that.

26

27 Two areas that I am just not sure in the plan whether it covers is around the marine
28 space as well, and could we explore getting a sea bin into our harbour area? Because
29 a lot of the debris that comes down after a lot of heavy rainfall or, if the weather is
30 really bad, from upstream, it all ends up in the harbour. I have been looking at the
31 sea bins across the wider international scene and they seem to work, and maybe is
32 that something that we could explore?

33

34 And then back to the dog fouling as well, I think it definitely that needs to come on

1 board. It can't be all the County Council. I think the area to look at is setting up
2 some sort of competition, zoning places and trying different pilots in different places.
3 And I just want to ask Jim has the idea of putting free bags on the bins ever been
4 mooted or was that ruled out? I know that you can lead a horse to water, but I do
5 think that it's worth trying in an area as a pilot. You know, there's certain routes and
6 walkways around each town that people go with their dogs and stuff. You know, it's
7 not the whole town but I think if we go into different areas it almost creates a
8 competitive environment and got people to buy into it, whether they were the shops
9 or local people that use that area, and that's something that we could look into going
10 forward. Thanks.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Paul O'Brien.

12 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Thank you, Jim. I
13 will be brief, a lot of what I said has been said. I take it we use the app See It Say It?
14 Because I have used it, and I have to say it is an excellent app when it comes to
15 illegal dumping. Can I also just agree with Councillor Scott and Councillor Cronin,
16 in terms of funding we're very good at looking after the likes of Brittas Bay during
17 summer months, and I have often heard it said we'll take the bins away because it
18 attracts rubbish. My attitude is I hope a bin attracts rubbish. But we need them
19 emptied during the winter months as well. Because after Covid -- well, during Covid
20 and after Covid, Brittas Bay became extremely busy, and it was great to see it
21 opened up to the public, both locals and beyond, for the winter months but we do
22 need more resources and more people on the ground. The easiest option is say we'll
23 take the bin away and they'll bring their rubbish home. We have to be realistic about
24 it: They won't. When you see them dumping their rubbish beside the bin when it's
25 full, you know. I know attitudes have to change, that takes time, but in the meantime
26 I think we have a duty of care to the beach, especially a blue flag beach, that we do
27 take away the rubbish on a regular basis. Thanks for all your work, Jim. Very much
28 appreciated.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Warren O'Toole.

30 COUNCILLOR O'TOOLE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: There's too many on it. Councillor Fortune, can you come off
32 for one minute? Thank you.

33 COUNCILLOR O'TOOLE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. And thanks, Jim, for the report.
34 You briefly discussed, Jim, about the likes of the CCTV. Dogs like people are

1 creatures of habit, and anyone can walk along different stretches and see the same
2 type of dog fouling that's happening continuously. The likes of the CCTV, what is
3 the parameters around that to get some of them activated in different locations, and
4 maybe making a very public display and embarrassing these people? Because there's
5 stretches that they could be tucked in or whatever and just make examples of certain
6 people. And the same with some littering in different places, you can see the same
7 types of littering, and obviously probably coming from the same type of people on
8 these routes. Can we kind of look at the likes of that? Thanks.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Okay. Do you want to come in on those three, Jim?

10 MR CALLERY: Okay. Yeah, with relation to a sea bin. My understanding was that
11 there was one due to be trialled in Greystones Harbour. I'm not sure did that one go
12 in. But it was something that was going to be managed by the harbour itself. It's
13 something I will bring up with our Ports and Harbour Office to see is there any
14 potential of putting them elsewhere. But it is a question of how they can be managed
15 and how accessible they would be for management would be the question. But yeah,
16 I'll have that conversation with our ports office.

17

18 With relation to competitions, yeah, it's always a useful way to engage people. I
19 know it is something that Sarah was talking about, running a competition to design
20 some signage around dog fouling. So, was it dog fouling? Yes. So yeah, it is an
21 engaging way and it can be a more effective way of getting the message out because
22 people do like to see something that's coming from local kids in their own area
23 making signage, it has more impact than something that's professionally designed.
24 So we will look at the use of competitions to help us get that message out.

25

26 With relation to free bags for dog fouling. I know this is something that a number of
27 districts have done over the years. They have tried it in a few of our towns, putting
28 out free bag dispensers. I think most have found it quite problematic, when you put
29 the bag dispenser out and fill it with bags someone comes along and empties it
30 completely and takes all the bags. We take the opinion when it comes to dog
31 ownership, if you're going to own a dog it is your responsible to look after it, to keep
32 it on a lead, to make sure that you bring bags with you, and I don't think it is a big
33 ask that a dog owner should be asked to supply their own bags. If there's particular
34 areas where we want to pilot it, try it, we can do it, but certainly our experience in

1 other parts of the county has been that the dispensers empty very quickly and it just
2 becomes a free provision of bags to a few dog owners rather than helping get the
3 message out to all dog owners. Okay.

4
5 On the EPA See It Say It service, yes, it is something that we use in Wicklow County
6 Council. We do receive complaints and reports of dumping and fly-tipping through
7 the See It Say It app. The Pure Project also uses the See It Say It app. So it is a great
8 service to have for the public to make those complaints and we're happy to use the
9 service.

10
11 With relation to bins on Brittas Bay, it was one of the concerns that held up open
12 access to Brittas Bay in the past; that we don't have the resources to manage it. The
13 agreement that was made with the local community I believe was that a bin would be
14 open -- or the car park would be open during the winter months for local people to
15 use the beach but that we wouldn't be in a position to provide a bin collection
16 service. It is something that we can bring again to the district to see if there's any
17 scope to change that, to look at the amount of littering or materials that are being left
18 behind in the car park and see what we can do. Because I would agree that our
19 marine environment is particularly fragile and any type of litter once it gets into the
20 sea you're not going to be able to get that back out, and it is going to break down into
21 microplastics that will contaminate the marine environment. So yeah, I will discuss
22 that with the district but I know it was part of the original agreement with the
23 community that the car park would be opened without the provision of services.

24
25 Then finally, CCTV. What are the parameters around the use of CCTV? There are
26 significant restrictions on how we use CCTV. We're not permitted ourselves to put
27 the cameras out there and collect the data ourselves. We have to use an outside
28 contractor. So we have to get a contractor in to do it, but before that we need to
29 prove our case on the use of CCTV. So we can only use CCTV where we can
30 clearly demonstrate that there is a significant and repeated issue of dumping
31 occurring that we can tackle through the use of CCTV and then outsource the data
32 management to comply with GDPR regulation. So it's quite a complex process
33 waste management have to use to roll out the CCTV. They are doing it, and it is
34 working for us. We did see a dip in the number of fines issued by Wicklow County

1 Council when we didn't have the option of CCTV as a tool for enforcement, and now
2 that we have that tool already in 2025 we're seeing a significant increase in the
3 numbers of fines being issued. So it is a very important tool but we have to use it
4 carefully and make sure it is fully compliant with GDPR to do so.

5
6 On the question of dog fouling, I don't think unfortunately that CCTV will work for
7 us because you have to be able to collect data that can identify the owner. And it
8 doesn't work by facial recognition. Where CCTV is particularly useful is where you
9 can identify something like a car reg plate that would identify the owner and prove
10 who they are. So it's not a case that the CCTV will solve all our enforcement issues,
11 but where it can help us to tackle problems of dumping we'll certainly use the CCTV.
12 Okay.

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Shane Langrell.

14 COUNCILLOR LANGRELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And thank you, Jim, for a
15 great presentation. I suppose we touched a good bit there on dog fouling and, like, in
16 my opinion it is absolutely schools, education, it's all about mindset I suppose and it's
17 the children out there that can actually teach us. Like, for example, my daughter is
18 11 years of age and she's in a school in Ashford, and a garda came in last week to
19 talk to the children about the dangers of Halloween with fireworks and what have
20 you, and then on Thursday -- or on Friday when we're going out trick-or-treating
21 she's with her friends and there she was chatting away to her friends, and she
22 understood. So I am just using that as an example. I am not saying, Jim, that you
23 can go into every school in the county, of course you cannot, but is it the principal, is
24 it a teacher in the school who can be appointed to have a chat with the children?
25 Because believe me, if I am out walking with our dog and my dog does the dirty
26 deed, like, them eight-, nine-, ten-years-old, even younger, will not let you go on
27 without picking that up. Education, education, education. Absolutely. That's my
28 opinion.

29
30 And I suppose regarding the rubbish, the fly-tipping, Jim, I don't know if you can
31 answer me this right now. If not, that's fine, you can come back to me. Like, there's
32 a lot of these skip hire companies now. When you go and hire a skip you kind of get
33 a list of what you cannot put into the skip. There's one-off housing being built
34 around our own county here and people have said it to me, like, you're getting your

1 skip, you can only put X, Y and Z in it so then you fear what you cannot put into it.
2 Where is that going to end up?

3

4 And finally, Jim, last Thursday there's a building company in
5 Newtownmountkennedy that separate for years all their different waste. And it was
6 last Thursday they loaded up a trailer, on inbox trailer full of cardboard which was
7 dry and clean, and they went down to the recycling centre last Thursday before
8 lunch. The guy that brought it down was turned away because it was lunchtime.
9 And when he came back after lunch to get rid of the cardboard he was told they
10 weren't taking it. This building company has been doing this for years. The reason
11 they weren't taking it was because he said the cardboard was too big and it was
12 breaking the machine down. Now, to me if it is breaking the machine down, is it
13 really the cardboard's fault? Now, I understand, Jim, you might not be able to
14 answer that for me today but I would like a response back in the next few days,
15 please, as, like, this building company are doing their best, dividing all their material
16 and when they get a trailer load they went down to recycling last Thursday, they
17 were messed around to be honest with you now. He could have told them even
18 before lunch, before they went, that they weren't taking it. They waited around for
19 an hour, when they went back at two o'clock he was told they weren't taking it. Once
20 again thanks very much for your presentation, Jim.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Graham Richmond.

22 COUNCILLOR RICHMOND: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I will be brief because so
23 much of what has been said has been said before. But just on the two things, the dog
24 fouling we all know. I wouldn't agree with providing free bags because it's not that
25 expensive. But one thing I noticed in part of the UK that was trialled is if you're out
26 walking a dog and you don't have bags you get fined. That's one idea so you're not
27 waiting hiding to chat them. There's one area. Lastly, you talk about the cigarette
28 butts wastage, I'd be amazed if when you come back again and do this that the vape
29 wastage doesn't raise. Particularly, I think people think if you take a sticker off a
30 vape and put it on a bin that's not littering, but it is. And then the waste, they're
31 throwing at will, and as much as cigarette waste is up, when you've got this large
32 lump of plastic dumped, and they are dumped, particularly if you go out after
33 weekends, it is something that is going to get a bigger problem. Thank you.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Lourda Scott.

1 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Yeah, sorry, thanks, Cathaoirleach, I wanted to come in
2 again very briefly just to pick up on a point Councillor Behan made earlier regarding
3 the deposit return scheme as I think there was an implication that the scheme isn't
4 working or isn't valid, and I just wanted to state for the record the stats about the
5 success of the scheme are on the Re-Turn website, and it's actually been incredibly
6 successful notwithstanding that indeed there can be some tweaks or improvements
7 made to it. There's been over one and a half billion bottles and cans that have gone
8 through the Re-Turn scheme since introduced and recycling rates have increased
9 from less than 50% up to 91%, which is massive. But perhaps as important is, for
10 ourselves, myself included, for litter-pickers that you notice the difference in the
11 number of cans and bottles when you're going out to do your litter pick. Indeed a
12 Coast Watch Litter survey in 2024 recorded its lowest level of bottle and can level in
13 25 years. The Irish Businesses Against Litter reported a 50% decrease in bottle and
14 can litter across the country. So it has made a huge significance to certain litter
15 across the country. Thanks.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Do you want to come in on those three
17 comments?

18 MR CALLERY: Okay. We certainly agree when it comes to education and
19 awareness it is absolutely vital that we get in and talk to young people about it. As to
20 whether I can get in to every school, I think I have been in every school over the
21 years, most of them multiple times, and I think Sarah is well on her way of having
22 been in every school in the county at this stage. Green Schools is one of the most
23 effective programmes that we have for delivering education and awareness because it
24 is not a one-off, you're going in and talking to the kids and getting them engaged.
25 And they'll work on a project over a number of weeks and build their understanding
26 of a topic. And certainly for kids when they have someone new coming in the school
27 it does leave an impression on them and they do go home and talk about the speaker
28 that's come in that day and what they had to say. So yeah, I would certainly agree it's
29 something that we need to keep working on.

30

31 On the issue of the cardboard waste being turned away from the recycling centre, I
32 wasn't aware of that one. I am not sure what the story is there. It is certainly
33 something that I will follow up on and report back on what the issue is and see if we
34 can get that one resolved quickly for that business.

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On the UK fining for people who are not carrying a bag, I am not sure legally if we can do that but it's something we will look into. Whether it is something that would require national legislation or whether it is something we can do ourselves. I suspect we would need a national driver to be able to do it. But certainly, yeah, it is something that we can look in and see is it possible to pursue.

I can't even read my own writing. Oh, yeah, vapes. Vapes is certainly something that is on our radar. The amount of vapes being dumped as litter now is growing and it is awful to see it, electronic waste, which should not be dumped anywhere. It shouldn't even be going into a bin; they should be recycled. We will look at how we can tackle that issue of vapes and the proper disposal of them. Okay

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Gerry O'Neill.

COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: That is Cathaoirleach. Yeah, thanks, Jim, for your presentation. I have quite a few experiences, especially Shane has touched on, where I talked about maybe, you know, with the dog fouling is an issue there, you'll hear day in and day out. And I am listening to it for a long, long time. How you go about educating, and it's mainly adults that are up to this, you know. In Blessington there we had, I mean whether you get free bags for the dog foul or not they were gathering up the bags of dirt and throwing it over the wall in the graveyard, the local graveyard. And the council there just cleaned it out some time ago, but there were hundreds of bags of dirt. So I don't know how you get it into adults mainly you know, and maybe we could improve a little bit more in schools. But you know to see what's being done, it's not right.

And also Shane mentioned the state of the area with fireworks and whatever, and I think this has grown into a huge issue. Halloween time is -- I mean I was around the town in Blessington there and it was like a bomb area. There was filth and dirt everywhere. I would like to see maybe more cooperation with the council and Gardaí. Fireworks are illegal. But it was only there we had a dreadful accident or whatever yesterday in the town and a little lad there, a 11-year-old boy, a wonderful boxer making a debut in four weeks' time and found a fireworks that hadn't been set off the night before and lit it with a very short fuse, he's lost a limb, he's in a Dublin hospital this morning. The kid is destroyed you know because there's massive

1 fireworks, they're like bombs. I just looked at the area there on Saturday on the
2 greens in Blessington and they were absolutely destroyed with it. Whether we as a
3 council work hand in hand with the Gardaí in whatever which we regulate this
4 maybe in the future, but when you see a young life destroyed, you know, looking
5 forward to his first debut in four weeks' time and now he'll never box again. Thanks
6 for your presentation.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Tom Fortune.

8 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: Thanks Cathaoirleach. And, Jim, thanks for your
9 presentation. And also I'd like to express my thanks to you as well for the
10 commitment and the passion you have for what you do over a long number of years.
11 Your plan today was excellent. It's all been said, but just a couple of things,
12 observations really. Tidy Towns I would like to acknowledge as well do a super job
13 all over the county, and I am wondering does your department, do ye sit down with
14 Tidy Towns groups, for example, once a year and have a chat? Because obviously
15 the amount of knowledge and stuff they do is invaluable. In fact, I wondered when
16 listening to the conversation early on, the notion just came to my head, what if there
17 was a seminar every year where the Tidy Towns people could come to and feed back
18 their hands-on experience on the ground? It might add value to the great stuff you
19 have been doing.

20

21 The other comment I would make very, very quickly is just picking up on what
22 Councillor O'Neill said, Halloween. I think Halloween needs to be managed.
23 Because even where I live, like I have never seen as many fireworks displays. There
24 was about five firework displays in a small village at the same time, and bonfires.
25 Different topic and different discussion. But the Gardaí don't have the resources to
26 do it. But it is an area that needs to be looked at because it is getting out of control
27 and, as Councillor O'Neill said, the fireworks now are like rockets. You know,
28 accidents. Like, it's terrible that incident that Gerry has described, but more will
29 happen if it is not managed. The local authority will say it is not our responsibility to
30 do X, Y and Z. There needs to be a coming together of the guards and local
31 authorities to have it managed because it is getting out of control.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Winstanley.

33 COUNCILLOR WINSTANLEY: Thanks, Jim. I raised a question actually at the
34 CPG earlier this morning and thanks for getting back to me so promptly with the

1 answer, but I thought it was worth raising the question again because I thought the
2 response was really helpful. What struck me when I was reading the litter policy
3 was the difference in enforcement rates over the years. So I noticed in 2024 there
4 was a considerable dip in the amount of fines that were being issued. I know you
5 touched a little bit in some of your answers but just to I suppose ask is there any,
6 like, resourcing issues in kind of following through with this strategy? Because, like,
7 it seems very comprehensive, the dip made me wonder whether there's on issue there
8 with enforcement. Thank you.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: There's just two more speakers so I'll bring them in before we
10 finish. Councillor Mulhall.

11 COUNCILLOR MULHALL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just, first of all, just to
12 commend Jim and the team on the effort they put into delivering the plan. It's really
13 extensive. A huge amount of work has gone into it. I suppose good to see that
14 quarry trucks were included in there and the need for it to be covered. It's a
15 particular issue in West Wicklow. On the cigarette butts, yeah, they're a big issue
16 but I do -- you know, as Councillor Richmond mentioned, I think vaping materials
17 are becoming a big issue as well. You know, we see it more and more frequently in
18 particular the disposable versions and there's a lot of stickers being placed on bins
19 now as well. So it's double issues.

20

21 On the dog fouling and stuff, yeah, nearly impossible to police it. Tried lots of
22 different things through the years but very little seems to work. It's very much about
23 personal responsibility and unfortunately some people, you know, have no
24 responsibility amongst themselves. I would like to maybe suggest that the dog
25 wardens could be a little bit more visible and out a little bit more frequently in the
26 districts. You know, they're not going to catch anybody but at least if they were out
27 and about it might worry some people.

28

29 On the deposit return scheme, you know I wouldn't fully agree with how it's being
30 implemented myself. I did find it a little punitive on those who were already
31 recycling, but I would, like Councillor Scott mentioned, definitely see a 50%
32 reduction week in week out with collecting plastic bottles and cans. You know, it's
33 definitely making a difference but it is a bit punitive on those who were already
34 recycling.

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Just as Councillor O'Neill mentioned about the fireworks, I think the fireworks in particular in recent years have tied in a lot with antisocial behaviour as well. Certainly cases in Blessington where in the new park, you know, they were effectively being aimed at people who were walking in the park. And I know the guards were contacted and stuff but there was very little they could do. I also sympathise with the young man who has been severely damaged there.

Yeah, I think just the same as Councillor Alvey mentioned to congratulate the Tidy Towns group on their successes this year, a really good year for Wicklow. And just acknowledge that the team in Wicklow County Council do supply us all with different materials year in year out, so much appreciated. Thank you.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Murphy.

COUNCILLOR MURPHY: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Sorry for coming back in there, but similar to what Councillor Fortune said earlier. In the Tidy Towns we ...(inaudible)... in every Tidy Towns, but especially in our county, it is a marking maybe for not having enough dog bins or what is the marking on that? That's something to look at with the Tidy Towns. And also, I'd just like to say for someone promoting environmental issues the prompt response of picking up ...(inaudible)... there two weeks ago from my own area in Johnstown, where there was dumping of meat. I'm sorry to bring this up, but of meat that was dumped right opposite the church in Johnstown. And family passing every day and other people as well every day walking by, and it was meat I suppose from a dead animal. That's the level of dumping that is being done in rural areas. The prompt response from the environment section in Wicklow County Council was highly recommended and thank you. But I mean we value what the environmental section is doing in rural Wicklow because it's horrific what they have to pick up or whatever, so huge acknowledgment to those.

CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. That's all the speakers. And I think you can see by the amount of Members that did want to speak the high regard and importance that we have for the work that you and the whole team are doing. So thank you on behalf of all of us there.

MR CALLERY: Yeah, I suppose the big one there is the issue of fireworks, and I agree. We shouldn't be seeing that level of fireworks in every town and community

1 across the county. They are dangerous. They cause a lot of nuisance. They upset
2 and cause an awful lot of anxiety. And I think it is something we can play a role in
3 promoting better practice there. I am not sure that we would have a regulatory role
4 with relation to fireworks. I think that would be more for the Gardaí but I think we
5 do have a key role to play around that messaging in fireworks. I think also that
6 Halloween is something that we have known for a long time we need to rethink, and
7 it is something that we have done a lot of activities in our county particularly through
8 our libraries organising events for Halloween for children to provide an alternative to
9 that tradition of bonfires and fireworks. It's certainly something I think that's going
10 to grow in the coming years. Fáilte Ireland are particularly keen that Halloween
11 would become a major celebration on the Irish calendar. I think that is something
12 that Wicklow County Council should be thinking of, about how could we have a
13 celebration of Halloween that would attract visitors into the county? You can see the
14 success of the Púca Festival in County Meath. There is funding starting to be made
15 available by Fáilte Ireland so I think we need to get our thinking caps on, on how we
16 want to celebrate Halloween in a better, more sustainable and more inclusive way for
17 everyone in the community going forward, while working on that issue of fireworks
18 and how we can prevent the illegal distribution of fireworks and setting them off.

19
20 On the Tidy Towns. An annual seminar is something that we always try to do with
21 our Tidy Towns groups. We haven't managed it every single year, but most years we
22 have run a seminar of some sort for Tidy Towns groups. We had a meeting in
23 September, a number of speakers in, and we had great participation by groups from
24 across the county. It was a very well attended event. That is an important
25 opportunity for us to talk to the Tidy Towns groups. We also run our Annual
26 Sustainable Development Awards. Tidy Towns would always be at the centre of
27 those awards. And again, it is an opportunity to hear from them about the projects
28 that they have delivered over the year and give them recognition for the work being
29 done. We learn a lot from them, and it's a great opportunity to share experience with
30 the Tidy Towns groups through both events, it is something that we will continue to
31 do going forwards.

32
33 On the dip in enforcement. The dip in issuing of fines in 2024. We actually had a
34 dip in the number of fines in both 2023 and 2024 to do so, and it was as a result of

1 bringing in new regulation through the Climate Action and Low Carbon
2 Development Act that we now have the right to use CCTV. We've started using it
3 again. So last year, in 2024, we had I think 94 litter fines issued and this year, in
4 2025, now that we can use CCTV again, the number of fines already issued this year
5 has gone back up, it's at 133 fines issued to date. So hopefully that will continue
6 going forward and we will catch increasing numbers of people who are fly-tipping
7 and dumping in our county.

8
9 Again the quarry trucks, that's something that we will continue to work on with our
10 enforcement team. We do recognise it's particularly an issue in West Wicklow, the
11 amount of quarry trucks there, passing through.

12
13 Stickers on bins is something I will bring to the attention of our enforcement team.
14 Yeah, vapes are already on our radar as something we need to target and we will be
15 targeting them.

16
17 As to the dog wardens being more visible, there are only two dog wardens in the
18 county, and I think their priority is always the control of aggressive dogs, where
19 there's reports of dogs causing a problem in a community. But yeah, we work with
20 them to see about getting them out into the communities and helping to deliver that
21 campaign around dog fouling.

22
23 In relation to Tidy Towns marking for dog bins, I don't think you would specifically
24 get marks for having dog bins, but you certainly would get marks under litter control
25 for having a dog campaign of some sorts as a Tidy Towns group, and I think it is
26 something most of our Tidy Towns groups have addressed in some form or other.
27 Dog bins are probably not the way for a Tidy Towns group to go because the dog
28 bins have to be managed. But certainly, yeah, engage in the issue through campaigns
29 can help to win marks for local Tidy Towns groups.

30
31 Okay. And yeah, on that issue of the dumping of meat, yeah, it is quite horrible to
32 see some of the stuff that is dumped or fly-tipped around our county, and it is
33 important that we can respond quickly to remove something like that in the local
34 environment. So it is important that where people see it that they report it to us so

1 that we can act on getting it removed.

2

3 I think I have addressed all the questions there.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: That is great. Thank you Jim. We have a proposer and
5 seconder. Are we all agreed to adopt the litter plan. Great. Thank you. Thank you
6 again, Jim, and to all your team. Thank you.

7 MR CALLERY: Thank you.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, Councillor Behan.

9 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Cathaoirleach, can I propose a time extension, because
10 we're having another presentation now, we have the suspension at half four and we
11 haven't even got to start the CE's report, and there are certainly a number of issues I
12 want to raise in that heading, please?

13 CATHAOIRLEACH: Yes.

14 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Half five.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Seconded by Councillor O'Brien. Thank you. We will move
16 on to the next item which is to note the NOAC Local Authority Performance
17 Indicator Report. So Leonora is going to read this out.

18 MS EARLS: Members, you will be familiar with this. This is the 11th performance
19 indicator report that has been completed by the National Oversight and Audit
20 Committee, which NOAC. So there's 46 separate indicators over 11 different areas
21 and it does supply very meaningful data to every local authority and it helps us to
22 identify trends and practices right across the sector. So the report is just for your
23 noting. Thank you.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Leonora. So the next item on the agenda then,
25 which we have brought forward, is to receive the presentation from Wicklow Civil
26 Defence. I would like to welcome Edel Mullen, who is the Assistant Civil Defence
27 Officer, and also to welcome Michael Carroll who is the Civil Defence Officer as
28 well. Thank you. You're very welcome, Edel.

29 ASSISTANT CIVIL DEFENCE OFFICER MULLEN: Thank you very much,
30 Cathaoirleach, for having us here today. Thank you very much to the Chief
31 Executive, Senior Members and Members of the Council, ladies and gentlemen. I
32 Edel Mullen. I am the Assistant Civil Defence Officer here in County Wicklow. I
33 am going to deliver a presentation today to talk about who Wicklow Civil Defence is
34 and what our role is in the community.

1
2 Next slide, please. So one of the main questions that we get asked on a daily basis
3 is: Who is Wicklow Civil Defence? Unfortunately the name doesn't really lend
4 itself like the Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue, or the Coast Guard. So we often
5 have to explain we're not members of An Garda Síochána, we don't have roles within
6 the Defence Forces. We are completely separate entity.

7
8 Next slide, please. So we fall between two organisations: Wicklow County Council
9 and the Department of Defence. So they work in conjunction with each other. On
10 the County Council side of things it's the normal operations, your day-to-day
11 activities. And that's myself and Michael Carroll, the Civil Defence Officer, who are
12 managing those activities. From the Department of Defence we receive our policies,
13 our governance, planning, funding and our direction. So as you can see on the slide
14 there we have our Civil Defence Towards 2030 plan. So that is a national plan for
15 Civil Defence all over Ireland, and what our plan Towards 2030 is. So we have our
16 five main pillars that I am going to speak now in a moment. Within those five main
17 pillars we're going to basically progress and grow as an organisation, both in our
18 volunteer capacity but also within our assets and the services that we provide.

19
20 Next slide, please. So as it currently stands we have 50 active volunteers. So there
21 are only two paid positions with Wicklow Civil Defence, and again that is myself
22 and Michael Carroll. But the Civil Defence a fully volunteer organisation, and I
23 have full pride in saying that they are professional volunteers. So the services and
24 the training and that expertise that they provide are second to none in my opinion.

25
26 Next slide, please. So where we train these volunteers is on the Mill Road in
27 Greystones. So some of you may or may not be familiar with the Civil Defence
28 Training Centre, because that's where it was newly built, but now at the moment we
29 have bushes all the way around, and we are just beside Aldi there, beside the other
30 council people. That's where all our training happens on a weekly basis. On a
31 Tuesday night, a Wednesday night and a Thursday night class, and that's not also
32 including or Baltinglass class as well. So in a week we could have 50 volunteers
33 going in and out through the training centre.

34

1 So who calls out the Civil Defence? So we have our principal response agencies as
2 we all familiar with: That is An Garda Síochána, the local authority, and the
3 National Ambulance Service. We also have our fourth kind of unofficial emergency
4 service, which is the Irish Coast Guard, who we work closely with. We obviously
5 have the helicopter asset there. We also have the voluntary on the ground team that
6 we work closely with as well as the other voluntary teams, such as Dublin Wicklow
7 Mountain Rescue, the RNLI, Glen of Imaal, and Order of Malta. Any of these
8 agencies can deploy the Civil Defence. They can ask for our assistance or we can
9 ask for theirs. We make it our mission within Wicklow to liaise with these different
10 organisations because these are the people we're going to need when the times get
11 tough for whatever reason, whether it is a medical issue or whether we are going out
12 in adverse weather, so these are the people we are going to need to know and work
13 quite closely with.

14
15 So those five pillars I spoke about. There's five main pillars that Civil Defence
16 operate under, and our very first one is radiation monitoring, search and rescue,
17 emergency response, our community assistance and our first aid.

18
19 So our very first one is first aid. Within Wicklow Civil Defence as of recently we
20 now operate up to a paramedic response level. That means when we go out on our
21 ambulance we can offer the same cover of that of the National Ambulance Service in
22 regards to the level of practitioner that we have. In our training capacity we have
23 everyone from community first responder level up to emergency medical technician,
24 and we can train those people within Civil Defence both locally and nationally.
25 From acquiring these different medical qualifications the volunteers then going forth
26 and use their qualifications both in the community and obviously at our events here
27 that you see a few pictures of. So our medical response is teamed a lot with our
28 search and rescue response as well. So the volunteers will go out, they might
29 retrieve a patient from whatever kind of terrain that might be, as well as treat the
30 patient. So the first aid is usually in tandem with one of our other pillars. But it is
31 something that they quite enjoy, it is something that we enjoy teaching to them, and
32 it is something that gets us out into the community quite a lot is our first aid
33 endeavours. Because we do a lot of first aid cover for local events, particularly the
34 likes of your Wicklow Hospice events and that, which we covered recently in the

1 glen to glen hike up in Laragh.

2

3 In our search and rescue efforts we have all of our volunteers trained up to a search
4 responder level. So when somebody does go missing at any hour of the day An
5 Garda Síochána can activate Civil Defence or any of the PRAs can activate Civil
6 Defence, and then we have fully trained search responders ready to go. We also
7 have specialist equipment, including a comms truck that we have built here in
8 Wicklow. It is specifically built here in Wicklow and it is one of a kind in the
9 country. We also have access to the Sarman ICU hub. So again, An Garda Síochána
10 can activate Civil Defence or ask for Civil Defence assistance in locating a missing
11 person in a way that we can input their phone number into this particular hub, a
12 message can go out to the despondent and they can choose to reply or not reply, or
13 they can click on the link that is received on their phone and that will give us an
14 updated in-time version of where they are so then we can go and locate them and
15 bring them home safely.

16

17 The comms truck that I alluded to earlier. So this is state-of-the-art-built and one of
18 a kind here in County Wicklow. It was a bit of a labour of love here in County
19 Wicklow, and it is something that we have put a lot of thought, time and effort into.
20 So as it stands, this particular vehicle is a standalone vehicle in regards to
21 communications and infrastructure. It can be self-powered, so it doesn't need to be
22 connected to any type of shoreline but we can operate it at any time of the day in any
23 location because obviously it has four wheels and we can move it and it is quite
24 easily manoeuvred.

25

26 Now, we also have a drone team, a specific specialised drone team here in County
27 Wicklow that has recently been -- that basically has recently been deployed to such
28 high profile events. Like I'm sure you all hear of the event of the young child that
29 unfortunately fell off the Cliffs of Moher. So because Civil Defence is also a
30 national team our drone teams were deployed to respond to that event. Our drone
31 teams are also deployed to missing persons events here in Wicklow and they have
32 been successful in locating missing persons due to their infrared camera.

33

34 Our emergency response pillar. We are assisting the -- sorry, in our emergency

1 response we assist the Fire Service on a regular basis. So here in this picture you can
2 see we are assisting in a flooding event, and this is something we assist quite
3 regularly, particularly in winter. Storms are increasingly getting worse so it is
4 something that we are called out for quite a lot. We can assist with pumping and
5 flooding response along with the Fire Service.

6
7 And in our kind of weather capacity again, every year we get called to the likes of
8 the Sally's Gap up the Wicklow Mountains due to snow tourists, as we like to call
9 them. Unfortunately people think they can drive up and have a look at the snow but
10 they don't really plan on how they're going to get in and out in the same vehicle, and
11 unfortunately they bring young kids with them. This was earlier this year when we
12 had a bit of snow up in the Sally's Gap and we had to deploy some of our people out
13 to rescue people out of the cars, and some of the cars had to be abandoned for
14 obvious reasons. Unfortunately due to capacity of the guards they can't be
15 everywhere all at once, so the Civil Defence has helped out in that means in regards
16 to getting people out.

17
18 Another thing we offer is swift water defence. This is, as I am sure you all
19 recognise, along the river in Wicklow. It is quite a regular place we train. Another
20 area we use is up behind Lynam's in Laragh. We have a specialist unit trained to do
21 this and can be deployed at any stage for swift water flood response. It is our main
22 kind of area of flood response that we would use these guys for, so if for whatever
23 reason, like what happened down the Dargle many, many years ago, people lost their
24 homes to flooding and they had to be evacuated from their home, so this team would
25 be deployed to help evacuate people out. And when I say evacuate, professional
26 volunteers. These people know what they are about, they're very highly trained and
27 we can trust them in these situations to get the job done.

28
29 Another capacity we offer here under our emergency response is we have two fully
30 kitted-out boats. Again our specialist boat unit are trained to use the equipment. We
31 have an SRK525 and we have a Whaly boat. Attached to our Whaly boat we have
32 state of the art sonar equipment. We are the only emergency service within Wicklow
33 that has sonar capability. Sonar is used if somebody goes missing and we need to
34 locate them quite rapidly under the water. As you can see there that's what shows up

1 when a sonar is deployed over, say, a bicycle and that's the image that comes back.
2 Our volunteers are trained to use the equipment. They're the only ones in Wicklow
3 that have it. In recent events, like what happened in Wicklow Harbour we had a
4 person going missing, so this type of technology was called for but was stood down
5 just before we put a deploy into the water.

6
7 Quite close to our hearts is our community events because that's why we're here.
8 We're here to serve our community in any way, shape or form. The community
9 events that we're involved with is Darkness Into Light, the Glen to Glen that we did a
10 couple of weeks ago. A lot of these events can't go forward unless our volunteers are
11 there to offer medical cover, so that we why we train them to such a high standard so
12 they can support at these events, and it is something that is very important to us. I
13 am sure you all remember after the Covid 19 pandemic we were very quickly hit by
14 the Ukrainian crisis. And again, part of community effort is that we can provide a
15 community hub for lack of a better word, we can set up these rest centres and take
16 people from flooding or such as what happened with the Ukrainian crisis. This is a
17 few years ago now where we had to take over the community centre in Arklow and
18 set up beds as well as tent areas and larger tent areas for bigger families that they
19 could have some semblance of privacy and normalcy while they were being
20 rehomed. Our volunteers rose to this occasion very, very effectively and manned the
21 centre 24/7. These are volunteers.

22
23 Our last pillar is not the least effective but it is the one that we have done for longest,
24 but it has a very, very small role nowadays. So it is radiation monitoring. Radiation
25 monitoring is the initial reason that the Civil Defence was set up back in 1950 and
26 we still continue with that work today. Every year the Civil Defence nationally is
27 deployed to collect soil samples in your local area and then deliver those soil
28 samples back to the Environmental Protection Agency so that they have a database
29 of what samples are collected so in the event of a nuclear fallout we know what our
30 baseline is, we know what our normal is and we know what is going on in our area.
31 Again these volunteers are trained to collect these soil samples by using a chronic
32 device that you see there in the presentation and deliver those soil samples back. So
33 again going back to your professional volunteers that are very highly trained.

1 Another service we offer within the Civil Defence is critical incident stress
2 management. As you can imagine when we're going out searching for despondent,
3 missing persons, or even when we are treating someone with quite high acuity
4 injuries, critical incident stress is something that anybody can feel at any time for any
5 reason, it just has to be a high stress situation. So we have critical incident stress
6 volunteers that go out to the classes and talk through some of these difficult
7 situations and support them through these difficult situations. Within Civil Defence
8 there is a counselling service that we offer. We can give them a card to a service
9 that's offered through the Department of Defence that the volunteers can call at any
10 time to support them through whatever they have been through.

11

12 Some of our taskings as of yet. So for our quarters two and three we've had 40 tasks
13 so far. So that equates to 2,253 volunteer hours within County Wicklow. So for
14 search and rescue we have had ten taskings so far in the area of Wicklow Town,
15 Bray, Bray Head, Glendalough and Wicklow Harbour, and we assisted Kilkenny also
16 that year. That by itself is 570 hours of searching for missing people. Within our
17 community assistance we've had 29 events providing medical cover. There are
18 multiple events. Like I said, Darkness Into Light, and we cover sport days with the
19 likes of Cumann na mBunscol, and are very fortunate to be invited to the Michael
20 Dwyer 200th anniversary event again that we also covered and we were delighted to
21 be invited to. We also covered the lights of mountain bike events. So you might see
22 us at the likes of Djouce Woods, Ballinasloe, again covering those events and giving
23 medical support so they can run their event safely, and that equates to 1,183
24 volunteer hours.

25

26 We are also part of a national event as well, Fleadh Cheoil, this year. So for
27 Wicklow Civil Defence alone that equated to 300 hours, volunteer hours covering
28 the Fleadh Cheoil in Wexford that we were invited down to by the Wexford Civil
29 Defence. We got to work along An Garda Síochána, our Wexford Civil Defence
30 colleagues, as well as the Order of Malta, and it was something that our volunteers
31 were very excited to attend as we attended last year as well. It is something they
32 look forward to. They get to test their skills, they get to engage with the community
33 and the community see them out in the public eye.

34

1 Other interagency training that we take part in every year as well is that with Dublin
2 Wicklow Mountain Rescue. We also have a couple of events to plan next year to
3 work with them. Again they do their highland very specialised search skills and we
4 do our lowland skills, so we complement each other by calling each other to all these
5 different events that we might not have the capability to cover so we call in our
6 others agencies to work with. We also work quite closely with the Coast Guard and
7 Wicklow Fire Service.

8
9 Recently we celebrated 75 years of Civil Defence. And here up in the top right-hand
10 corner you can see one of our longest serving members, Sheila O'Neill from
11 Baltinglass. Sheila this year now has celebrated 62 years in the Civil Defence. That
12 is 62 years of 75 years of service. She's one of the longest serving members within
13 Ireland. Sixty-two years here is Wicklow Civil Defence. I remember Sheila when I
14 first joined as a Civil Defence volunteer 14 years ago and she's still sharp as a tack as
15 she was then. You get nothing by her. So it was very important for Sheila to be
16 there with us on our 75 years and receiving the medal, the 75th medal from Minister
17 James Lawless.

18
19 So ongoing training that we have. So, as I said, we just celebrated our 75 years of
20 Civil Defence. Currently we have four volunteers going forward for the national
21 EMT course which myself I am helping to teach on. What this means for them is
22 they have served their time in Civil Defence, they have done their hours and years
23 and now they want to progress further into emergency medical technicians course.
24 What that means is that they will be basically Level 1 Ambulance Operators. So
25 what we give back to our volunteers is national training certs, we give them our time,
26 as much as we can anyway, but we give them their training certs so they progress in
27 their own careers. So with this particular qualification these four volunteers can then
28 progress to work on an ambulance in the private or public sector. But they have
29 given their time and their expertise so it is a little something small that we can get
30 back to them. We have also brought on board our newest instructor for food safety,
31 and that particular instructor again has given her time to the Civil Defence over the
32 years and has shown interest in this particular subject, and what they wants to do
33 then is ensure compliance in handling and preparing food. Within Wicklow Civil
34 Defence we have a particular piece of equipment, we have a truck that we use for

1 equipment and also for the maintaining of volunteers when they are out, whether that
2 is a cup of tea, cup of soup, anything, just a warm meal when they're out in the rain
3 searching for someone that is missing. So this particular individual is now going to
4 make sure that everything stays to the high standard that it is at already and make
5 sure we bring on new volunteers that can help the volunteers when they're out with
6 preparing these meals and keeping them going.

7
8 Missing persons search instructor recertification. We have three of our instructors
9 going forward to re-cert in that. So we do have missing persons search instructors.
10 So again, our volunteers. We train our volunteers to be the instructors. We can't do
11 it all for them. They're going forward, they are becoming their own experts and they
12 are instructing their fellow volunteers on how to search for missing persons. Those
13 three people are going forward for certification.

14
15 Our minimum training standard that we hold our volunteers to is a minimum of
16 manual handling, CFR, which is our community first responder, their Tusla Cert and
17 their Garda vetting. That is the minimum training standard required of all
18 volunteers. So when you meet a Civil Defence volunteer this is the minimum
19 training standard that they all carry before they go out into the public. And, as I said,
20 we have a couple of inter-training days coming up in Laragh with water drones and
21 search and rescue.

22
23 So as of tonight we will have seven new Wicklow Civil Defence volunteers coming
24 on board to join the team. They will be trained in their manual handling, their CFR,
25 their Tusla certs, and their Garda vetting, and then they will go forward for their
26 search responders and they will be trained by their volunteers to go forward in these
27 other specialty groups. Like I said, we have the drones, boats and search and rescue,
28 so they're quite a special group. It is up to them usually to run their own training and
29 bring their own colleagues along.

30
31 Thank you very much.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Edel, on a very comprehensive presentation. We
33 always knew how much the Civil Defence work do but never to that extent.

34 Congratulations to you all. I am going to pass to Orla Finn.

1 COUNCILLOR FINN: Thank you very much. Edel, I wanted to thank you, your
2 colleague and all the volunteers for everything that you do. I have been at numerous
3 events that you've attended and I am well aware that without your attendance at these
4 events they may not actually be able to go ahead. So you do provide an invaluable
5 service to the community and to the county, and I just want to say thank you very
6 much.

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Shane Langrell.

8 COUNCILLOR LANGRELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Thank you, Edel. And I,
9 suppose Edel, I'd like to thank you and your crew for what you do. I don't live too
10 far from the Sally Gap, and when these whatever we want to call them go for their
11 snow drive in the winter it's very frustrating, and you guys you put yourselves out
12 there in drifts of snow while we're all at home sitting around a fire, and it's very
13 much appreciated. So, Edel, thank you so, so much to you and your crew. Thank
14 you.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Pat Kennedy.

16 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Edel and Mike, can I just say
17 the Civil Defence is something that's quite close to my own heart as I was in the
18 Civil Defence many, many years ago when the Civil Defence was up in Glenmalur.
19 And I remember back in the day when it was Tommy Duffy from Arklow who used
20 to come out and train us in those days. Tommy Duffy himself served as a Councillor
21 back in Arklow in the late sixties and we had great time for him. But the very
22 amazing work that yourself and Mike, and all the members of the Civil Defence do,
23 and you do it under the radar, you just go and do it, and I remember the work you
24 were doing during Covid as well when you were out bringing shopping, bringing
25 medicines to people, and you just get on with the work, and you are very, very
26 valuable resource in this county and the commitment and time that you give is very
27 much appreciated, especially in the rural areas and I'm sure it's in the urban areas as
28 well but I know up our way you're highly thought of. I want to thank you, both of
29 you, all of your team and volunteers that work with you for the very amazing work
30 and service you give to this county. Thank you.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Dermot O'Brien.

32 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. And thanks, Edel, for
33 the presentation. It is actually fascinating how in the modern world when we're often
34 awarded or get paid or get looked after or get something in return that you're there in

1 the middle of the night to give with no expectation of a return in terms of finance or
2 a tangible concrete reward other than to be part of something that has been around
3 for a long time and is rooted in community. So I'd love to get a sense of even from
4 your perspective, Edel, like, what do you think the hook is? What is it that brings
5 people in to want to be part of that organisation in a time when again time is precious
6 and people have lots of commitments? And I'm sure all you guys have lots of other
7 things going on, all the volunteers, but they still find time, make time for this work
8 and we rely on it, which I think is also really interesting. I come from the youth
9 work world and we have a similar view of this professional volunteer concept,
10 because it's astronomical the capacity of field, the levels that people are operating at,
11 and just because they're not paid doesn't mean that they're not the highest level in
12 their field. So again, the only time I ever feel like my drone is like a Fisher Price toy
13 is when I talk to you guys about drones. Really huge credit to you and the team.
14 Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

15 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Do you want to just respond there? Thank you.

16 ASSISTANT CIVIL DEFENCE OFFICER MULLEN: Thank you very much for
17 your kind works, Councillor O'Brien. The hook is community. That is the hook.
18 They get to see the hours and the results of feeding back into their own community,
19 and that's the feel good factor I suppose for lack of a better word. But yeah, that is
20 the hook. Because they can see their hours, efforts and time going back into their
21 community and feeding back into the people that they might not know, they might
22 not know them, but they know it is for their county of Wicklow, it is for the nation of
23 Ireland. That is the feel good factor that they get from it. Thank you.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Edel. Whatever the hook is, we all can rest
25 assured that our community is safe. Thank you to you, to Michael and to all the
26 volunteers for all the amazing work that you do. Thank you very much for your
27 presentation today.

28 ASSISTANT CIVIL DEFENCE OFFICER MULLEN: Thank you very much.
29 Thank you having us.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: So we will go on to the next item then: To consider the Chief
31 Executive's Monthly Management Report, October 2025 (copy attached). I will take
32 these three at a time, and again if you keep them at three minutes so we can get
33 through as many as possible. Thank you. Councillor Paul O'Brien.

34 COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just a couple of

1 things real quickly. First of all, I want to congratulate my own district manager
2 Brian Gleeson. We got an email this morning saying he's now the new Deputy Chief
3 Executive. But I also want to pay tribute to the outgoing Deputy Chief Executive,
4 Michael Nicholson, who has done trojan work for us, was always very approachable,
5 even when there was a small matter that might have been small to him but big to us.
6 I want to thank him for his courtesy, his professionalism and I wish everyone well in
7 their new roles.

8
9 Last month I brought up about a pedestrian crossing on the Ballynerrin/Leg of
10 Mutton just in terms of a planning that went into a pedestrian crossing coming out on
11 the Leg of Mutton. Planning made them do it. Now it's been fenced off because it
12 comes out on to a busy junction. So I am looking for an update on that.

13
14 Something that concerns me too is grants for older people and social housing. I am
15 dealing with a number of people who need grant access for example for the likes of
16 bathrooms and so forth, one is stuck in hospital, can't come home, but I believe we
17 have run out of funding. It is something that is of serious concern to me given that
18 we've another two months in the year.

19
20 Councillor Behan might bring it up in terms of looking for an update on the N11.
21 The last two weeks I have been inundated with people, it is getting to the stage where
22 it is affecting their mental health. Just reading your email earlier on that you sent us
23 out in relation to the meeting with the Minister and the Tánaiste and the Taoiseach in
24 relation to housing, I am delighted you brought up about congestion on the N11,
25 about the lack of a train service south of Greystones. Because to me, the actions of
26 Taoiseach and the Tánaiste, it was a cheap shot at local government to be quite
27 honest to you blaming us for their failings when it comes to housing. It is all right to
28 say we're going to go from R1 to R2, but we're the ones getting it in the neck about
29 lack of school places, as if we can do anything about the congestion on N11, about
30 the lack of train service, about the lack of sport infrastructure. So while it is well and
31 good and we acknowledge we live in a housing crisis and have done so for almost a
32 decade and it is not getting better, it is getting worse. And I think to lay the blame at
33 local government is a cheap shot, unnecessary. And until they start addressing the
34 other issues around housing it's going to get worse. So yes, they can come out with

1 the headlines, yes, they can come out with the plans, but they need to give local
2 government the funding to crack on and get on with the work of building houses and
3 supporting our communities. Because as someone said to me last week, and it's very
4 apt, we need solutions now and not in a few years' times. Because headlines are not
5 going to deliver housing, they're not going to deliver transport or sporting
6 infrastructures. Thank you very much for raising them. It is something that I had
7 planned on saying today anyway until I got your email. I look forward to your
8 response. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

9 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Joe Behan.

10 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. In relation to the last item there
11 that Councillor O'Brien mentioned, the meeting that the Chief Executive attended
12 last Thursday. I am glad we got the report today. I was disappointed to hear about it
13 from Simon Harris on a Facebook post that day. I would have expected the Chief
14 Executive to be giving us that report last Friday. It is very disappointing that we
15 were kept out of the loop before the meeting. You knew you were having a meeting,
16 Chief Executive. There was no input from the Members into that meeting and I
17 would certainly take issue with it being presented now as being something where you
18 fought the case for Wicklow but that was it. Councillors around this table made the
19 argument, including Councillor Dunne, I don't know if he's still online, about
20 changing the designation from Residential 2 to Residential 1. That was made on
21 several occasions and you and your planning officials, Chief Executive, said we have
22 enough lands zoned in this county to manage for the foreseeable future. I read that
23 meeting as you as Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council being called in by
24 the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste to explain why you have not acted more quickly in
25 relation to the zoning of enough land for housing for this county. Because many of
26 the Members of this Council would agree that we are not doing enough but we're
27 being completely obstructed by national policies but also by the planning policy in
28 this Council of the permanent planning staff, which is that we don't need to zone any
29 further land. So I want to ask you specifically, Chief Executive: Did you explain to
30 the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste that we the Members have said we don't have enough
31 land zoned, that we have challenged your view on that? That's number one.

32
33 Secondly, I would ask again in relation to the difficulties that you mentioned that are
34 facing the Council, and there's no doubt there's quite a list there, the whole question

1 of the N11, and the fact that the Government who called you into the meeting have
2 suspended funding on improving the N11, did you specifically tackle them on the
3 fact that the Government are blocking the funding of widening the N11 which would
4 increase the capacity of the N11 but also deal with the horrible issue of the Herbert
5 Road closure which is still a festering wound for many, many people in Bray?

6
7 I would certainly be interested in your answers on that, Chief Executive, but I want
8 to move on as well to something else that's very, very controversial and very topical
9 at the moment. I doubt if it came up at your meeting. It certainly isn't in your
10 account. It's the question of the Cliff Walk and the fact that you as Chief Executive
11 are going to be representing the people of Wicklow at a meeting with the Tánaiste at
12 this next meeting of the Cliff Walk Task Force. And I want to ask you a few specific
13 questions because we got an email there last Friday from Ms Carroll saying that the
14 preferred options are being costed. What are the preferred options, first of all? Has
15 the costing been done? What is the projected costing? When is the meeting take
16 place? And when you go to the meeting what is your expectation of that meeting?
17 In particular, what is the timeline for ensuring that work begins on fixing the Cliff
18 Walk once and for all? And what is the process by which that timeline is going to be
19 actually brought into effect? And when will we as Members receive a full report on
20 your meeting with the task force? I attended, as quite a few Members did, a meeting
21 in Greystones where there was huge annoyance expressed at the meeting about what
22 is perceived to be the lack of action by this Council in dealing with this issue, not
23 just recently but over the last number of years. And I look at the paper today, there's
24 I think an email or a letter has been sent into you representing quite a lot of
25 businesses in Wicklow who are talking about the number of businesses that are
26 closing because of the absence of the Cliff Walk. So this is a golden opportunity.
27 The Tánaiste is forever telling us he has an open door. He set up a task force, a task
28 force that has only met once, however it is meeting sometime soon and hopefully,
29 Chief Executive, you will get to tell us more about this now in a minute. But we
30 need to be sure that we are going in looking for sufficient money that we will be able
31 to get this walk open as soon as possible. I think the people are expecting us to do
32 that and I think many will be expecting the response you are going to give today to
33 those questions. Thank you.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Avril Cronin.

1 COUNCILLOR CRONIN: Thank you very much. I just have two issues I'd like to
2 bring up. The first one is in relation to Colbinstown Bridge. It's on the border of
3 Wicklow and Kildare but it is actually in Wicklow. Last February €90,000 was
4 allocated for bridge rehabilitation works for Colbinstown Bridge and today we have
5 had no progress. What has happened with that 90,000? I first raised the issue in
6 March 2023 and there doesn't seem to be any development at all on it. It is of serious
7 concern. It's an old bridge. It badly needs works to cater for the volume of traffic.
8 But unfortunately I am not making any progress in my queries to see where it stands
9 in relation to an upgrade and where it stands with regard to the funding that was
10 allocated. I have been told on numerous occasions that it's with the Department or
11 that it's with different individuals but I haven't been able to get any response on
12 where the works are and where the 90,000 is that was allocated.

13
14 And my second point is just in relation to the N81, and I understand that there is
15 huge frustration in the east of the county in relation to the halting of development of
16 the N11 but unfortunately, as we raised time and time again, the N81 has been
17 shelved for a number of years now. I was in a presentation with the SPC, the
18 Economic Development SPC, and we had people in from the IDA in relation to
19 investment in Wicklow but unfortunately we're never going to attract any business
20 into -- any big industries into West Wicklow without the proper infrastructure in
21 place. In response to a recent parliamentary question the Minister said that Wicklow
22 County Council need to engage with TII. I am wondering what level of engagement
23 is taking place? Myself and Councillor Glennon, as we stated before, made a
24 submission to the National Development Plan in relation to getting the road back on
25 the national agenda, and I am wondering what level of engagement is taking place
26 within the Council. I know Councillor Glennon is going to speak on that topic so I
27 will leave it at that, and you might be able to respond when he makes his
28 contribution as well. Thank you.

29 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And thank you, Members. I'll ask Joe
30 Lane to come in on the Leg of Mutton update and on the bridge as well for
31 Councillor Cronin. And I might ask Michael to comment on the DPG funding in a
32 moment.

33
34 In relation I suppose on the N11 and I suppose the broader matter of the meeting

1 with the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste last week. We got invited at very short notice.
2 As I said, four chief executives, not the Greater Dublin Area, not -- I don't
3 understand the rationale for the four counties that were called in. I was on annual
4 leave on Thursday and Friday. I came in off annual leave to attend that meeting.
5 That's why I only sent the email today, Councillor Behan, and I apologise for that.
6 The meeting was very much framed around the National Planning Framework and
7 housing delivery. And while we were commended for what we have done on our
8 social housing and affordable housing, the sense in the room was very much that
9 they want the Council to do more in terms of zoning of land. When the planning
10 team assessed the new requirements when they came out in the summer we had
11 adequate land zoned. We have now been asked at that meeting on Thursday to
12 increase again. I think our housing target was 2,084 per annum, Minister Cummins
13 says he wants us to deliver more than 3,000 units per year. I outlined to those
14 present the proactive and pragmatic nature of our Council rezoning land. I have to
15 say my experience has been that the Members in this chamber have never been found
16 wanting with regard to listening to the needs in terms of zoning land, but I also
17 outlined to them, as we have had this conversation in the chamber, the guidelines
18 have a set order to things. You develop from the inside out. And that's how we
19 approached all of our most recent plans, our framework plans and our local authority
20 plans. That resulted in some lands being recommended as RN2 and that made sense
21 in the sequential order of planning of our towns and villages. To move those lands
22 from RN2 to RN1 is discounting the need for infrastructure, and I made this point in
23 the planning and delivery of housing and zoning of lands. I made the point at the
24 meeting that the zoning of lands alone will not deliver one extra house. It needs
25 infrastructure. It needs the N11 to become a motorway fully, what it deserves to be.
26 It needs proper public infrastructure to serve the people of Wicklow, both on the east
27 and the west of the county. As I said, the train service isn't a train service beyond
28 Greystones. It is infrequent at best, and it is overfilled. There is no proper public
29 transport in West Wicklow. So West Wicklow cannot develop in the way it should
30 naturally develop. I raised the issue of wastewater capacity in West Wicklow, I
31 raised the issue of freshwater capacity in the Arklow area, acknowledging the fact
32 that we have a new wastewater treatment plant in Arklow and you will see it start to
33 happen, planning applications are coming in, but not a single decision of this Council
34 to zone more land will deliver one extra house. That's the reality of it. I made the

1 point that we need the agencies of the State to work together. There's no point in any
2 of us here making a decision to allow a thousand units go ahead if it's going to be
3 stymied in the next three steps along the way.

4

5 In the room was the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste, the Minister for Housing and
6 Minister for State and Housing, and a lot of advisers, and myself, Joe Behan and
7 Helena Dennehy came with me. Sorry, Joe Lane. We were in the room for 20
8 minutes.

9 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Twenty minutes?

10 MS O'GORMAN: Twenty minutes. We got the invitation on Tuesday, we had to
11 submit a presentation by lunchtime on Wednesday. They had read the presentation
12 which was basically a presentation of all our numbers. We didn't get to present
13 because they were running behind time. So basically 20 minutes was the best we
14 had to make that position. That's why I sent the email today. I am happy to discuss
15 with everybody where we are at with it.

16

17 We are being asked to do a lot of heavy lifting as a county. Wicklow is a very
18 desirable place to live, I get that, but it can't be to the detriment of the quality of life
19 for people in Wicklow. I would stand firmly behind that. I understand the
20 frustration of people travelling on the N11. It doesn't affect me in the same way but
21 it's been taking me five hours to get to work roundtrip for the last month or so. That
22 is not the N11's problem. That is a different problem again. That's the M50. But
23 that's my choice. So I can only begin to appreciate the level of frustration that the
24 citizens of Wicklow have in trying to get to and from work.

25

26 On the N11 specifically, we didn't obviously get into a long discussion about it.
27 They accepted that there is a deficit in infrastructure and the Taoiseach was very
28 clear and said you zone land, we'll deliver the infrastructure. So we are now in a
29 situation where we are being asked to revisit our plans not just to take into the new
30 housing target by way of a variation to the Development Plan and just change our
31 core strategy, they have asked us very much to look at moving from RN2 to RN1
32 with obviously it's -- and I hate to say it, it's a matter for the Members, but I think
33 you know it would be the right thing to do where there is service land that can
34 deliver housing. We've also then been asked to look at additional zoning that's

1 serviced around the county, lands that are serviced around the county, and as I set out
2 in the email that's going to take significantly longer lead in time because it will
3 require SEA and AA screening. But it is a journey we have been asked to take. I
4 don't think we can walk away from it. I don't think any of the Members would want
5 to walk away from it. But it is very challenging. And I don't in good conscience
6 know how we can zone an additional, I don't know how many hectares of land
7 without a single spread of additional public infrastructure. It is difficult.

8

9 I might pass over to Joe Lane to answer on the Leg of Mutton and the bridge. The
10 Cliff Walk, sorry.

11 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Just on the Cliff Walk?

12 MS O'GORMAN: On the Cliff Walk, there is a meeting scheduled for the 25th of
13 November, it's only been confirmed this afternoon, at 4 pm in Government
14 Buildings. My expectation of that meeting is when we first meet, it's the only
15 meeting held at that Cliff Walk Task Force, I told the Tánaiste that when we met
16 again I would be looking for a funding package, that's what I would be expecting.
17 To be fair to Jackie's team and the team in Greystones MD, the RPS consultants
18 work has been done, it's been presented to the chamber and Cliff Walk Management
19 Committee, and it has looked for their input into your views on what you see as the
20 most feasible route forward. That's been costed up. I don't think that's been
21 completed. I might let Jackie come in on that. I intend to present that package to the
22 Tánaiste and ask where are we getting the funding from. The committee want, the
23 task force want the Cliff Walk open as soon as possible. We want the Cliff Walk
24 open as soon as possible. But it has to be done in a way that is long-term
25 sustainable. I do appreciate the impact it is having on both business communities
26 either side of the Cliff Walk and we are conscious we need to get it open as soon as
27 possible.

28

29 I might ask Jackie to clarify on figures for you but I will go to Joe first if that's okay.

30 MR LANE: On the Colbinstown Bridge, there was temporary works done early on
31 last year. Consultants are being appointed to progress to design on the bridge with
32 an idea it will progress in 2026. On the Ballynerrin pedestrian I will have to look at
33 that. I am not familiar -- I am familiar with what you are talking about, I am not
34 familiar with the link between that and the road. I will have to get that one checked

1 out.

2 MS O'GORMAN: Michael.

3 MR NICHOLSON: Thank you. Councillor O'Brien, yes, we do get a specific
4 budget allocation every January for social housing, the EPGs, and private housing.
5 In previous years we wouldn't be too worried, we could top it up with internal capital
6 receipts, we don't have that luxury anymore, our budget is our budget. So we have
7 ran out of money for this year. However, I have retained a small amount of
8 emergency funding for an emergency situation, so if you talk to me afterwards,
9 Councillor O'Brien, because it's that actual scenario I had in mind, if somebody
10 cannot return to their family home for want of a grant. So talk to me afterwards
11 about a specific case and we'll try and sort something out. Thanks.

12 MS CARROLL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. The Bray and Greystones members
13 have submitted the preferred options for remediation of the Cliff Walk Route. We
14 are currently costing those remediations. Primarily on the Bray side it is the
15 remediation of slopes, primarily on the Greystones side it is the rerouting of the
16 walk. It'll be a conservative estimate I suppose because we have to bear in mind that
17 we are talking about individual property rights and landowners on the Greystones
18 side and looking at the options for the spraying and the netting on the slopes of the
19 Bray side. I am very near completion of that cost estimate, that report, and I will be
20 submitting it to the Chief Executive as soon as that's completed. As I say, some of
21 the costs are going to be hard to anticipate bearing in mind that they're relating to
22 particular tracts of land that we are going to have to purchase and negotiate that
23 purchase with landowners, and also the fencing and remediation of areas of the
24 walks as well. So I hope to have that report finished in the next day or two, and I
25 will be submitting to the Chief Executive for the onward submission to the task force
26 for funding passage request in that area.

27 MS O'GORMAN: Just to say we'll circulate that to the Members.

28 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: Thank you.

29 CATHAOIRLEACH: As it's half four, we'll move on to the suspension of standing
30 orders. I am going to ask Helen to read out the wording of the suspension of
31 standing orders.

32 MS PURCELL: So the suspension of standing orders is proposed by Councillor Peir
33 Leonard and co-seconded by Councillor Tom Fortune and Councillor Joe Behan.
34 The wording is: "That Wicklow County Council write to the Minister for Enterprise,

1 Trade and Employment, the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, and other relevant State
2 agencies to convey the deep concern of this Council regarding the announced closure
3 of the Merck facility in Arklow in 2028, and to seek assurances that a comprehensive
4 local transition and support framework will be established at the earliest opportunity.
5

6 Further, that Wicklow County Council actively participate in any task force
7 established, and that the Chief Executive coordinate with the Local Enterprise Office
8 and local stakeholders to ensure timely communication of supports, promote
9 retraining and upskilling, assist affected small businesses, and protect local
10 employment and economic stability."

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Leonard, did you want to come in on that?

12 COUNCILLOR LEONARD: Yes, please, thanks very much. I just want to thank
13 Councillor Tom Fortune who is in charge of the Economic Policy Committee for
14 seconding this, and Joe Behan.
15

16 The announced closure of the Merck facility in Arklow is a major blow - not only for
17 the 100 skilled workers directly affected, but for the wider Wicklow economy.
18 These are high-value technical and manufacturing roles that sustain local families,
19 small businesses, and community confidence. The ripple effect will be felt across
20 Arklow's service sector, retail, and local suppliers, so we need an urgent,
21 coordinated response.
22

23 Wicklow County Council must be fully involved in a local transition task force from
24 the outset - working with the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, the ETB, and our Local
25 Enterprise Office to secure retraining and redeployment supports. The skills
26 developed at Merck are highly transferable to growth sectors like renewable energy,
27 advanced manufacturing, and data centres, and we need to keep that talent within our
28 county.
29

30 We also need early clarity on the future of the Merck site. It's a prime, serviced
31 industrial location that should not be allowed to lie idle - it must be marketed
32 proactively as part of a long-term strategy for sustainable industry and green
33 investment in Wicklow.
34

1 Finally, local SMEs that depend on Merck's presence will need targeted assistance to
2 stay afloat and adapt. This motion sends a clear message: Wicklow stands with the
3 workers and the community of Arklow, and we expect the State agencies to deliver a
4 fair, forward-looking transition. To ensure this happens, the Council should request
5 regular progress reports from the task force and State agencies, so we can track
6 outcomes on retraining, job replacement, and site redevelopment - and hold all
7 parties accountable for delivering real results for the people of Wicklow. Thank you.

8 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. I have made a note of who wants to speak on the
9 Chief Executive's Report but if anybody wanted to speak on this. Councillor
10 Fortune. Councillor Langrell, could you just knock yourself off and I will bring you
11 back in?

12 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, no, I just want to
13 second Councillor Leonard's proposal. And she has articulated it fully what the
14 situation is and outlined it very well. I want to commend her as well. Obviously this
15 is not happening until 2028 but I think now is the time to be preparing for it. And
16 when we get back to the Chief Executive's Report I want to make a couple of
17 comments about the IDA, and the IDA and people like that will play a serious role in
18 it. So I think what we need to do is approve this motion by Councillor Leonard and
19 immediately put in train contacts with the relevant agencies, and as I said I'll talk
20 about it IDA when we're talking about the report. Okay.

21 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Bourke.

22 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Cathaoirleach, thank you very much. I'd like to support
23 this motion proposed by Councillor Leonard and seconded by Councillor Behan. It's
24 very timely. I met with Deputy Brennan and the Minister Bourke actually last week
25 in Arklow. He happened to be down at Servier visiting them. I think that anything
26 we can do we should be doing to help salvage something from this I call it a debacle
27 more than anything, because from listening to the workers that spoke to us they're all
28 very skilled and operating in a very profitable business it seems to be at the moment,
29 it is not in trouble or loss-making. So it is a shame that the executives of this
30 company are making a decision affecting the lives of young people who recently
31 have taken out mortgages and are setting up a family and home. We need to do what
32 we can as a council to ensure that we mitigate this decision and try to find a
33 replacement, help to find a replacement industry. We have a very viable going
34 concern here that needs to be helped. Thanks very much, Cathaoirleach.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Kennedy, did you want to come in?

2 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Yes. Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I fully support this
3 motion as well, as Councillor Bourke has outlined already. I won't go over it and
4 hold up the meeting. I want to support it as well.

5 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Murphy online.

6 COUNCILLOR MURPHY: Yeah, thank you, Cathaoirleach. And, yes, I echo what
7 the other two Arklow Councillors have said, and Councillor Leonard has brought up
8 very sensitive discussion I suppose and again I would like to strongly say that I think
9 the IDA and a lot of other stakeholders can be involved in it, and my fear is that
10 ...(inaudible)... start of locally and nationally being in danger. So it's very important
11 that we meet with the stakeholders involved. Can I just actually say that Councillor
12 Mahon has had his hand up there for a long time and he hasn't been brought in there?
13 Okay.

14 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. He's next to speak on the Chief Executive's
15 Report. I will bring the Chief Executive in first.

16 MS O'GORMAN: Just very briefly, Members. Look, I thank Councillor Leonard
17 for the motion and for the support of the chamber. I think it is hugely, hugely
18 important we are proactive here. We have the Local Enterprise Office and the suite
19 of supports that are there, so we will use that office to reach out to the workers and to
20 the different agencies because there's very strong working relationships there. As it
21 happens, the Mid-East Region Skills Task Force is meeting in the next couple of
22 weeks, Regional Task Force, in Wicklow. So we will highlight the need for
23 intervention at State level too. Thank you. We'll get that off today.

24 CATHAOIRLEACH: Great. Thank you. So I think that's all agreed. Thank you,
25 Members, and thank you, Councillor Leonard, for that. So we will go back to the
26 Chief Executive's Report, and Councillor Pat Mahon is next.

27 COUNCILLOR MAHON: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Yeah, I will be very short.
28 The RRDF in Baltinglass. It was one of the first things I raised in the chamber when
29 I came on to the Council and that's a year ago believe it or not, and it is still not
30 advanced. We're gone beyond trying to tell people tenders, reports, et cetera, et
31 cetera, and all the people involved are asking when is this project going to get
32 finished up and get delivered? I also want to know who is responsible for delivering
33 the project and who is on the ground delivering the budget? We just need to get it
34 off the ground. It seems to be gone dead in the water. There's report after report

1 after report. Engineers' report, costings. We get reports, reports, reports. They need
2 to know when is this going to take place. When is it going to happen? That's all.

3 Thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Louise Fenelon Gaskin.

5 COUNCILLOR FENELON GASKIN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. First of all, I just
6 want to thank the Chief Executive and Michael Nicholson for progressing the works
7 in Farrankelly. As you know, it's one of my pet projects. But what I would like to
8 know is when can we expect to have a full detailed report on the works to be done
9 per the house and also the costing, which is very important, from the new system, as
10 we would like to see the extent of the survey that has been finished and also the
11 timeline for the works. It is great to see the works starting there, they have been
12 measuring doors, and it is happening. It is great to see the work, but it would be
13 great to see what is the whole project and what is the extent of it.

14

15 I will just say just on the Cliff Walk, and agreeing with Councillor Behan, from the
16 Greystones side, that I work closely obviously with the businesses and public there
17 and did stand up in front of them at that meeting, whether I was going to be shot or
18 not, but just something, can I ask that before the task force meeting to be sure that it
19 is productive, especially when you say like the other day you only had 20 minutes at
20 a meeting, that the relevant reports and everything are in before them well in advance
21 so as that that meeting is productive for a day because obviously we want to see
22 results coming back on it to make it worthwhile and that we can all move forward
23 with that. And if we could get an update on that report as soon as possible after that
24 meeting it would be very much appreciated.

25

26 And the other thing I just wanted to ask about, and I hope I have read it right in the
27 report, again it goes back to the N11, and part of Kilpedder falls into my district, but
28 it was on what is known as the Kilpedder Rat Run, that the feasibility study has been
29 approved for funding there for a road safety improvement scheme, a feasibility study
30 for it, and I was just wondering when would that happen. That's all. Thank you.

31 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Peter Stapleton.

32 COUNCILLOR STAPLETON: Thank you, Chair. And thank you for bringing me
33 in. Nearly blew a lid there thinking that we were finished with the Chief Executive's
34 Report after sitting through 90 minutes of dog shit and not getting to say my little

1 piece here. That is not to belittle the scourge that dog fouling is in the priority but it
2 did get me thinking about the priorities of this chamber that it took us 90 minutes to
3 get to Councillor Behan's point around housing, around future infrastructure in this
4 county, some of the most consequential things for the people who live here and
5 probably isn't discussed in this chamber enough. Because, for instance, even having
6 just had that exchange between the Chief Executive and Councillor Behan, it got me
7 thinking that there must be a huge number of people within the county who are living
8 in their parents' houses, living in rented accommodation, that would be living in
9 these new homes that aren't necessarily going to be necessarily putting additional
10 pressure on infrastructure. I don't know if we have any stats on that but I know even
11 in planning it's allowable to put in conditions that it be for people who live within the
12 county. So maybe if we had zoning with those restrictions it would give us more
13 confidence to kick on and zone more housing for the people of Wicklow. That's just
14 a by-the-by something to think by as you said that. Also it seems like a pretty fair
15 exchange between the Taoiseach and ourselves that if we zone more land the
16 infrastructure will come. So you have to take that as a positive, whether you can
17 take it at that word is another question, but I think that is the positive in that.

18
19 Finally to the point I wanted to raise. It is just around road markings on the road
20 between Shillelagh and Tullow. I know conversations have been going on about
21 ring-fencing money in the budget for line markings on our regional and local roads. I
22 just want to stress that is so important, particularly in reference to this road. A very,
23 very fast regional road that sees a lot of traffic that has next to no line markings on it,
24 and unfortunately was the location of a tragic accident in the last number of weeks.
25 Now, I have to stress that the lack of line markings was absolutely nothing to do with
26 what was an horrific accident. It draws the attention back to the lack of line
27 markings amongst the public and they have asked me to raise it here again. Is there
28 any way we can get it done in the near future? That would be brilliant thanks
29 CATHAOIRLEACH: I did mention conduct earlier. I didn't think I would have to
30 mention language in the chamber also. I will pass over to the Chief Executive.

31 COUNCILLOR STAPLETON: I apologise for that.

32 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Members.

33 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Language! Language! Dreadful.

34 CATHAOIRLEACH: It has been addressed.

1 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: You're a member of the right party.

2 CATHAOIRLEACH: Sorry, Councillors, the Chief Executive is about to speak.

3 Sorry, thank you.

4 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. I will ask Helena Dennehy to come in
5 on the RRDF in Baltinglass, Councillor Mahon. So it sits in that directorate. It is
6 part of planning, economic and rural development. It sits within the Town Centre
7 First Town Regeneration team. They are the primary vehicle for delivering the
8 RRDF and URDF projects in the county, notwithstanding that it has significant
9 support from the Baltinglass MD as well in terms of the expertise on the ground. I
10 will ask Helena to give an update on that now in a moment.

11

12 Councillor Fenelon Gaskin, I will ask Michael to come back in on Farrankelly and
13 where we are on it. My understanding is that the funding has to be spent by year end
14 so the works will continue at pace there but just in terms of getting detailed reports
15 on the costings.

16

17 In relation to the Cliff Walk, absolutely we will send in our options of feasibility
18 well within advance to the meeting. As I say, literally sitting in the meeting today
19 the date was confirmed for the 25th. It's moved a couple of times. As soon as we
20 have our report finalised we will circulate it to this chamber and we will circulate it
21 to the members of the task force so they have time to consider it in advance.

22

23 I will ask Joe to come in on the Kilpedder feasibility study as well and on the road
24 markings.

25

26 Councillor Stapleton, on the infrastructure. We don't have any statistics around how
27 many people are living at home. And yes, there probably is a sizable population
28 within Wicklow that would like to be living in Wicklow. How feasible it is to stitch
29 something like that into zoning -- we have been challenged, as you know, by vulture
30 funds on, it is a very important part of our Development Plan, on apartment blocks,
31 we have stitched that into our Development Plan, it has been challenged at every
32 turn. But we do have very strong local residency policies within Wicklow but I
33 wouldn't like to see us constrain housing availability to those that are only resident
34 and from Wicklow. I would I suppose hopefully share your optimism in if we zone

1 the infrastructure will come, and the Taoiseach was very clear it shouldn't be a
2 barrier on funding, but the proof is in the pudding on that.

3

4 I will hand over to Helena on the RRDF, then Michael and Joe.

5 MS DENNEHY: So, the Baltinglass RRDF. We have completed the tender
6 documents in relation to the public realm element of that. The detailed design has
7 actually been submitted to the Department and we're just waiting for clarification and
8 confirmation from the Department to move to the next step. And just to say I have
9 actually got a meeting with the Department on Wednesday about both Baltinglass
10 and Blessington URDF. So I am hoping to have an answer following Wednesday's
11 meeting about that project and progression of it.

12 COUNCILLOR MAHON: Thank you.

13 MR NICHOLSON: In relation to Farrankelly, I am hoping, Councillor Fenelon
14 Gaskin, you will be getting phone calls tomorrow, Wednesday, from your residents
15 informing you the work has started because it is due to start tomorrow Wednesday.
16 We are doing 11 houses. It is purely windows and doors. We did do a full survey of
17 all the properties but our focus at the moment is on windows doors. We felt that was
18 the best use of the 200 grand we have left in the repairs scheme. This is phase one.
19 We intend to continue in the new year when we get more money, I'm confident we
20 will, to finish the rest of the houses. When the contractor does the report it's loaded
21 onto iHouse and the Adjust system, it doesn't produce report, so we are trying to
22 manually extract from that what exactly was in those reports, and when I do that I'll
23 send them onto the Members. Certainly work is starting tomorrow on windows and
24 doors and I think the tenants will be very, very happy with that. Thank you.

25 MR LANE: As regards the N11, the safety improvement schemes, a feasibility
26 option report has been approved by the TII to support the proposed statutory
27 approval process that is currently being prepared. The objective of the scheme is to
28 deal with the safety issue and the rat running. As regard Shillelagh, I might talk to
29 the Councillor because I might have missed the exact location, there may be
30 sensitivities around that but I'll talk to you. But in general there's limited monies for
31 street lighting. We are looking in the context of the budget going forward. I want to
32 talk to you about that. I might have missed something there.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Patsy Glennon.

34 COUNCILLOR GLENNON: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Thank you very much. I'd

1 like to start by thanking the Chief Executive for her update on her meeting with the
2 Taoiseach and the Tánaiste and for the clarity she gave after Joe Behan's questions.
3 That's very much appreciated.

4

5 Coming back to my initial question, Hollywood Cross is being reconstructed, and
6 that's a welcome development. There's a great job being done. It is anticipated that
7 it will be finished by the end of December, ahead of schedule, as it is moving along
8 well. But unfortunately it will be of limited use unless we get our park and ride to
9 park cars there for the people coming from surrounding areas to take them out of the
10 cars and onto the bus. I have checked with the Director of Finance that the monies
11 would be available should a piece of land come up but I would like that to be
12 progressed as much as possible, as speedily as possible.

13

14 My colleague Councillor Cronin mentioned the N81. The N81 is a much forgotten
15 road when it comes to this chamber. I say that with the greatest respect. The N11 is
16 very important to a lot of my colleagues. But the N81 is not fit for purpose. It was
17 mentioned by Minister Buttimer recently in answer to a Dáil question, that it was up
18 to Council to progress it with TII. So I would like that to be progressed. Now, there
19 is another crossroads quite close on the Blessington side, Heron's Crossroad, but is
20 absolutely lethal. And both myself and Councillor Cronin are prepared to spend
21 some of our discretionary money to try to get a consultants' report to see what can be
22 done about it. It is certainly lethal and unfair to people using it. The safety scheme
23 south of Blessington was discussed at length with TII and it must be close on two
24 years because the delegation was led by Aoife Flynn Kennedy when she was
25 Cathaoirleach, and it still hasn't happened. It is progressing but not happening as fast
26 as it should. So those are issues I would like to see raised.

27

28 And Local Link doesn't serve either Donard or Hollywood, two reasonable villages,
29 but there is no services whatsoever in them, so I don't know how we go about
30 addressing them because I think we're falling between two stools with the organisers
31 of the Local Link. Perhaps you will have someone look into that for us.

32

33 I bear the frustration expressed by Councillor Mahon because me and my other
34 colleagues from Baltinglass have been mentioning the RRDF for considerably longer

1 than a year, but I have heard Helena's adequate response to it so there is no answer to
2 look for there, but perhaps the other matters you would throw some light on for me.
3 Thank you.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Lourda Scott.

5 COUNCILLOR SCOTT: Yeah, thanks, Cathaoirleach. I will start off with a
6 question about Farrankelly. And just following on from your response to Councillor
7 Gaskin in terms of getting the data from this new system, I think we have been
8 looking for this for the last two months, since September, and I appreciate that
9 whatever way that system is set up it is not easy to extract the data from it but I
10 would expect even going through it manually, there's only 50-odd houses there, that
11 we would have a report of sorts, that we know exactly what we are dealing with and
12 what sort of money we need to get to progress beyond these 11 houses, getting the
13 doors and windows done. It is welcome to hear that is starting.

14

15 On a similar note, I would like to ask on progress on seeing the property on Mill
16 Road being brought onto disposal notice in front of the Council. Again I know that
17 the plan is to have that money ring-fenced for the rest of the works that needs to be
18 done in Farrankelly and obviously will be a slow process probably to get that sold
19 and I am anxious to see it in front of us so at least that step is taken as soon as
20 possible.

21

22 Just moving on from that to the email I received from the Chief Executive about the
23 20-minute meeting, which, to be frank, is disrespectful to yourselves and it is
24 disrespectful to us as Councillors who are constantly working for the best needs for
25 their community. To have a meeting on zoning taking 20 minutes casually by the
26 Taoiseach and the Tánaiste is frankly disgraceful, and it shows how little they are
27 doing to tackle housing crisis properly. To think that zoning additional land is going
28 to achieve more houses being built is naive I feel. There needs to be more
29 discussions on the houses, the tens of thousands of housing that have planning
30 permissions currently and haven't started to be built let alone the thousands of vacant
31 homes that need to be addressed and brought back into the property. Specifically on
32 your comment, Chief Executive, on how the need for infrastructure has been
33 discounted. Like, Wicklow may be doing the heavy lifting here but Greystones
34 district, which is my concern, will be doing the heavy lifting on behalf of Wicklow.

1 At the last Council meeting we discussed our Local Area Plan, and that was led by
2 the need for infrastructure in our area to catch up after extensive development. To
3 remind everybody, the Tánaiste lives in Greystones. He knows about the lack of
4 school places we have there. He knows there's schools there waiting for their
5 extensions. He knows there's people who can't get childcare places, all our sporting
6 facilities, that have nowhere to train or play. I know the trains are incredibly poor
7 south of Greystones, they're also not too great going to Greystones. Again last bank
8 holiday weekend, no trains going. This has a massive effect on the businesses in our
9 town, with one of our restaurants sadly giving notice they have to close during the
10 week. This is part of the problem. Our own MD doesn't have another outdoor staff
11 at the moment to service the area let alone when we build additional houses there.
12 There's a whole discussion to be had on infrastructure. A school in Newtown is
13 needed. There's no sign of that happening, if ever. We have one of our secondary
14 schools still operating out of prefabs six years after it was sanctioned for a new
15 school to be built. So while we are saying naively, oh, if we build housing
16 infrastructure will come, if you believe that is going to happen in conjunction with
17 the housing being built I'd have a better chance of that happening if I put it on my
18 Santa list this December than relying on the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste to deliver
19 that. Because the infrastructure hasn't come already. We have a lot of houses built
20 in Greystones and we do not have the infrastructure. So the question is will it come,
21 it is when will it come? Thank you

22 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Gail Dunne.

23 COUNCILLOR DUNNE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach for letting me in there. Sorry,
24 just one second. I listened with great intent to what our Chief Executive said about
25 the meeting with the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste and Minister Browne. I also have
26 spoken to Minister Browne, and one of his ideas was that he was trying to bring in
27 land that had water and sewerage but it had no zoning on the outskirts of the town.
28 And that would increase, that would obviously increase housing but it would also
29 give more zoning to housing around Wicklow Town which has a lot of facilities.
30 Our problem is the DART. There's no point of in saying anything else. It's now put
31 back to 2030. Going forward, now I'm not sure whether I got this right, but are we
32 going to do a variation of the County Development Plan? Because if we are going to
33 look at proper planning and proper houses on the outskirts of the town that we can
34 bring in that has water, sewerage and proper infrastructure are we going to do it?

1 And maybe the Chief Executive would answer that. Bray and Greystones are the
2 major growth centres and Wicklow Town has grown, I think 2,150 are the new limits
3 with a headroom to 3,000. I wouldn't like to see housing every ...(inaudible)... In
4 my opinion, and proper planning I think is really important. That we do get housing
5 for the large amount of people that are on the housing list and people who are
6 looking for housing. I think we shouldn't forget that. ...(inaudible)... going forward,
7 and either zoning land or getting lands ready to zone. Because it's terrible to see
8 anybody who deals with houses -- in my area I deal with a lot of houses, and it's
9 terrible to see young people looking for affordable housing, looking for housing,
10 social housing and can't get any. And we get 20%, 10%, of all the schemes that are
11 done. So it's really important that we do it properly. But I know in fairness
12 ...(inaudible)... looking at all of this. I want to know, my question is: Are we going
13 for a variation in the County Development Plan? Thank you.

14 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. And thank you, Members. Councillor
15 Glennon, a lot of issues there around different elements of the roads in West
16 Wicklow. I will ask Joe to comment on what he can on it. I am going to suggest, I
17 am going to write to TII and see will they meet us specifically around the issues on
18 the N81 and the various crossings on them, and if I get a meeting with them we
19 might invite the members of the district and try and do it that way. Because I know
20 we're going around in circles, and it is very important that we have that meeting with
21 them at a high level. Joe might be able to clarify on the park and ride and Heron's
22 Crossroad and South Blessington as well.

23

24 On the Local Link, I had spoken to NTA about it. I will speak to them again,
25 because they're the funders of the Local Link, and for the need to extend to Donard
26 and Hollywood. I will certainly do that.

27

28 Michael might clarify again for Councillor Scott on Farrankelly and the Mill Road,
29 183.

30

31 Just to be clear, I suppose there wasn't any zoning decisions made at that meeting.
32 That's not -- the meeting within the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste and others. That's
33 not within their gift. What they have asked us to do is look more broadly at our
34 zoning of land. So to answer Councillor Dunne's question, yes, we will be proposing

1 to vary the County Development Plan. We have to vary it to take in the new housing
2 targets into our core strategy, so what I am suggesting is that we look in the first
3 instance at moving that RN2 to RN1. I think we may have a two-stage, two
4 variations to the plan, one to do that piece, subject obviously to the Members'
5 agreement, and secondly then to look at those lands that are on the fringes of our
6 townlands and hinterlands that have services that weren't zoned in the last iterations
7 of either LAPs or IPFs and to see whether they can be brought into the County
8 Development Plan. To do the second piece, those lands that aren't currently zoned,
9 will require the full rigours of the development plan process, as in the screening and
10 all the consultants' reports that go with that. So that is going to take much longer.
11 The timeline for doing that piece of work, you're probably talking from now until
12 next summer. To look at the core strategy and the RN2 potentially to RN1 you're
13 talking the very start -- the end of Q1, start of Q2. So you're talking March, possibly
14 bringing it to the full Council at that stage. But we're in the process of working it
15 through. We will be in touch, the planning team will be in touch with the Members
16 in the next week or so just setting out what we are looking at progressing and then
17 working with yourselves through that.

18
19 So yes, at a very minimum we are required to vary our plan to take into the new
20 targets but I think -- well, we have been asked to look at moving our RN2 to RN1
21 and then looking at what other additional lands that we could potentially zone that
22 have services that are on the hinterlands of our towns. Thank you.

23
24 So I will go over to Joe first on roads.

25 MR LANE: On the Heron's Cross, thanks for the offer, I will look for that. We
26 spoke earlier and I talked about that particular one, and I will make sure you get
27 progress reports on the N81, the safety measures on the N81 south of
28 Blessington -- sorry, south of Blessington, yes. The report I have on the park and
29 rides are just TII-funded ones. I will have to check that one for you. Outside the
30 formatting of the report. I will get that for you.

31 MR NICHOLSON: Cathaoirleach, I would imagine the tenants in Farrankelly would
32 prefer to get new windows and doors rather than read a report telling them they are
33 getting new windows and doors. So our focus has been on actually getting the
34 windows and doors in. My staff pulled out the most amazing thing to have it done in

1 quick time, to get them procured and priced, and have works started tomorrow. We
2 are doing that because we have to claim by the end of November. All claims have to
3 be in the Department by the end of the month. We're under time pressure to get the
4 money spent to have the claim made to get the money. We will pull out the reports
5 from the Adjust and iHouse system, but our priority has been on actually getting the
6 work done.

7
8 As regards Mill Road, yeah, the first five houses I will bringing them to the Council
9 meeting in December. I had hoped to have it on the agenda today but we are waiting
10 for a couple of small pieces of information. So section 183 should be on the agenda
11 for December. That included the Mill Road. The one advantage of there being a
12 delay is the value of those houses increased significantly. We believe the Mill Road
13 has almost doubled from the original price we were told to expect. That's good news
14 for Farrankelly; it means more money available. So the delay in this case in the
15 works is to our advantage. Thank you, Cathaoirleach.

16 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. So I have made a note of the requests for
17 speaking from before the suspension of standing orders. So the next one on the list
18 was Councillor Silvester Bourke.

19 COUNCILLOR BOURKE: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just two questions for Joe
20 Lane. In I think it was March we passed the Part 8 for the first phase of houses in
21 Church View in Arklow and we were told it would be commencing in November.
22 Could you give us an update on that? There's no sign of anything happening there
23 yet. And secondly, in relation to the second part of that, which was linked in a
24 bundle within the Public Private Partnership Scheme, the first part of that, I think in
25 Blessington has been rejected, you might correct me if I am wrong, but on cost
26 considerations. And what effect will that have, if any, on the phase two for Church
27 View for the 125 units that we also passed? Thanks very much.

28 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you. Councillor Shane Langrell.

29 COUNCILLOR LANGRELL: Thank you, Cathaoirleach. Chief Executive, thank
30 you for the update with the meeting with the Tánaiste and Taoiseach. I suppose
31 Councillor Scott touched on it there. We have to be very careful. It's all right for the
32 Taoiseach and the Tánaiste to I suppose go zone land and we look after things after.
33 For example, Councillor Scott touched on it there, in Newtownmountkennedy we
34 have lands zoned educational back in 2002 and only a few months ago myself and

1 Councillor Alvey have set up a little bit of a committee with a lot of parents in the
2 Roundwood, Laragh, Newcastle, Newtownmountkennedy area. And I got an email
3 back -- I probably said this in the chamber before, I got an email back from Helen
4 MacEntee to say there was no immediate plans for a school in
5 Newtownmountkennedy, which is crazy. Newtownmountkennedy is going to double
6 in size from two and a half thousand to five thousand in '28 and '29, where we crying
7 out for a secondary school. It is a knock-on effect to Greystones and Kilcoole where
8 we need our own secondary school. So absolutely, thank you for that, and I will be
9 meeting with the Tánaiste the week after next I think and I will be bringing this up
10 with him as well.

11

12 Chief Executive, you said you were going to be in touch on the Local Link there.
13 The 199 Local Link bus route from Glendalough to Bray, through Annamoe,
14 Roundwood, Kilmacanogue, I got an email saying it was going to start on the 22nd
15 of September. There was a delay on it. Then it was put back to some date in
16 October. Now we're the 3rd of November and it's a year ago that the NTA was here
17 and said it would be up and running early '25. The first quarter of 2025 is what I was
18 told. We had a meeting with the transport and infrastructure there six weeks, two
19 months ago, and the Director I think his name was John Knock was at our meeting
20 and he said it will be up and running by the end of October. Here we are in
21 November. I sent an email through Linda Healy here in the Council which she
22 forward on to the NTA, and the response back a few days later was very vague.
23 And, like, I'm representing the community of Glendalough, Roundwood and Laragh
24 and I am being inundated with messages when is this Local Link going to be up and
25 running. And furthermore, this job has been awarded to Nolan Coaches where I only
26 spoke to there last Friday, they've gone and purchased this bus. The bus is sitting
27 there with nothing coming back from the NTA. So, Chief Executive, if you could
28 please send an email to see can you get any clarification on it. Thank you very
29 much.

30 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Miriam Murphy.

31 COUNCILLOR MURPHY: Yeah, thank you, Cathaoirleach. Just a few things there
32 I want to bring up. I brought up actually a year ago in relation to the out of hours
33 contact and I am just wondering was that ever improved? I know our CEO was to
34 look into it. And I am wondering was there any improvement in it whatsoever?

1 Secondly, I was delighted to know that there was a drop-in information session on
2 people with disability recently. I would like a report on what information was
3 gathered on that, what was gained at each drop-in centre. And also, do the other
4 Councillors know about it? And thanks to Wicklow County Council information I
5 got to know of it, an information session in Arklow library. I think the information
6 would have been -- maybe other Members did know. I didn't. But I think Members
7 in our chamber would benefit from the information on that because ...(inaudible)...
8 such needs and situations, and also on what ...(inaudible)... I think we can all see it
9 in our districts with the same issue. Again Arklow being a huge forthcoming benefit
10 with houses on both sides of the town and literally lack of infrastructure, both
11 transport wise and congestion, and schools and public transport, and I think
12 ...(inaudible)... and you know, we need transport studies, and for a 30-year plan I
13 mean being realistic you know people are not going to wait that long for
14 improvements, and hopefully these developments in this district, we need to be
15 looking for funding for that as soon as possible. Thank you very much.

16 MS O'GORMAN: Thank you, Cathaoirleach and Members. Councillor Bourke, I
17 think all your questions were directed to Joe so I will get him to come in on that now.

18
19 Councillor Langrell, on the Local Link 199, I will definitely make contact. I am
20 shocked by that to be honest with you.

21
22 And, Councillor Murphy, I don't know about the drop-in service for people with
23 housing need with disabilities. Michael might be able to give a bit of information on
24 that. In relation to the out of hours services, we had looked at that. It was a
25 miscommunication I suppose in terms of when calls were being picked up and
26 dropped. Leonora might be able to clarify for you. I will go to Joe first.

27 MR LANE: We are currently working through design on that. Tender documents
28 should be going out early in quarter 1, '26. Now when you say there's no works were
29 being done, at the moment there is preliminary works, clearance on-site at the
30 moment. We reckon we will go to tender in quarter 1, '26.

31 MR NICHOLSON: Cathaoirleach, in relation to people on the list requiring
32 disability provision for houses, what we have done is we're going through our
33 housing list at the moment to make sure that every single person has identified on
34 their housing application form exactly what they require, and whether we can adapt

1 the property or whether we have to get a property specifically built for them.
2 Regardless of what happened at the drop-in clinics we're doing the exercise anyway,
3 just to make sure. Some people for some reasons don't obviously claim on an
4 application form what they need. We are going to make sure we have a full list, so
5 we can liaise with Joe and his team as regards constructing houses or make sure we
6 can adapt them, or build specifically, or use the disability grant. I will talk to you
7 privately on that, Miriam.

8 MR LANE: I forgot about Tinahask, and I might even pre-empt a question coming
9 from Councillor O'Neill regarding Burgage. So, Burgage is different to PPP. That
10 was suspended, that particular PPP. The others, which is Tinahask and Burnaby
11 there's currently a review of the PPP process, and we're awaiting that to see what
12 we're doing. That's for the Burnaby and Tinahask Phase 2 which is the extra part of
13 that development. Burgage, Wicklow County Council have decided rather than
14 waiting for the NTA and the Department to move on with the -- most of the schemes,
15 they are Kildare and Dublin mainly, and ourselves, there was a process where they
16 would go for a design, for a tender for all of those. We have decided rather than that
17 we will progress it ourselves. So we will be going to tender ourselves for the
18 Burgage. I am pre-empting a question that wasn't asked by the way. So Burgage
19 will be moving ahead by the local authority on its own. We're not waiting for the
20 PPP process or what is left from the NTA process. Once that review is done for
21 Tinahask, which is different from Burnaby, we will then decide whether we're going
22 to -- we will see what comes out of that, and whether we will break it up and go
23 ourselves again. We will have to see about that. Again, just one of the strengths of
24 the PPP was while they were doing that our team was doing something else. When
25 we're not doing that, it stretches us, and we still have challenges recruiting
26 professional staff. So just keep that in mind.

27 MS EARLS: Councillor Murphy, just in relation to the out of hours. We have been
28 in contact with the service providers and we have updated all the contact details for
29 Wicklow County Council with them. Now, there's still a bit of ongoing work with
30 them just to try and look at some of the glitches in the system so it's ongoing. So we
31 will keep Members informed.

32 CATHAOIRLEACH: We have another five people looking to speak. I am
33 conscious we have two notice of motions -- sorry, three notice of motions and we do
34 have people in the chamber waiting on those. Could we go quickly to those and then

1 go back to the Chief Executive's Report? I need a proposer and seconder of that?

2 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: Can we not deal with the report first?

3 CATHAOIRLEACH: I just want to do this quickly and then we go back. It's up to
4 you, Members, if you want to continue on with the Chief Executive's Report?

5 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: I just think this report is the best part of the meeting,
6 so...

7 CATHAOIRLEACH: That's fair enough. I wanted to put it out there. Fair enough.
8 So the next person to speak then sorry is Councillor Dermot O'Brien.

9 COUNCILLOR DERMOT O'BRIEN: That's grand, Cathaoirleach. Fire ahead with
10 the next person. All good.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Are you sure, Councillor O'Brien? Do you want to email in
12 your queries? The next one then is Councillor Pat Kennedy.

13 COUNCILLOR KENNEDY: Can you hear me? Yeah. Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I
14 suppose my question is for the Chief Executive just in relation to the meeting with
15 the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste, and something that I have mentioned to the
16 Taoiseach on many occasions and I have mentioned it in this chamber is the use of
17 package treatment plants on-site, where you bring in on-site treatment and then
18 connect into the foul sewer line. I did have a meeting, and I have mentioned it many
19 times here in this -- sorry, before I that say that, Chief Executive, I do want to
20 acknowledge that you came off your annual leave to go to that meeting. I just
21 wanted to put that on the record.

22

23 Something that I have mentioned many times in this chamber is the fact that there's
24 no capacity in the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Aughrim. And there have been no
25 houses built there for maybe 16 years now and we do have a waiting list in Aughrim
26 for housing. I did have a meeting with Irish Water two weeks ago specifically about
27 Aughrim, I did ask them about the use of package treatment plants, and they did
28 indicate to me that they do hope to lodge an application for a new wastewater
29 treatment plant over the next year or 14 months to the Council here for that. So I did
30 ask them can we use or will they allow the use of package treatment plants if a
31 developer was prepared to put one in, subject to complying with all environmental
32 regulations and suitably sized, and the answer was if a developer was prepared to put
33 in a package treatment plant they will accept that provided it meets all the legislation
34 and criteria. And I suppose my question, Chief Executive, is: That if a developer

1 does want to do that, that will meet no barriers in the Council? That if Irish Water is
2 accepting it that Wicklow County Council will accept it? Is that fair? Thanks,
3 Cathaoirleach.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Stephen Stokes. Councillor Stokes, did you have
5 a query? We will go on to Councillor Tom Fortune.

6 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. Thanks, Chief Executive, for
7 your report. There's lots of good stuff in it. I have just a few specifics I want to
8 highlight or ask about. One would be housing. The question I would have on
9 housing is: Where we have an emergency and a one-bed is the solution to it and we
10 don't have a one-bed in the system, is it possible in particular cases we'd look at a
11 two-bed even if it meant sometime in the future swapping it around? I think it's
12 something that should be considered because if not we're going months and months
13 and months without being able to deal with an issue.

14
15 And just very quickly on the Economic Development SPC. We had a visit from the
16 IDA. Now, just to give you a couple of pointers, and I wanted to ask something
17 specific as well falling out of it. The meeting itself was okay. It was the same as the
18 meetings we've had here over the years, where they come down and do a kind of dog
19 and bone show about what they're about, but nothing ever seems to be happening at
20 least in the way we would look at it. They were asked, like, for example, about in
21 what way would they treat Wicklow as a priority versus, say, Kildare or Meath?
22 That it appeared that we weren't getting project -- that was our perception, we weren't
23 getting the projects. So they gave us their standard answers on that. We also raised
24 with them specifically about the media campus in Greystones that is a massive
25 project and it's sitting on ice as we speak, and what they confirmed was that they
26 would have an answer about its future by Christmas. So it was that kind of
27 conversation. We talked about the idea of the lack of proper big industry throughout
28 Wicklow affects the rate base and affects the economics of running our county.
29 They were some of the rationale of stuff we put to them. So they told us then as part
30 of our feedback to us that -- because we talked about meetings and having meetings
31 that are productive. They said they meet with Wicklow County Council regularly,
32 they even said they meet monthly. I'm not sure whether that happens the way they
33 described it or not. But what I would ask falling out of what I have said is: Is it
34 possible, Chief Executive, that on your monthly report we would get some kind of a

1 paragraph or some update on what is happening IDA wise? Because as I referred to
2 there a moment ago, we have a problem in the county on the rate base levels, and we
3 need to be pushing the likes of the IDA to do what we want done. So maybe that
4 would be productive from what's going on.

5
6 If I could make a quick observation on the Cliff Walk without trying to repeat what's
7 been done. With the meeting you're having on the 25th of November. Obviously the
8 costing is very important. We need to get that costing done and clear. Also,
9 hopefully what might come out of that or the feedback out of that might be who is
10 going to be in charge of making the project happen and then confirm the timeline.
11 Because there is an expectation especially, say, on the south side of the walk, and I'm
12 sure on the Bray side as well, that it could be open by next St Patrick's Day. That's
13 the kind of pressure that is on locally. We need to know how real that is. Because
14 on the Greystones side there's also a strong view that there's about 300 metres of the
15 walk that really just needs moving in. I don't know if that's correct, but at least
16 maybe falling out of all of this once and for all we can establish that so we're not
17 having meeting after meeting and getting nowhere. In other words, there's a solution
18 to what is going on rather than a whole lot of talk. So that'd be important.

19
20 Also is there any update -- there's a lot of talk going on backwards and forward about
21 a greenway project going from Bray to Arklow or Greystones to Arklow, and there's
22 loads of difficulties in making that happen. Where is that? And what's the
23 involvement of the local authority? Can we get an update on it? And is it possible to
24 have regular updates on that as well?

25
26 Again thank you for your update last Thursday with the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste,
27 Chief Executive. It sounds like the meeting, despite -- it seems like it was a good
28 meeting. But I think what's important coming out of that meeting as well is
29 timelines, because we as public reps need to know that. That's going to be in the
30 media, it's there already, so we're going to get inundated now with what was said and
31 what wasn't said, so we do need to know that we're talking from a factual base.
32 That's very important.

33 CATHAOIRLEACH: Councillor Fortune, can I hurry up there?

34 COUNCILLOR FORTUNE: Yeah, you can. I am just finished. Yeah, on that point

1 as well, as a group in our own area when we were discussing the Local Area Plan, or
2 the LAP, we did a lot of what ifs around it, so we have had conversations in our
3 district already around this potential stuff happening, so feedback to us is very
4 important.

5

6 Then my last comment, Chair, is the IDA, NTA I have problem. If we are relying on
7 them to come down here to us and explain to us in proper language and proper
8 solution-based language I think it is a lot of wishful thinking. So we need to give
9 them a brief of some sort before they come near us so they don't come in and give us
10 a standard -- we don't need to know who they are. We can read that online.

11 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Councillor O'Neill. There's only one or two
12 minutes left.

13 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Thanks, Cathaoirleach. I just wonder there two points.
14 What's the situation as regards the court proceedings against Quanta Limited, the
15 people building 65 houses in Bray without any planning? Is that still going ahead
16 next Monday I think?

17

18 Number two, in talking about the Hollywood traffic calming I would like to remind
19 Councillor Glennon that long before himself or Councillor Cronin were involved in
20 politics that I was very much involved in the N81 and trying to upgrade it, and for
21 years I tried to get this famous bus stop. And we do have -- the bus stop is on the
22 way and there's traffic calming. There over a million euro being spent on the traffic
23 calming in the area. But if you look at the plan of it, and maybe the CEO would look
24 at this to ensure that this doesn't happen, having spent over a million the speed limit
25 is to remain the same. And that's there in black and white in the plans for this. So I
26 know the people of Hollywood are very concerned that the whole idea of the traffic
27 calming would be to reduce the speed not to leave it at the 80 kilometre that it is at
28 the moment.

29

30 On the N81 again, could I just briefly? There's a lot of talk from my colleagues
31 about south of the N81 from Blessington on down to Dunlavin and whatever, but
32 there's very little said about north, and the busiest part of the N81 is from
33 Blessington to Dublin. And there's been proposals there for some time for a
34 carriageway, but I would be of the view -- I am going to find out also -- you know, it

1 is not the first time we met ministers on the N81, we haven't been getting too far with
2 them, but I wish you the best of luck, and I hope you include the municipal district
3 councillors in any meetings with ministers. I'd love to meet them again. I think that
4 we should seriously consider a proposal I have been making here for a while, and
5 that instead of a dual carriageway to go from Brittas into Blessington that we look at
6 it again and build a decent road. Because in the building of a carriageway into
7 Blessington, into Wicklow, it would be the only artery from the city. At the moment
8 it's the only road that's cyclists can use. And what I would really be looking for
9 maybe is a plan to improve the road, to improve the road as it is and have a cycle
10 lane either side. Because still that is one part that the people of Dublin can get on
11 their bikes and travel. It is very unsafe, it is an unsafe road for cyclists at the
12 moment where lorries are passing and beeping. But we could go about building a
13 decent road there, and especially it would be some time maybe getting the greenway
14 in Blessington in place. So I would look at the whole plan of that to be done. Also
15 it's important to know that South Dublin County Council have taken their section of
16 the N81 off their Development Plan. So we're left in no-man's-land there. So I think
17 that proposal of mine should be considered.

18
19 You know, as I say, we do talk a lot about south of Blessington, you know, whereas I
20 think the northern part where we have heavy lorries coming out, the gravel and
21 whatever, you know is needed in Dublin, but as I pointed out before we don't really
22 get -- we don't get back anything that we give. We get free water to Dublin. Dublin
23 Corporation and City Council can charge commercial rates for water, we give it for
24 nothing. We give them the sand and gravel and stone, but we still are working off
25 the same road that we have been working off for a hundred years. So honest to God
26 I hope that you are successful in meeting the Ministers. And also, you did meet the
27 Taoiseach and the Tánaiste and the Minister for 20 minutes the other day or
28 whatever, but I hope you reminded them too that you know them preaching about
29 planning here in Wicklow that it was only two months ago the third Minister,
30 Minister for Housing you met there, Browne, that he actually shelved the building of
31 106 houses in Blessington. So I take the three of those boys with a pinch of salt. I
32 mean they're talking about rezoning in the county and then at the same time where a
33 site had started, the development of the site in Burgage had started. We're in dire
34 straits for social housing.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: I hate to interrupt you but we have gone over time and the
2 Chief Executive wants to respond to the queries.

3 COUNCILLOR O'NEILL: Okay. Grand.

4 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you for your patience. Just before we do. I want to
5 apologise to the members of the public in the gallery that we didn't get onto the
6 notice of motions, but to thank you for your patience in waiting. I will let the Chief
7 Executive come back on those issues.

8 MS O'GORMAN: Very, very briefly, Members, because I know you are probably
9 all browned off at this stage. Councillor Kennedy, just on those package treatment
10 plants, we'll have to look at it. If they're acceptable to Uisce Eireann, because we
11 would consult with them when we're looking at the water side of things, so we will
12 certainly look at it.

13

14 Councillor Fortune, very briefly, on somebody who has a one-bed need in
15 emergency accommodation. Our priority is to get people out of if they're in
16 emergency situations and we look at all options. It is not preferable to put somebody
17 into a two-bed but we will look at all options.

18

19 The Cliff Walk, we're talking and there's about a kilometre or so, that's a rough
20 estimate of what needs to be rerouted. So it is not 300 metres, it's a bit -- I know, but
21 it is not significant, it is not 5 kilometres at the same time. We have to see how that
22 bears out, and we're dealing with private landowners there.

23

24 On the greenway from Greystones to Arklow, I will certainly have to come back to
25 you on that.

26

27 Including an update from the IDA in the Chief Executive's Report. We can ask the
28 IDA. I don't know whether they'll provide a report but we will certainly ask them.

29

30 Councillor O'Neill, just to confirm, yeah, we are in the High Court next Monday with
31 that case. I note your comments around Hollywood and the N81. Yeah, look, I am
32 going to seek a meeting with TII. I think it is far more practical to meet with them,
33 and if we do secure a meeting with them that we invite members of the Baltinglass
34 MD to that meeting. Thank you, Members.

1 CATHAOIRLEACH: Just before I close the meeting, Councillor Winstanley, did
2 you want to come in quickly there?

3 COUNCILLOR WINSTANLEY: Sorry, Cathaoirleach, I just wanted to chance my
4 arm in case anyone didn't -- my motion, if anyone didn't feel that it was particularly
5 contentious, would people be happy to agree for the Chief Executive to send out a
6 letter? It was only because of the timely nature of it because the legislation is being
7 reviewed at the moment in Government.

8 COUNCILLOR BEHAN: I second that.

9 MS PURCELL: Sorry, Councillor Barry is not here, so you're happy to second
10 instead Councillor Behan, and that that letter will issue? Is there any objection to
11 that? (No.) The first motion, is that similar, Councillor Scott? That the Council
12 resolves the Chief Executive write to the Department? Again you need a seconder
13 because Councillor Doyle is not present.

14 COUNCILLOR WINSTANLEY: Yes.

15 MS PURCELL: Councillor Winstanley. Are you happy with that? So we can issue
16 both sets of letters then if that's agreeable to call. Thank you.

17 CATHAOIRLEACH: Thank you, Members, and thank you for your attention. We
18 have the budget meeting on the 24th November at 10 o'clock in the chamber, and
19 we're hoping before -- under 'Any Other Business' we're hoping to have a civic
20 reception for Lara Gillespie. She is Ireland's first female World Track Cycling
21 Champion. We'll see you back on the 24th November. And thank you very much
22 for your attention today.

23

24 (Meeting concluded at 5.37 pm)

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