



**Minutes of meeting of Full Council held at 3:00 p.m.
Monday 26 January 2026 in the Council Chamber
Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare**

Members Present: Councillors C. Kelly (Cathaoirleach), P. Balfe, V. Behan, A. Breslin, F. Brett, B. Caldwell, B. Clear, N. Connolly, S. Doyle, G. Dunne, T. Durkan, W. Durkan, A. Feeney, D. Fitzpatrick, R. Heather, N. Heavey, I. Keatley, N. Killeen, M. Leigh, T. McDonnell, P. McEvoy, S. Moore, P. O'Dwyer, T. O'Dwyer, B. O'Loughlin, C. O'Rourke, C. Pender, R. Power, D. Ryan, E. Sammon, D. Trost and B. Wyse.

Online: Councillors B. Dooley, K. Duffy, P. Mulroe, D. Phelan and P. Ward.

Apologies: Councillors A. Breen, P Brooks and P. Melrose.

Also Present: Ms. S. Kavanagh (Chief Executive), Mr. J. Boland, Mr. A. Dunney, Ms. M. Higgins, Mr. E. Ryan (Directors of Services), Ms. E. Hanlon (Head of Finance), Mr. D. Creighton, Mr. M. McLoughlin, Ms. P. Pender (A/Director of Services), Ms. L. Hanratty (Meetings Administrator), Mr. B. O'Gorman (Meetings Secretary) and other officials.

Councillor C. Kelly (Cathaoirleach) welcomed everyone to the January monthly meeting of the Council. The Meeting Administrator read out a notice regarding the live streaming of the meeting to the Council's YouTube channel.



00/0126

Bereavements

The Cathaoirleach advised the meeting that she had been informed of the following bereavement:

- . John Doyle, General Operative, Transportation Section

The Cathaoirleach requested that a minute's silence be observed. A minute's silence was observed.

01/0126

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.

Item 4 – Section 183 for Celbridge Industrial Estate - Councillor D. Trost advised that he was a voluntary Director of Camelton Enterprises Ltd and would absent himself from discussion. This was noted and agreed.

No other conflicts of interest were declared.

02/0126

Minutes and Progress Report

The council considered the draft minutes of the special planning meeting held on 15 December 2025, the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 15 December 2025 and the progress report.

An addition to full council minutes for Item 18/1225 (Mercosur) was noted and read by Cathaoirleach as follows:

‘Councillor Pender indicated his support but sought clarification on the inclusion of a matter outside the Council's direct statutory functions on the agenda. The Cathaoirleach advised that the item was appropriate for consideration, given its relevance to a significant number of residents in the county engaged in farming who would be impacted by the proposal.’



The amendment was noted and agreed by members.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor W. Durkan and agreed by the members present that the draft minutes of the special planning meeting held on 15 December 2025 be adopted.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor S. Moore and agreed by the members present that the draft minutes (with amendment) of the monthly meeting held on 15 December 2025 be adopted.

The progress report was noted.

03/0126

Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report

The members noted the Chief Executive's monthly management report.

04/0126

Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001

The members considered the disposal by way of 35 year lease of freehold interest pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended (Statutory notice of 07 January 2026 circulated previously and attached)

- Industrial Unit in Celbridge Industrial Estate (0.43 Ha).

Councillor D. Trost left the Chamber for the duration of the debate and determination.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor R. Power, seconded by Councillor S. Moore and agreed by the members present that the disposal by way of 35 year lease of freehold interest pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended -Industrial Unit in Celbridge Industrial Estate (0.43 Ha) be approved.

05/0126

Climate Action Implementation Report

The members considered the report previously circulated in relation to an update on the Climate Action Implementation Report.



M. Higgins, Director of Services welcomed progress across all pillars of the Climate Action Plan noting that 72% of actions were underway and highlighted strong cross-departmental collaboration.

P. O'Rourke, Climate Action Coordinator noted that the key need is to transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable, climate neutral economy by 2050, with the 2030-mile marker of 50% increase in energy efficiency and 51% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions.

Key updates included significant energy-efficiency improvements, which included major progress on the Public Lighting LED retrofit and retrofitting of 60 social homes. Biodiversity enhancement includes advancement of the 50-acre woodland project, Moonlight Meadows talks, river catchment works, among others. Other climate action initiatives included Picnic in the Park, Climate Champions programme, over 55 Climate courses and the Maynooth Demo House. The report noted that integration of Green Public Procurement was advancing across the organisation and highlighted the Council's continued contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The report was noted.

06/0126

Bi-annual update from the Development Control Section

The members considered the report previously circulated from the Development Control Section on the Taking in Charge of estates

The report was noted.

07/0126

Report from Members appointed to Other Bodies

The members considered the following reports from members appointed to Other Bodies, pursuant to Section 141 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended):

- Drehid
- Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance
- County Kildare Heritage Forum

The reports were noted.



08/0126

Cathaoirleach's Business

The Cathaoirleach advised members on the following highlights:

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|--------------------------------|--|
| 'Did I Ever Tell You' | Launch of 'Did I Ever Tell You', a deeply moving new publication capturing the stories, memories, and lived experiences of people in residential healthcare and palliative care settings across Kildare, Offaly, and Westmeath. The event took place on Wednesday, 21 January and was funded by Creative Ireland, in partnership with the HSE, Healthy Ireland and local authorities. |
| Spirit of Brigid Awards | Taking place as part of the forthcoming Brigid – Spirit of Kildare Festival 2026, the awards will shine a light on people and organisations whose actions, creativity and commitment have made a meaningful difference to others. The ceremony will take place on Sunday, 2 February at Aras Chill Dara and will recognise outstanding contributions in the following areas: Local Heritage and Biodiversity, Contribution to Local Community Life, Youth Contribution, Environmental Awards, Contribution to the Arts, Sports Achievement Award and Woman in Leadership. A Lifetime Achievement Award will also be presented. |

09/0126

Correspondence

The Meetings Administrator confirmed that twenty items of correspondence had been circulated to the members along with the progress report. These included:

- Reply from the Minister for Housing Local Government and Heritage in response to December motion (Ref.16/1225) re planning permission exemption.
- Acknowledgements/replies from seven (7) Members of The European Parliament in response to December motion (Ref.18/1225) re Mercosur Trade Deal.



- Acknowledgements from Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, Department of Transport and Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment in response to December motion (Ref.19/1225) re National Development Plan Review 2025.
- Replies from three (3) Oireachtas Members in response to December motion (Ref.19/1225) re National Development Plan Review 2025.
- Acknowledgement from Minister for Transport in response to December motion (Ref.20/1225) re DART+ South West.
- Local Government Circular LG 01-2026.
- A resolution from Carlow County Council.

The correspondence and report were noted.

10/0126

Conferences and Training

The Meeting Administrator referred to the Conference and Training report which was circulated to the members and recommended by the Corporate Policy Group.

IPA Governance Forum Approval to attend:

Councillor B. Clear, B. Caldwell, and N. Heavey.

AILG Webinar 1 Planning Approval to attend:

Councillor G. Dunne

LAMA Spring Seminar Approval to attend:

Councillors F. Brett, B. Caldwell, B. Clear, N. Heavey. and
T. McDonnell.

AILG Annual Conference Approval to attend:

Councillors B. Caldwell and T. McDonnell.

NUIM Third Level

Approval to continue B.A. Degree - Local Studies –
January 2026 to January 2027, including retrospective for
Module LS4:



Councillor B. Wyse.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor W. Durkan, seconded by Councillor B. Caldwell and agreed by the members present that the Conference and Training report be approved.

11/0126

Annual Update from Local Community, Cultural and Integration SPC

The members considered the annual update from the Local Community, Cultural and Integration Strategic Policy Committee provided by Councillor S. Doyle, (Chairperson).

The report was noted.

12/0126

Dual-Language Irish and English Signage on Residential Estates

The following motion in the name of Councillors Donna Phelan, Anne Breen and Noel Connolly was considered by the members:

Go ndearbhaíonn agus go bhforfheidhmíonn Comhairle Contae Chill Dara comhlíonadh iomlán le Polasaí Ainmniúcháin agus Comharthaíochta Eastát 2018, ag cinntiú go gcaithfidh comharthaíocht bhuan, lánchomhlíontach dháttheangach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla a bheith suiteáilte i ngach forbairt chónaithe nua agus i ngach eastát atá ag iarraidh a bheith tógtha i gcúram sula gcríochnófar an phleanáil agus sula dtógtar i gcúram iad, agus go ndéanfar iniúchadh ar eastáit atá tógtha i gcúram cheana féin, ionas gur féidir comhlíonadh cúlghabhálach leis an bpolasaí a bhaint amach. Ina theannta sin, iarrann an rún go n-oibreoidh an Fheidhmeannas amach costas na n-oibreacha ar eastáit/forbairtí ábhartha atá tógtha i gcúram cheana féin (agus eastáit oidhreacht) agus go n-aithneofar foinse chistiúcháin.

That the council reaffirms and enforces full compliance with the Naming of Residential Developments Policy 2018, requiring all new residential developments and all estates seeking to be taken in charge to have permanent, fully compliant dual-language Irish and English signage in place before planning completion or taking in charge and to carry out an audit of estates already taken in charge where



retrospective compliance with the policy could be undertaken. In addition, the motion asks that the Executive determine a costing for works to relevant estates/developments already taken in charge (and legacy estates) to be determined and that a funding source be identified.

The motion was proposed by Councillor N. Connolly and seconded by Councillor D. Phelan.

A report was received from Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services and Mr M McLoughlin, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces informing members that The Kildare County Council Naming of New Residential Developments Policy Document 2018 seeks to conserve, preserve and enhance Kildare's heritage as part of the planning process and sets out requirements for naming new residential developments and installing permanent bilingual (Irish and English) signage.

This policy aligns with the Official Languages Act and the Kildare County Development Plan provisions on heritage and placemaking.

Naming and numbering is a standard condition attached to grants of planning permission for multi-unit residential developments. Developers are required to submit proposed names (Irish and English) for written approval by the Council, and to install permanent, compliant signage before completion of the development.

Estates cannot be taken in charge by the Council unless all planning conditions—including naming and signage—are fully met. This includes correct bilingual signage installed in accordance with the 2018 Policy.

The Council will continue to enforce these conditions and internal procedures to ensure uniform application of the 2018 Policy across all developments.

There are in excess of 600 residential developments taken in charge and an assessment of the scope and scale of the project will be a considerable undertaking as evident from the Transport Department's experience in procuring statutory signs for residential developments as part of the implementation of Jake's Law. The scale of a project for the retrofitting of dual language signage in residential developments should not be underestimated and would require careful evaluation, considering the



lack of uniformity of signage, the volume of bespoke stone signs and the extensive scope of such a project which would be well outside the scope of normal operations of the Transport Department.

Councillor Phelan welcomed the report and emphasised that this was an existing requirement for developments and asked that compliance continues to be actively monitored to ensure that the policy is consistently applied. She distinguished legacy estates and was not seeking an audit of older estates.

A. Dunney noted that the report reaffirms the Council's commitment and that confirming compliance is undertaken as part of the Taking in Charge process

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor D. Phelan, seconded by Councillor N. Connolly and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

13/0126

Vulnerable Persons Register for County Kildare

The following motion in the name of Councillors Mark Leigh and Rupert Heather was considered by the members:

That the council examines the feasibility of establishing a Vulnerable Persons Register for County Kildare, on an opt-in basis and in compliance with GDPR (Data Protection), to support emergency planning and coordinated responses during extreme weather events or other emergencies, in collaboration with relevant statutory and community agencies.

The motion was proposed by Councillor M. Leigh and seconded by Councillor R. Heather.

A report was received from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water and Ms. P. Pender, A/Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that where initiatives of this nature have been progressed, they have been led by An Garda Síochána, with, in some counties, involvement from the HSE and Age Friendly initiatives. In that regard data collection and storage around this very sensitive data would appear to be a Garda matter.



As part of the formation of the new Local Community Safety Partnership Committee and the development of Kildare's Community Safety Plan during 2026 (which is dependent upon rollout of the National Strategy), the Council will engage with the Gardai to establish the recommended approach to this, based on precedents in other counties.

Individuals or families experiencing homelessness through an extreme weather event or other emergency are supported by the Homeless outreach team during office hours (Telephone 045 980230) and out of hours by the Peter McVerry Trust Freephone Service (Telephone 1800 804 307) where both teams have details and locations of reported rough sleeping. This is updated on a regular basis and in the event of an extreme weather even or emergency 12 additional beds can be activated and brought into use at short notice.

Councillor Leigh welcomed the report and asked that the matter be referred to the Local Community, Cultural and Integration Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.

M. Higgins noted that vulnerability is not age dependent and suggested that a multi-agency response was appropriate. The Local Community Safety Partnership was being established in February, and items can be referred for its consideration as part of the LCSP's work programme.

Councillor P. O'Dwyer advised that she will refer the matter to the Regional Health Forum.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor M. Leigh, seconded by Councillor R. Heather and agreed by members present that the request be forwarded to the Local Community, Cultural and Integration Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.



14/0126

Multi Annual Support Festivals and Volunteer Led Events

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

That the council agrees to move to a structured, multi annual system of support for community festivals and volunteer led events and that the council -

- a) Establish a multi annual funding scheme of at least three years for established festivals, with clear eligibility criteria and application timelines,
- b) Pilot longer term funding agreements in 2026 to give festivals planning certainty and reduce annual administrative burden, and
- c) Develop and bring to full council within six months a countywide festivals and events framework, including a single funding pathway, a named council contact point, and timelines aligned with event delivery cycles.

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

A report from Ms M Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water and Mr A Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services stated that it is really important to acknowledge the invaluable contribution that festivals and events make to our community. They provide vibrant cultural experiences, foster community spirit, and contribute significantly to our local economy both by way of local participation and promoting Kildare to potential inward visitors. It's essential that we enable our communities to plan effectively for these events, ensuring their continued success and growth.

However, as we consider the proposal for a multiannual funding system, we must recognize that the current budget allocations for 2026 were already decided by the members back in November 2025. The proposed motion, unfortunately, goes against the existing funding allocation process. Our revenue budgets and LPT allocations are determined on an annual basis, unlike capital programs that operate on a



multiannual framework. Attempting to establish a multiannual program based on an annually voted budget is simply not feasible.

It is also important to note that the members themselves decide the allocation of funding, such as LPT, for various established festivals. The Executive cannot commit to a multiannual funding scheme where the determination of funding is a reserved function. An annual approach allows us the flexibility to support new and innovative festivals emerging from the community.

Additionally, a multiannual approach could lead to unforeseen challenges, such as the need for a funding application and procurement process covering a full three years for all aspects of the events. This could potentially restrict organizers by binding them to providers for an extended period. At this time, our Council do not have the resources to develop a comprehensive festival and events framework.

Nevertheless, we understand the need for a strategic direction in managing and supporting festivals. We are committed to conducting an overall strategic review of festivals during 2026, in collaboration with Into Kildare and Failte Ireland, to ensure we are effectively addressing the needs of our community and enhancing the impact of these significant events.

Councillor C. Pender noted the report and asked that the matter be referred to the Local Community, Cultural and Integration Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor P. Balfe and agreed by members present that the matter be referred to the Local Community, Cultural and Integration Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.

15/0126

Information Leaflet on Leaf Fall Season

The following motion in the name of Councillor Evie Sammon was considered by the members:



That the council supports municipal district communities and tidy towns groups by creating an information leaflet (and downloadable format) on leaf fall season, including how and where to set up leaf mould systems.

The motion was proposed by Councillor E. Sammon and seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer.

A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water informed members that the issue of green waste was discussed at a recent Environment Services SPC meeting. As requested in the notice of motion, the council will develop an information leaflet for communities on how to setup leaf composting systems in advance of next autumn. Subject to LPT funding the council also intends to roll out leaf composting workshops, 2 per municipal district.

The council is also planning an information event for all Kildare Tidy Towns Groups in February (similar to last year's event), during which we will also mention the topic of leaf mould systems.

Councillor Sammon welcomed the report.

M. Higgins agreed to also circulate the leaflet via the Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN) and Tidy Towns.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor E. Sammon, seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer and agreed by members present that the report be accepted.

16/0126

Full Time Access and Inclusion Officer

Access and Inclusion Officer The following motion in the name of Councillor Peggy O'Dwyer was considered by the members:

That the council identifies a funding source for a dedicated full time post holder for an Access and Inclusion Officer in line with obligations under the Disability Act 2005.

The motion was proposed by Councillor P. O'Dwyer and seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer.



A report from Mr. E. Ryan, Director of Services, Property and Property Management informed members that Under section 26(2) of the Disability Act 2005, it states that “Each head of a public body referred to in subsection (1) shall authorise at least one of his or her officers (referred to in this Act as “access officers”) to provide or arrange for and co-ordinate the provision of assistance and guidance to persons with disabilities in accessing its services”. We have met our obligations under the act in appointing Michael Hurley as Access Officer. There is not a requirement for a dedicated full time post holder.

Councillor P. O'Dwyer acknowledged the report and complimented the work of the Council's Access Officer and the support given to the seven access groups in the county. She highlighted that c. 13% of the population in the county has one disability (or more) and was of the view that funding should be identified in the future to allow the position to be a full-time equivalent post.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P. O'Dwyer, seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

17/0126

Government Grant Funding for Rural Community Childcare

The following motion in the name of Councillor Veralouise Behan was considered by the members:

That the council identifies what streams of government grant funding are available for rural communities to provide community childcare, in particular start-up funding.

The motion was proposed by Councillor V. Behan and seconded by Councillor B. Caldwell.

A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water informed members that The Community Department does not have a direct role in the provision of childcare facilities. However, to assist members in sharing relevant information please note there are a range of grants available, with information available at <https://www.kccc.ie/#government-schemes>



In addition, the County Kildare Childcare Committee offers support, training and advice to childcare providers, in terms of quality development of services and programmes in a childcare setting: <https://www.kccc.ie/#about-us>

Councillor V. Behan thanked the Director for the report and highlighted the challenges for new facilities getting started and distinguished between rural and urban areas. M. Higgins clarified that the Council's remit did not extend to this area.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor V. Behan seconded by Councillor B. Caldwell and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

18/0126

Update to Local Authority Resident association Grants

The following motion in the name of Councillor Tracey O'Dwyer was considered by the members:

Can the council confirm when it is planned to introduce the revised update to local authority resident association grants that was applied to private residential estates in the previous term as was agreed to by the Local Community, Cultural and Integration Strategic Policy Committee.

The motion was proposed by Councillor T. O'Dwyer and seconded by Councillor E. Sammon.

A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that should this Council now resolve to revise the local authority resident association grants to align with changes applied to private residential estates during the last term of Council, this can be referred to the relevant SPC.

However, taking the basis applied to private estates, a very preliminary assessment of the impact of this approach on local authority estates indicates that this would result in reduction of funding to estates in areas of disadvantage.

These estates typically have a greater need of supports from a range of agencies.



Significant work, over a long period of time, has been carried out in these more socially disadvantaged areas, including widening participation in community initiatives, including maintenance, including climate change activities as part of open space maintenance, and a likely reduced scale of funding would not be a recommended step and would likely disincentivise engagement.

However, if the members so resolve, the Community Department, due to other work demands that occur particularly in the first six months of 2026, would not be in a position to bring an initial report to SPC until Q4 2026.

Councillor T. O'Dwyer welcomed the report and asked that the matter be further considered by the Local Community Strategic Policy Committee.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor T. O'Dwyer, seconded by Councillor E. Sammon and agreed by members present that the matter be referred to the Local Community, Culture and Integration Strategic Policy Committee for further consideration.

19/0126

Annual Action Plans for each Municipal District

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

That this council prepares annual action plans for each municipal district to identify, prioritise, and progress the reactivation of vacant and derelict sites, including standardised timelines for actions to be carried out by site owners, the imposition and collection of the derelict sites levy, and the expedited use of compulsory purchase order powers where appropriate.

With the agreement of Councillor Melrose (absent), the motion was proposed by Councillor P. Mulroe and seconded by Councillor N. Killeen.

A report from Ms. P. Pender, A/Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration and Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services stated that The Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023-2026 is



available to view here <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/publications/vacant-homes-action-plan-2023-2026/>

The CPO activation programme was launched in April 2023.

The Town Regeneration Team have visited and surveyed 1,204 properties since the launch of the scheme. The team conduct regular surveys across the county and thoroughly investigate any reports of vacant and derelict properties.

The process for addressing vacant and derelict properties involves several stages of engagement. Owners are typically contacted initially by post to discuss the property's status, followed by a "Request for Further information" notice placed on the property site.

The Town Regeneration Team actively encourage and assist owners in bringing vacant and derelict properties back into use through engagement, providing information on the various schemes (Vacant property refurbishment grant and the Repair and Leasing scheme), and, as a last resort, Compulsory Acquisition.

The Derelict Sites Register transferred from the Environment Dept. to the Town Regeneration Team in January 2024, 25 properties have been added to the register since January 2024.

41 Compulsory Purchase/Acquisitions have commenced since the launch of the CPO activation programme in April 2023.

The DHLGH set individual targets for each local authority for 2024 and 2025 for vacant/derelict properties to enter the CPO activation programme and for the number of compulsory purchases / compulsory acquisitions to commence. Kildare County Council has exceeded these targets in 2024 and 2025.

The Vacant Property Grant is administered by the Town Regeneration Team, 167 vacant property grant payments have issued in the past 2 years.

The Repair and Leasing Scheme has been approved for 13 properties, which expect to deliver in 2026.



The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund [URDF] Call 3 programme saw a dedicated fund being made available to local authorities to tackle long term vacant and derelict properties in URDF eligible areas. 56 properties across the eligible towns in the county were identified and approved for inclusion on the Call 3 programme.

Compulsory acquisition of 6 URDF Call 3 approved properties is now complete; 1 property has been acquired by agreement.

Following engagement with the owners, 4 properties have been brought back into use and plans are in place to bring a further 14 back into use.

Progress reports by the Town Regeneration Team can be found in the Chief Executive's Reports.

Planning Department-Vacant Sites: Kildare County Councils Planning department maintains a Vacant Sites Register, listing lands considered vacant under planning legislation. However, as part of the Government's Housing for All plan, the Vacant Site Levy has been phased out and replaced by the Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT).

The Finance Act 2021 introduced RZLT to encourage the activation of zoned, serviced land for housing. Under this legislation local authorities must prepare and publish maps identifying land that is:

- Zoned for residential or mixed-use development, and
- Serviced (or capable of being serviced) for housing.

While councils prepare these maps, the Revenue Commissioners are responsible for managing the RZLT process, including registration, annual self-assessed tax returns, valuation, collection of payments, and enforcement.

From 1 February 2025, RZLT took full effect. Land previously subject to the Vacant Site Levy is now taxed under this new regime at 3% of market value, as set out in the Finance Act 2021.

Councillor P. Mulroe accepted the report.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P. Mulroe, seconded by Councillor N. Killeen agreed by members present that the report be noted.

20/0126

Public Drinking Water Tap

The following motion in the name of Councillor Brian O'Loughlin was considered by the members:

That the council undertakes to have at least one public drinking water tap in every town and village in the county.

The motion was proposed by Councillor B. O'Loughlin and seconded by Councillor V. Behan.

A report from Mr. M. McLoughlin, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated in June 2024, a Public Water Fountain Scheme was launched by the Minister of State with special responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy and the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The aim of the Scheme was to reduce plastic bottle use and provide widespread public access to drinking water with an allocation of €2million under the Circular Economy Fund, Phase 1 of this Scheme was for the installation of drinking fountains within public buildings including libraries and council offices. Phase 2 of the Public Water Fountain Scheme would expand the scheme to public outdoor spaces such as community centre, swimming pools, parks, greenways and beaches and was scheduled to commence in 2025.

Kildare County Council installed a water station in Kildare Town Playground in 2023 at a cost of €10,000 funded through local property tax. This included the purchase of the water station, installation costs and the Uisce Eireann connection.

The installation of additional water stations or fountains will be dependent on the commencement of Phase 2 of the Government led Public Water Fountain Scheme. The Council have not been advised of a date for the commencement of Phase 2.

Councillor B. O'Loughlin thanked the Director for the report and asked that the matter be considered as part of future public realm projects.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor B. O'Loughlin and seconded by Councillor V. Behan and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

21/0126

Draft Minutes of Full Council Meeting

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

That the council provides the elected members of Kildare County Council with draft minutes of the previous full council meeting in advance of the motions deadline for the next month's full council meeting. For example, where the deadline for members' motions is the 12 January, Draft Minutes of the December full council should be available to council members three working days prior to that January deadline.

The motion was proposed by Councillor C. O'Rourke and seconded by Councillor N. Killeen.

A report from Mr. J. Boland, Director of Services, Corporate and Cultural Services stated Standing Orders for the Regulation of Business and Proceedings at Meetings of the Council 2021 require that a copy of the minutes be given to each Member of the Council by the Meetings Administrator for confirmation as an accurate record at the next following ordinary Meeting, where practicable.

Current practice is to issue draft minutes with the meeting notification and agenda nine clear days in advance of each monthly meeting.

Standing Orders (2021) require a member to provide notice in writing to the Meeting Administrator by noon on the Tuesday prior to the Meeting stating part not being an accurate record.

The request would introduce a 7-working-day turnaround for preparing draft minutes.

There are 4 Meeting Administrators in the members team servicing over 90 statutory meetings each year within a strict monthly turnaround schedule in line with standing orders.



Member services are satisfied that the current practice provides sufficient time for internal review and coordination across internal departments to ensure that the draft minutes accurately reflect all decisions and discussions prior to circulation.

Any amendments to standing orders is a matter for the members to agree. The matter could be referred to the Protocol and Procedures Committee for consideration under the ongoing review of Standing Orders.

Councillor O'Rourke thanked the Director for the report and advised that the intention of the report was to continue to enhance efficiency in the operation of meetings.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. O'Rourke, seconded by Councillor N. Killeen and agreed by members present that the report be accepted.

22/0126

Re-Opening of Corbally Canal

The following motion in the name of Councillor Seamie Moore was considered by the members:

That the council declares that the Corbally Canal re-opening at Jigginstown, Naas has been included in its 2027 Work Programme and that a Feasibility Study of its undertaking will be obtained during 2027 to guide that objective.

The motion was proposed by Councillor S. Moore and seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer.

A report from Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services stated that The Corbally Canal and Liffey Corridor Enhancement Feasibility Study Report is in the final stages of completion which (at the request of the Elected Members) includes a Quantity Surveyors report outlining costs for various elements. The report is currently undergoing environmental screening and once same are completed, the report will be published and circulated to the Elected Members. While it is not possible to determine or confirm, at this stage, that the Corbally Canal re-opening at Jigginstown, Naas would



be included in the 2027 Work Programme however, the Feasibility Report will be used for future funding applications.

Councillor Moore welcomed the report and asked that members be updated on any action(s) that they can do to assist with progress of the project.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor S. Moore, seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

23/0126

International Refugee Resettlement Programme (IRPP)

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

That the council provides the elected members with a detailed report on the International Refugee Resettlement Programme (IRPP).

That the report include:

- an overview of the scheme and its objectives,
- the date the scheme commenced in County Kildare, and
- the number of properties allocated under the scheme to date.

That this information be provided with a view to Kildare County Council reviewing the operation of the scheme in the context of the significant people on the housing waiting list and the significant levels of homelessness within County Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor B. Clear and seconded by Councillor G. Dunne.

A report from Mr. D. Creighton, A/ Director of Services, Integration stated Detailed reports on the Irish Refugee Protection Programme have been included in the monthly Chief Executives Report under the Integration heading since the programme started in July 2024. Reports include the background to the scheme and regular progress updates. A detailed verbal update on the IRPP programme was also given by the A/Director of Services at a Council meeting in 2025 at the request of the Councillor.



The Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) is a national programme established by the Government on 10 September 2015 as part of Ireland's humanitarian response to the migration crisis in Europe. Its purpose is to provide safe and legal pathways for refugees (primarily those identified by the UNHCR) to resettle in Ireland. Reasons behind the programme:

- **Humanitarian Responsibility:** Ireland introduced the IRPP as a direct response to the humanitarian crisis caused by conflict in the Middle East and Africa. The programme reflects Ireland's commitment to international protection and refugee rights. The IRPP contributes to strengthen Ireland's reputation for humanitarian leadership.
- **International & EU Commitments:** EU relocation mechanisms, particularly the 2015 EU decisions aimed at relieving pressure on countries like Italy and Greece. Ireland regularly pledges resettlement numbers to the European Commission.
- **Supporting international burden-sharing:** Ireland contributes to international efforts by admitting refugees who cannot safely remain in first countries of asylum such as Jordan, Lebanon, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan.

Role of Local Authorities:

- Local Authorities have the responsibility to house programme refugees in their communities. Programme refugees are housed in local authority and approved housing body housing. This is an assigned responsibility within the national IRPP framework.
- Local Authorities must work as part of a Whole-of-Government framework and form part of a multi-agency model including Government departments, and State agencies. The IRPP's whole-of-government approach depends on local authority participation.
- Local authorities have the responsibility to manage housing and community integration. Once a Local Authority receives its refugee quota, it plans how and where families will be accommodated and how to assist the families integrate into the community (schools, health services, community supports).



- Each Local Authority supports refugees' orientation and access to services and ongoing access to education/training, health and community supports. This is done through a Resettlement Support Worker with social care/integration expertise and an Intercultural Support Worker with relevant language and cultural experience.

Kildare County Council has been successfully involved in a resettlement programme as far back as 2010. The current programme is Irish Refugee Protection Programme Phase II (IRPPII). Quotas for each local authority are agreed as part of the County and City Management Association's (CCMA) model for distribution for IRPP II, CCMA HBLU IRPP II Model for Distribution. Through this model, Kildare County Council was allocated 66 refugees to be resettled between 2024 and 2026. DCEDIY staff met with KCC Housing officials in November 2023 with a view to initiating IRPPII in early 2024.

Responsibility for the delivery of the programme was transferred to the A/Director of Services for Integration when the Integration Directorate was established in early 2024. The grant funding and procurement of the Resettlement and Integration Support Workers was completed in Q2 2024 and the first resettlement of families under the programme was completed in September 2024.

As of 15 January 2026, Kildare County Council has resettled 50 of the 66 refugees in its allocated quota. The resettlement has been carried out in a combination of Approved Housing Body and Kildare County Council housing units through various tranches. The remaining families in the programme are scheduled to be resettled in Q1 2026 with integration supports due to finish in April 2026. All families resettled under the programme become either Kildare County Council or Approved Housing Body tenants.

Councillor Clear welcomed the report and said the programme adds pressure to Kildare's housing system and asked the council to review its participation once current commitments are completed. Councillor Clear also asked for confirmation of the number of social housing units being used in the programme.



A number of councillors expressed disagreement with the motion, stating that it could be seen as marginalising refugees and might contribute to unnecessary concerns within the community. They also noted that the 66 refugees involved represent a small number and are unlikely to have a significant impact on overall housing availability in Kildare.

D. Creighton confirmed that the Council will continue resettling the remaining refugees under its current allocation, with the remaining 4 families scheduled for housing in early 2026. A total of 14 social housing units will be used under the programme, 10 used to date with a further 4 units to be used for the remaining families. The Council will also maintain integration supports until April 2026, and resettled families will remain long-term local authority or approved housing body tenants. Mr. Creighton advised that no indication of a future scheme had been given to the Council.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor B. Clear, seconded by Councillor G. Dunne and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

24/0126

Community Micro-Hubs

The following motion in the name of Councillor Nuala Killeen considered by the members:

That the Council pilots Community Micro-Hubs in underused council and community spaces to host skill-building workshops, community meetings, repair cafés, and tool/seed libraries, supporting social inclusion, sustainability, and community engagement, with a preliminary audit of available spaces and their capacity to inform implementation and a review after 12 months to assess impact and scalability.

The motion was proposed by Councillor N. Killeen and seconded by Councillor C. Pender.

A report from Mr. J. Boland, Director of Services, Corporate and Cultural Services stated Kildare Library Service through our branch network already fulfil the role as



Community Hubs and are actively expanding their capacity under the National Skills for Life programme, launched by Minister Jerry Buttimer in 2025.

Libraries are trusted, inclusive spaces that serve as community anchors for lifelong learning and engagement. Through the National Skills for Life, Kildare Library Service will be expanding our provision of free life skills training and resources across six key areas:

- Basic Digital Skills – from using smartphones and email to navigating online services.
- Financial Literacy – budgeting, saving, and managing personal finances.
- Media Literacy – recognising misinformation and developing critical thinking online.
- Business and Employment Skills – CV writing, job searching, and workplace readiness.
- Health Awareness – making informed decisions about personal and family health.
- Sustainable Lifestyles and Environmental Awareness – learning how to live more sustainably.

In addition to the new Skills for Life Programme, our libraries already deliver a wide range of free events and initiatives that align with the objectives of the proposed Micro-Hubs, including:

- Climate and Sustainability Workshops – practical sessions to inspire community action.
- The award-winning Kildare Seed Library, now available in all seven main libraries, supporting biodiversity, food growing, and seed-saving through seasonal workshops and talks.
- Maker Space in Naas Library – providing access to tools and technology for creativity and innovation. Additional Maker Spaces are planned for Clane and Newbridge Libraries.
- Craft and Skill Workshops, Digital Skills and Media Literacy workshops
- TTT – Toys, Technology and Training Programme – supporting neurodiverse children and adults, and those who support them (carers, parents, teachers,



and professionals in disability services) through specialised resources, assistive technologies, and training.

- Energy Kit Lending – helping households monitor and reduce energy consumption.
- Healthy Ireland at Your Library Programme – promoting health and wellbeing through talks, workshops, and curated resources.
- Age Friendly Programmes and Activities – ensuring older adults have access to inclusive, supportive services and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Cultural and Creativity Programming – delivered through the Creative Ireland Community Engagement Programme, and programmed events during Heritage Week, Culture Night, Cruinniú na nÓg, Brigid Festival, and the Kildare Readers Festival, with libraries acting as venues for cultural events and performances. All of these are free and open to everyone to participate.
- Integration Supports – Libraries work closely with the Local Authority Integration Team and members of the Community Integration Forum to provide supports, programmed workshops, and English language classes for migrants and those seeking asylum.

The Council also collaborate extensively with other agencies and partners such as KWETB, Solas, Citizens Information, MABS, and through ALL Strategy collaborative projects, ensuring that our services complement wider community and educational initiatives.

All these initiatives are central to our Library Development Plan, *Building for Tomorrow* and reflect our role as Community Hubs in practice. Libraries are already delivering on the goals of social inclusion, sustainability, and community engagement, and we continue to innovate and expand these services.

Accordingly, rather than duplicating efforts, the Council recommends leveraging, promoting and supporting the existing library network, which is well-established, accessible, and trusted by communities. This approach ensures efficient use of resources while building on proven success.



Councillor Killeen clarified that her intention was to request a comprehensive capacity audit of all community spaces and facilities across the county, noting that the proposal should not be limited to library buildings alone.

Mr. J. Boland acknowledged the significant and ongoing work of the Library Service in supporting local communities. He noted, however, that where additional capacity may exist within community-type facilities, practical challenges may arise in making such buildings available for broader community use, including issues relating to access, management, and operational arrangements.

Ms. M. Higgins advised that, in addition to libraries, there are a number of facilities countywide that already operate as community hubs or have available capacity, including Newbridge Town Hall, Kilcock, Carbury, K Leisure facilities, and various community centres. She requested that councillors notify the Council of any facilities that may not be operating at optimum usage, to support further consideration of potential community space utilisation.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor N. Killeen, seconded by Councillor C. Pender and agreed by members present that report be noted.

25/0126

Road Traffic Regulations 1997 relating to Electric Scooters

The following motion in the name of Councillor Tom McDonnell considered by the members:

That the Council writes to the Minister for Transport to review enforcement and implementation of Road Traffic Regulations 1997 (as amended) specifically related to electric scooters with a view to protecting all road users.

The motion was proposed by Councillor T. McDonnell and seconded by Councillor B Clear.

A report from Mr. M. McLoughlin, A/ Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that this is a matter for the members to agree.



Councillor McDonnell highlighted safety concerns for both users and the wider public. He asked that the members agree that the council write to the Minister to review enforcement and implementation of relevant legislation.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor T. McDonnell, seconded by Councillor B. Clear and agreed by members present that the Council writes to the Minister for Transport.

Mr. Eoghan Ryan, Director of Services

The Cathaoirleach congratulated Mr. Eoghan Ryan, Director of Services, on his new employment and wished him every success, expressing thanks for his work and noting that members were saddened by his departure.

Mr. Ryan thanked the Cathaoirleach for her kind words and acknowledged the positive engagement and support he had received from the elected members and staff colleagues throughout his time with the Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting.