



**Minutes of meeting of Full Council held at 3:00 p.m.  
Monday 28 April 2025 in the Council Chamber  
Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare**

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**Members Present:** Councillors K. Duffy (Cathaoirleach), P. Balfe, V. Behan, A. Breslin, F. Brett, B. Clear, B. Dooley, S. Doyle, G. Dunne, T. Durkan, W. Durkan, A. Feeney, R. Heather, N. Heavey, I. Keatley, C. Kelly, N. Killeen, M. Leigh, T. McDonnell, P. McEvoy, P. Melrose, S. Moore, P. O'Dwyer, T. O'Dwyer, B. O'Loughlin, C. O'Rourke, C. Pender, D. Phelan, D. Trost, and P. Ward.

**Online:** Councillors P. Brooks, B. Caldwell, N. Connolly, P. Mulroe, L. Panaite Fahey, R. Power, E. Sammon, and B. Wyse.

**Apologies:** Councillors A. Breen and D. Fitzpatrick.

**Also Present:** Ms. S. Kavanagh (Chief Executive), Ms. A. Aspell. Mr. A. Dunney, Ms. E. Hanlon, Mr. E. Ryan, (Directors of Service), Ms. C. Barrett, Mr. D. Creighton, P. O'Brien (A/Directors of Service), Ms. L. Hanratty (Meetings Administrator), Ms. L. Morgan (Meetings Secretary), and other officials.

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The Cathaoirleach welcomed everyone to the April monthly meeting of the Council and asked the Meeting Administrator to read out a notice regarding the live streaming of the meeting to the Council's YouTube channel.



**00/0425**

**Bereavements**

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

Marioara Mutiu, wife of Nicolae Mutiu, Transportation.

Jean O'Dwyer, Mother of Siobhan O'Dwyer, Transportation.

Marie (Mary) Kelly, Mother of Majella Kelly, Building & Development Control.

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

**01/0425**

**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.

**02/0425**

**Minutes and Progress Report**

The council considered the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 31 March 2025 and the progress report.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Doyle, and agreed by the members present that the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 31 March 2025 be adopted.

The progress report was noted.

**03/0425**

**Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report**

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



**04/0425**

**Environmental and Water Service Strategic Policy Committee**  
**sectoral representation nomination**

The Cathaoirleach advised the members that Kildare PPN, following an election process, proposed a sectoral interest candidate representing community and voluntary for the Environment and Water Service SPC. He then noted that a biography of the nominated candidate had been circulated prior to the meeting and that CPG had approved the nomination for consideration at Full Council.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Doyle, seconded by Councillor Pender, and agreed by the members present that Mr. Denis Logan be appointed as a sectoral interest representing community and voluntary to the Environmental and Water Services Strategic Policy Committee.

**05/0425**

**Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures**

Ms. Eileen Hanlon, Director of Service, Finance, Digital Services, Innovation and Governance noted that a report on the proposed Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures, reviewed by the Finance Committee and CPG, had been circulated prior to the meeting. Ms Hanlon briefed the members on the report, emphasising that the procedures will support good corporate governance and transparency in the allocation of public money which will safeguard the members and the Council.

Ms Hanlon requested that the members consider approving the proposed Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures.

During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- Reservations were expressed about transitioning from guidelines to procedures. The reservations included.
  - A reduction of Members powers,
  - The unknown and unintended consequences.



- Further review of the draft LPT procedures, to identify and address concerns.
- Support was expressed for the introduction of procedures as it would provide clarity on the process to new councillors and create a consistent approach.

Ms Hanlon noted that the proposed procedures had been two years in development, had previously been sent back to the Finance Committee by CPG and the development process was now exhausted.

It was proposed by Councillor McEvoy and seconded by Councillor Breslin to defer the approval of the proposed 'Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures' to allow consultation. The members present supported the proposal and the Cathaoirleach initiated a vote.

**Vote 1:       Defer the approval of the proposed 'Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures' to allow consultation.**

<b>In favour:</b>	12
<b>Against:</b>	19
<b>Abstained:</b>	7

**Result:**       The proposal to defer the approval of the proposed 'Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures' to allow consultation was not carried based on the vote results.

It was then proposed by Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor T. O' Dwyer to reject the proposed 'Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures'. The members present supported the proposal and the Cathaoirleach initiated a vote.

**Vote 2:       Reject the proposed 'Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures'.**

<b>In favour:</b>	31
<b>Against:</b>	4
<b>Abstained:</b>	3

**Result:**       The proposal to reject the approval of the proposed 'Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures' was carried based on the vote results.



The Chief Executive noted that a significant amount of public money was distributed by the members under the retained Local Property Tax advising that in the absence of members procedures the Executive would draft their own procedures for approving payment requests submitted under retained LPT. She also emphasised that procedures support good corporate governance and transparency in the allocation of public money which safeguards the members and the Executive.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Doyle, seconded by Councillor T. O' Dwyer, and agreed by the members present that the Retained Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation Procedures be rejected.

**06/0425**

#### **Cathaoirleach's Business**

The Cathaoirleach advised members that he had attended several events recently.

- Launch of Kildare County Council Corporate Plan 2024-2029.
- Official opening of the Blackrath Housing Scheme, Athgarvan that delivered 18 beautiful new social homes under 'Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland'.

The Cathaoirleach also noted the passing of His Holiness, Pope Francis and confirmed that the online Book of Condolence with a closing date 2 May 2025 was opened to allow the citizens of Kildare express their sympathies.

**Online Book of Condolence:** <https://kildarecoco.ie/bookofcondolence/>

The Cathaoirleach reminded members that the 'Kildare Inclusivity Festival' will take place on 11 May 2025, between 11-4pm.

[Kildare Inclusivity Festival 2025 – County Kildare Access Network](#)



**07/0425**

**Correspondence**

The Meetings Administrator confirmed six items of correspondence had been circulated to the members along with the progress report. These included two resolutions from other County Councils, a reply from Department of Local Government and Planning regarding Councillor Moore's SPC's motion, an acknowledgement from the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority (AHBRA) regarding Councillors Doyle motion, an email from ASIAM confirming a date to give presentation, and a letter seeking nomination as a Presidential candidate.

Councillor Killeen requested that the nomination process for the Presidential Election be clarified. The Cathaoirleach advised that a briefing will take place in advance of this event.

The correspondence and report were noted.

**08/0425**

**Conferences and Training**

The Meetings Administrator referred to the conference and training report which had been circulated to the members and recommended by the Corporate Policy Group.

Councillor Heather and Connolly sought retrospective approval for attendance at free online AILG Webinar 4 on Social and Affordable Housing in Ireland on 25 April 2025.

Councillors Balfe, Brook, Dunne, Munroe, O'Rourke and Trost sought retrospective approval for attendance at free online training AILG Induction Training to members of SPC's on 17 April 2025.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Mc Evoy, seconded by Councillor Killeen, and agreed by the members present that the approvals sought in the Chamber and the conference and training report be approved.



**09/0425**

### **Accessing External Funding**

The following motion in the names of Councillors Heather, Leigh and Feeney was considered by the members:

That Kildare County Council provides a report outlining existing structures and opportunities for accessing external funding, including relevant European Union programmes, and considers how organisational structures could be strengthened to improve success in such funding applications.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Heather, seconded by Councillor Leigh.

A report from Mr. E. Ryan, Director of Services, Corporate, People and Cultural Services stated that securing additional national funding for strategic projects and work programmes is a priority of Council. Kildare County Council actively applies for all national funding opportunities as they become available. We have had success in securing funding and have been able to deliver a wide range of projects and services over the years, including Naas Library, Kerdiffstown Park and Athy Distributor Road. We also secured funding for a number of European projects; one of which is the Repower the Regions project that started recently and looks set to be a very interesting and rewarding project. Further information on this project is available at the following link [\(1\) Repower Regions: Posts | LinkedIn](#)

In terms of organisational structures, as the members were made aware the appointment and assignment of staff is an executive function.

Councillor Heather thanked the Director for the report and noted the importance of availing of all potential funding streams. During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- Role of the regional assemblies in Ireland, and can Kildare County Council increase access to development and funding opportunities,
- Potential for a European Project Funding Officer.



Mr. Ryan advised the members that Kildare County Council were very active in seeking funding but noted that many funding opportunities related to research and development and not capital projects.

He also noted the challenges Kildare County Council were experiencing in staff retention and recruitment, that there was an active recruitment campaign and maintaining core service delivery was the priority.

Councillor Heather welcomed the response but noted that the recruitment challenges were unfortunate.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Heather, seconded by Councillor Leigh, and agreed by the members present that the report be noted.

The Cathaoirleach requested that motions 10,11, and 12 be taken together as they were similar. The members present agreed.

#### **10/0425**

#### **Tenant in Situ Scheme**

The following motion in the names of Councillors Pender and Balfe was considered by the members:

That Kildare County Council writes to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to urgently request a review and increase in the funding allocated to the Tenant in Situ scheme, which operates under the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme. Given the increasing demand on the scheme and the critical role it plays in preventing homelessness, it is essential that adequate resources are made available to ensure local authorities can act quickly and effectively where a tenant is at risk of losing their home due to a property being placed on the open market.

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

A report from A. Aspell, Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that the members have been provided with a detailed report on the operation of the Second-hand Acquisition Programme 2025. The report outlined the council's 2025





funding position, likely budgetary implications arising from the programme and the management of notices of termination. As outlined in the report the council received a funding allocation for 2025 of €15 million, this funding is fully committed, through a combination of sales to be completed, refurbishment costs and buy and renew properties.

It is a matter for the members if they wish to correspond with the Minister on this matter.

Councillor Pender thanked the Director for the report and emphasised the importance of continuously being active in supporting homeless prevention.

**11/0425**

### **Second-Hand Acquisition Programme 2025**

The following motion in the name of Councillor Aoife Breslin was considered by the members:

That this Council calls on the Minister for Housing to provide additional funding under the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme 2025 to Kildare County Council to ensure that the Council can commence acquiring properties when tenants have recently received Notice to Quit under the Tenant in Situ Scheme. Furthermore, given the changes recently announced for the Buy and Renew Scheme where now it has to be funded through the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme the Council will be unable to purchase properties under the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme 2025.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Breslin and seconded by Councillor Feeney.

A report from Ms. A. Aspell, Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that the members have been provided with a detailed report on the operation of the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme 2025. The report outlined the council's 2025 funding position, likely budgetary implications arising from the programme and the management of notices of termination. As outlined in the report the council received a funding allocation for 2025 of €15 million, this funding is fully committed, through a



combination of sales to be completed, refurbishment costs and buy and renew properties.

Regarding the Buy and Renew Scheme, as advised in the report Buy and Renew Properties are being funded from the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme 2025 and an analysis of our existing Buy and Renew Programme is being undertaken. We are engaging with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in an effort to identify an alternative funding mechanism for some of properties earmarked for acquisition under this Scheme.

Councillor Breslin thanked the Director for the report, and emphasised the need for increased funding, as families were being impacted.

**12/0425**

### **Tenant In Situ Purchase Scheme**

The following motion in the name of Councillor Noel Connolly was considered by the members:

Go soláthróidh an Chomhairle tuarascáil do na comhaltaí ar fheidhmiú na scéime ceannaigh in situ do thionóntaí, lena n-áirítear ach gan a bheith teoranta dóibh seo a leanas:

1. Líon iomlán na bhfálacha a ceannaíodh in 2024 agus costas iomlán na bhfálacha, agus go sonrúfar, astu sin, líon iomlán na bhfálacha tionónta-in-situ in 2024 agus costas iomlán na bhfálacha sin
2. Líon na n-iarraitas ó thionóntaí in situ in 2024 a cuireadh ar sos go dtí gur deimhníodh an leithdháileadh caipitil do 2025, agus an líon díobh a cheannófar anois le leithdháileadh caipitil 2025, mar aon leis an gcostas iomlán a bheidh orthu sin
3. An líon iomlán de na hiarratais sin nach rachaidh chun cinn a dheimhniú, agus an méid airgid a bheidh fágtha ó leithdháileadh 2025 tar éis déileáil le hiarratais 2024 a dheimhniú.



That the Council provides a report to the members on the operation of the tenant in situ purchase scheme, including but not limited to the following:

1. Total acquisitions purchased in 2024 and total cost of these acquisitions and from within this the total number of tenant-in-situ acquisitions in 2024 and total cost of these acquisitions.
2. Number of 2024 tenant-in-situ applications paused until 2025 capital allocation was confirmed and the number of these that will now be purchased with the 2025 capital allocation and the total cost of these.
3. Confirmation of the total number of these that will now not proceed and what remains from the 2025 allocation when the 2024 overhand is dealt with.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Connolly and seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

A report from Ms. A. Aspell, A/Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that the members have been provided with a detailed report on the operation of the Second-hand Acquisition Programme 2025. The report outlined the council's 2025 funding position, likely budgetary implications arising from the programme and the management of notices of termination. As outlined in the report the council received a funding allocation for 2025 of €15 million, this funding is fully committed, through a combination of sales to be completed, refurbishment costs and buy and renew properties.

1. The council closed sixty-two second hand sales in 2024, the majority being tenant in situ properties with a small number of purchases for people with a disability. The total cost of these properties was €15.7 million. While sales closed in 2024, not all funds were recouped from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in 2024, at year-end we were awaiting recoupment of €2.6 million, this amount forms part of the 2025 allocation.



2. The council did not pause the acquisition programme; however, we ceased accepting expressions of interest from landlords in Quarter 4 2024. At year-end there was a balance of twenty-two properties where the sale was un-concluded, the capital cost of these properties was €6.9 million.
3. Twenty-two properties were carried into 2025. As advised in the report issued to the members refurbishment costs form part of the funding allocation along with properties purchased under the Buy and Renew Programme. When all outstanding claims are considered, the council is not able to commit to any further acquisitions.

Councillor Connolly thanked the Director for the report.

During discussion, the members expressed their support for all three motions and raised the following points:

- Concern for tenants, especially families and single people,
- The need to prioritise homeless prevention,
- Housing demand was inflating rent values in certain areas,
- The hard work of the Housing section was commended.

Ms. A. Aspell acknowledged the concerns raised, the challenging situations that some tenants were experiencing and advised that the Housing Section is continuously active in dealing with all cases.

Motions 10, 11 and 12 were **resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Connolly, seconded by Councillor Evoy, and agreed by members present that a letter be issued to Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage requesting a review and increase in the funding allocated to the Tenant in Situ scheme.



**13/0425**

**Lyme Disease Information Signage**

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

That Kildare County Council installs Lyme disease information and warning signage in all public parks and playgrounds to advise of the dangers of Lyme Disease and the steps to take to minimise the risk of contracting this chronic condition.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Behan and seconded by Councillor Heavey.

A report from Ms. C. Barrett, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces advised the members that a social media campaign will be organised to highlight the issues with Lyme disease. Signage will be considered but it will have to be costed, and a budget identified to cover these. There is no provision in this year's budget for such signage.

Councillor Phelan thanked the Director for the report stating the importance of raising awareness, that Lyme disease is on the rise and cited resources that provide useful information and signage templates.

Lyme Resource Centre (a national charity)  
HSE website

[Home | Lyme Resource Centre](#)  
[Lyme Disease - HSE.ie](#)

During discussion, the members the members expressed their support for the motion and raised the following points:

- It is an urban and rural problem,
- Long-term complications prevented with early diagnoses

Ms. C. Barrett thanked the members for raising this motion and advised that the Council will review media options to raise awareness, and funding options to roll out signage.



**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Behan, seconded by Councillor Heavey, and agreed by members present that the Council will review media options to raise awareness, and funding options to roll out signage.

**14/0425**

**Planning rules in the provision of childcare facilities**

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

That elements of the Guidance document for planning authorities with regard to Childcare facilities dated 2001, be replaced by the development of a county set of recommendations of best practice, that have regard to the delivery of quality sustainable childcare in our communities. Key requirement for change being the recommendation ratio of one creche per seventy-five units, that is a flawed concept, misinforming planning decisions to the detriment of a fast-growing County with one of the youngest demographics in the State. That in the interim we adopt a policy by resolution of this meeting that all planning decisions for the provision of childcare facilities should immediately seek to have an appropriately scaled model (at a minimum of 80 children) to ensure sustainability and efficiencies that can deliver the necessary regulatory standards for quality childcare in County Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor Ward.

A report from Mr. N. O'Riordan, A/Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services that was presented by Director of Service Alan Dunney, stated that the delivery of childcare is not a service directly provided by Kildare County Council. As such, the formulation and development of a set of county wide recommendations of best practice in the delivery of childcare was a matter for the Kildare County Childcare Committee and/or the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality.

The Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities [June 2001] referenced above were issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development 2000 (as amended). In relation to new housing areas, the standard required in these



guidelines was one childcare facility providing for a minimum twenty childcare places per seventy-five dwellings/units. Planning Authorities were statutorily obliged to comply with Section 28 Guidelines in the preparation of County Development Plans, Settlement Plans and Local Area Plans.

Any significant deviation from the standard set out in the guidelines would require a revision by Government of the relevant guideline. In this regard, the members may wish to write to the DHLGH to express their views in advance of any new guidelines being prepared.

Councillor Doyle thanked the Director for the report emphasising the importance of providing access to suitable childcare facilities.

During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- The need for a public funded model,
- Creche size needs to align with demand,
- Land zoned for housing needs to provide suitably sized childcare facilities,
- Concerns were expressed regarding long waiting lists in some areas for a creche place, staff retention due to low pay, availability of qualified staff and viability of service due to changes in child, staff ratios.

Mr. A. Dunney, Director acknowledged the concerns raised, noting that one size would not fit all, and to develop a policy, further review was required.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Doyle, seconded by Councillor Ward, and agreed by members present that the motion be referred to the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Policy Committee.



**15/0425**

**As I Am Autism-Friendly Accreditation**

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

That the council follows the direction of the Houses of the Oireachtas which achieved 'As I Am Autism-Friendly Accreditation' in 2023 for Leinster House, making it the world's first Autism-Friendly parliament and considers including an objective in the next 'County Kildare Access Strategy' for Kildare County Council to gain 'As I Am Autism-Friendly Accreditation' for the Áras Chill Dara headquarters.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Phelan and seconded by Councillor Doyle.

A report from Mr. E. Ryan, Director of Services, Corporate, People and Cultural Services stated that the council will include an objective in the next 'County Kildare Access Strategy' for Kildare County Council to gain 'As I Am Autism-Friendly Accreditation' for the Áras Chill Dara headquarters.

Councillor Phelan thanked the Director for the report and asked when the review of Kildare's Access Strategy was due.

Mr Ryan noted that he would confirm the timeline for review of the Strategy.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Phelan, seconded by Councillor Doyle and agreed by members present that the report be noted and the timeline for the review of the Access Strategy be confirmed.

**16/0425**

**Cairde App and the MapAlert Systems**

The following motion in the name of Councillor T. O'Dwyer was considered by the members.

That the council explains the difference between the Council owned Cairde App and the MapAlert systems and outline why two systems are required to deliver alerts and notifications.





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

A report from Mr. E. Ryan, Director of Services, Corporate, People and Cultural Services stated that MapAlerter is a subscriber-based text and email alerts system for notices regarding infrastructure emergencies, and other matters related to Council services.

It is in use by the Council for several years, and the scope of the service relates to Council services.

It is free to individual subscribers, and an App version is also available.

To date, in this County Council, MapAlerter is used for alerts related to the Weekly Planning Lists, Severe Weather events, Road closures, hazards and roadworks by Municipal Districts Offices and Library service notices. The App is an important tool in our Severe Weather and Emergency Plan, as it communicates alerts to the Fire Service, HSE, Gardai and the Council's Out of Hours Phone Service Provider.

The service also gives existing subscribers to the Council's consultation portal the option to receive alerts regarding public consultations advertised on that portal.

The Cairde App is not owned by the Council and was procured more recently than MapAlerter and from a separate process, and for a different purpose. The Cairde app is used for Community Text Alerts which are issued by An Garda Síochána and other users with appropriate access. The app was tendered on an initial 3-year trial basis and was funded through Local Property Tax, this trial period will expire in 2025 and a determination on whether to continue with the use of this app will need to be taken.

Councillor T. O'Dwyer thanked the Director for the report emphasising the benefits of having one App. During discussion, the members expressed their support for having one App where all information can be accessed.



Mr. E. Ryan acknowledged the points raised, noting that a review of merging the App's can be considered when developing the brief for a new contract when the current contracts expire.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor T. O'Dwyer, seconded by Councillor Durkan, and agreed by members present that the report be noted and consideration to merge the Apps is given when developing the brief for a new contract.

**17/0425**

**Text Alert Scheme for Misuse of Accessible Parking Bays**

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

That Kildare County Council adopts the text alert scheme to report misuse of accessible parking bays similar to what is already in place in Gorey, Lucan, and Rathfarnham.

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

A report from Ms. C. Barrett, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that Kildare County Council regulates parking byelaws in twelve towns in the County. A maximum stay period operates for all parking bays covered by the byelaws including accessible parking bays which are referred to as disable parking bays in both the Road Traffic (Traffic and Parking) Regulations 1997 and in the parking byelaws. Traffic wardens employed by our pay parking contractor monitor compliance with the byelaws to ensure that the bays are not occupied for longer than permitted and that disable person permits are on display where appropriate. Outside of the parking-by-law areas, Kildare County Council traffic wardens ensure compliance with parking regulations. The fine for parking in a disabled parking bay without an appropriate permit is €150.



The following table outlines the number of parking fines issued by Kildare County Council for illegal parking in respect of disabled parking bays.

<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025-Quarter 1</b>
275	255	81

In addition, An Garda Síochána have taken a proactive approach in recent months to enforcement which is improving the level of compliance in this regard.

The Transport Department have noted the awareness campaign launched by the Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland (DDAI) in respect of the appropriate use of disabled parking bays and are reviewing the situation. While the campaign has merit, there are practical implications in respect of the hours of operation of pay-parking which is limited while disabled bays are in force at all times. The Scheme could be looked in the context of the next review of the managed parking services contract scheduled for 2026. Furthermore, in the context of the review of parking byelaws, the Transport Department will review the locations of disabled parking bays to ensure that there are sufficient numbers and appropriately situated bays available for the convenience of disabled drivers. Kildare County Council treats the misuse of disabled parking bays as a serious offence and elected representatives and the public are encouraged to contact the parking team in Kildare County Council during office hours and An Garda Síochána outside of office hours to ensure adherence to byelaws.

Councillor P. O'Dwyer thanked the Director for the report emphasising the important function accessible parking bays provide to the entitled user. During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- Misuse of accessible parking parks was unacceptable.
- €150 fine was not adequate.
- Newbridge was suggested for the 'text pilot scheme'.



Ms. C. Barrett acknowledged the points raised noting that the text alert functionality can be considered when preparing the brief for the 'managed parking services' contract when due for renewal.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor P. O'Dwyer, seconded by Councillor Pender, and agreed by members present, that the text alert scheme for reporting illegal parking in disabled parking bays be considered when preparing the brief for the 'managed parking services' contract when due for renewal.

**18/0425**

**Recyclable Cups at Licensed Events over 5000 Attendees**

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

That Kildare County Council adopts a policy requiring licensed events with over 5,000 attendees to use recyclable cups, aiming to reduce single-use plastic waste.

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

A report from Ms. P. O'Brien, A/Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that current practice, in accordance with the Planning regulations, requires the submission of an Event License Application accompanied by a draft Event Management Plan (EMP) to the planning department of the local authority in advance of a large-scale outdoor event (>5,000 attendees).

The environment section of the EMP includes a draft Environment Monitoring Programme which must be in place before, during and after the proposed event. Minimum requirements for the section are details on litter picking provision, quantities, and types of infrastructure.

There is currently no requirement in event licensing applications for strategies towards waste prevention and/or waste reduction. However, the council promotes best practice in this regard – including the option for implementing a reusable cup



system onsite – and works proactively with promoters and event organisers in planning their waste management requirements. Consideration is also given to reducing or banning other single use items for example, plastic lanyards, plastic packaging for merchandise, wristbands, glow sticks, plastic giveaways, rain ponchos etc.

It is also noted that, if a festival or event are selling drinks in plastic bottles, aluminium, or steel cans, they will be required to register with Re-turn and operate a deposit return system.

For the members' information, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications has recently produced a "Guide to Plastic Free Festivals & Events" tailored for event and festival organisers, and which is available online at the Mywaste.ie website, Ireland's "official guide to managing waste."

Councillor Sammon thanked the Director for the report. During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- A policy to reduce single-use plastic waste was needed.

Ms. Paula O'Brien, Senior Executive Officer, Community Section, advised the members that Fáilte Ireland have issued a guide for festivals [failte-ireland-sustainable-festivals-guidelines-2023.pdf](#), noting that Kildare County Council promoted best practice in the area of waste prevention and waste reduction.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Sammon, seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer, and agreed by members present that Kildare County Council develop a policy to promote the use of recyclable cups and the reduction of single-use plastic at licensed events with over 5,000 attendees.

**19/0425**

#### **NDA Guidance on Accessible Documents**

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



That the council aligns its documents with the NDA guidance on accessible documents.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Melrose and seconded by Councillor Balfe.

A report from Mr. E. Ryan, Director of Services, Corporate, People and Cultural Services stated that the council has a number of documents which include the “Kildare County Council Style Guide”, “First steps in producing accessible publications”, “Accessible Publications Guidelines”, “Creating Accessible Content for Website” which align with NDA Guidelines.

[Website Accessibility | EU Web Accessibility Directive | - National Disability Authority](#)

Councillor Melrose thanked the Director for the report, stating that the intention of his motion was to allow Members submit a motion or question in accessible formats, and that the Executive would provide agenda reports in accessible formats when requested. An example of a motion in an accessible format was provided to demonstrate Councillor Melrose’s intention.

Mr. E. Ryan acknowledged the intention of Councillor Melrose’s motion, noting that careful consideration was needed to develop a suitable solution, suggesting that the motion be referred to the Protocol Committee and included in the Standing Order review.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Melrose, seconded by Councillor Balfe, and agreed by members present that the motion be referred to the Protocol Committee and included in the Standing Order review.

**20/0425**

### **Vacant Homes Schemes**

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



That the council provides an update on Vacant Homes Schemes, namely the Buy and Renew Scheme, the Repair and Leasing Scheme and the Long-Term Leasing initiative to include what funding is available to operate these schemes and what support is available from the council to applicants.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Dunne and seconded by Councillor Moore.

A report from Ms. A. Aspell, Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that the Town Regeneration Team are utilising a number of schemes and programmes to address vacancy and dereliction and encourage the re-use and regeneration of vacant and derelict properties in the county.

#### **CPO Activation Programme:**

The CPO Activation Programme was launched in April 2023, requiring a proactive and systematic approach by local authorities to identify vacant and derelict properties and engage with owners to bring those properties back into use, and to use legislative powers to acquire vacant and derelict properties, where engagement with owners has been unsuccessful.

Kildare County Council has received a target of 120 properties to enter the CPO activation programme and ten compulsory purchases / compulsory acquisitions to commence in 2025.

Targets set for this programme in 2023 and 2024 were exceeded.

#### **Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant:**

A grant of €50,000 is available for the refurbishment of properties which have been vacant for 2 or more years. If the refurbishment costs exceed the standard grant of up to €50,000 and the property is derelict, a top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 is available. In 2024 142 Vacant Property Refurbishment grant applications were received; 119 were approved and seventy grant payments issued. To date in 2025, 38 applications have been received, thirty-two have been approved and thirty-three grant payments have issued.



### **Buy and Renew Scheme:**

Seven properties have been purchased under the Buy and Renew Scheme since 2023 and the purchase of a further four properties is at an advanced stage and expected to close this year.

Twelve properties acquired by CPO are approved for funding under the Buy and Renew Scheme. Due to funding constraints and, in particular, the inclusion of Buy and Renew properties in the Second-Hand Acquisition Programme 2025 allocation, the local authority is currently at an advanced stage in discussion with the DHLGH to transfer acquisition and refurbishment costs to an alternate funding stream (SHIP Renewal) for these 12 properties.

### **Repair and Leasing Scheme:**

The Repair and Leasing Scheme is available to refurbish vacant properties in need of repair and bring them back into use for social housing. The maximum repair cost under the scheme is €80,000 per unit. The property is then made available to the Local Authority or Approved Housing Body under a direct lease agreement or rental availability agreement. The cost of the repairs is offset against the agreed rental payment until the value of the works is repaid.

There are currently three active leases under the Repair and Leasing Scheme, five applications for the scheme were received in 2024 and we expect two units to deliver this year. There has been a number of enquiries in relation to the scheme so far in 2025 and 1 application has been received. Kildare County Council has been allocated a minimum target of 1 Repair and Leasing unit to deliver in 2025.

### **URDF Call 3**

Funding under URDF Call 3 has been approved for fifty-six sites in the county. Compulsory acquisition of three sites and acquisition by agreement of one site in Athy is being finalised. Documents are being prepared for compulsory acquisition of two further URDF approved sites in Kildare Town. A number of the approved sites





have been put up for sale or brought back into use privately, following engagement with the Town Regeneration Team.

### **Long Term Leasing Programme:**

Long term leasing does not form part of the package of programmes available to address vacancy. Currently no funding is available for long term leasing.

Councillor Dunne thanked the Director for the report commending the comprehensiveness of the report.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Dunne, seconded by Councillor Moore, and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

**21/0425**

### **Review of acceptance of motions for Plenary Meetings**

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

That members would support a submission to the Protocol Committee, the Agenda Appeals Committee and the Chief Executive that a review of the scope of the conditions of acceptance of motions for Plenary Meetings, should be reviewed and widened to allow at least one motion per meeting on matters of national importance in order to reflect a position of public concern from public representatives.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Moore and seconded by Councillor Clear.

Ms. L. Hanratty, Meetings Administrator stated that this was a matter for the members to agree.

Councillor Moore acknowledged the response from the Meetings Administrator noting his frustration with the current Standing Orders, the limitations they place on members, and highlighted that a number of motions have been rejected this year due to the restrictions within the Standing Orders.



During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- A review of the Standing Orders is due. More scope is needed to allow members raise concerns on national matters that affect the electorate they represent,
- Caution was expressed in relation to allowing motions that are not related to reserved functions and the effective management of time in the Council Chamber.
- The petition system allows for matters that are not related to reserved functions.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Clear and agreed by members present that the motion be referred to the Protocol Committee to undertake a review of the Standing Orders.

**22/0425**

### **K-Hub Network Meeting Rooms**

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

That the council requests the K-Hub Network – Kildare’s Innovation and Co-Working Space – to consider making meeting rooms available to community groups at no cost or at a reduced rate, in recognition of the fact that these facilities have been partly funded through the Local Property Tax.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Clear and seconded by Councillor Moore.

A report from Mr. N. O’Riordan, A/Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services and presented by Director of Service, Alan Dunney, stated that The Kildare Hubs Strategy which sets out the objectives of the K Hub Network was commissioned by Kildare County Council and adopted by Elected Members in 2022.



Within the K Hub Network there is a very varied hub facilities by type, location and ownership which is both private and public. These hubs have emerged over time through a wide and diverse set of partners, stakeholders, and users. Ownership structures vary from community organisations to local authorities, HEI's, statutory agencies and also private ownership and partnership models.

Hubs while they are much more than workspaces for remote workers, their primary function are the conduits for entrepreneurship, enterprise creation and innovation and a key instrument in enterprise and industrial policy. The incubation cycle means that our enterprise hubs can continuously produce high value employment as clients start, grow, scale and exit. Hubs are a primary instrument in stimulating indigenous enterprise and promoting innovation across the local SME base. Hubs can also play a useful role in the enterprise ecosystem by building partnerships with FDI operators and HEI's to create second sites for expansion projects or placing teams in an innovation and collaboration environment.

There are fifteen hubs in K Hub Network, 10 in private ownership which we have no authority to dictate usage, the remaining five are governed by Kildare County Council and include

Merits, The National Equine Innovation Centre, Athy Enterprise Centre and as yet completed Model School Food, Drinks and Skills Hub and Monasterevin Fashion and Textile Hub.

Regarding MERITS, community Engagement has occurred during Kildare County Councils Family Day, in addition we also host weekly teens CoderDojo camps, just to note this can only be facilitated after business hours due to Garda vetting requirements also Scoil Phádraig Naofa (again through the Arts Dept in KCC) we ran a film workshop for their students FOC. In addition, we annually open the building to the public for Arts week and have facilitated Digital Artist in Residence (this is part of a free bursary award through the Arts department)

We have not refused any group free access to this space, however, regarding the NEIC, or Athy Enterprise Centre these physical spaces do not lend themselves to



being used as meeting rooms, while the other buildings have yet to open but will offer their training opportunities in food and textiles to the public.

In conclusion just to note all these buildings have not only been funding by Kildare County Council but all have significant Government funds as employment activation centres and the primary function of these spaces is and must always be the conduit for job creation.

Councillor Clear thanked the Director the report emphasising the great work of community groups and the importance of supporting their survival. During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- The challenges voluntary groups experience when looking for suitable, available and affordable meeting rooms,
- This was an opportunity to support Community Groups,
- Many voluntary groups have cash-flow issues,
- Merits is funded by Kildare County Council.

Mr. Alan Dunney advised the members that it was not practical for the K-Hub Network to provide rooms free of charge as there were related running costs in administration and security.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor Clear, seconded by Councillor Moore and agreed by members present that a letter be issued to K-Hub Network requesting that they consider making meeting rooms available to community groups at no cost or at a reduced rate.

**23/0425**

#### **OPW to Present at Full Council**

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



That the council invites the Office of Public Works (OPW) to present their plan for heritage restoration and development in County Kildare to the members at full council.

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

Ms. L. Hanratty, Meetings Administrator stated that this was a matter for the members to agree.

During discussion, the members raised the following points:

- The great work of the OPW in County Kildare was noted,
- Understanding the OPWs future plan for sites they manage in the County would support informed decision making and representations,
- The presentation should address each Municipal District.

**Resolved** on the proposal of Councillor O'Rourke, seconded by Councillor Killeen, and agreed by members present that a letter of invitation be issued to the Office of Public Works (OPW) to present their work plan for the Heritage Sites, landscapes, and buildings they manage in the County to the members at full council.

The meeting concluded.