

**PLANNING & RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2026 IN THE SEMINOLE ROOM,**  
**COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW**

**Present:** Cllr. Patsy Glennon (Chair), Cllr. Sylvester Bourke, Cllr. Pat Mahon, Cllr. Gail Dunne, Cllr. Peter Stapleton, Cllr. Malachai Duddy, Paul Armstrong, Conor McCarthy, Jim Wood, Tessa Stewart

**In attendance:** E. Birmingham, S. Walsh, M. Devereux, S. Clarke, Dr. H. O’Kelly, C. Ruane, Fatma Al Bulushi

**Apologies:** Helena Dennehy, Richella Wood

**Item 1: Adoption of the Minutes of Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

The Minutes were proposed by Cllr. S. Bourke and seconded by Cllr. P. Mahon

**Item 2: Matters Arising from Minutes:**

There were no matters arising.

**Item 3: Update on Biodiversity Plan**

The group received a presentation on the Biodiversity Action Plan from Dr. Hannah O’Kelly, Ecologist, which was adopted at the December Council meeting.

There are 50 actions in the biodiversity action plan, the three main types of actions being:

- 1) Actions for which WCC has direct responsibility i.e. working with the council to try to ensure biodiversity is being taken into consideration and implementing best practise in our day-to-day work and lands that WCC manage
- 2) Partnership/collaborative actions i.e. working with and/or support other state or civil agencies
- 3) Supporting role in projects which are led by an outside group, community group or local NGO.

Collaborative projects include Spongeworks which focuses on the Aughrim River system involving assessments of the wetlands area, rivers, and various farms to establish nature-based assistance projects, Citizen Science Programme and Dark Skies project.

**Item 4: Update on Forward Planning:**

Greystones/Delgany/Kilcoole local planning framework was adopted at February’s council meeting as a variation to the County Development Plan effective immediately.

Arklow LPF - 67 submissions received. Report due for circulation to the elected members week beginning February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026, published online the following week and scheduled for consideration at the April Council Meeting.

Variation no. 6 to the CDP – core strategy and population figures. A report on the 120 received submissions will be circulated week beginning February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026. A special meeting has been scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026 to deal with this.

This variation is bringing into effect the new housing population targets issued by the minister last summer.

WCC is currently running a call for sites; an expression of interest from landowners whose land is not yet zoned but capable of connecting to services and who would be interested in developing the land. A report will be prepared for the elected members for consideration. A variation will be required if suitable sites are progressed.

In response to questions, it was advised that:

1. If variation 6 is adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> March RN2 becomes equal to RN1
2. Timescale for lands identified as suitable for progression in the call for sites will be a number of months. Potential lands require zoning and are subject to usual assessments (SEA, AA, strategic flood risk assessment etc.) A variation will be required which will be a minimum of 16 weeks if no other changes are required. No planning applications would be considered prior to zoning.
3. Land zoned residential and on final map is liable for RZLT.
4. WCC has engaged with the Housing Activation Office.
5. The Department is aware that there is conflict between the new higher densities and activating land. It is a national problem.
6. If land is ecologically rich it is not zoned.
7. WCC's position is that LAP's stay in effect until replaced.

**Item 5: Upcoming policy considerations:**

- One off Rural Housing scheduled for meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026.
- The executive will revert with a timetable for the review of the Development Contributions Scheme.

Next Meeting: 14.05.2026