

MIONTUAIRISCÍ ÓN GCRUINNIÚ IOMLÁNACH DE CHUID
CHOMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH TIONÓLTA
AR AN LUAN, 28 AIBREAN 2025 AG 3.00 I.N. I SEOMRA NA
COMHAIRLE, HALLA AN CHONTAE & VIA FOIRNE MS



MINUTES OF PLenary MEETING OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 28TH APRIL, 2024 AT 3.00 P.M.
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL & VIA MS TEAMS

Chair: Cllr. Michael McCarthy

Elected Members: *Council Chamber*

Cllrs. Tomás Breathnach, Jenny Catt Slattery, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Fidelis Doherty, Stephanie Doherty, Maria Dollard, Pat Dunphy, Pat Fitzpatrick, David Fitzgerald, Joe Lyons, Joe Malone, Andrew McGuinness, Eugene McGuinness, Seán Ó hArgáin & Maurice Shortall.

MS Teams

Cllrs. John Brennan, Brian Cleere, Michael Delaney, Michael Doyle Ger Frisby & Joe Sheridan.

Officials: Lar Power, Tim Butler, Fiona Deegan, Ian Gardner Mary Mulholland, Frank Stafford, Maria O'Shea, Margo Hayes, Agnieszka Zychla, Catherine Cooney, Aileen McGrath, Anne Marie Shortall, Seamus Kavanagh, Claire Buckley & Conor Sweeney.

1. **Dearbhú Miontuairiscí - Confirmation of Minutes**

- (i) **Miontuairiscí Chruinniú Iomlánach mhí an Mhárta - Minutes March Plenary Meeting**
Proposed by Cllr. Eugene McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness and agreed:

"That Minutes of Plenary Meeting of Kilkenny County Council held on Monday, 24th March, 2024 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved".

- (ii) **Miontuairiscí SPC 2 - Minutes of SPC 2**

Proposed by Cllr. Deirdre Cullen seconded by Cllr. Maurice Shortall and agreed:

That Minutes of SPC 2: Transportation Policy/Mobility Management and Water Services held on Thursday, 9th May, 2024 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved".

- (iv) **Miontuairiscí SPC 2 - Minutes of SPC 2**

Proposed by Cllr. Deirdre Cullen seconded by Cllr. Maurice Shortall and agreed:

"That Minutes of SPC 2: Transportation Policy/Mobility Management and Infrastructure held on Friday, 13th December, 2024 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved"

Vótaí Comhbhrón - Votes of Sympathy

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael McCarthy extended vote of sympathy to the following:

- Mary Cashin, Housing Department and Sinead Blanchfield, Music Generation on the death of their father Greg Blanchfield.
- Jerry Rowe, Driver, Kilkenny Area on the death of his father Jeremiah (Jerry) Rowe.
- Siobhan Burke, Stores/Machinery Yard on the death of her mother Hannah Kirk.
- Brigid Young on the death of her husband James Young a retired employee
- Family of the late Edward Murphy, Ballyragget, Kilkenny
- Family of the late Benen (Benny) McDonagh, Owing, Piltown, Kilkenny.

Fógraí - Announcements

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Michael McCarthy congratulated the following:

- Junior Camogie Team who had beat Cork
- Mr. Peter Lynch of Kilkenny Farriers who has broken the Senior Marathon Record.

This was seconded by Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin

Cllr. Fedelis Doherty congratulated all those involved in the in the Netflix series 'Inheritance' which showcased Kilkenny County Hall as well as Kilkenny City and Countryside.

2. (a) **Tithíocht & Díuscairt Eile- Housing& Other Disposal**

It was proposed by Cllr. Eugene McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin and agreed:

"That in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Kilkenny County Council hereby approves of the disposal of the Freehold Interest where a Transfer Order is already in place for a property at 52 Assumption Place, Kilkenny- as identified on the attached map - to Ms. Christina Kane and Mr. William Grace personal representatives of the estate of Christine Grace. for the nominal sum of €10 with the Purchaser being responsible for all legal fees associated with the sale, including those of Kilkenny County Council. The Consent of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage is not required"

2. (b) **Pleanail - Planning**

Cllr Joe Malone asked for clarity in relation to the completion of the road. Tim Butler, Director of Services outlined that there is a small amount of work remaining which is to be completed shortly.

(i) **Ag Glacadh i gCúram: Taking in Charge: Rathullord, Kilkenny (Phase 2)**

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin and agreed that:

"That the County Council of the County of Kilkenny, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 11 of the Roads Act, 1993 and in compliance with Section 180 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended by Section 59 of the Planning & Development Act 2010, hereby declares the road listed in the Public Notice and listed below, to be a Public Road.

Development: [TC 180]: Rathullord, Kilkenny (Phase 2)"

2. (c) **Bóithre- Roads**

(i) **2025 Road Works Scheme**

Director of Services, Mary Mullholland presented the Road Works Scheme pointing out that the funding of circa €28million to deliver the scheme. The scheme is funded through Transport Infrastructure Ireland Grants for National Road Improvement and Maintenance totalling over €7million and 2025 Department of Transport grants for the Non-National Road Network providing €19.5million and over €2million from Kilkenny County Council. Ms. Mulholland acknowledged the input of all Members and thanked our own staff Seamus Kavanagh, Senior Engineer, Area Engineers and Claire Buckley, Administrative Officer. She pointed out that this is a huge body of work. Kilkenny is repeatedly successful in achieving funding as we deliver on time and on budget. Cllr. Deirdre Cullen, Chairperson of SPC 2 - Transportation Policy/Mobility Management & Infrastructure paid tribute to all the staff and said the scheme is to make the best use of resources for the County.

It was proposed by Cllr. Deirdre Cullen seconded by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick and agreed that:

"We the Members of Kilkenny County Council approve the Roadworks Scheme for 2025, as circulated."

(d) **Timpeallacht - Environment**

(i) **Graveyard Grant Scheme 2025**

There was a total of 57 applications received under the Graveyard Grants Scheme 2025. The total budget allocation for the Graveyard Grants for 2025 is €24,000.

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Fedelis Doherty and agreed that:

"That the Graveyard Grant Scheme 2025, as circulated to the Members, are hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council."

(ii) **Amenity Grants 2025**

Mr. Tim Butler presented his Report on Amenity Grants for 2025. He advised that a budget of €140,000 was agreed for 2024. 183 applications were received. Three applications were deemed ineligible as they did not meet the objectives of the Amenity Grant Scheme.

It was recommended that the 180 applications be awarded the prescribed amounts in the Schedule circulated.

It was proposed by Cllr. Jenny Catt Slattery and seconded by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick and agreed that:

"That the Amenity Grants 2025, as circulated to the Members, are hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council."

(e) **Pobol - Community**

(i) **Community Event Grants**

Ann-Marie Shortall, Senior Executive Officer presented the Community Event Grants. The grants range in size from €150 to €600 and the total being granted is €30,000.

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed that:

"That the Community Event Grants 2025 are hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council, as per Report circulated"

(ii) **Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)**

Community Safety Coordinator Maria O'Shea presented on the Local Community Safety Partnership. Ms. O'Shea set out the rationale for the LCSP, the legislative base, as well as the membership structure and next steps for delivery. The LCSP requires seven Elected Members in addition to Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick who has already been selected. Expressions of Interest are sought by 9th May. When the Partnership is established, a Chairperson will be elected from the first meeting.

A number of Elected Members made contributions including Cllrs. Andrew McGuinness, Seán Ó hArgáin, John Coonan, Maria Dollard, Joe Malone, Deidre Cullen, Eugene McGuinness and Pat Fitzpatrick.

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness referred to the success of the Joint Policing Committee and asked about the format of the LCSP meeting, as to whether they will be private or public, the location and the expectations we can have. He referred to several Anti-Social behaviour episodes he has become aware of and said this is an issue that needs to be tackled.

Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin expressed his disappointment with the new structure especially the deduction of Elected Members on the Committee from 13 down to 7. He viewed this as the role of Councillor is being diminished and feels this is a backward step.

Cllr. Maria Dollard pointed out that we don't have gender balance on Kilkenny County Council and asked that the safety of women, those living with disability and minority groups would be a priority for the LCSP. Cllr. Jow Malone agreed with Cllr. Dollard.

Cllr. Deidre Cullen noted that she found the JPC very beneficial and enquired about the rank of the Gardai involved as the Elected Members need to have access to data and statistics which give clear picture of safety and security for both rural and urban areas.

Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick said he was initially disappointed but said that its vital that there are decision makers in the room and that we need to give the LCSP a chance and be there as people who can take decisions.

Cllr. John Coonan also felt that the JPC has been an effective structure with active engagement. He questioned how business will be done within 4 meetings and 30 Members.

Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh agreed with Cllr. Ó hArgáin in that she felt it was downgrading the role of Councillor.

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness felt that one of the first items on the agenda should be CCTV as there was a budget previously was allocated.

Ms. Maria O'Shea responded by saying that the LCSP is in place to give the voice to the people and would include Youth, Business and Elderly as well as An Gardaí, HSE and Tusla. There will be Working Groups in place as well. She remarked that there will be a lot more support and guidance going forward.

Ms. Mary Mullholland closed the discussion pointing out that this has been enacted in legislation and we must implement that legislation while keeping in mind the important points raised at the meeting.

(f) Gnóthaí Corparáideacha – Corporate Affairs

**(i) *Tuarascáil Mhíosúil an Phríomhfheidhmeannaigh*
Chief Executive's Monthly Report**

Cllr. Michael McCarthy advised that the Chief Executive's Report will be taken as read.

Cllr. Eugene McGuinness asked about the status of St. Patrick's Centre which had been proposed for accommodation of International Protection Applicants. Fiona Deegan confirmed that Kilkenny County Council did receive a Section 5 in January of 2025 in relation St. Patrick's. The Planning Section requested further information which was not received. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) have confirmed they will not be proceeding with it.

Cllr. Michael McCarthy also enquired about St. Catherines Nursing Home in Freshford and Heather Court in Ballyraggett.

The Planning Section of Kilkenny County Council received a Section 5 for Heather Court in Ballyraggett and requested further information, but they did not receive any further information. The DCEDIY have confirmed that they're not proceeding with Heather Court.

In relation to St. Catherines, a Section 5 was received in September 2024 and this was deemed exempt. Kilkenny County Council have no role in the procurement, the role is in compliance only. The DCEDIY has confirmed that they are not proceeding with St. Catherine's Nursing Home in Freshford.

Ms. Fiona Deegan, Director of Services responded to a query by Cllr. Dollard to say that Kilkenny County Council - Jenkintown House, they have not received a Section 5 and the DCECIY have not received any application with regard to that building.

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness asked if there was a way that this information could be made available to Elected Members on a regular basis. Ms. Fiona Deegan committed to keep Councillors 'in the loop' in all ways possible.

Cllr. Eugene McGuinness noted a topic that was being circulated on social media - regarding a large (€150,000,000) investment in a multi-use sports facility. He asked for a report on this as it did not go a Council Meeting and therefore the Elected Members had no influence on it either for or against.

Mr. Tim Butler provided a response to say that there was an initial contact by a promotor who consider Kilkenny as a facility for a national ice-rink in May 2024. They were looking at potential sites and were asked to put provide in a business case. Following a meeting held in September 2024, Kilkenny County Council set out what supports the Local Authority, but the Local Authorities cannot be a promotor of these facilities. The developer said that it would not work as a standalone facility, and they looked at other infrastructure such as Housing and Kilkenny County Council outlined what they could provide.

The Developer followed up and looked at a much smaller facility (*about 20% of the original*). A business case was sought, and we have not heard back. In a situation where there were any commitments made in terms of land or other resources; this would certainly have brought it back to the Council Members at that stage but that was not the case. Kilkenny County Council had agreed to support minority sports and groups have been in contact. The Executive ascertain what the requirement is and if required would bring that back to the Members.

(ii) **Annual Report 2024**

It was proposed by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick and seconded by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness and agreed:

"That the Draft Annual Report for 2024 is hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council."

(iii) Appoint Nominees to Public Art Management Group

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness and seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed that:

“That Kilkenny County Council hereby appoints the following Elected Member to the Public Art Management Group”:

- Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin,
- Cllr. John Coonan

(iv) Appoint Nominees to Road Safety Working Together Group.

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness and seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed that:

“That Kilkenny County Council hereby appoints the following Elected Members to the Road Safety Working Together Group”:

- Cllr. Maurice Shortall
- Cllr. Joe Malone
- Cllr. Deirdre Cullen
- Cllr. Pat Dunphy

(v) St. Patrick’s Festival

Ms. Marian Flannerty of Development Solution Consultancy and Mr. John Gilsenan of Market Dynamics presented on the Festival 2025. Market Dynamics were commissioned to conduct a survey of attendees, there was a successful response with 386 surveys completed.

The Survey found that:

- St. Patrick’s Festival – another firmly-established regional attraction in Kilkenny.
- Attendees from 19 counties – Leinster / Munster region.
- Strong ‘young family’ attendee profile.
- ‘Location’ and ‘safety and security’ of festival score highly – very important for this attendee cohort.
- Strong ‘revisit’ profile – 96% would attend again / 84% have done before.
- Most suggested improvements relate to St Patrick’s Day Parade.
- Festival a great success despite evidence of fewer foreign tourists attending in 2025.

Elected Members thanked Ms. Flannery and Mr. Gilsenan for the presentation and complimented her and her team on the wonderful Festival delivered over the four days. It is great for the promotion of Kilkenny as a destination for future years.

3. Comhfhreagras - Correspondence

(i & ii) Correspondence from Minister in relation to N24 & N25

Correspondence from Gordon Ryan and Amanda Corley Private Secretaries to Minister O'Brien TD. Cllr. Pat Dunphy thanked Mary for organizing the meeting but felt that there was a lack of substance within the letters from the Department. He asked that Mary could set up another meeting and proposed consulting again with TDs.

Cllr. Fidelis Doherty supported Cllr. Dunphy on this and said funding would have to be granted. Cllr. Catt Slattery and Cllr. Tomás Breathnach concurred.

4. **Gnó ar athló ó chruinniúroimhe seo - Business adjourned from a previous Meeting**

None.

5. **Dátaí agus Amanta do chruinnithe a shocrú - Fix Dates & Times of Meetings**

(i) **Schedule of Meetings**

It was proposed by Cllr. John Coonan seconded by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness and agreed.

(ii) **Agree date for Meetings**

Special Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed that the Special Meeting be held on Tuesday, 6th May, 2025 at 3.00 p.m. to consider the Chief Executive's Report of An Bord Pleanála Application for a Windfarm consisting of 12 turbines at Ballynalackan, Co. Kilkenny

Annual Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed that the Annual Meeting for 2025 be held on Friday, 27th June, 2025 at 3.00 p.m.

6. **Plé ar Thuairiscí agus Moltaí ó Choistí an Comhairle**
Consideration of Reports & Recommendations of Committees of the Council

(i) **Report of SPC 2: Thursday, 9th May, 2024**

Deferred.

(ii) **Report of SPC 2: Friday, 13th December, 2024**

Deferred.

7. **Gnó Eile romhainn i bhFógra reachtála an Chruinnithe**
Other Business set forth in the Notice convening the Meeting

None.

8. **Oideachas agus Oiliúint - Education & Training**

None.

9. **Gnótha ag éirí as Miontuairiscí - Matters Arising from Minutes**

10. **Aon Ghnó Eile - Any Other Business**

None.

11. **Fógraí Rúin - Notices of Motion**

Notice of Motions were postponed until the May 2025 Meeting due the Civic Reception taking place after the meeting.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE