



Minutes of meeting of Full Council held at 3:00 p.m.

Monday 29 June 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, B. Dooley, S. Doyle, K. Duffy, G. Dunne, W. Durkan, A. Feeney, D. Fitzpatrick, N. Heavey, C. Kelly, M. Leigh, T. McDonnell, P. McEvoy, S. Moore, P. Mulroe, P. O'Dwyer, T. O'Dwyer, B. O'Loughlin, C. O'Rourke, C. Pender, D. Ryan, D. Trost, P. Ward and B. Wyse.

Online: Councillors P. Balfe, N. Connolly, I. Keatley, N. Killeen, P. Melrose, D. Phelan, R. Power and E. Sammon.

Apologies: Councillors P. Brooks and R. Heather.

Also Present: Ms. S. Kavanagh (Chief Executive), Ms. A. Aspell, Mr. J. Boland, Mr. A. Dunney, M. Higgins (Directors of Services), Ms. E. Hanlon (Head 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 June 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.



00/0626

Bereavements

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

- Lech Heksel, Father of Mariola Heksel, Building and Development Control
- Maureen Fitzpatrick, Mother of Councillor Daragh Fitzpatrick.
- John Dowling, Brother of Carmel Hutchinson, Athy Community Library

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

01/0626

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.

02/0626

Minutes and Progress Report

The Council considered the draft minutes of the special meeting (planning) held on 27 April 2026 and the monthly meeting held on 25 May 2026 and the progress report.

An amendment to the minutes of the special meeting (planning) to note attendance of Councillor N. Connolly was noted.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor A.

Feeney and agreed by the members present the draft minutes of the special meeting (planning) held on 27 April 2026 (with amendment) and the monthly meeting held on 25 May 2026 were confirmed.

The progress report was noted.



03/0626

Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report

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

04/0626

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 17 June 2026 circulated previously and attached) – Disposal of 0.09 hectares of land at Three Oaks, Gragadder, Kilcock.

The Cathaoirleach advised that the area of land was stated as 0.09 hectares and should be corrected to 0.03 hectares. This was noted.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor A. Feeney, seconded by Councillor A. Breslin and agreed by members present that the disposal of lands pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended - Disposal of 0.03 hectares of land at Three Oaks, Gragadder, Kilcock be approved.

05/0626

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 17 June 2026 circulated previously and attached) – Disposal of 0.018 hectares of land at Kilwarden and Blackchurch, Kill.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Kelly, seconded by Councillor W. Durkan and agreed by members present that the disposal of lands pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended - Disposal of 0.018 hectares of land at Kilwarden and Blackchurch, Kill be approved.



06/0626

PPN Nominee for the Climate Action SPC

The members considered the report provided by the Public Participation Network (PPN) regarding the nomination of Bernard Duffy to the Climate Action Strategic Policy Committee.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. Pender, seconded by Councillor K. Duffy and agreed by members present that Bernard Duffy be appointed to the Climate Action Strategic Policy Committee.

07/0626

Local Property Tax (Local Adjustment Factor) Regulations

Ms. E. Hanlon, Head of Finance provided a report to the members on the Local Property Tax (Local Adjustment Factor) Regulations 2026.

It was noted that the revised regulations allow local authorities to vary LPT upwards by up to 25%, while the maximum downward variation remains at 15%. The meeting was advised that Kildare County Council's 2025 decision to apply a +10% variation for 2026 and 2027 remains valid and does not require reconsideration unless the Council wishes to do so.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor A. Feeney, seconded by Councillor K. Duffy and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

08/0626

Retained Local Property Tax

The members considered the report on the allocation of retained Local Property Tax (LPT) to Municipal Districts for Budget 2027 and future years.

The report outlined the previous allocation method, the revised approach agreed for Budget 2026, and the difficulties associated with implementing that revised method. It noted that the Finance Committee had reviewed the matter and considered issues including equity, potential gains or reductions for Municipal Districts, population,



housing stock, estimated housing values and the number of elected members in each Municipal District.

The report advised that, as LPT receipts are not available by Municipal District, Census 2022 data and average housing sales price information by Eircode had been used to inform the review. It concluded that allocation by number of members was considered the most equitable and straightforward method, as this broadly reflected population and housing stock.

The following options were presented:

- Option 1: Revert to the previous method, with 10% allocated to administration costs and the balance split 50% equally across the Municipal Districts and 50% by number of members.
- Option 2: Move fully to allocation by number of members from Budget 2027.
- Option 3: Phase in allocation by number of members over three years.
- Option 4: Phase in allocation by number of members over five years.

The members noted the report and the options presented for consideration in the context of Budget 2027.

Councillor T. O'Dwyer noted that Kildare continued to be one of the fastest growing counties in Ireland and that towns such as Newbridge, Kildare and Monasterevin were continuing to expand and transform. She stated that recent zoning variations would further accelerate this growth and that corresponding investment in local services was essential to support community development.

She emphasised the need to establish an equitable framework for the distribution of retained Local Property Tax and, on that basis, proposed Option 2. The proposal was seconded by Councillor S. Doyle.

Councillor A. Breslin, proposed Option 1 a counter motion. This was seconded by Councillor V. Behan. Councillor Breslin noted that Athy would lose funding under the the alternative three options. She highlighted significant investment made by the council over recent years in Athy and environs, but noted the need for ongoing investment given the area's profile.



Councillor S. Moore queried the need to change the existing system in the middle of a council term, noting that the existing arrangement has been in operation for c. 15 years.

Councillor K. Duffy clarified that no agreement was in place from the previous council, but it had been agreed that the Finance Committee would review the current arrangement and report back to the council.

The Cathaoirleach called for a vote and the result was as below:

Option 1

- In favour 11
- Against 20
- Abstained 2.

The proposal fell.

Option 2

- In favour 21
- Against 11
- Abstained 1.

As a majority voted in favour, Option 2 will be implemented from 2027 onwards.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor T. O'Dwyer, seconded by Councillor S. Doyle and agreed by members present that Option 2, being the full allocation of retained Local Property Tax by number of elected members, be approved for implementation from Budget 2027 and future years.

09/0626

**Draft 2025 Annual Report, including the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025
Progress Report and the Corporate Plan Progress Report for 2025**

The Draft 2025 Annual Report, including the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 Progress Report and the Corporate Plan Progress Report for 2025 were circulated in advance of the meeting for consideration by members.



Resolved on the proposal of Councillor W. Durkan, seconded by Councillor C. Pender and agreed by the members present that Draft 2025 Annual Report, including the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025 Progress Report and the Corporate Plan Progress Report for 2025 be adopted.

10/0626

Cathaoirleach's Business

The Cathaoirleach referred to Councillor Brian O'Loughlin's proposal for the conferral of a Civic Honour on Mr. Desmond Egan in recognition of his distinguished contribution to literature and the arts, and his long-standing association with County Kildare, including as founder and artistic director of the Gerard Manley Hopkins International Literary Festival.

As the conferral of a Civic Honour is a reserved function, the recommendation requires approval by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the Full Council meeting.

Members were unanimous in their approval and agreed that the Dara Bronze be conferred on Mr. Egan and presented at the Gerard Manley Hopkins Festival on Friday, 24 July 2026 at 7.00 p.m. in Newbridge College.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor T. Durkan, seconded by Councillor B. O'Loughlin and agreed by members present that a Civic Honour be conferred on Mr. Desmond Egan, that the Dara Bronze be presented and his name be inscribed on the roll of Civic Honours of Kildare pursuant to the provisions of Section 74 of the Local Government Act 2001, in recognition of his outstanding and enduring contribution to the arts, literature and culture in County Kildare.

11/0626

Correspondence

The Meetings Administrator confirmed one referral to Transportation Mobility and Open spaces SPC and two items of correspondence issued relating to motions passed at the May full council.



Nine items of correspondence were received this month. Also included was the meetings calendar for July and the Corporate Policy Group minutes (May).

The correspondence and report were noted.

11/0626

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.

As outlined in the report circulated, three members sought retrospective training approval, and two members sought approval to attend third level education in September.

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

13/0626

Preparedness for Heatwave Events

The following motion in the name of Councillors Pádraig McEvoy, Angela Feeney, Tim Durkan and Brendan Wyse was considered by the members:

That the council prepares a report for the elected members on its preparedness for heatwave events, including:

- the adequacy of emergency planning, risk assessment and use of forecast thresholds or triggers for prolonged high-temperature events;
- integration of heatwave scenarios into training, exercises and inter-agency coordination, including clarity of lead roles and responsibilities;
- the potential to include heatwave scenarios within the Major Emergency Plan, particularly regarding impacts on public health, water services and vulnerable populations;
- the adequacy of resources, expertise and operational capacity, including the availability and accessibility of cooling centres or climate shelters (e.g. community centres, libraries, public buildings and other sustainably



air-conditioned facilities) for urban and rural communities, and supports for vulnerable populations during extreme heat;

- the effectiveness of governance, coordination and decision-making during preparedness and response phases;

and to identify actions required to strengthen operational readiness, inter-agency coordination, monitoring and evaluation of heat impacts, and public communication of heat-related risks, including targeted communication to vulnerable groups.

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

A report from Mr. J. Boland, Director of Services, Corporate, Culture and Emergency Services stated that The Local Authority will respond to periods of extremely high temperatures in accordance with the Framework for Major Emergency Management and the Met Éireann Weather Warning System.

Extreme heat events may occur over prolonged periods and can have cumulative impacts on health, infrastructure, the environment and service delivery. The issue has been identified in the Council's recent Climate Action Plans as a significant risk.

For practical purposes, the impacts associated with prolonged high temperatures include:

- Threat to health and wellbeing of persons, particularly vulnerable groups
- Increased risk of wildland / bog / forest fires
- Pressure on water supply and wastewater services
- Disruption to critical infrastructure (roads, power, communications)
- Degradation of road surfaces and transport networks
- Business continuity impacts due to reduced workforce capacity

Response Agencies do not always have sufficient resources to mitigate all impacts. Working in high temperature conditions presents hazards and staff should operate in accordance with risk assessments and control measures.



As with other severe weather events, the Council's Severe Weather Assessment Team will:

- Monitor Met Éireann Yellow, Orange and Red high temperature warnings
- Consider prolonged advisory periods and cumulative impacts
- Convene where:
 - Orange or Red warnings are issued
 - Local impacts exceed Municipal District capacity
 - Risk to vulnerable communities or infrastructure is identified

The SWAT will also:

- Assess potential impacts
- Determine Response Levels
- Recommend activation of the Severe Weather Plan (which is a sub-plan of the Major Emergency Plan)
- Advise the Chief Executive and consider convening the Crisis Management Team

The actions listed below are not exhaustive and additional actions may also be required.

Roads and Engineering

- Monitor road surfaces and identify heat-related deformation risks
- Implement traffic management or road closures where required
- Prioritise inspection of critical transport routes and structures
- Support fire service operations where feasible
- Liaise with TII and relevant contractors

Fire Service

- Respond to increased incidents of:
 - Wildland, bog and forest fires



- Outdoor and vegetation fires
- Deploy appropriate resources, including water tankers where required
- Provide public fire safety advice

Environment / Water Liaison

Liaise with Uisce Éireann regarding:

- Water supply pressures and restrictions
- Related environmental impacts:
- Water quality
- Impacts on habitats and biodiversity

Housing Services

- Identify and support vulnerable tenants, homeless and displaced persons
- Coordinate supports
- Activate relevant sub-plans where necessary

Civil Defence

- Provide support including:
 - Welfare support (water, logistics)
 - Assistance to communities
- Support Fire Service operations where requested

Community

- Activate network of community support centres

Corporate Services

- Coordinate communications:
 - Issue public information



- Heat safety advice
- Water conservation messaging

- Fire risk warnings
- Maintain updates via website, social media and Map Alerter

In particular, the SWAT Team will ensure a co-ordinated response of all departments and escalate to Crisis Management Team if warranted as well as ensuring effectiveness in public messaging.

Specifically, regarding the motion at hand, the Council is satisfied regarding the adequacy of emergency planning including risk-assessment mechanisms and is also satisfied regarding governance arrangements.

It is accepted that the issues involved can be complex and that, as suggested in the motion, there would be substantial benefit in additional training, scenario planning as well as ongoing reassessment of resources, expertise and operational capacity. In this context, the Council is currently reviewing elements of its Severe Weather Plan which relates to 'prolonged periods of extreme high temperatures' and will consider these aspects in more detail. Co-ordination arrangements with other agencies/entities at local/regional level will be another really important element in this area. This might involve, for example, assisting other Government Departments in terms of support and logistics, where possible. The HSE is the lead agency in relation to public health impacts.

Councillor McEvoy welcomed the report and referred to the Council's recognition of the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in 2019, the signing of the EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events. He queried the Council's preparedness and response capacity in the context of its obligations under climate legislation.

Members highlighted the impacts of climate change on vulnerable groups, the need for coordinated inter-agency responses to emergencies, community resilience, public information, and the provision of suitable public spaces and amenities. Reference was also made to recent peatland fires, the impact of extreme weather on rough sleepers, and the importance of planning and preparedness.



Mr. Boland welcomed the engagement of members and advised that the Severe Weather Plan was being reviewed. He noted the importance of emergency management, public information, community resilience and inter-agency cooperation, and advised that members would have an opportunity to consider these matters further as part of the Climate Action Plan review process.

Ms. Higgins noted that the motion was timely in the context of the implementation of the Climate Action Plan and highlighted the use of scientific research and data to inform the Council's climate adaptation and mitigation measures.

Councillor McEvoy welcomed the responses and requested that the matter be referred to the Climate Action Strategic Policy Committee for further consideration and report back to the Council.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P. McEvoy, seconded by Councillor A. Feeney and agreed by members present that the matter be referred to the Strategic Policy Committee for consideration.

14/0626

Primacy of Town Centres

The following motion in the names of Councillors Veralouise Behan, Brian O'Loughlin, Noel Heavey and Donna Phelan was considered by the members:

That the council commissions a study of the first ten town centres as outlined in the settlement strategy of the Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) to be conducted by appropriate commercial retail experts with a view to bringing forward a range of potential actions that aim to protect and promote the primacy of town centres with a SWOT analysis of each town. Consultants should have demonstrable expertise in innovative successfully applied methods applied elsewhere. This work will also help members in shaping policies for our new CDP.

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



A report from Ms. A. Aspell, Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that we welcome the intent of the motion and consider that the proposal merits further consideration. We would welcome an opportunity to meet to consider the proposal in more detail including how any potential retail study could complement existing work being undertaken in relation to town centre renewal, regeneration and retail vitality.

It should be noted that the County Development Plan already includes a number of objectives which aim to protect and strengthen the role of town centres from a retail, placemaking and regeneration perspective. These include, for example, objectives in Chapter 8 which seek to reinforce town and village centres as the primary locations for retail activity, support the role of retailing as a core town centre function, encourage the reuse of vacant and underutilised buildings and sites, and seek to maintain attractive, accessible and liveable urban centres.

A substantial body of work is already being progressed by Kildare County Council in relation to the renewal and regeneration of town centres. If commissioned, this type of retail study should complement that work and add value to the ongoing efforts of the Planning, LEO, SPPR and Town Regeneration teams.

In light of the above, additional time is requested to research the matter further, with a view to identifying the most appropriate scope, purpose, and potential outputs while also noting that funding would need to be identified for any such study.

Councillor Heavey thanked the Directors for their reports and highlighted the importance of supporting the continued development and growth of town centres as commercial and community spaces, particularly in the context of changing retail patterns and the digital age.

A number of members spoke in support of the motion and emphasised the need to support all towns across the county, while recognising the unique character and potential of each town, including opportunities linked to the night-time economy. Councillor Behan referred to the Athy Regeneration Strategy as an example of an existing study which required further support to progress implementation.



Councillor Doyle supported the motion and noted that the proposal was timely, as it could inform the preparation of the next County Development Plan.

Ms. A. Aspell advised that the Town Regeneration Officer had led on the response and that the Town Centre First Programme was being rolled out in the county. She noted that engagement had taken place with the Planning and Economic Development teams, that significant work was already underway, and that further resourcing would be required to progress the proposal.

Mr. A. Dunney outlined the work being undertaken by the Economic Development Team, including initiatives in Athy and Kildare town, the countywide shopfront scheme, new libraries in Naas and Newbridge, and the Shackleton Experience. He advised that an appropriate funding stream would need to be identified to progress further actions.

Councillor Heavey welcomed the report and responses, emphasised the urgency of the issue, and stated that the matter should be considered as part of the Budget 2027 process.

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

15/0626

Countywide Paint Amnesty

The following motion in the names of Councillors Mark Leigh, Kevin Duffy and Rob Power was considered by the members:

That the council establishes a countywide paint amnesty for the collection and recycling of surplus paint and enters into a formal agreement with the paint recycling scheme at the Circular Economy Centre in Athy to support the recycling of water-based waste paint into reusable paint.

The motion was proposed by Councillor K. Duffy and seconded by Councillor M. Leigh.



A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that there is no provision in this year's budget for a paint amnesty, and accordingly no such event is currently planned.

For context, the last event held by the Council in September 2024 cost €38,000. A total of 37.3 tonnes of waste paint was collected on the day.

That event was delivered by Kildare County Council in partnership with the Regional Waste Management Planning Office (RWMPO) to support household recycling and help reduce illegal dumping across County Kildare.

Contributory funding for the event was awarded under the Anti-Dumping Initiative from the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE).

Subsequently, in April 2025, DCEE allocated funding of €2 million to the Regional Waste Management Planning Offices as an initiative in support of separate Household Hazardous Waste Collection (HHWC).

In May 2025 the RWMPOs issued a tender for the "Provision of Services for a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Service at various locations across the three Waste Regions in 2025.

Following the tendering process, nine HHWC locations were identified by the RWMPOs for 2025.

Among the criteria for the proposed locations were:

- Local Authority household hazardous waste collection regimes i.e. no provisions currently in place at LA run Civic Amenity Sites (CAS) to accept household hazardous waste, (Note: Kildare has provisions in place). and
- Local Authority HHWC initiatives in 2024 i.e. LA did not avail of or provide any HHWC service in the preceding year. (Note: Kildare provided a service in 2024)

In the event that funding is made available for a future paint collection event, it is the intention of the council to support the centre in Athy.

The members may wish to consider in the context of the 2027 revenue budget.



For the members information, grant funding has been received from the Department towards a mattress amnesty event in 2026. Details will be provided to the members in due course.

Councillor K. Duffy welcomed the report and requested that options be explored for the introduction of a paint amnesty, with a view to minimising or offsetting the cost of the initiative. A number of members spoke in support of the proposal and suggested that consideration also be given to the inclusion of other recyclable materials, such as furniture and mattresses.

Ms. M. Higgins advised that, while there were contractual arrangements in place at the council's current sites and no budget provision for a paint amnesty at present, options to progress the proposal would be examined.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor K. Duffy, seconded by Councillor S. Moore and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

16/0626

Camera Surveillance in Public Playgrounds

The following motion in the names of Councillors David Trost, Carmel Kelly and Brian Dooley was considered by members:

That a report on the rationale for not having camera surveillance in public playgrounds be given to Council and identify the appropriate mechanism/ process to initiate amending the current policy in order to provide for the implementation of camera surveillance in public playgrounds and recreation amenities.

The motion was proposed by Councillor C. Kelly and seconded by Councillor D. Trost.

A report from Ms. S. Scully, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that the council acknowledges the importance of ensuring that public playgrounds and recreation amenities are safe and well managed. However, the use of CCTV or live camera surveillance in playgrounds raises significant data-protection



and privacy considerations, particularly as such locations are primarily used by young children and families.

CCTV footage containing identifiable individuals is personal data and must be processed in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Any proposal to install CCTV must have a clearly defined purpose, lawful basis, and evidence-based rationale and must be necessary and proportionate. The Data Protection Commission's guidance requires consideration of purpose, lawfulness, necessity, proportionality, security, retention and transparency before CCTV is installed.

The council's own CCTV Data Protection Impact Assessment process also recognises that proposals involving children's playgrounds require particular consideration, including whether vulnerable individuals are likely to be recorded and how any footage would be used, stored, accessed or disclosed.

For these reasons, it would not be appropriate to amend practices to provide for a general or blanket roll-out of CCTV across public playgrounds and recreation amenities. The council is also mindful that live CCTV coverage of playgrounds across an entire local-authority jurisdiction does not appear to be a standard approach, and that any such measure would require a strong site-specific justification.

The appropriate approach is to consider any proposal on a case-by-case basis. Where a particular playground or amenity is subject to repeated and evidenced issues, the relevant department may prepare a business case and assess whether CCTV is necessary and proportionate, having first considered less intrusive measures. Any proposal would require consultation with the Data Protection Officer, completion of a Data Protection Impact Assessment where required, and clear arrangements for signage, access controls, retention, disclosure and review.

Accordingly, the council does not recommend a blanket amendment to the current camera surveillance practices. CCTV may be considered only where there is a clear, evidence-based rationale and where the proposed use can be shown to comply with GDPR, child privacy considerations and the principles of necessity and proportionality.



Councillor C. Kelly welcomed the report and emphasised the need to balance data protection obligations with public safety considerations in playgrounds and public parks. She stated that concerns had been raised by parents regarding antisocial behaviour and queried what less intrusive measures could be implemented, as referenced in the report. She also sought clarification on the criteria required for a park or playground to be considered for CCTV.

A number of members spoke in support of further consideration of the matter, with particular reference to public safety in parks and playgrounds.

Councillor B. Dooley referred to the anti-dumping CCTV project in Athy, which he stated had been successful in reducing illegal dumping, and suggested that a similar approach could be considered to protect children and playground equipment.

Ms. S. Scully thanked members for their engagement and advised that consideration would be given to identifying a possible pilot area, subject to compliance with GDPR requirements, including completion of a Data Protection Impact Assessment.

Resolved on the proposed by Councillor C. Kelly, seconded by Councillor D. Trost and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

17/0626

Out of Hours Emergency Maintenance Call Out Service

The following motion in the names of Councillors Tracey O'Dwyer and Peggy O'Dwyer was considered by members:

That the council introduces an out of hours emergency maintenance call out service for local authority tenants.

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

A report from Ms. A. Aspell, Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that the provision of an out of hours housing maintenance response would be highly resource intensive, requiring significant financial and operational commitments, including 24/7 staffing or contractor standby arrangements, as well as associated



administration and governance. The Council must ensure that services are delivered in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, having regard to available resources and competing priorities.

Under the current arrangements, all out-of-hours housing maintenance calls are directed to a dedicated call centre, where tenant details and the nature of the issue are recorded and logged for follow-up. These are forwarded to the Housing Maintenance Section on the next working day, where they are assessed, prioritised and addressed as appropriate. Where an issue presents an immediate risk to health or safety, tenants are advised to contact the relevant emergency services directly, who are best placed to respond in real time.

While the Council remains committed to supporting tenants and responding promptly to maintenance issues, it must balance service delivery with resource constraints and value for money considerations. Having regard to the significant cost and operational implications of an out-of-hours service, together with the effectiveness of the current arrangements, the Council is satisfied that the existing system represents an appropriate and proportionate response. Accordingly, there are no plans to introduce a dedicated out-of-hours emergency maintenance call-out service.

Councillor T. O'Dwyer thanked the Director for her report and requested that consideration be given to prioritising vulnerable tenants for repairs, including the possible introduction of a pilot scheme. A number of members spoke in support of the proposal.

Ms. A. Aspell thanked members for their comments and advised that the Housing Maintenance Section was not aware of this matter presenting as a significant issue under the current arrangements. She noted that a proposal for a Vulnerable Persons Register was being considered by the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Policy Committee and the Local Community Safety Partnership.

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



18/0626

International Recovery Day

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

That the council marks International Recovery Day on 30 September each year, in conjunction with the Substance Use Regional Forum, HSE, local addiction recovery services, the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and its relevant subgroups, by a) flying a recognised recovery flag or banner at suitable civic buildings; b) lighting suitable Council buildings or public landmarks in purple, where possible; and c) promoting the initiative through Council communication channels and through the networks, member organisations and subgroups of the LCDC.

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

A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Community, Culture, Environment and Water, Mr. J. Boland, Director of Services, Corporate, Libraries and Emergency Services and Mr. D. Creighton, A/Director of Services stated that if relevant organisations involved in International Recovery Day can provide the official promotional/awareness materials in a timely manner, the Council will add this to its communications pipeline and will also share the materials with relevant members of the LCDC for the same purpose.

It is a matter for members to agree the flying of a flag at Áras Chill Dara and Newbridge Town Hall for this occasion. Official flag artwork would need to be provided by the relevant organisations involved in International Recovery Day.

Lighting of public buildings for National Recovery Day on 30 September will be carried out where possible. Where this is not possible, virtual illumination will be provided as has been provided for other occasions. Structures such as Perpetual Motion (Naas Ball) may not be under the control of Kildare County Council and arrangements with the relevant authority will need to be made.



Councillor Pender welcomed the report and emphasised the importance of recognising recovery within the community. He highlighted the need to support persons in recovery as they rebuild their lives locally and welcomed the Council's support in facilitating appropriate recognition of International Recovery Day.

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

19/0626

Dedicated Financial Support for Sports, Recreation and Amenity Lands

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

That the council writes to the Minister for Finance, to ask him to introduce a new funding mechanism and dedicated financial support for, Sports, Recreation and Amenities, to allow Local Authorities directly purchase lands or properties for municipal development of essential social infrastructure, particularly in designated growth towns and counties, like Kildare, as this facility is presently not included in national budget allocations.

The motion was proposed by Councillor S. Moore and seconded by Councillor B. Clear. With the agreement of members, the motion wording was amended to insert the words 'sports lands'.

'That the council writes to the Minister for Finance, to ask him to introduce a new funding mechanism and dedicated financial support for, Sports, Recreation and Amenities, to allow Local Authorities directly purchase lands or properties for municipal development of essential social infrastructure, particularly sports lands in designated growth towns and counties, like Kildare, as this facility is presently not included in national budget allocations'.

A report from Ms. L. Hanratty, Meetings Administrator stated that this is a matter for the members to agree.

Councillor Moore outlined the challenges faced by community sports groups in accessing capital funding where lands were not owned by the group or the local



authority. He highlighted the projected population growth of the county and the consequent need for additional sports facilities, particularly in designated growth towns. He emphasised the need for investment in social infrastructure, including the acquisition of lands for sports and recreational purposes.

A number of members spoke in support of the motion. It was agreed that a letter issue to the Minister for Finance.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor S. Moore, seconded by Councillor B. Clear and agreed by members present that a letter issue to the Minister for Finance seeking consideration of funding mechanisms to support the acquisition of lands for sports and community infrastructure.

20/0626

Single Rural Dwelling Density Rules

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

That the council amends the current Single Rural Dwelling Density rule contained in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029, including Objective HO O59 and the associated Single Rural Dwelling Density Toolkit, with a view to increasing the threshold from 30 single rural dwellings per square kilometre to 40 single rural dwellings per square kilometre.

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

A report from Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that the proposal to amend the Single Rural Dwelling Density threshold from 30 to 40 dwellings per square kilometre would represent a material policy change to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029, including Objective HO O59 and the associated Single Rural Dwelling Density Toolkit and therefore require a full variation of the plan, subsequent to Variation 3 for the National Planning Framework as commenced in October 2025 and adopted in April 2026.



In this regard, it should be noted that the existing density parameters were established having regard to the evidential baseline, including environmental sensitivities, infrastructure capacity, and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and were subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes as part of the County Development Plan Review.

Any proposed increase in rural housing density has the potential to give rise to additional environmental effects, including but not limited to impacts on:

- water quality and wastewater assimilation,
- landscape character and visual amenity,
- biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including designated European sites.

Under the SEA Directive (EU), changes of this nature must be assessed to determine whether they are likely to give rise to significant environmental effects, having regard to cumulative impacts and the environmental baseline. Similarly, under the Habitats Directive (EU), the Planning Authority is required to screen the proposed change for Appropriate Assessment and, where necessary, undertake a Natura Impact Report to assess the potential for adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

Accordingly, the proposed amendment would require, at a minimum:

- SEA Screening (and potentially full SEA) to assess the environmental implications of intensifying rural housing density; and
- AA Screening (and potentially a Natura Impact Report) to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive.

In the absence of such environmental assessment, it cannot be demonstrated that the proposed increase would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area or with the statutory environmental obligations of the Planning Authority.



Furthermore, any future variation to the Development Plan must be evidence-based, plan-led, and consistent with national and regional policy, including the need to promote sustainable settlement patterns and avoid unsustainable rural dispersal.

Noting the above, the proposal to amend the objective and associated implementation tools could only be considered through a comprehensive review of the Kildare rural housing policy as part of a future statutory plan review or variation, supported by full SEA and AA processes and an updated evidence base and in accordance with an anticipated review of the National Planning Statement on Rural Housing, which is due to be published by Government over the coming period of time.

Councillor Clear welcomed the report and understood the necessity for the requirements. He asked that the council commences a process to review the requirements, as increasing numbers of local applicants have been refused planning permission. He articulated that the council's policy had been based on evidence at the time and this changes over time and a review was appropriate.

A number of members spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor T. O'Dwyer queried if a review now would be premature as national guidance is expected and a review of the policy as part of the future County Development Plan would provide a better outcome.

Mr. A. Dunney noted that the National Planning Statement is awaited over the coming weeks and the council will have to have regard to this document.

Councillor Clear asked for a vote on the matter, but the Cathaoirleach suggested that it would be better to postpone consideration.

The Chief Executive advised that it was premature to consider the proposal in the absence of the relevant information and guidance. The council will be reviewing the matter in the near future.

Councillor Clear accepted the advice and it was agreed that he can resubmit the motion for consideration when the national position is determined.



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

21/0626

Continued Implementation of Universal Accessibility in Kildare

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

That the council provides costings to enable provision to be made at budget time to position funding to allow the continued successful implementation of universal accessibility in Kildare, including the annual Kildare Inclusivity Festival and to implement the staffing needs as identified in the Workforce Plan for Access.

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

A report from Mr. D. Creighton, A/Director of Services, Integration and Strategic Property Management stated that detailed costings will be prepared, as requested. These costings will outline the financial requirements necessary to support the continued implementation of universal accessibility measures in Kildare, including provision for the annual Kildare Inclusivity Festival, as well as the staffing requirements identified in the Workforce Plan for Access.

The information will be developed in sufficient detail to inform and support the upcoming budget process, ensuring that appropriate consideration can be given to funding these important initiatives.

It should be noted that the allocation of staffing resources in an executive function and a matter for the Chief Executive.

Councillor Caldwell welcomed the report and looked forward to the Director's costings being provided for consideration.

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



22/0626

Pilot of a 'Summer Streets' programme

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

That the council recognises that summer presents a unique opportunity to improve community wellbeing, support local businesses, and encourage sustainable travel, and explores the potential and prepares an implementation plan to:

1. Pilot a "Summer Streets" programme in selected towns across Kildare, providing temporary pedestrian-friendly spaces, seating, shade, and family-friendly activities during three peak summer weekends.
2. Establish a small grant scheme for community groups and local businesses to deliver inclusive summer events, prioritising activities that are free, accessible, environmentally sustainable, and supportive of social inclusion.
3. Prepare and publish a report before the end of the year evaluating the sites, the social, economic, health, and environmental impacts of the pilot programme, with recommendations for permanent measures where successful.

The motion was proposed by Councillor N. Killeen and seconded by Councillor P. Mulroe.

A report from Ms. M. Higgins, Director of Services, Climate, Community, Environment and Water stated that the Council already, through a range of Departments and funding mechanisms enables an extensive number of summer events for the local community across Kildare.

These events are inclusive and free as set out in the motion.

This proposal encompasses responsibilities and costs for a range of Council Departments given that it seeks to create pedestrian friendly public spaces and calls for equipment or infrastructure to manage the safety of participants.



Any temporary closure of a public road for this programme is likely to have to go through a statutory process in accordance with Section 75 of the Roads Act 1993 and the Roads Regulation 1994

The Community Department does not have any operational outdoor staff to manage events and infrastructure.

In addition, it is unclear from the proposal as to what criteria should be used to identify which towns would be selected for the proposed pilot.

It should be noted that it is now June and budgetary expenditure across the organisation is at the midpoint of the year, and the Council cannot introduce a grants scheme without a clear funding source and while it is already implementing its 2026 business plans.

At present the Community Department operates a Festival Grants Scheme, and where funding under that is neither available nor appropriate, groups are informed of alternative sources, other than Council funds.

To consider a new grant scheme and pilot for 2027 would require either closing or reducing the provision in place for other grant schemes, all of which are over-subscribed in recent years, as a result of which funding is already having to be spread more thinly across the huge number of applicants.

It is also of note that community grants schemes do not typically fund commercial activities, and the proposal calls for funds to businesses.

In addition, at present, there is no remaining capacity for the Community Department to operate a new grants scheme, given that it operates almost 15 individual schemes, as well as actively assisting other Departments with grants.

Unless there is clarity on how members might propose to fund this pilot, including the staffing costs, and how the events in the pedestrian-friendly spaces can be operationally managed, there is no possibility of a pilot.

It may be appropriate for members to consider this proposal as part of budget processes for 2027 including LPT considerations, but the operational staff needed to



manage the proposed events, also need to be factored into funding considerations too, not merely the grant scheme.

Also the members would be required to set out criteria for a pilot, that could identify relevant towns, given that if LPT allocation is proposed, this is decided at Municipal District level.

A report from Ms G. Allen, County Librarian and Ms E Lavelle, Arts Officer stated that

Library Service

The Library Service plans its annual programme well in advance and is already fully committed to delivering a comprehensive suite of national and locally developed summer initiatives across all 15 branches. These include the Summer Stars reading programme, alongside an extensive range of free activities such as story times, STEM workshops, early years engagement, and family events including Heritage Week events.

All available staffing and operational resources are dedicated to these programmes, which already provide free, inclusive, and accessible opportunities for communities throughout the summer. Given the advanced stage of planning and delivery for 2026, it is not feasible to introduce additional initiatives or reallocate resources at this time.

Arts Service

The Arts Service similarly has significant existing commitments. Through its regularly funded organisations, it already supports the delivery of a wide range of free cultural programmes across the county for adults, families, children, and young people.

The Service currently administers sixteen grant schemes and is actively working to streamline these supports to ensure they remain accessible, sustainable, and aligned with county priorities. In this context:

- The Arts Service is not in a position to establish an additional grant scheme without a clearly defined funding source and associated staffing provision.



- Any proposal for new schemes or pilot initiatives would need to be considered through the 2027 budget process.

In addition, festival and event activity will be examined as part of the development of the next Arts Strategy (2028–2032), with research, consultation, and public engagement scheduled for 2027. This process will assess how current supports operate and what is feasible within service capacity. Any new initiative would therefore require a strategic, phased approach, rather than short-term implementation.

Kildare Library and Arts Service must advise that, due to existing programme commitments, capacity limitations, and the late timing relative to the 2026 planning cycle, it is not possible for either service to engage with the proposed Summer Streets initiative this year.

Both services remain open to considering similar proposals in the future, where they can be aligned with forward planning, available resources, and strategic priorities.

Councillor Killeen welcomed the report and referred to street party programmes operated by a number of local authorities. She requested that consideration be given to a pilot programme in Kildare with a view to evaluating its potential for wider implementation in 2027.

Councillor A. Breslin referred to the successful work of the Athy Town Promoters Group, but queried the feasibility of introducing such a programme during the current summer period.

Ms. Higgins outlined the extensive work undertaken by the Community Section and the supports already provided to communities throughout the county. She advised that, due to existing commitments and resource constraints, the proposal could not be implemented in the current year.

Councillor Killeen expressed disappointment with this position and highlighted the differing capacities of community groups to organise local events.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the significant work undertaken by the Community Department in supporting communities across the county and advised



that capacity was not available to facilitate the proposal during the current summer period. She noted, however, that the council would support any local group wishing to organise such an event.

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

23/0626

Water Outage Business Relief Scheme

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

That the council when considering rates changes for 2027, establishes a Water Outage Business Relief Scheme, providing for a proportional rebate or credit on commercial rates for businesses forced to close due to successive water outages by Uisce Éireann, calculated on a pro-rata daily basis relative to their annual rates liability.

- Include within that scheme a care and education facility provision, providing compensatory payment or rates credit to registered childcare, and elderly care facilities that, while sometimes unable to close, can demonstrate additional operational costs directly attributable to a water outage event.
- Establish a straightforward self-declaration application process, with supporting documentation such as Uisce Éireann outage records, for businesses and facilities to claim relief, minimising administrative burden on applicants.

This motion would recognise that the repeated and ongoing nature of these Uisce Éireann enforced outages have moved beyond the threshold of an occasional inconvenience and now represent a systemic and foreseeable disruption to commerce and care provision in County Kildare.

The motion was proposed by Councillor P. Mulroe and seconded by Councillor C. O'Rourke.



A report from Ms. E. Hanlon, Director of Services, Finance, Digital Services, Innovation and Governance stated that Kildare County Council has **no** role in the operation, maintenance or provision of Water Services, this is the responsibility of Uisce Éireann and there is no crossover with Kildare County Council.

Uisce Éireann operate a system of water charges for businesses where Uisce Éireann charge for the supply of water and the treatment of wastewater to fund the operation, maintenance and provision of water services. Uisce Éireann also receive very significant funding from central government.

It is a matter for Uisce Éireann to credit or compensate businesses for poor service and business disruption not Kildare County Council.

Kildare County Council charges and collects rates from businesses on commercial premises. Commercial rates are calculated based on the net effect valuation of the premises as determined by Tailte Éireann multiplied by the Annual Rate on Valuation set each year by Kildare County Council at its annual budget meeting.

Commercial Rates fund the services provided by Kildare County Council including road repairs and maintenance, public lighting, traffic management, provision and maintenance of open spaces, parks, playgrounds, community centres etc. to name a few.

Kildare County Council has no role in the provision operation or maintenance of water services.

Section 15 of the local government rates and other matters makes specific provision that elected members of a local authority may make a scheme providing for the waiver of rates and that such a scheme shall be approved at a local authority meeting. However, it also states:

“a local authority may make a scheme providing for the waiver by the authority of all or a portion of the rates due to it by ratepayers in order to support the following:

- (a) the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy within the meaning of the Act of 2000.
- (b) the implementation of a development plan within the meaning of the Act of 2000



- (c) the implementation of a local area plan within the meaning of the Act of 2000
- (d) the implementation of a local economic and community plan within the meaning of the Act of 2001.

Local Government Waiver of Rates Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 349 of 2024) states proposal for waiver scheme to strategic policy committee.

- (1) A waiver scheme shall not be made, or an existing waiver scheme amended, by a local authority unless it is proposed to the authority by a strategic policy committee established by the authority under section 48 of the Act of 2001.
- (2) A proposal to the strategic policy committee of a local authority in respect of a local financial year to recommend a waiver scheme shall, subject to paragraph (3), be made to the committee before 30 June in any year before that financial year.
- (3) The proposal referred to in paragraph (2) in respect of the local financial year 2025 shall be made before 30 September 2024.

The request presented in the motion falls outside the requirements outlined above and therefore no such scheme can be prepared.

In any case using commercial rates due and payable to Kildare County Council which funds the provision of Council services to compensate for Uisce Éireann's failures is not acceptable or a good use of scarce resources.

It is a matter for the business sector and representative bodies to take up this issue with Uisce Éireann.

Councillor Mulroe thanked the Director for the report and, while acknowledging that water services are no longer a function of the local authority, emphasised the need to advocate on behalf of ratepayers and highlighted the impact of recurring water outages on local businesses.

Councillor S. Doyle supported the intent of the motion but noted that responsibility for water services rests with Uisce Éireann and matters of policy should be addressed at national level.



A number of members spoke in support of the motion and highlighted the need for greater engagement by Uisce Éireann with affected businesses.

The Chief Executive noted that commercial rates are a significant source of funding for the Council and that any measure affecting rates income would have implications for service delivery. She reiterated that responsibility for water services lies with Uisce Éireann and that the issues raised were matters for Uisce Éireann and central government.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor P. Mulroe, seconded by Councillor C. O'Rourke and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

24/0626

Unauthorised Developments

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

That the council provides an annual breakdown of all legal proceedings taken regarding Unauthorised Developments in the county between 2020 and 2025 by category identifying cases under Section 154 (Enforcement Notices) and Section 160 (Injunctions), categorised by whether the defendant is a natural person or a body corporate.

This motion seeks statistical information by category only and does not request any individual information that would breach GDPR. Please provide the annual data as follows:

1. The total number and percentage of cases against natural persons.
2. The total number and percentage of cases against bodies corporate.
3. A breakdown by court jurisdiction: District Court proceedings and Circuit/High Court injunctions under Section 160.

The motion was proposed by Councillor C. O'Rourke and seconded by Councillor P. Mulroe.

A report from Mr. A. Dunney, Director of Services, Planning, Enterprise and Economic Development stated that the information requested is not recorded or



maintained in a format which would allow the Council to readily produce the statistical breakdown sought.

While records relating to enforcement actions and legal proceedings are maintained by the Planning Enforcement Section for operational and case management purposes, the data is not categorised in a manner which distinguishes, collates, or reports proceedings by defendant type (natural person or body corporate), percentage breakdowns, or court jurisdiction in the format requested. The relevant information would therefore require a detailed examination of individual case files and legal records over the six-year period from 2020 to 2025.

Compiling the requested data would necessitate the manual extraction, review, verification and correlation of information from different systems and physical and electronic files. This exercise would require a significant allocation of staff and management resources.

For context, this table shows the volume of cases which would have to be reviewed in order to extract the information requested. For information, year to date figures for 2026 are also included.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Warning Letters issued	20	29	261	298	431	693	235
Enforcement Notices issued	8	6	79	138	106	169	60
Cases referred for Court	2	2	11	13	6	6	6

Given existing workloads, statutory obligations and current resource constraints, undertaking such an exercise would result in the diversion of limited staff resources from day-to-day operational matters and would adversely affect the delivery of core services within the section.

Accordingly, the information requested cannot be compiled within existing resources in the short term, and the Council is not in a position to facilitate the request at this



time. Should resources permit in the near future, a full report shall issue to Cllr. O'Rourke.

Councillor C. O'Rourke welcomed the report and advised that the intention of the motion was to support transparency and public confidence in the planning enforcement system. She requested further clarification in relation to the cases referred for court, as set out in the table presented.

Mr. A. Dunney advised that further clarification on the relevant cases would be provided in advance of the next meeting.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor C. O'Rourke, seconded by Councillor P. Mulroe and agreed by members present that the report be noted.

25/0626

Supply of Public and Private Parking

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

That the council compiles data sets on supply of public and private parking within all towns across the county in order to properly determine ranges of car parking ratios that might inform the setting of standards in our new County Development Plan.

The motion was proposed by Councillor S. Doyle and seconded by Councillor D. Fitzpatrick.

A report from Ms. S. Scully, A/Director of Services, Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces stated that car parking standards are set out in Chapter 15 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, (as varied) and are informed by Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines that Kildare County Council must have regard to. Residential development in areas within walking distances of town centres and high-capacity public transport services are intended to have fewer parking spaces to encourage more sustainable forms of transport, to limit traffic congestion and to protect the quality of the public realm from the physical impact of parking.



In submitting applications for development, developers can submit car parking analysis of a particular area to demonstrate the supply and demand for car parking spaces. The area-based approach to parking standards must be in accordance with the NTA Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042 and the Climate Action Plan 2021.

As part of the preparatory work for variations to the County Development Plan (former local area plans), area-based transport assessments (ABTA) are completed to evaluate existing transport networks and projected future growth with a view to devising strategies to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility and support sustainable community development. As part of the assessment process, parking requirements which includes the assessment of existing parking supply and the maximum parking requirements required for the future development of the area in question is assessed to determine the ranges required of the area in question.

Councillor Doyle welcomed the report and highlighted the importance of supporting the primacy of town centres. She noted that improved data on public and private parking would assist in informing objectives and policies as part of the County Development Plan process. She also referred to the potential competitive advantage of out-of-town developments compared with town centre locations.

Ms. S. Scully advised that the council had control over on-street parking in towns and through the pay parking regime, including charging structures and time limits. She recommended that the item could be dealt with in conjunction with any action arising from Motion 14 relating to town primacy.

Resolved on the proposal of Councillor S. Doyle, seconded by Councillor D. Fitzpatrick and agreed by members present that the report be noted.



26/0626

Re-letting of Vacant Properties

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

Go dtuairisceoidh Comhairle Contae Chill Dara do bhaill na Comhairle ar an meánfhad ama a bhíonn tithe folamh faoina úinéireacht folamh sula ndéantar iad a athligeran. Ba chóir don tuarascáil an caiteachas ard ar athchóiriú i gcomparáid leis an meán náisiúnta a mhíniú, agus ba chóir go n-áireofaí inti:

- Líon na maoine folamh atá folamh ar feadh níos mó ná 6+ mhí, 12+ mhí agus 18+ mí i ngach Ceantar Bardasach i bhfoirm táblach.

Ba chóir don tuarascáil sonraí a thabhairt freisin faoi na céimeanna formheasa agus na hamlínte ama a bhaineann leis na céimeanna seo maidir le haon iarratais mhaoinithe chuig an Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht, agus ba chóir plean a cheapadh chun an t-am a bhíonn tithe na Comhairle folamh a laghdú, agus meánchostas an athligeran, más féidir.

That the council reports to the members on the average length of time vacated homes in its ownership are vacant before being relet. The report should explain the high spend on refurbishing compared to the national average, and should include:

- The number of vacant properties that have been vacant for more than 6+ months, 12+ months and 18+ months in each municipal district in tabular form.

The report should also detail the approval stages and timelines relating to these stages, to any funding applications to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and should formulate a plan to reduce the time Council homes are vacant, and the average cost of reletting, if possible.

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

A report from Ms. A. Aspell, Director of Services, Housing and Regeneration stated that the turnaround of vacant social housing stock remains a key priority for Kildare County Council. The Council recognises the importance of returning vacant homes to



use as quickly as possible, while ensuring that properties are safe, compliant with rental standards and suitable for allocation to new tenants.

Vacant stock is monitored through the monthly Vacant House Report, which is circulated to members in advance of Municipal District and Full Council meetings. The report provides a breakdown by Municipal District of vacant properties, the vacancy rate as a percentage of overall stock, and the number of properties at pre-letting stage. The June 2026 report records 103 vacant properties from a total stock of 6,825, giving an average countywide vacancy rate of 1.71%. This shows a significant downward trend in the vacancy rate compared to a vacancy rate in January 2025 of 2.5%.

In 2025, a new Planned Maintenance Framework was awarded to 14 contractors. This framework enables a faster transition from completed scope of works to contract award, where each project is tendered by all 14 contractors instantaneously. This approach supports timely delivery and helps secure value for money across pre-letting works. Since the framework commenced in June 2025, improvements in value for money have been achieved.

In September 2025, the Housing Maintenance Department presented to the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Policy Committee and Full Council on vacancy rates, turnaround priorities, pre-letting repair costs, performance metrics, funding arrangements, and budget pressures.

Pre-letting works are funded through the housing maintenance budget, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage voids funding and, where applicable, retrofitting funding. Costs vary significantly depending on the age, condition and type of property, the works needed to meet rental standards, and any additional health and safety, energy efficiency, electrical, mechanical or structural requirements before re-letting.

Councillor N. Connolly welcomed the report and acknowledged the improvements made by the Housing Department in recent years in relation to the turnaround of vacant housing stock. He highlighted the continued concerns of applicants regarding vacant units and requested greater transparency on costs, delays, timelines and



locations. He suggested that the matter could be referred to the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Policy Committee.

Ms. A. Aspell noted the comments and outlined the significant work undertaken to improve the turnaround of vacant units. She advised that update reports were provided to members on a monthly basis and that the current vacancy rate was 1.7%. She referred to a previous presentation by Housing Maintenance, which had outlined vacancy rates, turnaround priorities, pre-letting repair costs, performance metrics, funding arrangements and budget pressures.

Ms. A. Aspell noted that the council remained committed to investing in its housing stock and that upgrade works helped to protect these assets in the long term. She advised that members had approved a significant housing maintenance budget of approximately €20 million, with Department funding of approximately €11,000 per unit available in this category for approximately 60 to 70 units annually. She further advised that the council was moving to a new Asset Management System, which would include a Stock Condition Survey, and that members would be further updated in advance of Budget 2027.

Councillor N. Connolly acknowledged the report and the work being undertaken by the council, while noting the frustration of applicants on the council's social housing list.

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

This concluded the business of the meeting.