



MINUTES OF PLENARY MEETING OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 19 MAY 2025 AT 3.00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY
HALL & VIA MS TEAMS

Attendance

Chair: Cllr. Michael McCarthy.

Elected Members: *Council Chamber*

Cllrs. Tomás Breathnach, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Ger Frisby, Andrew McGuinness, John Coonan, Jenny Catt Slattery, Fidelis Doherty, David Fitzgerald, Patrick Dunphy, Pat Fitzpatrick, Eugene McGuinness, Seán Ó hArgáin, Joe Sheridan, Maria Dollard, John Brennan and Maurice Shortall.

MS Teams

Cllrs. Deirdre Cullen, Joe Lyons, Michael Delaney, Michael Doyle, Brian Cleere and Stephanie Doheny.

Apologies: Cllr. Joe Malone.

Officials: Lar Power, Martin Prendiville, Mary Mulholland, Ian Gardner, Tim Butler, Seamus Foley, Bernadette Moloney, Anne Marie Shortall and Catherine Cooney.

Fógraí - Announcements

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Michael McCarthy extended congratulations to the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Team on reaching the Leinster Final and to Evergreen Football Club, Kilkenny City on reaching the Leinster Junior Cup Final.

Vótaí Comhbhrón - Votes of Sympathy

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael McCarthy extended vote of sympathy to the following:

- Edel Brett, Environment Department on the passing of her father, Paddy Ryan.

1. Dearbhú Miontuairiscí - Confirmation of Minutes

- (i) **Miontuairiscí Chruinniú Iomlánach mhí na Aibreáin - Minutes of April Plenary Meeting held on 28th April, 2025.**

Proposed by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and agreed:

“That Minutes of Plenary Meeting of Kilkenny County Council held on Monday, 28 April, 2025 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved”.

- (ii) **Miontuairiscí an Chruinnithe Speisialta
Minutes of Special Meeting held on 6 May, 2025.**

Proposed by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and agreed:

“That Minutes of Special Meeting of Kilkenny County Council held on Tuesday, 6th May, 2025 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved”.

- (iii) **Miontuairiscí an Choiste Polasaí Straitéisigh 5 Seirbhísí Pobail, Comhtháthaithe, Cultúrtha, Gaeilge, Oidhreacht agus Dóiteáin – Minutes of SPC5: Community, Integration, Cultural, Gaeilge, Heritage and Fire Services.**
Proposed by Cllr. Jenny Catt Slattery, seconded by Cllr. Patrick Dunphy and agreed:
“That Minutes of SPC5: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 14th March, 2025 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved”.
- (iv) **Miontuairiscí an Choiste Polasaí Straitéisigh 5: Seirbhísí Pobail, Comhtháthaithe, Cultúrtha, Gaeilge, Oidhreacht agus Dóiteáin – Minutes of SPC5: Community, Integration, Cultural, Gaeilge, Heritage and Fire Services.**
Proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. John Coonan and agreed:
“That Minutes of SPC5: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 16 May, 2025 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved”.
- (v) **Miontuairiscí an Choiste Polasaí Straitéisigh 5: Seirbhísí Pobail, Comhtháthaithe, Cultúrtha, Gaeilge, Oidhreacht agus Dóiteáin – Minutes of SPC5: Community, Integration, Cultural, Gaeilge, Heritage and Fire Services.**
Proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and agreed:
“That Minutes of SPC5: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 10 December, 2025 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved”.
- (vi) **Miontuairiscí an Choiste Polasaí Straitéisigh 5: Seirbhísí Pobail, Comhtháthaithe, Cultúrtha, Gaeilge, Oidhreacht agus Dóiteáin – Minutes of SPC5: Community, Integration, Cultural, Gaeilge, Heritage and Fire Services.**
Proposed by Cllr. Patrick Dunphy, seconded by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach and agreed:
“That Minutes of SPC5: Community, Integration, Cultural, Gaeilge, Heritage and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 28 January, 2025 as circulated with the Agenda be and are hereby approved”.

2. (a) **Tithíocht & Díuscairt Eile - Housing & Other Disposal**

It was proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and agreed:

“That, Notice is hereby given, that at a meeting of the Council to be held after the expiration of 10 days from the date of this notice, it is the intention of Kilkenny County Council, that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, Kilkenny County Council hereby approves of the disposal of its interest in land at The Nite Cap, Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny, (as identified on the map) to Shane Molloy, Wildflower Cottage, Boley Hill, Fethard-on-Sea, Co. Wexford for the sum of €153,000 (one hundred and fifty-three thousand euro) with each party being responsible for their own legal costs associated with the sale. Site area measures 0.38ha. The Consent of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage is not required.”

(b) **Cuid 8 Pleanáil – Development of a Cultural Hub at the Abbey Quarter Squash Courts, Kilkenny 01/25**

Mr. Martin Prendiville provided an overview of site’s acquisition by the Council and the decision to retain the Brewhouse, Mayfair and Squash Courts buildings. The Squash Courts will be developed into a Cultural Hub and managed as an annex to the Watergate Theatre.

Mr. Prendiville confirmed that 75% grant funding has been secured under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) with the remaining 25% provided by the Council.

Mr. Seamus Foley, Senior Engineer, presented the proposed development, highlighting the following points:

- Background on the proposed use as a Cultural Hub (Rehearsal Space).
- Site Location details.
- Key Elements of the proposed development.
- Part VIII Planning – Public Consultation.
- Submissions received and topics addressed in submissions.
- Recommendation by Chief Executive for approval by Elected Members.

The majority of Elected Members expressed their support for the project noting that it will be a valuable addition to the Watergate Theatre and elevate its offering.

Cllr. Maria Dollard acknowledged the efforts of Kilkenny County Council staff in advancing this project, recognising its significance for the Arts Community in Kilkenny. However, she expressed disappointment regarding the facility's accessibility, noting that the first floor space was not accessible to everyone.

Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin, in support of the project, requested further clarification regarding the footprint required for the installation of a lift.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald expressed his inability to support the development due to the lack of provision for the Kilkenny Squash Club, which lost its permanent home in 2022. He noted that the expressions of interest for the current site occurred during COVID, causing the Squash Club to miss their opportunity to submit an expression of interest. He welcomed the Council's recent purchase of the Hughes Family home for further redevelopment as part of the Watergate Theatre.

Cllr. John Coonan enquired about the possibility of making adjustments to the proposal to make it universally accessible.

Mr. Martin Prendiville addressed the points raised by Cllr. Maria Dollard and Cllr. David Fitzgerald noting:

- 50% of the space upstairs would become unusable if a lift was installed. There was only one location where a lift could be installed.
- The majority of usable space is downstairs and designed with full accessibility in mind.
- The criteria for Expression of interest were broadened to allow for sports Clubs to submit a proposal, which did not occur.
- The Council deemed the Watergate Theatre proposal viable proposal and meeting all criteria.
- The Council does not currently have possession of Hughes site, but will collaborate with the Watergate team on future development once possession is secured.
- The Hughes site does not have sufficient space to accommodate the space being developed in the cultural hub along with the other requirements that the Watergate Theatre have.

Mr. Seamus Foley responded regarding the lift provision, explaining that a lift would service a room of 31m², whereas the standard requirement is when the space is over 200m². He clarified that a lift is not justified as all services for the proposed use as a cultural hub are provided for on the ground floor.

Following a further discussion, the Cathaoirleach called for a vote on the proposal and asked for a show of hands.

It was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Andrew McGuinness

Seconded by: Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh

On a show of hands 19 members voted in favour and 2 (*Cllr David Fitzgerald and Cllr Maria Dollard*) voted against the following resolution:

“We, the Members of Kilkenny County Council approve the Part 8 in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, to the development of Cultural Hub at the former Smithwicks Brewery Squash Court Building, Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny.”

The resolution was carried by 19 votes to 2 votes.

(c) An Conradh gníomhaíochta um na hlontachtaí Éiceolaíochta The Biodiversity Action Plan

It was:

Proposed by: Cllr. Ger Frisby

Seconded by: Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin

And resolved that:

“the Draft Biodiversity Action Plan, as circulated to the Members, is hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council.”

(d) Straitéis Cairdiúil don Aos 2025-2028 Draft Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2028

Ms. Anne Marie Shortall presented Draft Age Friendly Strategy highlighting the following points:

- Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme and National Best Practice.
- Context and Demographics.
- Developing the Strategy.
- Stakeholders Consultation.
- Background and Process.
- Strategic Framework for the new Strategy.
- Main Findings.
- Strategic Priorities.
- Actions.
- Next Steps.

Following the presentation, Members thanked Ms. Shortall and referred to the following:

- Important that strategy is regularly reviewed.
- Public transport in areas of high population of older people.
- Provision of public amenities.
- Expand the offering of Sports Partnership.

Ms. Shortall responded to points raised.

It was:

Proposed by: Cllr. John Coonan

Seconded by: Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin

And resolved:

“that the Draft Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2028, as circulated to the Members, is hereby approved by the Members of Kilkenny County Council.”

**(e) N24 Port Láirge go Cathaoir agus N25 Port go Gleann Mór
N24 Waterford to Chair and N25 Water to Glenmore**

Mary Mulholland, Director of Services, acknowledged the Council’s disappointment that funding was not secured to progress the N24 and N25 roads projects in 2025. She also recognised the public’s concern over the lack of progress. She explained that the issues surrounding these projects are complexed and layered. A Workshop was held with Elected Members prior to this meeting and Kilkenny County Council committed to ensuring that both projects are included in the 2026 funding. Meanwhile, the Council will focus on other measures to improve the situation and continue working towards the completion of both schemes.

(f) Gnóthaí Corparáideacha – Corporate Affairs

**(i) Tuarascáil Mhíosúil an Phríomhfheidhmeannaigh
Chief Executive’s Monthly Report**

Cllr. Michael McCarthy advised that the Chief Executive Report will be taken as read. Any questions can be taken up with the Chief Executive.

(ii) Appoint Nominees (7) to Local Community Safety Partnership.

It was:

Proposed by: Cllr. John Coonan

Seconded by: Cllr. Pat Dunphy

and resolved that:

“that Kilkenny County Council hereby appoints the following Elected Members to the Local Community Safety Partnership:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ▪ Cllr. Jenny Catt Slattery | ▪ Cllr. David Fitzgerald |
| ▪ Cllr. Joe Sheridan | ▪ Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin |
| ▪ Cllr. Andrew McGuinness | ▪ Cllr. Maria Dollard.” |
| ▪ Cllr. Fidelis Doherty | |

3. Comhfhreagras - Correspondence

None

4. Gnó ar athló ó chruinniúroimhe seo - Business adjourned from a previous Meeting

None

5. Dátaí agus Amanta do chruinnithe a shocrú - Fix Dates & Times of Meetings

- (i) Schedule of Meetings circulated with Agenda was proposed by Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and agreed.

6. Plé ar Thuairiscí agus Moltaí ó Choistí an Comhairle
Consideration of Reports & Recommendations of Committees of the Council

- (i) **Tuarascáil ar Chruinniú SPC 2 - Report of SPC 2 Meeting**
It was proposed by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, seconded by Cllr. Patrick Dunphy and agreed that Report of SPC 2 Meeting: Transportation Policy, Mobility Management and Water Services held on Thursday, 9th May, 2024, be taken as read and noted.
- (ii) **Tuarascáil ar Chruinniú SPC 2 - Report of SPC 2 Meeting**
It was proposed by Cllr. Pat Dunphy, seconded by Cllr. Joe Sheridan and agreed that Report of SPC 2 Meeting: Transportation Policy, Mobility Management and Water Services held on 13th December, 2024, be taken as read and noted.
- (iii) **Tuarascáil ar Chruinniú SPC 5 - Report of SPC 5 Meeting**
It was proposed by Cllr. Eugene McGuinness, seconded by Cllr. Jenny Catt Slattery and agreed that Report of SPC 5 Meeting: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 14th March, 2024, be taken as read and noted.
- (iv) **Tuarascáil ar Chruinniú SPC 5 - Report of SPC 5 Meeting**
It was proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. Eugene McGuinness and agreed that Report of SPC 5 Meeting: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 16th May, 2024, be taken as read and noted.
- (v) **Tuarascáil ar Chruinniú SPC 5 - Report of SPC 5 Meeting**
It was proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. Pat Dunphy and agreed that Report of SPC 5 Meeting: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 10th December, 2024, be taken as read and noted.
- (vi) **Tuarascáil ar Chruinniú SPC 5 - Report of SPC 5 Meeting**
It was proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. Pat Dunphy and agreed that Report of SPC 5 Meeting: Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Tuesday, 28th January, 2025, be taken as read and noted.

7. Gnó Eile romhainn i bhFógra reachtála an Chruinnithe
Other Business set forth in the Notice convening the Meeting

None.

8. Oideachas agus Oiliúint - Education & Training

None.

9. Gnótha ag éirí as Miontuairiscí - Matters Arising from Minutes

None.

10. Aon Ghnó Eile - Any Other Business

None

11. Fógraí Rúin - Notices of Motion

06(25) Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin

It was proposed by Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin, seconded by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach and agreed that:

“Recognising the importance of Local Government to the lives of our local citizens and the importance of communicating the excellent work done by our Council, both Executive and Elected Representatives, our Council should follow the excellent example of other Local Authorities and facilitate the live streaming of all Plenary Meetings of the County Council and to consider the same facilities for Municipal District and Strategic Policy Committee Meetings. To this end, that the Executive would be asked to prepare a report on this matter and report to the Council within three months”.

Cllr. Seán Ó hArgáin spoke on the Motion and in response Mr. Martin Prendiville explained that the preparation of a report within a three-month timeframe will be challenging due to the current workload in the I.T. Department.

It was agreed that the report will be prepared and brought back to the Council for consideration within six to eight months.

07(25) Cllr. Maria Dollard

It was proposed by Cllr. Maria Dollard, seconded by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and agreed that:

“that Kilkenny County Council working in partnership with award winning Social Enterprise Property Marking Ireland and An Garda Síochána support the acquisition of a property marking machine so as to encourage people to mark their property to prevent theft”.

Cllrs. Maria Dollard and Fidelis Doherty spoke on this Motion.

It was agreed that this item would be put on the Agenda of the inaugural meeting of the Local Community Safety Partnership.

08(25) Cllr. Maurice Shortall

It was proposed by Cllr. Maurice Shortall, seconded by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach and agreed that:

“That Kilkenny County Council ask the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne, to publish updating of the planning guidelines for wind turbine development. This has been held in reserve since 2006 and has been a divisive matter in communities across the Country and needs to be published now not only for the benefit of Kilkenny but for the benefit of the entire Country.”

Cllrs. Maurice Shortall, Tomás Breathnach, Pat Dunphy and Eugene McGuinness spoke on this Motion. Mr. Tim Butler agreed to write to the Minister in relation to this Motion.

Cllr. Eugene McGuinness requested an update on previous correspondence issued to the Minister in relation to other Notices of Motion.

Mary Mulholland agreed to provide this update in the Chief Executive Report on a quarterly basis.

09(25) Cllrs. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Brennan, Fidelis Doherty, Pat Dunphy, Michael Doyle, Joe Lyons and David Fitzgerald.

It was proposed by Cllr. Pat Dunphy, seconded by Cllr. David Fitzgerald and agreed that:

“That this Council write to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, expressing our deep concern over the critical shortage of community-based childcare services in the Kilkenny-Carlow area. Families are struggling with

unaffordable private childcare costs, highlighting the urgent need for a publicly funded Early Years Education System. We call on the Government to prioritise investment in affordable, high-quality, community-based childcare to establish sustainable early years and after-school services. This measure would support working families who are finding it difficult to meet the expense of childcare services.”

Cllrs. Pat Dunphy, Seán Ó hArgáin and John Coonan spoke in support of this Motion.

10(25) Cllrs. Ger Frisby, Jenny Catt Slattery, Pat Dunphy, Fidelis Doherty and Tomás Breathnach.

It was proposed by Cllr. Ger Frisby, seconded by Cllr. Pat Dunphy and agreed that:

“that the Members write to the Minister for Transport in support of Waterford Airport in its endeavours to secure funding from the Department to further develop the airport given its strategic importance to the economic development of the Southeast Region and in particular to enable business and tourism growth and development in County Kilkenny.”

Cllrs. Ger Frisby, Pat Dunphy, Tomás Breathnach, Michael Delaney and Jenny Catt Slattery spoke on this Motion in support of the development of Waterford Airport for the growth of the Southeast Region.

11(25) Cllr. Tomás Breathnach

It was proposed by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach, seconded by Cllr. Deirdre Cullen and agreed that:

“that Kilkenny County Council writes to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to seek increased funding, to at least €500m to Uisce Éireann to speed up the delivery of wastewater schemes under the Small Town and Villages Programme included in its Capital Investment Plan 2025 – 2029.”

Cllrs. Tomás Breathnach, Deirdre Cullen, Michael Doyle, Seán Ó hArgáin, Pat Dunphy, Jenny Catt Slattery, John Brennan, Fidelis Doherty and Maurice Shortall spoke in support of this Motion.

Cllr. Tomás Breathnach stated that Elected Members should be taking the opportunity to make submissions during the public consultation period for the Capital Investment Plan. Mr. Tim Butler confirmed that the Council will be making a submission on the Draft Plan.

12. Fógraí i dtaobh Rúin ó Údaráis Áitiúla eile ag lorg tacaíochta ó Chomhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh - Notices of Motion from other local authorities seeking support of Kilkenny County Council

It was proposed by Cllr. John Coonan, seconded by Cllr. Tomás Breathnach and agreed by all that the following Notices of Motion 13(25) to 15(25) be taken as read and noted:

That concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE