

CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8th MAY 2025
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, DUNGARVAN,
CO. WATERFORD.**

PRESENT

Cllr. Jason Murphy (Mayor)	Cllr. Kate O'Mahoney
Cllr. Declan Barry	Cllr. Donnchadh Mulcahy
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Joeanne Bailey
Cllr. Joe Kelly	Cllr. Tom Cronin
Cllr. Declan Clune	Cllr. Niamh O'Donovan
Cllr. Liam Brazil	Cllr. Eamon Quinlan
Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan	Cllr. Pat Nugent
Cllr. John Hearne	Cllr. Catherine Burke
Cllr. Jim Griffin	Cllr. Thomas Phelan
Cllr. David Daniels	Cllr. John O'Leary
Cllr. Jim D'Arcy	Cllr. Adam Wyse
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. John Pratt
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Seanie Power	Cllr. Blaise Hannigan
Cllr. Frank Quinlan	

Apologies: Cllr. Joe O'Riordan, Cllr. Seamus Ryan, Cllr. Sandra Conway

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. S. McKeown, Chief Executive
Mr. G. Hynes, A/Director of Services, Roads, Water & Environment
Mr. I. Grimes, Director of Services, Corporate Services, IS, HR, Culture and Planning
Mr. B. Pollard, Head of Finance
Ms. H. Dennehy, Director of Service, Housing
Mr. M. Quinn, Director of Service, Economic Development
Ms. H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator
Ms. A. Flynn, Senior Staff Officer, Corporate

1. Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of Plenary Meeting held on 10th April 2025 proposed by Cllr. Brazil, seconded by Cllr. Kelly and agreed by all.

2. Matters Arising

Cllrs. Roche, Griffin and Daniels requested an update on the delegation to meet the Minister in relation to the Airport.

Cllr. Bailey said the letter that issued to the Minister in relation to the Airport had not been circulated. She asked for an update on letters she had requested to issue to the Gardai in relation to Garda resources in Waterford and to Uisce Éireann as regards their backyard policy.

Cllr. D'Arcy asked if there had been a response from the NTA in relation to transport on the sustainable transport bridge in the North Quays.

S. McKeown, CE confirmed a letter had issued to the Minister in relation to the Airport. He said no response has been received to date. He said Uisce Éireann has a First Fix Free Scheme in relation to leaks on private property, but this does not extend to backyard services. The CCMA are developing a paper on the issue of backyard services.

I. Grimes, DoS informed the members that the Chief Superintendent has agreed to a workshop and date to be confirmed.

Cllr. Roche requested that The Mayor follow up on the letter to the Minister in relation to the Airport.

M. Quinn, DoS noted that he would follow up on the sustainable transport bridge at the next review meeting with the NTA.

Cllr. Donal Barry asked that the motion in relation to the Airport agreed at Plenary Meeting on 13th February be followed up on.

3. Land Disposals

I. Grimes, DoS outlined details of the land disposals for approval.

Disposal of Right of Way consisting of 88msq at Cul Dara, Williamstown Road, Waterford City to Liam Neville Developments ULC. Transfer in Fee Simple for €35,000 (thirty-five thousand euro). Each side to bear own costs.

(Ref. No. 1560)

Proposed by Cllr. Declan Barry, seconded by Cllr. Fitzgerald and agreed by all.

Disposal of Property at West Street, Tallow, Co. Waterford to Kieran Geary and Peter O'Connor. Transfer in Fee Simple for €45,000 (forty-five thousand euro). Each side to bear own costs.

(Ref. No. 1561)

Proposed by Cllr. Pratt, seconded by Cllr. Wyse and agreed by all.

Disposal of 36.15msq at 45 Ashley Avenue, Cherrymount, Waterford City to Melissa Barry. Transfer in Fee Simple for €500 (five hundred euro). Purchaser to bear both sides costs.

(Ref. No. 1562)

Proposed by Cllr. Bailey, seconded by Cllr. F. Quinlan and agreed by all.

The Mayor requested a suspension of Standing Orders to take Items 5 to 7, Items 9 to 11 and Item 8 on the agenda before Item 4 Monthly Management Report.

Proposed by Cllr. Geoghegan, seconded by Cllr. Wyse and agreed by all.

Cllr. Fitzgerald asked that it be noted that the Sinn Féin Group were concerned with the moving of the Monthly Management Report on the agenda.

6. LCDC 2024 Annual Report

H. Dennehy, DoS presented The Local Community Development Committee Annual Report 2024.

Cllr. Griffin asked if the survey on the functions of the LCDC issued only to Councillors or to the wider community.

Cllr. Donal Barry asked if there have been any meetings held with the designated public development officer and other agencies to look at the situation in Waterford as regards deprivation in our housing estates. He asked if there was any duplication of work among the various organisations and he asked how much of the SICAP budget allocation of €1.4M was spent on salaries and expenses. He asked if the community services car was still available for all members of the community.

Cllr. Phelan commended the work of the LCDC and he asked if Councillor membership on the committee could be expanded.

Cllr. O'Leary also commended the Committee's work and he asked if the Clár funding could be expanded to include more than five communities.

Cllr. Kelly asked about the Committees' sources of funding.

Cllr. O'Mahoney said she supported Cllr. Phelan and suggested LCDC membership include a Councillor from each district. She noted there was no members of Gaeltacht na nDéise on the Committee and asked that this be looked at.

Cllr. Pratt said he supported Cllr. O'Leary in relation to Clár Funding.

H. Dennehy, DoS said the survey issued to all members of the LCDC and to all elected members. She said a response in relation to Clár Funding and how it will be extended or reviewed has issued to all Councillors. She will revert in relation to other issues raised.

7. Annual Financial Statement (AFS) and Section 104

B. Pollard, HoF introduced the Annual Financial Statement for year ended 31st December 2024. He said the Income and Expenditure Account for the year shows a surplus of €313,303. The credit balance on the Revenue Account at 31st December 2024 is €472,383 compared to a credit balance of €159,080 as at 31st December 2023. The Capital Account shows a credit balance of €15,406,769 at the year end.

Cllr. Fitzgerald asked if the surplus of €313k is carried forward to 2025 and how it will be spent.

Cllr. Donal Barry asked about the spend on Housing Maintenance, the administration costs of Homeless Service and the €360k for Community & Social Inclusion. As regards the increased expenditure in 2024 in respect of plant and machinery he asked if buying plant and machinery would be better value for money than renting. In relation to the increase in consultancy & professional fees he asked if there is scope for staff members to take up some of this work. He asked what the €1.1m for Agency & Recoupable Services under the Recreation and Amenity Programme related to.

Cllr. Kelly asked if any surplus is a factor in determining Government funding. He asked about the overspend on festivals, increase in rent arrears and asked if the multiplier of €0.2891 applied in the calculation of rates for 2024 can be reduced by the members.

Cllr. Phelan asked about the Council's position in relation to Relevant Contracts Tax and the setting up of a Finance Committee with representatives of each grouping or alternatively expanding the membership of the Audit Committee.

Cllr. Daniels asked about the Council's interest in other companies.

Cllr. Griffin asked if the increased income from housing rents be ringfenced for maintenance.

B. Power, HoF said the surplus is relatively small. He said it is good practice to have a surplus and it does not go into the next years' accounts. He said the €3.1m overspend on Housing Maintenance was across all housing stock. He said the multiplier applied in the calculation of rates is determined by the members at budget time. He said our final position in relation to RCT was €5,000 and he said he is open to discussing the setting up of a Finance Committee. He said the overspend on festivals was in respect of Winterval. Rent arrears increased from €5.1m to €5.4m however looking at 2024 alone there was €21.7m collected out of an accrual of €22m which is a 96% collection rate for the year. He will revert with details in relation to Agency & Recoupable Services expenditure in Recreation and Amenity.

Section 104 Local Government Act 2001 - Statement of Additional Expenditure re Annual Financial Statement 2024 was proposed by Cllr. Hannigan, seconded by Cllr. E. Quinlan and agreed by all.

9. Committee Vacancies

(i) Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change SPC

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Sullivan and seconded by Cllr. Declan Barry that Cllr. Sandra Conway be elected to the Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change SPC

(ii) AILG

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Sullivan and seconded by Cllr. Kelly that Cllr. Wyse be elected to the AILG

(iii) County Heritage Forum

It was proposed by Cllr. Pratt and seconded by Cllr. Clune that Cllr. Phelan be elected to the County Heritage Forum.

(iv) Tramore Town Centre Management Group

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Sullivan and seconded by Cllr. E. Quinlan that Cllr. Hannigan be elected to the Tramore Town Centre Management Group

It was proposed by Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. O'Mahoney that Cllr. Griffin be elected to the Tramore Town Centre Management Group

Cllr. Hannigan was elected to the Tramore Town Centre Management Group by a majority show of hands.

There followed a discussion during which it was proposed that both Councillors be nominated to the Tramore Town Centre Management Group. It was agreed that the executive considers this as the Group is non-statutory.

5. Audit Committee Report – Padraic Doherty

Padraic Doherty presented the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2024.

Cllr. E. Quinlan commended the non-Councillor members of the Audit Committee.

Cllr. Phelan asked if Councillors could see the Internal Audit Reports and asked if there is scope to carry out an audit of processes within individual sections.

Cllr. Kelly asked if there had been any risks identified across the organisation.

Padraic Doherty said internal processes are audited and Internal Audit Reports are available on request. He said the Directors of Services identify the key risks across the organisation.

S. McKeown, CE thanked Padraic Doherty and the Audit Committee for their work.

10. Correspondence

Proposed by Cllr. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

11. Notice of Motions

None

8. Presentation – North Quays Development

M. Quinn, DoS and Pat Power, Harcourt Developments gave a presentation on the progress of the North Quays Development, followed by a question and answers session.

Cllr. Wyse asked what will happen with Plunkett Station, is there a guarantee that the hotel and conference centre will be built, the number of social and affordable units, cost of units to purchase or rent and if there is a plan for the Ard Rí.

Cllr. E. Quinlan asked around the timelines for new train station due to open in Q.2 2027 but will be completed in Q.2 2026 and asked if Irish Rail would be moving in once complete, expressing concern that it would be idle for a year otherwise. He asked about access to the river from the North Quays and about flood defences.

Cllr. Kelly said the 350 residential units, hotel and aparthotel are critical to the development. He asked about access to the river and the elimination of the electric bus that was to provide transport across the sustainable bridge.

Pat Power, Harcourt Developments said there will be a large element of social and affordable housing. Access to the river from the North Quays will be considered in Phase 2 and if demand is high for some form of transport on the bridge, this can also be considered. In relation to flood defences there will be two layers of flood defences.

M. Quinn, DoS in relation to Plunkett Station said the offices are still occupied and the canopies above the platform are protected structures and its future use will be considered in due course. Proposals for the Ard Rí are being considered by the developer and owner. The train station

cannot open because the signalling equipment cannot be installed until the flood defences are complete.

Cllr. Fitzgerald asked about carparking at the new train station and about canopies over the platforms.

Cllr. Roche requested that copy of the presentation be circulated to the members. She asked if the sustainable transport bridge is in place this year could it be opened to the public prior to Q.4 2026. She asked about the treatment of the elevation of the development that will be viewed across the river from the South Quays to North Quays and if there was any information on the retail offering.

Cllr. Bailey asked about the number of retail units on site, parking for hotels and residents and the operation of the hotel and aparthotel. She asked if funding would be available to improve the South Quays.

Pat Power, Harcourt Developments said he is happy for the presentation to be circulated to all members. He said there will be convenience retail such as food, beverage and other services such as dry cleaning. Regarding the operation of the hotel and aparthotel he said that there had been a number of approaches from hoteliers since planning permission was granted.

M. Quinn, DoS said in relation to the canopies over the railway station that there are no proposals to extend the canopies beyond what is already there. In relation to parking there is provision for parking under the apartments for use by residents and there is also provision for parking on the left-hand side of the site for the hotel. There is more than adequate parking for the overall development. It has been agreed with Harcourt Developments that a route straight through the middle of the site from the sustainable bridge to Dock Road will be prioritised and this will be opened as soon as reasonably practical. Improvements for the South Quays can be considered as part of the Capital Programme discussions in the coming weeks.

Cllr. Nugent asked about connecting the train station to the bus station and covering with a canopy and asked if there were any overruns with BAM.

Cllr. Griffin said he supported Cllr. Nugent and other speakers in relation to a canopy.

Cllr. Darcy said the train and bus stations need to be connected. The walking distance between stepping off the train and the south end of the sustainable bridge is substantial enquiring if it would be possible to put a light rail there. He asked about deliveries to businesses and the amount of parking for residents.

Pat Power, said there is sufficient parking provided for the development.

M. Quinn, DoS said there is no provision for additional canopy in the train station and no provision for a canopy from the train station across the bridge to the South Plaza.. In relation to light rail he said it would not be practical and in terms of an electric shuttle bus service he said he will continue to pursue this with the NTA. BAM are broadly on programme and within budget and WCCC are satisfied with overall working relationships with BAM.

Cllr. Burke asked if there were plans in place to ensure appropriate and accessible services for the residents such as GP, youth and family support services, community spaces and playgrounds.

Cllr. Daniels asked if a risk assessment had been done to look at what happens in the event of emergencies and if there is a need to look at the design of the Quays. He asked if there was a playpark to cater for young families.

Cllr. Phelan asked about secure storage for bikes for residents and supported other speakers in relation to play spaces.

Cllr. Donal Barry asked about the cost to purchase one of the apartments and he asked for an update on the substantial piece of art for outside the exit to the train station.

Pat Power, said there is bicycle parking and storage provided. There are discussions with the Council in relation to the artwork. There are six pocket parks and GP services and pharmacies will follow as the development progresses. The cost of the apartments is not finalised as yet. M. Quinn, DoS said there is a substantial programme of risk assessments across a range of areas including consideration of emergency access and where it would be appropriate for emergency services to access the site.

Cllr. Geoghegan said the North Quays Development will transform the city and praised Harcourt Developments for their work on the North Quays.

Cllr. O'Leary said it was a good news story and would be a game changer for Waterford.

The Mayor thanked M. Quinn and Pat Power for the presentation.

4. Monthly Management Report

Cllr. E. Quinlan asked if the online application system for grants for clubs and community groups could be more user friendly so that some fields would populate automatically where the information had been previously submitted. He asked for clarification in relation to housing transfers for tenants of Approved Housing Bodies. He asked that low-income earners who would normally qualify for social housing not be penalised, as regards income earned in one year resulting from training and brings them over the income limit for social housing for that particular year.

Cllr. Phelan asked if the Outdoor Recreation Plan could include a policy requiring the provision of toilets and bins on an all-year round basis on our blue flag beaches. In relation to the transfer of the Dungarvan Presentation and Cleansing team to the Roads Department in Dungarvan he asked if there is scope to increase their remit to include Ballinroad and Clonea.

Cllr. Donal Barry asked if the Council were represented at the Active Travel & Greenways Conference in Limerick and if so could the various topics discussed be circulated. He noted that at the last meeting the disposal of the former Sorting Office and Archive Building was approved for €450,000, while the Council rents office accommodation for somewhere in the region of €1m and asked going forward that large property disposals be accompanied by supplementary reports detailing why the property is being disposed of.

H. Dennehy, DoS said tenants of AHB must apply for a housing transfer to the AHB. Where the AHB has no suitable unit in their housing stock the Council will accept their transfer application. In relation to housing applications she said eligibility is based on previous years' earnings as set out by the Department. Retaining information sought for a specific purpose is a GDPR issue.

G. Hynes, A/DoS said there can be a discussion at budget time in relation to budget requirements as regards provision of toilets and bins on an all-year basis on our blue flag beaches. He said initially we are transferring the services of the Dungarvan Presentation and Cleansing team to the Roads Department but the future operations of both teams will be looked at.

I. Grimes, DoS said we are not paying in the region of €1m for office accommodation in the city and we are currently looking at accommodating staff primarily in buildings we own in order to reduce the level of rent we are paying. He said a report on office accommodation will be provided in advance of next month's meeting. He said the Plenary agenda is brought before

the CPG, discussed in detail at the CPG before it is confirmed. He is available to answer questions on any disposal and any suggestions how the process can be improved can be discussed at CPG.

The Mayor called for a suspension of Standing Orders for 15 minutes.
Proposed by Cllr. Griffin and seconded by Cllr. Declan Barry and agreed by all.

Cllr. Daniels requested an update on the Capital Programme and the airport and asked for a workshop on the Development Plan.

Cllr. Griffin asked if there was a Plan B for the airport given the lack of Government support to date. He asked if it was an option to have resident associations work with the Council in relation to the operation of toilets.

Cllr. O'Mahoney said there are very few properties in Waterford County advertised on CBL and asked if this is being addressed and asked about the timeframe in relation to processing housing adaptations grants.

S. McKeown, CE said the Capital Programme will be brought to the June Council meeting. There will be a follow up workshop to the one held in April in advance and he suggested that the workshop also deal with issues raised in relation to the airport.

I. Grimes, DoS said a workshop on the Development Plan will be arranged towards the end of June when there may be issues to discuss and variations to be considered.

G. Hynes, A/DoS would welcome any community group who would work with us in relation to the operation of toilets that would allow for the extension of the opening times.

H. Dennehy, DoS said all properties are advertised on CBL as they become available. In relation to adaptation grants it can take some time for inspections to be carried out but said we are working through those grants.

Cllr. Cronin raised the issue of the N25, its upgrade and co-operation between Cork County Council and Waterford City & County Council. He also raised the issue of the delay in payments in relation to housing grants.

Cllr. Fitzgerald requested a list of the historic burial grounds across County Waterford. He said Irish Water and the Council employ emergency crews to reinstate broken mains. He said recently a sizable settlement was without water over a weekend because there was no emergency crew available and asked that this be looked at.

Cllr. Burke said she supported the other speakers in relation to public toilets and said she welcomed the Council's willingness to work with community groups to extend the opening hours of toilets. She asked about the response time of housing maintenance requests and the measures in place to ensure a timely response. She asked if the Councillors can make representations in relation to housing repairs. She asked if the Council could include on their website information in relation to Lyme disease.

Cllr. Bailey asked in relation to the Housing Adaptation Grant if the six months for completion of work could be extended. She asked if there are any housing developments being held up by Uisce Éireann and requested a meeting with representatives from Uisce Éireann to address some of the issues.

H. Dennehy, DoS said delays in payments of grants are being addressed noting that delays in payments are also as a result in many cases of individuals not submitting the required information. Where work will not be completed within six months the individual should contact the Housing Department and based on each individual case - an extension may be granted. She noted that the Maintenance Team respond adequately to all calls.

G. Hynes, A/DoS said the upgrading of the N25 is a political issue and we need to continue to highlight the issues as regards the N25. A list of historical graveyards will be supplied. Uisce Éireann are responsible for maintenance and repair of water mains and will raise Cllr. Fitzgerald's issue with them. He noted that housing developments have been held up by Uisce Éireann and said like most other local authorities there are infrastructure deficits in relation to water and sewerage. The appropriate authority to provide information on and advise in relation to Lyme disease is the HSE.

S. McKeown, CE added that he has contacted the CE of Cork County Council in relation to the N25 and they have agreed to meet to progress this issue. He noted that, Cork City, Wexford and Kilkenny local authorities also need to be involved in this strategic project.

Cllr. Roche requested more information on and/ or a presentation in relation to the Local Enterprise Office supports noting the reduction in numbers applying for Measure 1 to end of April 2025 compared to end of April 2024. She asked if a new Chair has been appointed to Visit Waterford and said there is no retail representation on Visit Waterford and consequently there is no information on Visit Waterford's website in relation to the retailers in the city. She said she had asked that Members would be updated on the activity of the Economic Department in relation to retail. She asked if Waterford City & County Council would be making a submission to the National Development Plan review and if so if the Members could have sight of same.

Cllr. Mulcahy commended the provision of the beach wheelchair in Tramore and asked when will beach wheelchairs be rolled out across the county and asked that the N72 Tallow to Fermoy be kept in mind for upgrade.

Cllr. Declan Barry asked how prevalent Japanese Knotweed is and what steps are taken to eradicate it. He asked what steps are being taken to tackle coastal erosion.

Cllr. O'Donovan asked when the Community Safety Partnership Wardens be rolled out across the county.

M. Quinn, DoS said he will provide more information in relation to LEO supports. The new SEO in Economic Development will be engaging with the city retailers in relation to various issues. Visit Waterford is a membership group that brings operators in tourism and hospitality together, the issue of retail information on the Visit Waterford website will be raised.

I. Grimes, DoS said if we are given an opportunity we will ensure that we have a robust submission on the NDP.

G. Hynes, A/DoS said we are currently looking at a pilot scheme for the provision of beach wheelchairs. In relation to the N72 he said Cork County Council have applied to the TII for funding. Japanese Knotweed on public land is our responsibility and we have a programme in place to address it. On private land it is the responsibility of the land owner and it is an offence not to treat it. WCCC have done some work on coastal erosion funded by the Office of Public Works.

12. AOB

None

Signed: _____
Mayor of Waterford City & County

Dated: _____