



**Minutes of meeting of Full Council held at 3:00 p.m.
Monday 23 September 2024 in the Council Chamber
Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare**

Members Present: Councillors J. Neville,(Cathaoirleach), P. Balfe, V. Behan, A. Breen, A. Breslin, F. Brett, B. Caldwell, B. Clear, S. Doyle, K. Duffy, G. Dunne, T. Durkan, W. Durkan, L. Panaite Fahey, A. Farrelly, R. Heather, N. Heavey , C. Kelly, N. Killeen, M. Leigh, T. McDonnell, P. McEvoy, P. Melrose, N. Ó Cearúil, P. O'Dwyer, B. O'Loughlin, C. O'Rourke, C. Pender, R. Power, E. Sammon, D. Trost, P. Ward and B. Wyse

Online: Councillors B. Dooley, A. Feeney, S. Moore and S. Ní Raghallaigh

Apologies: Councillors D. Fitzpatrick, I. Keatley and T. O'Dwyer

Also Present: Ms. S. Kavanagh (Chief Executive), Mr. A. Dunney and Mr. E. Ryan (Directors of Service) Ms. C. Barrett, Ms. P. O'Brien and Ms. S. Scully (A/Directors of Service), Ms. E. Hanlon (Head of Finance), Mr J Hannigan (Meetings Administrator), Ms. M. Richardson (Meetings Secretary), and other officials.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to the September monthly meeting of the Council noted that this meeting was being live streamed to the Council's YouTube channel.



01/0924

Declaration of Interests

The Cathaoirleach sought from the members any declarations of conflicts of interest or pecuniary or beneficial interests under Section 177 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended. There were no declarations.

02/0924

Bereavements

The Cathaoirleach advised he had been informed of the following bereavements.

- Charlier Talbot. Retired member of staff
- John Dunne, brother of Councillor Ger Dunne
- Rainsford Hendy. former Councillor and Cathaoirleach.
- Teresa Byrne. former Town Councillor Leixlip.

The Cathaoirleach requested the members to observe a moments silence.

A minute's silence was observed.

03/0924

Minutes and Progress Report

The council considered the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 29 July 2024 and the progress report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor B Caldwell, seconded by Councillor S Doyle and agreed by the members present that the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 29 July 2024 be adopted. The progress report was noted.

04/0924

Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report

The members noted the Chief Executives monthly management report.

The report was noted.



05/0924

Climate Innovation Fund

The members considered the Climate Innovation Fund report.

The report was noted.

06/0924

Annual Budget Meeting 2025

The members considered a date for the statutory annual budget meeting. Ms Hanlon asked that it take place in the Council Chamber, Áras Chill Dara, on Monday 18 November at 3.00pm and that there be a briefing on Monday 11 November at 3.00pm.

With the agreement of all members present that the statutory annual budget meeting be held on Monday 18 November at 3.00pm and a briefing on the draft budget be held on Monday 11 November at 3.00pm.

07/0924

Setting Local Property Tax Adjustment Factor 2025

The members considered the report of the Chief Executive on the setting of a local property tax local adjustment factor for 2025 and the Chief Executives report on the submissions received during public consultation which that had been circulated previously. The Chief Executives report on the setting of a local adjustment factor included

- Estimation of Income and Expenditure to be provided in accordance with the format as specified in Schedule 1 of the regulations.
- Financial position to be provided in accordance with the format as specified in Schedule 2 of the regulations.
- Estimation of financial effect on:(a) A liable person, (b) Local property tax (LPT) revenue, (c) Local Authority Services.



Councillor S Doyle proposed that the current Base Rate of +10% be continued and to review the rate annually.

This was seconded by Councillor K Duffy.

Councillor A Farrelly asked to propose a second motion.

The Cathaoirleach advised on the advice of the Meetings Administrator that they would consider the first motion prior to taking any further motions.

Councillor A Farrelly advised that the Social Democrat members would not be supporting Councillor Doyle's proposal. Central Government funding from LPT was to Kildare's detriment, they had waited for a more equitable distribution from central government, who had yet again forgotten County Kildare. He also called for greater communication from Kildare County Council on projects funded by LPT. His proposal was to that the base rate be varied by 0%.

The members raised the following:

- Supported the +10% variation, LPT had been very good for the Municipal Districts, peoples' money being spent back in the community.
- All members had seen the benefits from LPT.
- How LPT was used needed to be promoted better so the public were made aware of LPT funded projects.
- Each year LPT rate resets to 0% but the members had previously decided to fix it for two years.
- There was a deficit from central government funding.



- It would seem that the basic day to day operational costs to fund staffing, rise in wages etc. Kildare was underfunded.
- Could corrie boards be made available to communities to advertise projects which had been funded through LPT allocations.
- LPT funding had helped so many community groups
- Population rise since 2017 across all Municipal Districts, rate of growth calls on other services needed. People were happy to pay LPT once they could see the services being provided.

Ms E Hanlon, Director of Finance advised that the recommendation of the Chief Executive was set out on page 12 of the Chief Executive Report and that the LPT allocated to the GMA be changed to 15% of the net LPT figure of €19,416,944 (after excluding self-funding) plus or minus the amount of any increase or decrease in the adjustment factor. As outlined by the Director of Finance the LPT allocated to GMA for 2025 would be €5,085,749.

Councillor K Duffy supported keeping the base rate +10% variation

Councillor A Farrelly sought confirmation that it would be set for one year only

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that it would be for one year only.

Resolved with 27 members voting in favour, 7 members voting against and 4 members abstaining, that in accordance with the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended) the members agreed that the basic rate of local property tax should stand varied upwards by ten per cent (10%) for the year 1 November 2024 to 31 October 2025 in respect of relevant residential properties situated in the administrative area of Kildare County Council.

08/0924

Bank Overdraft Facility

A report had been circulated by Ms Hanlon informing the members that as in previous years, Kildare County Council's Finance Department were looking for Council approval



to seek sanction from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to continue to maintain an overdraft facility of €4,500,000 (€4.5million) for the year 2025 to assist in funding the working capital requirements of the council should it be needed. As shown in the Chief Executive's monthly report, there has been minimal requirement to use this facility in 2024, however it was strongly recommended that it be maintained for cash flow purposes.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor S Doyle seconded by Councillor K Duffy and agreed by the members, that the seeking of sanction for Bank Overdraft facilities of €4.5m for the year ending 31st December 2025 be approved.

09/0924

Loan for Housing, Recreation and Amenity Land

The members considered the report circulated in advance of the meeting in relation to a €15m loan to finance housing, recreation and amenity land purchase.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor K Duffy, seconded by Councillor A Breen and agreed by the members that the raising of a €15m loan to finance housing, recreation and amenity land purchase be approved.

10/0924

Section 85 agreement with South Dublin County Council

The members considered, pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2001, the approval of a Section 85 agreement with South Dublin County Council (SDCC), whereby Kildare County Council will allocate four Capital Assistance Scheme units in Kill to SDCC social housing applicants.

Councillor N Killeen asked for clarification on who was monitoring resources in these tenancies for the CAS scheme in Kildare and advised that she fully supported the work of Cheeverstown.



Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service advised that CAS scheme usually came from the Kildare County Council housing list with the exception for Cheeverstown which in this case it was coming from South Dublins list. Regarding the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive she would receive an update from the Homeless team and come back to the members with an update.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor B Caldwell seconded by Councillor C Pender and agreed by the members, that a Section 85 agreement with South Dublin County Council (SDCC), whereby Kildare County Council will allocate four Capital Assistance Scheme units in Kill to SDCC social housing applicants be approved.

11/0924

Appointment to the Local Community Safety Partnership

The members considered the nomination, election and appointment of seven members to the Local Community Safety Partnership.

The Cathaoirleach proposed that the current Cathaoirleach in situ each year have a place on the committee and the six remaining seats go out to the electoral areas. Athy having one, Naas having one, Clane/Maynooth having two, Kildare/Newbridge having two, Celbridge/Leixlip having one and as the Cathaoirleach is from Celbridge/Leixlip MD he would take that seat and that it would be referred to each Municipal District to decide on their nomination at their next Municipal District meeting.

The members raised the following points:

- Concerns over retaining Cathaoirleachs seat.
- Regretful to move away from JPC, a further erosion of powers from the members.
- Would there be an opportunity to still meet with An Garda Síochána on a quarterly basis. Local forums were great to raise concerns on local issues



- As a point of clarification, the in committee meetings were informal and went a long way in ensuring local issues could be aired efficiently. Could it be proposed to An Garda Síochána to continue with quarterly meetings.
- Could this new Local Community Safety Partnership be reviewed in a year.
- Policing the streets was becoming more difficult for An Garda Síochána, it was felt that the members were losing their voice.
- JPC was a huge loss at local and county level.

The Chief Executive advised that the Local Community Safety Partnership had been piloted in other Local Authorities and to give it a chance. She would put it to An Garda Síochána about quarterly meetings. The Council did not have a part to play in Garda resources, they had previously made the case to look for additional resources in County Kildare. The new structure would take into account residences, businesses and community.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor J Neville, seconded by Councillor E Sammon and agreed by the members that current Cathaoirleach be nominated to the Local Community Safety Partnership for the Celbridge/Leixlip Municipal District and the six remaining seats would be filled at Municipal District level. One from Kildare LEA, One from Newbridge LEA, one from Clane LEA, one from Maynooth LEA, and one from each of the remaining Municipal Districts.

12/0924

Appointment to the Audit Committee

This item was deferred to the October meeting.

13/0924

Appointment to the Kildare Sports and Leisure Facilities Ltd

This item was referred to the next Kildare/Newbridge Municipal District meeting.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor J Neville, seconded by Councillor S Doyle and agreed by the members that this item be referred to the next Kildare/Newbridge Municipal District meeting for decision.

14/0924

Gnó an Cathaoirleach/Cathaoirleach's Business

The Cathaoirleach advised that he had attended many events including the Irish Open, Taste of Kildare, Culture Night. the launch of the Age Friendly units at Castlefen, the Rose of Tralee participants visit at Barberstown Castle and he had met the Malaysian Ambassador when he visited Kildare and noted that it had been a busy period.

15/0924

Comhfhreagras/Correspondence

The meetings administrator informed the members that there were eight items of correspondence were circulated to the members consisting of seven resolutions from other County Councils and a reply to Councillor Ó Cearúil's July motion re data on number of special education places in the County.

16/0924

Conferences and Training

The Meetings Administrator referred to the conference and training report which had been circulated to the members.

Retrospective approval was sought for AILG Autumn Training Seminar, 11 and 12 September, Councillor N Ó Cearúil, Councillor Brett, Councillor Moore, Councillor Power, Councillor McDonnell, Councillor Caldwell held in the Hillgrove Hotel Monaghan.

Approval was sought for Training:

Kildare Biodiversity Conference 2024 to be held on 19 October 2024. Councillor S Doyle wished to attend.



Councillor P McEvoy wished to enrol in the Climate Crisis and Local Government Course.

They requested that anyone who wished to attend the Irish Language Course apply as soon as possible.

N Ó Cearúil advised the members of the LAMA event on 17 and 18 October and asked that members contact meetings@kildarecoco.ie to book their place.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P Ward seconded by Councillor D Trost and agreed by all members present that the Conference and Training report be approved.

The members took item 17 and item 18 together.

17/0924

Accessing and Tracking Issues Related to Trees

The following motion in the names of councillors Naoise Ó Cearúil and Paul Ward was considered by the members.

That the council develops a standalone system where public representatives and the public can access and track issues related to trees.

The motion was proposed by Councillor N Ó Cearúil and seconded by Councillor P Ward.

A report from Ms C Barrett, A/Director of Service, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that there are no plans or resources available at present to develop a standalone system for tracking tree related issues. Requests for trees generate a large amount of work to record and inspect and produce a works programme. In the last year approximately 4000 trees have been examined and had works carried out to them. Another aspect which contributes to this is the spectrum and conflicting opinions



that the public have on trees. The CRM system allows public representatives and the public to submit tree requests. These are then used to develop a programme of works for each MD. Any standalone system will duplicate some of this and require more resources to manage.

The Council are currently examining subject to available budget the possibility of introducing a GIS system to map the trees in the county and assist with recording works needed on trees and developing works programmes. This would help to improve the current systems in place and make it easier to develop works programmes.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor N Ó Cearúil seconded by Councillor P O'Dwyer and agreed by members that the report be noted.

18/0924

Appointment of Tree Officers

The following motion in the name of Councillor Peggy O'Dwyer was considered by the members.

That the council considers appointing Tree Officers with Maintenance Crews to take over tree management within the county.

The motion was proposed by Councillor P O'Dwyer and seconded by Councillor K Duffy.

A report from Ms. C. Barrett, A/ Director of Service, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that tree management in the county is currently carried out by qualified tree surgery companies. There are no resources available to appoint Tree Officers and maintenance crews to manage trees in the county.

Councillor Ó Cearúil informed the members of the following:

- During the local election campaign it became apparent that issues around removing or planting of trees was a huge concern.



- Many estates had trees that were inappropriate for the area and resulted in lifting of footpaths and roots going under boundary walls.
- Huge trees also caused issues with lighting one example was a house in Maynooth where light was blocked at the back of the house by trees and it resulted in the house being totally covered in mould.

Councillor Ward raised the following:

- Understood there were issues with resources.
- There was a need to improve the system of managing and maintaining trees and also to manage expectations.
- How could the implementation of the GIS be expedited.
- There had been issues with the tree programme this year resulting in Kilcock being back to square one.

Councillor P O'Dwyer added the following:

- From working with Access Groups it was apparent that trees were causing trip hazards and lifting footpaths. Some tree works had not been completed this year as funding had run out.

The members raised the following points:

- Was there a way for the public to appeal a decision on removal of trees or could the council grant permission to individuals.
- Some trees were a Health and Safety risk to homeowners.
- The Council needed to improve their current system.
- There had been previous reports circulated where tree pruning had taken place but in some scenarios it was not done properly.
- If further funding was needed, LPT allocation could be looked at.
- Regarding the removal of trees, how could people get away with this without permission.
- A lot of funds were spent on upgrading footpaths in each Municipal District due to inappropriate trees that were planted and now causing damage.



- Could an audit be carried out, remove the trees and replace them with appropriate trees.
- Trees blocking street lighting was leaving streets dark, causing problems.
- Rural trees were also an issue, ash dieback, up to 90% of trees would die. These large trees died slowly and would become a big issue in high winds.

Ms C Barrett, A/Director of Service, advised that this debate reflects different opinions on trees. There was a huge demand on the Parks team on issues with trees. There was a lot of time and energy put into that work. Every tree had to be assessed by experts and a competent contractor assigned. This type of work required a high level of skill and training work of an arborist. Trees from development stage needed to be regulated. The development control department looked at trees when they were taking estates in charge. Over 4000 trees were dealt with last year. LPT could help expand their output for 2025. They had looked for funding for GIS system. Each tree would have to be geolocated. Plan to put in place and propagate into that system. There was no budget to do the audit in one go. Regarding trees affecting private property, these matters were escalated. She wanted to commend the work of the Parks Department and noted they were a small team who produce huge value.

Councillor N Ó Cearúil supported the work of the Parks Department and noted that some of the comments were made out of frustration. He asked could they establish how much of a gap in funding was required to get the system up and running. Could an auto email be created on CRM to explain the process and timelines involved.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P O'Dwyer and seconded by Councillor K Duffy and agreed by all members present that the report be noted.

19/0924

Distribution of Playgrounds Across the County

The following motion in the name of Councillor Rupert Heather was considered by the members.



That the council addresses the uneven distribution of playgrounds across the county by taking an approach that ensures each municipal district has a basic level of amenities.

The motion was proposed by Councillor R Heather and seconded by Councillor A Breslin.

A report from Ms C Barrett, A/ Director of Service, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated the Kildare Play Strategy sets out proposals for additional playground around the county. This is the basis for providing a distribution of playgrounds around the county. Additionally, it is a requirement for new large scale residential developments to include play provision within them. These will further increase the distribution of playgrounds.

Councillor R Heather welcomed the response from the Council but questioned how effective that would be. On a search of Kildare County Councils website the play strategy in 2018-2028 there was 23 existing playgrounds, in 2024 this was 25. The aim of the play strategy was to deliver play areas, this was not being met. At odds with the population growth, needed proper playgrounds with a full range of equipment.

The members raised the following

- In Celbridge/Leixlip Municipal District it was a huge issue as there was only one playground
- Word of caution on housing developments, not really a structured play facility, planks of wood. How was that monitored?
- There had been reports of 3 incidents in the playground in Celbridge in the last 2 weeks. It was not up to standard, potholes etc.
- There were not enough facilities for children in the area. The population was on the rise.
- An equal distribution of playgrounds was needed across all Municipal Districts.
- Totally inadequate facilities in the Celbridge/Leixlip Municipal District.



- The play strategy lacked detail. How was it decided which playgrounds came next.
- Regarding the playground in Allenwood, took time. Needed to work with the council and the local community groups to locate a suitable site, get people involved. It had to be a joint effort.
- Hopeful that the purchase of the Donaghcumper lands could change things and could potentially be a suitable location for a playground.

Ms. C. Barrett, A/ Director of Service, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Ms C Barrett informed the members of the following:

- advised that regarding the equitable distribution of playgrounds, this had been outlined on page 15 of the play strategy. One of the limiting factors was the availability of land.
- The play area in Willowbrook Park would be resurfaced.
- Prior to covid, the council were in talks with St John of God's but that land was no longer available.
- Trying to deliver facilities in Celbridge for teenagers, needed co-operation around land.
- In SHDs natural play areas were favourable as there was no one constantly maintaining these playgrounds.
- There were a number of playgrounds to be delivered through the Capital Programme within the next year which was guided by the Play Strategy.
- Sensational Kids collaboration for children with additional needs, this needed prioritisation and identification of lands.

Councillor R Heather welcomed the supports and thanked the Director of Service for her report and noted that this was a critical issue for the wellbeing of children.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor R Heather seconded by Councillor A Breslin and agreed by members that the report be noted.



20/0924

Update on Dartplus

The following motion in the name of Councillor Joe Neville was considered by the members.

That the council provides an update on its next steps and plans in relation to Dartplus and the decision by An Bord Pleanála granting the Railway Order.

The motion was proposed by Councillor J Neville and seconded by Councillor N Ó Cearúil.

A report from Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services and Ms C Barrett, A/Director of Service, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that Kildare County Council are neither the developer nor the consenting authority with respect to DART+ West. KCC were a prescribed consultee in the Railway Order statutory consent process through An Bord Pleanála. KCC have no role in determining next steps or project programming, however (like other affected Local Authorities) will engage with Iarnród Eireann as and when required.

Iarnród Eireann are best placed to provide the level of detail required in this instance and it is a matter for the Elected Members should they wish to pursue it further with the applicant.

Mr J Neville advised that he had attended meetings on this project over the last number of years along with local groups. He welcomed the increase of the Dartplus but was disappointed it was not being extended to Kilcock. The NTA were coming next week and it could be discussed then.

Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services advised the members that the report spoke for itself, Kildare County Council would like to see the Dartplus extended to Kilcock. At operational level



on the bridge, the council's technical team would be dealing with that. Asked for the motion to be forwarded to the NTA in advance of their upcoming meeting.

The Meetings Administrator advised that he had forwarded the motion to the NTA in advance of the members briefing.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor J Neville seconded by Councillor N Ó Cearúil and agreed by members that the report be noted.

21/0924

Social Housing Development Proposals

The following motion in the name of Councillor Angela Feeney was considered by the members.

That the council informs members about social housing development proposals currently in process with the Department of Housing to include the following: what stage these proposals are at in the current four-stage approval process and an overview of length of time for social housing applications to progress from submission to approval by the Department of Housing based on current conditions.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Feeney and seconded by Councillor P McEvoy.

A report from Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service, Housing and Regeneration stated that Information in relation to capital delivery and the various stages of approval are contained in the Chief Executive Report.

In 2016 the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) introduced a single stage approval process, which was welcomed by the council. This process was revised in 2020 and 2023. The single stage process applies to social housing construction projects of 25 units or less with a value €8m or less. Kildare County Council is using this process for six construction projects at present. The projects suitable for single stage approval need to be non-complicated in nature with



no known site challenges. Many of the schemes developed by Kildare County Council do not allow for the single stage process.

The 4-stage process incorporates the local authority activities of initial design, statutory approval, detailed design and tender. Under the 4-stage process the budget cost at stage 1 are generally high level estimates. At each stage the budget is revised as the project develops. Approval at each stage constitutes approval to proceed to the next stage and not overall project approval. While the 4-stage process may cause some delay, we are satisfied that due to the complexity of the sites being developed ongoing engagement with the DHLGH is required, and that we have developed a good working relationship with the department

Other factors contributing to delays, examples include:

- Retention and recruitment of technical staff
- Adequacy of staff resources, the council sought sanction for 26 additional staff to deliver Housing for All capital delivery targets, however approval was received for 13 staff.
- Site specific complexity, for example infrastructural provision, invasive species, legal issues, service mapping.
- Delay in statutory approvals
- Difficulty associated with delivery on brown field and infill sites

Currently we have 116 units in construction in Athgarvan, Kill and Maynooth, and a further 243 units at various stages of the approval process.

Councillor A Feeney accepted the report.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Feeney seconded by Councillor P McEvoy and agreed by members that the report be noted.



22/0924

Levies on Derelict Properties

The following motion in the name of Councillor Peter Melrose was considered by the members.

That the council provides, in tabular form, detailed figures for levies due on derelict properties in each municipal district for 2024, including historical aggregated levies due on any such properties for each year heretofore.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Melrose and seconded by Councillor P O'Dwyer.

A report from Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service, Housing and Regeneration gave the below table with details of levies due on properties entered on the Derelict Sites Register for each Municipal district.

Municipal District	Properties entered on the Derelict Sites Register	Levies due 2024	Total Levies Due
Naas	8	€ 98,853.43	€ 215,236.48
Celbridge-Leixlip	8	€ 108,500.00	€ 211,371.23
Clane-Maynooth	7	€ 105,700.00	€ 240,381.44
Athy	14	€ 65,323.81	€ 159,773.69
Kildare Newbridge	13	€ 178,467.00	€ 304,386.52



Totals	50	€ 556,844.24	€ 1,131,149.36
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Levies are charged at 7% of the Market Valuation per annum.

The derelict sites register transferred from Environment Department to the Housing and Regeneration Department in January 2024.

Compulsory acquisition has commenced on a number of properties on the register, if acquired Compulsorily or by agreement, levies owed are deducted from any Compensation or Purchase price agreed.

Properties will remain on the register until renovation works are complete and they are no longer derelict, of the 50 properties currently on the register 17 have activity ongoing to address the dereliction as detailed in the table below:

Compulsory Acquisitions Commenced	8
CPO process complete	3
Acquired by agreement	2
Negotiations to Acquire ongoing	4

Councillor P Melrose raised the following:

- Adding sites to the Derelict Sites Register would not completely resolve issue but could help with bringing properties back into use.
- It was an important issue, preventing stock in the market and causing a visual blight.
- 13 years was too long for any property to be on the register.
- It wasn't enough to put a few boards up and flower pots outside these properties, the council could do better than that.
- Under the derelict sites act, estimated market value should be used to set levies every 5 years, was that done?
- CPO was the key to this issue. Could the council apply for URDF funding for this?
- Housing should be a priority in regeneration of these properties.



The members raised the following:

- A plan needed to be put in place to keep small businesses in place.
- Would like to see levies collected. Commercial and residential brought back into use.
- The town regeneration team were doing great work.
- Big issue that commercial property could not be used for housing.

Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service, Housing and Regeneration advised that derelict sites had come under the remit of the Housing and Regeneration department at the beginning of the year. Delays were due to legal issues and queries around the ownership of properties. This was a small team and was working with all available tools. Could drawdown more URDF funding to make these properties more appealing to the market.

Councillor P Melrose thanked Ms S Scully for the report and noted that it was important for dereliction to be kept on top of the agenda.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P Melrose seconded by Councillor P O'Dwyer and agreed by members that the report be noted.

23/0924

Allocation of 5% of Vendor Spaces to Local Producers at Events in Kildare

The following motion in the name of Councillor Mark Leigh was considered by the members.

That the council mandates that all events held in Kildare requiring planning permission must allocate at least 5% of vendor spaces to local food and drink producers, ensuring priority access to support and promote local businesses and producers.

The motion was proposed by Councillor M Leigh and seconded by Councillor A Breslin.



A report from Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services stated that it is not possible to condition and enforce such a licence condition. Factors such as costs and insurances required to attend could potentially be an issue for local producers/businesses.

However, at pre-application and consultation stage of an Event Licence application, we will strongly encourage promoters and event organisers to include local producers/businesses. It would also be worthwhile for local producers and businesses to engage directly with promoters and event organisers when Event Licence applications are received and published in the national papers and on Kildare County Council's website.

Councillor M Leigh advised that supporting local businesses and promoting sustainability should be a priority. Local producers were prevented from selling their produce at events/festivals due to multinational companies getting the contracts. Including new local producers could increase overall sales. It would enhance a festivals appeal.

Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services advised the members that he agreed that it was a good suggestion. The Local Enterprise Office supported many local traders for example the Model School, new food and drinks hub. The Council could not do much on private agreements but could look at standard operating procedures on licences to include 10% of traders would be local.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor M Leigh seconded by Councillor A Breslin and agreed by members that the report be noted.



24/0924

Support of Youth Development in Kildare

The following motion in the name of Councillor Pat Balfe was considered by the members.

That the council outlines its role in support of youth development in the County. The motion was proposed by Councillor P Balfe and seconded by Councillor C Pender.

A report from Ms M Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that as per Census 2022, the number of children and young people in Kildare under 25 is 86,155. This is the 4th youngest proportion (34.8%) and 5th highest number of children/young people among the country's Local Authorities with only Dublin City, Cork County, Fingal and South Dublin having higher numbers. The number of children and young people in Kildare exceeds the populations of many counties, and places significant pressure on existing services and creates challenges in responding to emerging needs.

Kildare County Council provides significant supports to various community and voluntary groups to assist in the provision of youth services throughout the county. In addition, Kildare County Council works closely with forums such as Kildare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) and the Kildare Education and Training Board towards the shared goal of enhancing the lives of children, young people and families in Co. Kildare.

The recently published Local Economic Community Plan 2023 - 2029 outlines the Youth priorities for the County for the next 5 years. Kildare County Council supports the implementation of agreed priority actions in order to build capacity and deliver better outcomes for young people.

The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA), now the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), established the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) (formerly



Children's Services Committees) in 2007 with the purpose of improving outcomes for children and families at local and community level.

CYPSC bring together a diverse group of agencies across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors in local county areas to engage in joint planning of services for children and young people. All major organisations including Kildare County Council working locally on behalf of children and young people are represented. These committees work to improve the lives of children, young people and families at local and community level through collaborative planning and improved service delivery. Kildare CYPSC has a Memorandum of Understanding with Kildare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) which guides the positive collaborative relationship between the two agencies.

Comhairle na nÓg child and youth councils operate in each of the 31 Local Authority areas across Ireland. Funded and managed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), the Councils enable young people aged 12-17 to exercise their right in influencing decision-makers on the topics most important to them. Kildare County Council has responsibility for ensuring that Comhairle na nÓg is established and functioning in line with its requirements. In Sync, who are the largest provider of youth services in the county run Comhairle na nÓg on behalf of Kildare County Council.

The Youth Work Act 2001 provides a legal framework for the provision of Youth Work programmes and services and gives statutory responsibility at national level to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and at local level to the Education and Training Boards for the development of youth work and its co-operation with other services to young people.

Education and Training Boards are charged with responsibility for Youth Work in the ETB 2013 Act, which identifies Youth Work as a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation, and which is (a) complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and (b) provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations (ETB Act 2013 and Youth Work Act 2001).



Kildare County Council will continue to support young people, who play a vital role in building their communities and creating an inclusive environment, through our Community, Arts and Sports Partnership grant schemes.

Councillor P Balfe raised the following:

- Thanked the department for the report and for outlining the significant supports Kildare County Council was providing to youth services through collaborations with local bodies, funding, and initiatives that promote youth participation.
- The members must be proactive in advocating for more services and better infrastructure focusing on those most at risk and those who are not into sports
- There was an urgent need for increased funding from central government to address service gaps for vulnerable youth.
- Failure to address these issues will have long term effects
- Collaborating with public and private organizations to expand resources, especially in underserved communities.
- Youth spaces and services need to be reflected in county development plans to ensure future infrastructure addresses all youth needs.
- Using research and demographic data, to make a stronger case for investment, particularly in disadvantaged areas.
- Engaging youth, especially from underserved areas, to directly influence policy and ensure their needs are addressed.
- Pursuing EU and national grants to supplement local funding and support projects in rural and disadvantaged areas.
- Public Awareness needed to be raised, emphasizing the importance of public support to drive national action on youth service shortfalls.
- He had 18 years of experience as a voluntary youthworker.

Ms P O'Brien, A/Director of Services advised the following:

- Youth and youth activities permeated across every department in the Council.
- Fifth highest number of young people in the country.
- There was a number of programmes and grants available.



- Sports Partnership, Library services etc also did a lot of work in the background
- There was a strong commitment from LCDC. They had allocated a seat on their committee to Tusla.
- Would collaborate with CYSPC and InSync regarding a specific youth needs analysis.
- More funding would be very helpful.

Ms S Kavanagh, Chief Executive welcomed the positive report but reminded the members that the Council did not have a statutory function when it came to provision of youth facilities. The Council had worked well with statutory agencies and LCDC and would assist but it was not a direct function.

Councillor P Balfe was looking for support from the members on this matter. There was a need for dedicated youth spaces. Could be an item for the Planning SPC regarding dedicated youth spaces, collaborating with CYSPC and the ETB and include as part of a social infrastructure audit.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P Balfe seconded by Councillor C Pender and agreed by members that the report be noted.

25/0924

Apple Tax Windfall

The following motion in the name of Councillor Shónagh Ní Raghallaigh was considered by the members.

That the council writes to the Minister for Finance asking him to use the Apple Tax windfall to implement climate action measures, including the retrofitting of Council owned homes to bring them up to a minimum Building Energy Rating of B2

The motion was proposed by Councillor S Ní Raghallaigh and seconded by Councillor P McEvoy.



A report from Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service, Housing and Regeneration stated this is a matter for the Members to decide upon.

Councillor S Ní Raghallaigh stated that this funding would help meet national climate action targets, would see long term social benefits.

The members raised the following:

- The members could not dictate national policy, they had no input in how that money would be spent.
- Understood the reasoning for the motion, how could the members prioritise the retrofitting of homes when so many people are without homes and the current level of homeless figures.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed with Councillor Ní Raghallaigh that the letter would not be sent.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Ní Raghallaigh seconded by Councillor P McEvoy and agreed by all members present that the letter would not issue.

26/0924

Emergency Response Protocol at Castletown in Celbridge

The following motion in the name of Councillor Claire O'Rourke was considered by the members.

That the council provides a report detailing the updated emergency response protocol in place at Castletown in Celbridge for the fire service and other blue-light emergency services and confirm that these services are co-ordinated centrally.

The motion was proposed by Councillor C O'Rourke and seconded by Councillor J Neville.



A report from Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services stated that the Kildare Fire Service has a pre-fire incident plan for the main house at Castletown, should an incident occur at that location.

Kildare Fire Service has access to the grounds of Castletown, via the main gates at Lime Avenue, and has possession of keys to those gates held on its appliances at Maynooth and Leixlip Fire Stations.

A co-ordination meeting was held locally, and as a result of that meeting, arrangements are in place with the National Ambulance Service, that should they require access to the grounds of Castletown House, that they will automatically request the assistance of the fire service who will facilitate access. The National Ambulance Service are aware that the primary entry point is through the gates at Lime Avenue.

The 3 emergency services operate from separate control rooms, but coordination and activation of one service by another is a routine event, carried out multiple times daily.

Councillor O'Rourke advised the members that the motion had come on foot of a recent emergency at Castletown where an ambulance was delayed by locked gates. Following an emergency meeting the emergency response protocol had been updated and was now co-ordinated centrally. She requested that the information be made publicly available.

Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services advised the members that an investigation was ongoing but protocols were now in place. This was a public meeting so the information was available to the public.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C O'Rourke seconded by Councillor J Neville and agreed by members that the report be noted.



27/0924

Department of Education Briefing Request

The following motion in the name of Councillor Aidan Farrelly was considered by the members.

That Kildare County Council requests the Department of Education to brief members on detailed plans for new schools and expansions in County Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor A Farrelly and seconded by Councillor C Pender.

A report from Ms. Mr A Dunney, Director of Service, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services stated that with the members agreement an invitation will issue to the Department of Education.

The members raised the following:

- There was a huge challenge with school places.
- The role of the Local Authority and forward planning needed to be looked at for future proofing school places.
- Curious how the evidence was based to future proof for school capacity.
- Enrolment for private schools should not be included when looking at capacity.
- It would be valuable to invite the Department of Education in to discuss these matters.
- Would assist Councillors decision making in land zoning
- Needed a co-ordinated applications process
- Some members were on school boards and were inundated with queries on school places.
- Schools that did not have permanent buildings were under pressure for permanent buildings.
- The rate of growth in Kildare was exceeding new school places.



- Department were delivering projects a decade behind requirements.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor A Farrelly seconded by Councillor C Pender and agreed by members that an invitation be sent to the Department of Education.

28/0924

Housing for Individuals with Mental Health Difficulties

The following motion in the name of Councillor Chris Pender was considered by the members.

That Kildare County Council, recognising its responsibility for promoting social inclusion and addressing housing needs, supports the establishment of housing for individuals with mental health difficulties in the form of supported accommodation by, subject to relevant procurement arrangements and resources, actively reaching out to Approved Housing Bodies, such as Hearth and Mind, HAIL, or similar organisations that specialise in housing for individuals with mental health difficulties, to collaborate on delivering this essential housing.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Pender and seconded by Councillor P Balfe.

A report from Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service, Housing and Regeneration stated that an action arising from the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027 has been the appointment of a Tenancy Sustainment Officer for mental health for Kildare and Wicklow. In Kildare, the focus of the Cara Mental Health Visiting Tenancy Support Service is working with clients who are not linked with mental health services. The service is open to tenants of the local authority or approved housing bodies including both nominations to new tenancies and those in established tenancies.

HAIL also operate a Tenancy Sustainability service in the county which the Council engages with through a referral process.



The council engages with HSE CH07 Mental Health Team through various fora including the Homeless Forum and the Housing and Disability Steering Group and have established a priority list of housing cases for clients of the Mental Health Team. Engagement with the HSE CH07 team also occurs through the Regional Consultative Homeless Forum and through the Housing Action Team for Kildare. The HSE are also actively engaged in supports for Housing First cases in Kildare and form part of the wrap-around services to ensure tenancy sustainment. A representative from Primary Care also sits on the Housing Action Team Meetings for Kildare which are held monthly. Their attendance at this meeting links to Hospital Discharges.

The council supported Focus Ireland to lease 21 properties in the Celbridge-Leixlip MD area to accommodate people with a mental health disability. The Capital Assistance Scheme is available to Approved Housing Bodies who wish to deliver housing for priority needs including people with a disability.

Councillor C Pender thanked the Housing department for the response and was glad to see work being done. People needed to be put in appropriate accommodation, he would like to see the Council do more and proactively reach out to these agencies. There were a number of individuals who should be in supported accommodation.

Councillor S Doyle advised that it was difficult to identify these cases due to GDPR. Could this be addressed through the Housing SPC. Could the application form be looked at so applicants could put down if suffered with ongoing mental health issues.

Ms S Scully, A/Director of Service advised that in terms of engagement, a lot of work had been done recently and was improving all the time. A lot of additional support staff. It did not fall within the statutory function of the Council. They were bound by the national housing application form. Regarding terms of engagement, they would look at that.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C Pender seconded by Councillor P Balfe and agreed by members that the report be noted.



29/0924

Uisce Éireann Policy on Tree Planting in New Estates

The following motion in the name of Councillor Bill Clear was considered by the members.

That Kildare County Council writes to Uisce Éireann requesting their policy on tree planting in new estates in Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor B Clear and seconded by Councillor C Pender.

A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Service, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that subject to the agreement of the members, Councillor Clear's motion will be referred to UE via the dedicated email address for notices of motion and a response will be expected before the next meeting. The members will be updated accordingly.

Councillor B Clear advised that no trees were allowed within a 5m radius of pipelines. Could clarification be sought from Uisce Éireann. There was a biodiversity crisis. He was aware there was a difficulty with certain trees but the boxes outside Swans in Naas would be a great solution.

Councillor F Brett questioned if it would be the planning departments responsibility not Uisce Éireann.

Mr A Dunney advised that trees would not be planted near water or wastewater infrastructure.

The Cathaoirleach also advised that clarification was needed from Uisce Éireann.



Councillor S Doyle mentioned that the planning department should look at this.

Councillor C Pender asked what Uisce Éireann's policy was and what did they base it on.

The Meetings Administrator agreed that the item would be added to the agenda for the upcoming meeting with Uisce Éireann.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor B Clear seconded by Councillor C Pender and agreed by members that this item be added to the agenda for the meeting with Uisce Éireann on 30 September.

The meeting concluded.