



**Minutes of meeting of Full Council held at 3:00 p.m.
Monday 28 September 2026 in the Council Chamber
Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare**

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

Online: Councillors P. Balfe, P. Brooks, I. Keatley, P. Mulroe, P. O'Dwyer and E. Sammon.

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

Welcome

Councillor T. Durkan (Cathaoirleach) welcomed everyone to the September 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.



00/0926

Bereavements

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

- Peadar Cunningham, Father of Stephen Cunningham, Planning Department
- Laurence (Larry) Cullen, Father of Laura Hayden, Finance Department
- Paul O'Neill, beloved partner of Gillian Moore, Celbridge Library.
- Commander Jimmy Byrne, Former Civil Defence Commander.
- John (Alfie) Edmonds, father of Johnny Edmonds, Housing Department.
- Pat Rice, former colleague, Housing Department.

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

01/0926

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.

The Cathaoirleach and all members noted that they had been contacted by Microsoft and significant members of the public regarding Data Centres.

There were no declarations.

02/0926

Minutes and Progress Report

The Council considered the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 27 July 2026 and the special meetings held 27 July 2026 and 9 September 2026 and the progress report.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Kelly, seconded by Councillor C. Pender and agreed by the members present the draft minutes of the monthly meeting held on 27 July 2026, the draft minutes of the special meeting held on 27 July 2026 and the draft minutes of the special meeting held on 09 September 2026 were confirmed.

The progress report was noted.

03/0926

Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report

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

04/0926

Section 183 Disposal of Land

The members considered the disposal of lands pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended (Statutory notice of 03 September 2026 circulated previously and attached) - Disposal of 0.731 Ha. (1.81 acres) at Easton, Leixlip, Co. Kildare.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor N. Killeen, seconded by Councillor S. Moore and agreed by the members present that the disposal of 0.731 Ha. (1.81 acres) at Easton, Leixlip, Co. Kildare be approved.

05/0926

Section 183 Disposal of Land

The members considered the disposal of lands pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended (Statutory notice of 03 September 2026 circulated previously and attached) - Disposal of 30 and 31 Woodstock Street, Athy.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor A. Breslin, seconded by Councillor M. Leigh and agreed by the members present that the disposal of 30 and 31 Woodstock Street, Athy be approved.



06/0926

Amendment to April 2026 Minutes – Flinter's Field Athy

The members considered the amendment to the April 2026 minutes (FC 04/0426) to reflect the location in the disposal of lands to Disposal of 1.0429 Ha. (2.57 acres) at Flinter's Field Athy to finalise and complete historical land transfer to Respond (Approved Housing Body).

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor M. Leigh, seconded by Councillor V. Behan and agreed by the members present that the amendment to the April 2026 minutes (FC 04/0426) be approved.

07/0926

Nominee for the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces SPC

The members considered the report regarding the nomination of Mr. William J. Fadden – Construction Industry Federation sectoral nominee to the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Strategic Policy Committee.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor K. Duffy agreed by members present that Mr. William J. Fadden be appointed to the Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces Strategic Policy Committee.

08/0926

Commercial Rates Incentive (Waiver) Scheme

The members considered the report circulated on the Commercial Rates Incentive (Waiver) Scheme (CRIS), in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019, as amended.

The scheme aims to encourage reoccupation of vacant commercial premises in town and village centres across County Kildare. The scheme provides for a three-year waiver of a percentage of commercial rates to eligible entrepreneurs/ businesses who occupy a property that has been vacant for a period of at least 1 year.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Kelly, seconded by Councillor F. Brett and agreed by the members, that the council approves the adoption of a Scheme for the waiver of Rates (as circulated) pursuant to Section 15 of the Local Government



Rates and Other Matters Act 2019, as amended and in accordance with S.I. No. 349 of the Local Government Waiver of Rates Regulations 2024. The scheme shall apply for the financial year ending 31 December, 2027 and is intended to support the implementation of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (as reviewed).

09/0926

Annual Budget Meeting 2027

The members considered a date for the statutory annual budget meeting. Ms. E. Hanlon, Director of Service, Finance, Digital Services, Innovation and Governance, advised members regarding Circular Fin 08/2026 and the prescribed periods for local authority budget meetings between 02 November and 30 November 2026

A briefing on the draft budget be held on Monday, 16 November 2026 at 3.00pm (Online).

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor D. Fitzpatrick, seconded by Councillor C. Kelly, with the agreement of all members present it was agreed that the statutory annual budget meeting be held on Monday, 23 November 2026 at 3.00pm.

10/0926

Bank Overdraft Facility 2027

A report was circulated by Ms. Hanlon informing the members that as in previous years, Kildare County Council's Finance Department was seeking the council's approval to seek sanction from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to continue to maintain an overdraft facility of €4,500,000 (€4.5 million) for the year 2027 to assist in funding the working capital requirements of the council should it be needed.

As noted in the Chief Executive's monthly report, there has been minimal requirement to use this facility in 2026, however it was strongly recommended that it be maintained for cash flow purposes.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor S. Doyle, seconded by Councillor K. Duffy and agreed by the members, that the seeking of sanction for Bank Overdraft facilities of €4.5m for the year ending 31st December 2027 be approved.



11/0926

Local Authority Home Loans, Purchase and Renovation Loans

The members considered the report received on the raising of a €12m loan to finance Local Authority Home Loans and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loans.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor N. Killeen and agreed by the members, that the raising of a €12m loan to finance Local Authority Home Loans and Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loans be approved.

12/0926

Appointments to Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee

This item was deferred.

13/0926

Cathaoirleach's Business

The Cathaoirleach informed the members of a number of engagements and events attended since the previous meeting, including:

- Attendance at launch of Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2026–2031.
- Attendance at the Annual Defence Forces Mass.
- Attendance at National Ambulance Day event.
- Attendance at 2026 KPMG Women's Irish Open at K Club.
- Signing contracts for St. Evin's Park and Trinity Way social housing developments.
- Attendance at launch of Kildare Road Safety Campaign.
- Attendance at Heritage Week events across the county.
- Welcoming the Duke of Leinster to Athy.
- Welcoming Lexington Twinning delegation to the county.



- Signing of building contract for the Newbridge Library and Cultural Centre project.
- Attendance at National Play Day event at Áras Chill Dara.
- Presentation of the county's thirty-first Pride in Your Place Awards.
- Attendance at Culture Night events in County Kildare.
- Welcoming Austrian Ambassador to Ireland and Irish Ambassador to Austria for three-day visit to the county as part of the EU Presidency 2026.

14/0926

Correspondence

The Meetings Administrator confirmed six items of correspondence were received this month. Also included was the meetings calendar for October and the Corporate Policy Group minutes (July).

The correspondence and report were noted.

15/0926

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.

One member sought approval for training, and one member sought retrospective approval for attendance at a training event.

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

16/0926

Update from Climate Action SPC

Councillor D. Fitzpatrick, Chair of the Climate Action Strategic Policy Committee, presented an update on the Committee's work during 2026. He outlined progress in



implementing the Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan 2024–2029, noting that, by the end of 2025, 112 of the 155 actions had commenced and 21 had been completed. He highlighted the integration of climate action into Council budgets and work programmes, progress towards the Council's 2030 energy-efficiency and emissions-reduction targets, the retention of ISO 50001 accreditation and a range of energy, fleet, public lighting, building-retrofit and community engagement initiatives. He also referred to the increasing risks associated with extreme weather, the development of climate-related policies, including the Pesticide and Alternative Maintenance Policy, and the SPC's 2026 programme, which included review of the Climate Action Plan, continuing professional development and a fact-finding visit to the Athy Circular Economy Hub.

The update was noted by the members.

The members agreed to take items 17 and 20 together.

17/0926 and 20/0926

Zoning for Data Centres

The following motion referred from the Naas Municipal district meeting was considered by the members:

That the council considers commencing the statutory process to vary the Naas Local Area Plan, with a view to reviewing the existing "P Data Centre" zoning designation on lands at Jigginstown/ Maudlins, Naas.

The motion (17/0926) was proposed by Councillor Connolly and seconded by Councillor Dunne.

A report from Mr A Dunne, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that This motion is effectively calling into question the informed decisions made by the elected members in respect of the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027.

Any resolution by the members to initiate consideration of a variation of the Naas Local Area Plan to remove any existing zoning provisions that specifically facilitate data centre development is against the advice of the Executive.



The appropriate course of action is that consideration of any proposed or potential development will take place through the rigorous Development Management Process and, having regard to the appropriate Planning and Development Legislation, third parties will have the opportunity to partake in that process including the opportunity to appeal to An Coimisiún Pleanála if any development is granted permission.

The following motion (20/0926) in the name of Councillor Noel Connolly was considered by the members:

Go gcinntídh Comhairle Contae Chill Dara tús a chur le breithniú ar athrú ar Phlean Forbartha Chontae Chill Dara chun aon fhorálacha criosaithe atá ann cheana a éascaíonn forbairt ionad sonraí go sonrach a bhaint, agus, i gcomhréir le halt 58 den Acht Pleanála agus Forbartha 2024, go n-iarrfaidh sí ar an bPríomhfheidhmeannach tuarascáil a ullmhú agus a chur faoi bhráid na gcomhaltaí tofa maidir leis an athrú beartaithe sin lena bhreithniú acu.

That the council resolves to initiate consideration of a variation of the Kildare County Development Plan to remove any existing zoning provisions that specifically facilitate data centre development and, in accordance with Section 58 of the Planning and Development Act 2024, requests the Chief Executive to prepare and submit a report on such a proposed variation for consideration by the elected members.

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

A report from Mr A Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that the members should note that there are no existing zoning provisions that specifically facilitate data centre development in the County Development Plan. Furthermore, this motion calls into question the informed decisions made by the elected members in respect of the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027.

Any resolution by the members to initiate consideration of a variation (to the Naas Local Area Plan) to remove any existing zoning provisions that specifically facilitate data centre development, in accordance with Section 58 of the Planning and Development Act 2024, is against the advice of the Executive.



The appropriate course of action is that consideration of any potential development will take place through the rigorous Development Management Process and, having regard to the appropriate Planning and Development Legislation, third parties will have the opportunity to partake in that process including the opportunity to appeal to An Coimisiún Pleanála if any development is granted permission.

Councillor A. Breslin called for stronger national regulation of data centres, stating that they should be self-sufficient in meeting their energy needs.

Members expressed differing views on the motion. Supporters referred to concerns regarding the potential impacts of data centres on energy, water consumption, noise and the environment, and considered that changing circumstances warranted a review of the existing zoning. Concerns were also raised regarding public health, environmental impacts and the need for stronger national regulation of data centres.

It was noted that the motion sought a report from the Chief Executive and the commencement of a review process rather than an immediate amendment to the Development Plan.

Other members opposed the motion, citing the importance of maintaining the integrity of the statutory planning framework and the certainty provided by an adopted Development Plan. Reference was made to Ireland's energy policy, the thorough preparation of the Naas Local Area Plan, and the Council's ability to apply high planning standards in the assessment of any future planning application.

Mr. A. Dunney advised that any planning application received would be subject to a robust assessment having regard to all relevant national, regional and local policies.

Councillor Connolly requested a roll-call vote. The request was put to a vote, with three members voting in favour and therefore a roll call vote was not agreed.

The Cathaoirleach put Motions 17 and 20 to a vote together. The result was 11 in favour, 22 against and 7 abstentions.

Both motions fell and were not carried.



18/0926

Housing Section of Kildare County Council Website

The following motion in the name of Councillors Donna Phelan and David Trost was considered by the members:

That the Council reviews the layout, accessibility and user experience of the Housing section of the Kildare County Council website, prioritising it as the starting point for improving the wider website, particularly for vulnerable users and people with disabilities; and considers developing an easy-to-navigate Housing and Disability Information Hub bringing key housing information, supports, forms and contacts into one accessible location, informed by best practice, with the ambition of positioning Kildare as a national leader in accessible, user-friendly online public services.

The motion was proposed by Councillor D. Phelan and seconded by Councillor C. Pender.

A report from Ms E Hanlon, Director of Finance stated that Kildare County Council's website has been developed with accessibility in mind and currently has an average accessibility rating of 93% with the National Disability Authority. This indicates a strong level of technical accessibility, while recognising that navigation, plain language, concise content and ease of access to key information are also important elements of the overall user experience.

Responsibility for the accuracy, relevance and ongoing maintenance of service information rests with each Council directorate, supported by the IT Department in relation to the overall website structure, standards and presentation. Each directorate is therefore responsible for reviewing and updating its own content within the Council's wider web governance arrangements.

The Housing Department provides extensive information on social housing support, allocations, homelessness, the Housing Assistance Payment, housing grants, affordable housing, tenant services and disability-related housing supports. It also includes application forms, guidance material and videos, and relevant contact details.



The Communications and IT Teams are planning to prepare tenders for both the design and the development of a new Council website, with accessibility, navigation and user experience among the key requirements. The issues raised in the motion, together with the relevant findings from the NOAC Performance Indicator Report 2025, will be considered through that Council-wide process. The tender provides the appropriate mechanism for improving the effectiveness, accessibility and user-centred design of the Council's online services, including Housing.

In the interim, the Housing Department will continue to review its content and will issue a short survey to the Housing and Disability Steering Group seeking feedback on the experience of members and service users in accessing and using the Housing webpages. A separate detailed redesign or standalone information hub is not proposed before the structure of the new website has been agreed.

Councillor Phelan welcomed the report and highlighted the importance of improving the accessibility and navigation of the Council website to ensure information and services are easier for members of the public to locate and access.

A number of members spoke in support of the motion and suggested that a comprehensive review of the website be undertaken. Members highlighted the importance of the Housing Department pages, given their relevance to vulnerable customers accessing council services.

Ms. E. Hanlon thanked members for their contributions and advised that the views expressed would be considered as part of the forthcoming website review and future tender process.

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



Suspension of Standing Orders

Resignations of Councillor Brendan Wyse and Councillor Paul Brooks

The Cathaoirleach requested that Standing Orders be suspended to allow members to speak on the impending resignations of Councillor B. Wyse (Clane Maynooth Municipal District) and Councillor P. Brooks (Celbridge Leixlip Municipal District).

This was seconded by Councillor T. O'Dwyer and agreed by the members.

19/0926

National Planning Guidelines for Large-Scale Solar Farms

The following motion in the name of Councillors Mark Leigh, Aoife Breslin, Brian Dooley, Veralouise Behan and Ivan Keatley was considered by the members:

That the council requests that the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage urgently publish clear national planning guidelines for large-scale solar farm developments, addressing issues including cumulative impact, landscape, biodiversity, agricultural land, water quality, residential amenity and decommissioning.

The motion was proposed by Councillor M. Leigh and seconded by Councillor V. Behan.

A report from Mr A Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that the Executive will contact the Department of Heritage, Local Government and Housing to request the preparation of a National Planning Statement in relation to large scale solar farm developments outlining the concerns expressed in this Motion. There are no legislative provisions under which the Planning Authority can postpone the determination of a planning application pending the publication of a National Planning Statement. Kildare County Council's policy position regarding solar energy is contained in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 (as varied), namely Section 7.6 and Section 15.11.2. Individual proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis having regard to the foregoing, to relevant Local Area Plans or Settlement Plans where appropriate, Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines (where appropriate), environmental assessments and submissions from the public and prescribed bodies.



Councillor Mark Leigh stated that he supported renewable energy and the expansion of solar energy generation but stressed the need for clear national planning guidelines to ensure solar farm developments were appropriately located and had due regard to biodiversity, agriculture, water quality, landscape and residential amenity

A number of members spoke in support of the motion and called for the development of national planning guidelines to inform the future siting and assessment of solar farm developments.

Mr. A. Dunney acknowledged the views expressed and advised that a letter would issue to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage regarding the matter.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor M. Leigh, seconded by Councillor V. Behan and agreed by members present that the council requests that the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage urgently publish clear national planning guidelines for large-scale solar farm developments.

21/0926

Planning and Development Act 2024 Information Event

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

That the council hosts an information event for planning agents, consultants and other industry professionals to learn more about the new requirements, procedures and timelines under the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended) and to engage directly with council staff on their practical application.

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

A report from Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that the Council acknowledges the value of engaging with planning agents, consultants, and other industry professionals as the new



legislative framework of Part 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 is implemented.

It is anticipated that the Department of Heritage, Local Government and Housing will circulate training information to each local authority for planning agents and consultants in this regard which will help to ensure consistency of interpretation and messaging across all planning authorities.

Subject to the availability of Departmental training materials and guidance, it is the Council's intention to facilitate such an information event for planning agents, consultants, and other industry professionals. This event would provide an opportunity to outline the new requirements and procedures and to engage directly with Council staff regarding their practical implementation.

Councillor T. O'Dwyer welcomed the report, noted that a similar information event had been held previously and looked forward to receiving an update in due course.

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

22/0926

Funding Supports and Assistance for Returning Irish Citizens

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

That the council writes to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage requesting the development of appropriate grants and funding supports to assist Irish citizens living abroad, including families and single persons, who wish to return to Ireland and secure a home in County Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor McDonnell and seconded by Councillor G. Dunne.

A report was received from the Meetings Administrator advising that this a matter for the members to agree.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor T. McDonnell, seconded by Councillor G. Dunne and agreed by members present that a letter issue to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

23/0926

Junior School Warden Service

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

That the council actively engages with primary schools throughout County Kildare to promote participation in the Junior School Warden Scheme and other road safety education initiatives, in partnership with An Garda Síochána and the wider school community.

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

A report from Ms. S. Scully, A/ Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that the Road Safety Officer engages with An Garda Síochána on an ongoing basis in relation to a range of road safety education initiatives and will continue to work collaboratively with them to support and promote road safety awareness across County Kildare.

The Council welcomes opportunities to support schools in delivering road safety education and is agreeable to exploring the feasibility of running a Junior School Warden Programme. Matters to be considered include the appropriate age of potential junior wardens, the training requirements and the scope of responsibilities.

The Road Safety Officer has ongoing engagement with schools and will continue to engage with schools and relevant partners to explore opportunities to promote pedestrian safety, cycling safety, and other road safety initiatives. The matter will be referred to the Road Safety Working Group.

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



24/0926

Google Review of Speed Limits

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

That the council writes to Google requesting them to review the stated speed limits on their navigation services as they are currently misleading and inaccurate.

The motion was proposed by Councillor T. Durkan and seconded by Councillor C. Pender.

A report from Ms. S. Scully, A/ Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that speed limits are regulated by the Road Traffic Act 1961, the Road Traffic Act 2004 as amended and the Road Traffic and the Roads Act 2023 which set down the default speed limits for certain roads for example 120kph on motorways, 100kph on national roads, 60kph on local roads, 50kph in built up areas and 30kph in town centres and residential areas with supplementary bye-laws augmenting these core speed limits. While the council maintains a speed limit schedule on its pavement management system, physical road signs are the appropriate means to determine the correct speed limit for the public as these may sometimes override the default speed limits. The council provides this information to the Road Management Office; however, the data is not shared with third parties who provide navigational aids and it appears that they obtain their information from their own sources. The council is not aware of how often the third-party navigation aid providers update their databases; however, they do provide options for members of the public to submit corrections where the information is inaccurate.

It is a matter for the members to agree to write to Google.

Councillor T. Durkan welcomed the report and highlighted a number of examples where incorrect speed limits were displayed on navigation systems.



A number of members spoke in support of the motion, noting the increasing reliance of motorists on navigation technology.

Ms S. Scully reiterated that physical road signs determine the applicable speed limit and noted that a number of companies provide navigation data. She acknowledged the views expressed by members and confirmed that, subject to their agreement, correspondence would issue to Google and other navigation platform providers as identified.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor T. Durkan, seconded by Councillor C. Pender and agreed by the members present that the report be noted and that correspondence issue to Google requesting a review of the speed limits displayed on its navigation services.

25/0926

Enforcement Action Against Unauthorised Development

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

That the council, having regard to previous Council responses identifying delays in planning enforcement due to staffing shortages and court scheduling constraints, calls on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to extend the statutory period for enforcement action against unauthorised development from seven to ten years and to provide sufficient staffing and court resources to ensure that validated planning-enforcement complaints are investigated and progressed within that period.

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

A report from Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that the transition from the Planning and Development Act 2000 to the newly enacted (and partly commenced) Planning and Development Act 2024 involved a comprehensive 3-year legal review of the planning system led by the Department and the Office of the Attorney General. The decision



by the Oireachtas to retain the seven-year statutory limitation period for planning enforcement was a recent policy choice and given the exhaustive nature of this statutory overhaul, it is unlikely that structural changes would now be considered.

The resourcing and staffing of the Courts is a matter for the Courts Service of Ireland. The Executive will continue to request measures under consideration by the Courts Service to address staffing and resource challenges.

Notwithstanding the above, this is a matter for the elected members and correspondence can be issued to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in this regard if so agreed.

Councillor O'Rourke acknowledged the report and referred to previous motions on the matter, noting that a range of concerns had been raised. She expressed disappointment with the current position and emphasised the importance of maintaining public confidence in the planning system.

Mr. A. Dunney advised that the Planning and Development Act 2024 was being commenced on a phased basis. He noted that, with the agreement of Members, correspondence would issue to the Minister outlining the concerns raised.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor O'Rourke, seconded by Councillor N. Killeen and agreed by the members present that correspondence issue to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage in support of the motion.

26/0926

Water Outage Relief Scheme

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

That Kildare County Council write to Uisce Éireann seeking the establishment of a Water Outage Relief Scheme, providing for:

- A proportional rebate or credit on commercial water charges for businesses that have been forced to close on successive occasions during a defined billing period due to water outages; and



- A compensatory payment for households adversely affected by successive water outage events more than 5 times in a given month.

With agreement of Councillor Mulroe (online), the motion was proposed by Councillor N. Killeen and seconded by Councillor C. Pender.

A report from Ms L Hanratty, Meetings Administrator stated that with members agreement the motion can be referred to Uisce Éireann via the dedicated members email channel set up for the purpose of council motions. In addition, the motion can be listed for the forthcoming Uisce Éireann workshop.

Councillor Mulroe accepted the report and agreed that the motion should be referred to Uisce Éireann and to the forthcoming workshop (November 2026).

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor Mulroe seconded by Councillor C. Pender and agreed by members present that the matter be referred to Uisce Éireann and to the forthcoming UÉ workshop.

27/0926

Centre of Excellence for Climate Change in Newbridge

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

That the council revisit the report on the feasibility study to establish Centre of Excellence for Climate Change in Newbridge with a view to providing a centre in the county for dissemination of information to the public relative to climate change.

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

A report from Ms M Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that Kildare County Council's Climate Action Team's work programme is concentrated on the delivery of actions in Kildare's Climate Action Plan. The dissemination of information to the public on climate change is a key deliverable. The approach taken is to support communities countywide and work directly with communities in their locality. A dedicated Community Climate Action



Officer works directly with community groups on advice, project development, grant applications and events. This engagement and support is enhanced by funding opportunities via the Community Climate Action Program (CCAP), with €897,000 allocated to Kildare under both Phases 1 and 2, together with the locally funded Climate Innovation Fund.

Opportunities to deliver information, policy and supports to communities are enhanced as multiple Council services work with the Climate Action Office. Examples include the Hack the Climate hackathon with the Innovation Team / MERITS and information on the various Community and Tidy Town Grants which support and advise on sustainable maintenance and planting. The Climate Action Office also delivers Climate Action Fortnight, a programme of library and community events which provides information on energy and retrofitting with targeted training.

Working with our Council partners Libraries, Arts, Creative Ireland, Community Dept, the PPN, Sustainable Energy Communities, universities, and community organisations this network provides a sustainable model of delivery and a greater reach across the county. Approaches to deliver information in different formats and mediums such as the arts further allows for the information to reach a wider audience. Examples include Picnic in the Park, an annual collaboration that uses family activities, workshops, performances, comedy and information stands to engage the public on climate change and sustainability. Kildare received grant funding via Creative Ireland of €250,000 for an innovative climate project with community engagement at its heart called the Climate Design Lab. More recently €629,600 was granted under Creative Climate Action Fund III (2026–2029) for Not Going It Alone: Ar Scáth a Chéile, supporting creative, collaborative approaches that make climate action more accessible and enable communities to engage meaningfully in climate and nature action. Other KCC-supported creative climate projects include a climate-themed short film and the Berba, Goddess of the River Barrow festival.

Advice and information is also available via to individuals and communities as a result of the development of an online tool called [GlasHouse Hub](#), which is located on Kildare County Council's website. This portal provides information on retrofitting and supporting funding opportunities. This portal provided a step-by-step approach



to home retrofitting, the approach undertaken is based on SEAI model of Learn, Plan and Do.

Climate information and expertise are also currently available nationally and regionally through organisations including SEAI, the EPA's Climate Ireland platform, the Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) and university research institutes, including the MaREI Centre at University College Cork, which developed the Climate Ireland information platform under the EPA Research Programme.

There is no provision in the capital funding programme and no funding avenue is currently available to revisit the feasibility of such a dedicated facility. Staffing in the Climate Action Team remain focused on a sustainable countywide information delivery model, maximising existing funded and resourced facilities such as libraries, engaging in collaborative projects, supporting communities directly with advice via the Community Climate Action Officer, building online tools, nurturing mutual partnerships all to support behavioural change and enable practical local climate action across the county.

Councillor Heavey advocated for a dedicated centre to provide credible information and support to the public and promote climate action initiatives.

Members supported the motion and commended the work and climate action initiatives of the Climate Action Team and CARO.

Ms. M. Higgins advised that her report detailed how the Council provides climate information and supports to communities and commended the work of the Climate Action Team and CARO. She noted that the centre of excellence proposal had previously been considered but that no funding source was available to meet the significant capital and operational costs involved. She also highlighted the role of local libraries, the demonstration house in Maynooth and the online GlasHouse Hub in providing climate information and support.

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

This concluded the business of the meeting.