

CATHRACH AGUS CONTAE PHORT LÁIRGE
WATERFORD CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10th JULY 2025
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL, WATERFORD.**

PRESENT

Cllr. Seamus Ryan (Mayor)	Cllr. Kate O'Mahoney
Cllr. Declan Barry	Cllr. Donnchadh Mulcahy
Cllr. Donal Barry	Cllr. Joeanne Bailey
Cllr. Sandra Conway	Cllr. John O'Leary
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. Joe O'Riordan
Cllr. Jason Murphy	Cllr. Joe Kelly
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald	Cllr. Jim D'Arcy
Cllr. Damien Geoghegan	Cllr. Mary Roche
Cllr. Seanie Power	Cllr. Blaise Hannigan
Cllr. Frank Quinlan	

Apologies: Cllr. Tom Cronin, Cllr. John Pratt, Cllr. Adam Wyse

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. O'Kane, Management Accountant, Finance
Ms. H. Dennehy, Director of Service, Housing
Mr. S. De Faoite, 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 12th June 2025 proposed by Cllr. E. Quinlan, seconded by Cllr. Kelly and agreed by all.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 26th June 2025 proposed by Cllr. Murphy, seconded by Cllr. Declan Barry and agreed by all.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Bailey asked for an update in relation to her previous request for a meeting with Uisce Éireann.

I. Grimes, DoS said a meeting will be arranged for September.

Cllr. Fitzgerald wanted it recorded that the Management Report wasn't dealt with at the June meeting.

3. Land Disposals

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

Disposal of 0.41 acres at Dawn B&B, Kildermody, Kilmeaden, Co. Waterford to Thomas Fitzgerald. Transfer in Fee Simple for €500 (five hundred euro). Purchaser to bear both sides costs. **(Ref. No. 1567)**

Proposed by Cllr. O'Leary, seconded by Cllr. Brazil and agreed by all.

Disposal of 106.6msq at the rear of 10 Parnell Street, Waterford to Thomas & Teena Casey. Transfer in Fee Simple for zero consideration. (Nil euro). WCCC to bear both sides costs. **(Ref. No. 1568)**

Proposed by Cllr. Darcy , seconded by Cllr. Phelan and agreed by all.

Lease of the 0.4acres of additional lands at Cleaboy, Waterford to Roanmore CLG. No Change to current lease rent and term. Each side to bear own costs. **(Ref. No. 1569)**

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

Disposal of 2 Bath Street, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford to Darragh Lyons & Megan Dunford. Transfer in Fee Simple for €337,665 (three hundred and thirty-seven thousand six hundred and sixty-five euro). Each side to bear own costs. **(Ref. No. 1570)**

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

Disposal of property at Main Street, Lismore, Co. Waterford to Katelyn Horsom & Niall Dalton. Transfer in Fee Simple for €41,050 (forty thousand and fifty euro). Each side to bear own costs. **(Ref. No. 1571)**

Proposed by Cllr. O'Mahoney, seconded by Cllr. O'Donovan and agreed by all.

4. Monthly Management Report

Cllr. Phelan asked about our social media and web stats, requested an update on funding for concentric cabling and asked if the council has any powers to remove an unsightly container on the N25. He welcomed the upcoming Walkability Audits and asked about the process of joining KIMO.

Cllr. Donal Barry asked if there is a separate stream of funding for adaptation grants for local authority tenants and requested more detail in the Management Report in relation to adaptation grants for social housing tenants. He asked for an update on the walking trails between Bunmahon and Stradbally and an update on the attraction of scale.

Cllr. Burke requested a list of the 457 derelict sites and any other vacant properties and the plan to bring them back into use. She enquired if those individuals who are unsuccessful in a bid on Choice Based Letting are notified of same.

S. De Faoite, DoS said there are two funding streams for adaptation grants, one for private houses and one for local authority houses and he will look at providing more information in relation to adaptation grants in the monthly Management Report. In relation to CBL he will review the process in other local authorities.

G. Hynes, A/DoS said funding for concentric cabling is provided in the Capital Programme and additional funding will be sought from the Department. The removal of the container on the N25 can be looked at under planning enforcement or the Roads Act. He will revert in relation to the process of becoming a member of KIMO.

M. Quinn, DoS said in relation to the walking trails along the Copper Coast that information is being gathered with a view to providing evidence to show that the proposed trails will not result in disturbance to birds. In relation to the attraction of scale he said we are still at feasibility stage and at the moment there is no funding proposal or funding opportunities.

I. Grimes, DoS said he would revert in relation to social media stats. However he noted it is important to monitor the various platforms to establish the ones that are most effective. In relation to derelict sites the Council endeavours to engage with the owners to avail of the schemes that are available through the Housing Department to bring the properties back into use.

Cllr. Daniels asked about the potential of unveiling a plaque or statute in honour of Tom Dunphy of the Royal Showband to mark the 50th anniversary of his passing.

Cllr. Bailey enquired about Energy Efficiency Retrofitting, allocation of funding and whether we are on course to meet our targets for 2025 and requested that more information around retrofitting be provided in the monthly Management Report. She suggested that the scheme be brought to a workshop or to the Housing SPC.

Cllr. Hearne mentioned issues around public toilets, enquiring about responsibility regarding their maintenance and operation.

S. De Faoite, DoS said retrofitting is dependent on grants from Central Government, he will revert in relation to allocation for 2025 and further information can be provided.

G. Hynes, A/DoS outlined that the operation of our public toilets is done by a mix of contractors, community groups and council staff. A complete review of their operation will be done over the coming months. He acknowledged the work being done and noted that the condition of public toilets can deteriorate rapidly throughout the day.

I. Grimes, DoS said Cllr. Daniels's suggestion to mark the 50th anniversary of the passing of Tom Dunphy should be brought to the CPG.

Cllr. Fitzgerald requested that the 12 projects funded under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme be circulated. He asked that information in relation to the Historic Thatch Buildings Grant be sent to the owners of all historic thatch buildings. He asked about rezoning requests and if it is futile for housing applicants to be bidding on CBL if they are not priority 1 applicants.

Cllr. Roche asked if we have made a submission to the National Development Plan Review and if so can a copy be circulated. She noted Waterford's own build performance of 20% and asked if it is possible to get a league table of housing targets and asked for clarification on the meaning of own build targets. She requested an update on the review of the various committees. Cllr. O'Mahoney asked about inspections of our housing stock where improvements have been carried out in just 25 properties and asked about the Housing Succession Policy and what protections are in place in the policy for children who are under the age of 18.

S. De Faoite, DoS said CBL gives the applicant current information as to what is available and as an approved housing applicant you are entitled to apply for a house in which you are interested. He said the 20% own build performance is where the local authority has a direct contract. There are other forms of delivery and taking all other forms of delivery including the Repair and Lease Scheme Waterford is in line to meet all our housing targets. Improvement works as a result of inspections are prioritised and can only be done where there is a budget for them. All relevant agencies would be involved in cases of succession where there are children under 18.

I. Grimes, DoS said he would discuss with Conservation Officer how best to communicate the details of the Historic Thatch Buildings Grants. There will be opportunities for land owners to seek rezoning next year when the City & County Development Plan is being reviewed. The submission to review the National Development Plan has been circulated and the review of the committees is underway.

M. Quinn, DoS said the details of the 12 projects under ORIS funding are included under the relevant District Report.

Cllr. E. Quinlan highlighted a growing number of complaints around parking fines issued for failure to display a ticket despite many drivers using a mobile app to pay for parking which does not provide a physical ticket and asked that this be looked at. He said the new parking meters require users to input their vehicle registration numbers which prevents drivers from passing on tickets to others. He asked if someone pays for an hour and only uses 40 minutes why are they not allowed to give the remaining 20 minutes to someone else. He was not aware of any recent amendments to the parking by-laws. He highlighted the lack of Local Area Plans for city and county and asked that the Housing Allocation Policy be reviewed so that families with a family member with autism be assigned Medical 1 priority.

Cllr. Declan Barry asked for an update on the reduced speed limits and signage. He asked which council department is responsible for coastal erosion and what is being done to combat it and asked how often our bathing waters are tested. In relation to the removal of dog bags he asked how long the pilot schemes will last.

Cllr. O'Leary asked for an update on planning rules for log cabins in back gardens.

G. Hynes, A/DoS said we are satisfied that the current parking by-laws support linking parking tickets to registration numbers. The speed limit has reduced on local roads from 80km to 60km however he said there has been a delay in the reduction of speed limits in urban areas from 50km to 30km and guidance from the Department is awaited. The coastal erosion is the responsibility of the Roads Department working in partnership with the Office of Public Works. He stated that bathing waters are tested fortnightly. Dog bags are often discarded into ditches and trees even where there are bins provided, and we are carrying out this pilot scheme to see if the removal of the dog bags will improve this situation.

S. McKeown, CE noted that in relation to coastal erosion that an interdepartmental group has been established. He is representing the local authorities on this group. There is a commitment in the Programme for Government to identify at least three pilot areas where different methods

of coastal change management might be applied like interventions, soft measures and better planning. Given that there are only three areas to be selected it will be extremely competitive, he will keep the members updated on the process.

I. Grimes, DoS outlined that it is the intention to commence the development of the local Area Plans for Tramore and Dungarvan later this year and currently waiting on traffic management reports which will inform the plans. In relation to log cabins it was unlikely a planning application for a log cabin would be successful under current legislation.

Cllr. Kelly asked if the Housing Department has any influence on how Approved Housing Bodies and in particular the Simon Community allocate houses highlighting issues of anti-social behaviour with some individuals housed by AHBs. He requested an estimate of the cost of fully funding the operation and maintenance of all the public toilets across city and county. Cllr. O’Riordan queried the environmental enforcement statistics and asked if enforcement extends to local authority tenants who have accumulated rubbish in their front and back gardens.

Cllr. Griffin asked if a meeting could be arranged for the Councillors to meet the staff of the Housing Department. He asked about the attraction of scale and an update on the shuttle bus feasibility study and requested further testing of the River Suir to ensure that shellfish are not being affected.

S. De Faoite, DoS said nominations to AHBs properties come from the local authority. However, any issues with anti-social behaviour are a matter for the AHB. He would welcome a meeting with the Members and will organise same.

G. Hynes, A/DoS in relation to public toilets said costs will be reviewed and will be available at budget time. There is a zero tolerance around litter and with individuals who do not pay fines as they pursued through the courts and further testing of waters can be looked at.

M. Quinn, DoS said in relation to the attraction of scale that we are at the early stages of the project, the bus feasibility study will take a minimum of six months to complete.

Cllr. Murphy asked if the requirement to holding a tenancy for two years continuously before seeking a transfer be looked at in cases of serious medical needs.

Cllr. Nugent asked about the contact details for the vacant properties team. He suggested a substantial fine for those who do not clean up after their dog.

S. De Faoite, DoS there is a policy in relation to housing transfers and this can be looked at.

G. Hynes, A/DoS said in relation to dog littering that awareness and education is important. It is difficult to link an individual to dog littering; however he said we do enforce where we can.

5. Draft Polling Scheme

Agreed and noted.

6. Waterford Regional Airport

S. McKeown, CE said he was recommending that funding of up to €450,000 be provided by way of a capital contribution towards the operational costs of the airport while they are waiting a decision from government in relation to the development of the airport. The Council will be asking for a significant equity return in terms of shareholding. The project must now go through the new public spending code and transport appraisal framework and the first part of the process is a new preliminary business plan and business case. The process that the

department are asking for will extend into early next year. There is no guarantee what the outcome of the process will be but there is a commitment for the project in the Programme for Government. In the interim the Irish Coast Guard's Rescue helicopter and the flight training school will continue to operate at Waterford Airport.

Cllr. Kelly expressed his disappointment and said he would support the funding on this occasion but would have serious concerns if the airport board came back in a year.

Cllr. Hearne not satisfied that the government were now looking for additional details when previous business case already submitted, noting that government funding should be provided.

Cllr. Phelan said based on his experience to date he does not think the government are interested in funding the airport. As a supporter of the airport and the importance of the airport to the Southeast he will be reluctantly supporting the funding. If the funding is coming from the capital budget, should it be used for operational purposes and he asked given the airport will serve the Southeast if European funding has been sought.

Cllr. Burke believes the financial responsibility for the development of the airport should not fall on the local authority. If the government is committed to balanced regional growth there must be meaningful investment. She will reluctantly support the funding but said the government parties need to step up.

Cllr. Power said he would support the funding and asked if there was anyone in the aviation industry that could be brought onto the board of Waterford Airport.

Cllr. O'Leary said he too would be supporting the funding. The public spending code has to be completed given the criticism the government received in relation to spending on the children's hospital, the bicycle shed and believes the government will support Waterford Airport once it has gone through the public spending code.

Cllr. Donal Barry said he would be supporting the request for operational funding because he said it was unacceptable that the lifeboat and coast guard crews, cliff and mountain rescue teams, fishing crews and emergency airlift of patients are at risk because of government inaction. It seems like a deliberate attempt to stall progress that this compliance issue was not flagged earlier. He proposed that Cllr. Daniels be appointed to the board.

Cllr. O'Riordan said he found it extraordinary the way the government has treated Waterford City and County Council and Waterford Airport. The CE has been placed in an invidious position trying to sell this bailout to Councillors. He will be supporting the CE's recommendation and said our members of government need to fight for Waterford.

Cllr. Geoghegan will be supporting the proposal reluctantly, the CE is correct to seek equity in return for the €450,000 investment. We should be mindful of the recent comments by Ryanair's CEO Michael O'Leary. We are putting further money into the airport without having seen the business case. Waterford is a private airport and we are giving money to a private company.

Cllr. Daniels asked if the airport had approached airlines in relation to propeller aircraft as a start to getting passengers out of the airport.

Cllr. Griffin said today we also need to be mindful of the staff in the airport. For the department to come back at this stage with the new public spending code is kicking the can down the road.

Cllr. Mulcahy agreed with the point of seeking more shares in return for the funding of €450,000 and said this is another example of government failing to provide vital infrastructure.

Cllr. Roche said the reason Waterford Airport is private is because the people of Waterford paid for it. The former chairman, Dan Browne who passed away recently deserves our thanks. She agreed with other speakers that this is the government kicking the can down the road and

the Airport Board are only seeking a letter of comfort at this stage. The business plan was good enough to attract €12m from the private sector and is being held up now by this new process. Cllr. E. Quinlan said he was uneasy that he has not seen the business plan. He suggested that the lands around the airport be classified as a Strategic Development Zone. Nonetheless he said he would be supported the proposal.

Cllr. Bailey said if the government had honoured their commitment this €450,000 funding would not now be needed. The fact that no issues were raised until now in relation to the business plan does look as if the can is being kicked down the road as others have said. She would be supporting the funding but there are a lot of questions in relation to shares. She would like to second Cllr. Donal Barry's proposal to appoint Cllr. Daniels to the airport board.

Cllr. Darcy said given that the airport is in the Programme for Government we are in a strong position.

Cllr. Hannigan said he was disappointed with Michael O'Leary's recent comments.

Cllr. Murphy said the Airport Board is made up of very competent people but there is no one on the board with aviation expertise.

Cllr. Fitzgerald said he would support the funding because the Search and Rescue service is essential.

Cllr. Declan Barry said the Airport Board are aware of the councillor's frustration and the issue in relation to shares has also been brought up.

The Mayor said he will support the proposal but commented that no further funding should be provided unless the equity is significantly increased.

S. McKeown said the €450,000 will come from the Capital Programme and will not affect day to day services. In relation to the equity he said legal and financial advice has been sought. There is currently no other source of funding for the airport. Mr. O'Leary's has made previous comments saying he would operate out of Waterford Airport. In relation to the business plan he was informed and was of the view that all documentation that was requested had been provided. However we must now accept that the project must now go through the new public spending code and transport appraisal framework. Classification of lands around the airport as a SDZ is a possibility but it would be a decision for Cabinet. In relation to additional expertise on the board he said someone with aviation expertise would be a welcome contribution but pointed out the council can not dictate who should be on the Board. He said it is not unusual that a business plan would not be shared at this point due to commercial sensitivities.

Proposed by Cllr. Kelly, seconded by Cllr. O'Leary and agreed by all.

Cllr. Donal Barry's proposal that Cllr. Daniels be appointed to the board, seconded by Cllr. Bailey was ruled out of order by the Mayor as it is not the Council's function to appoint to a private Board.

7. Correspondence

Proposed by Cllr. E. Quinlan, seconded by Cllr. Geoghegan and agreed by all.

8. Notice of Motions

Motion in the name of Cllr. Donal Barry

"Carers Allowance and Benefit Reform 'That the members of Waterford City and County Council call on the Minister for Social Protection Mr. Dara Calleary, to abolish means

testing for Carers Allowance in Budget 2026. We further call on the Minister to introduce a fair and adequate payment for recipients of Carers Allowance and Carers Benefit one which truly reflects the time, dedication and compassionate care that carers provided everyday across Ireland”.

Reg. No. PJ/2025/256 (dated 27th June 2025)

In proposing the motion Cllr. Donal Barry said family carers are the backbone of our care system, their work is vital and their contribution to society is huge. Many have given up employment to look after children with additional needs, to look after parents and other vulnerable loved ones. The means test should be abolished completely; carers deserve financial support. Carers make it possible for older people to remain in their own homes surrounded by people they love. Family carers support our health and social care system, relieving pressure on hospitals and residential care facilities. If we want to be a society that values care and respects human dignity, we must stand up for the people who provide that every day. He is calling on the Minister to abolish means testing for Carers Allowance in Budget 2026. He requested that the motion be circulated to all local authorities.

Cllr. O’Riordan seconded the motion.

Cllr. O’Leary said he supported the motion, however he said he does have an issue with the abolition of the means test. Cllrs. Phelan and Geoghegan spoke in support of the motion.

Proposed by Cllr. Donal Barry, seconded by Cllr. O’Riordan and agreed by all.

Motion in the name of Cllr. Joe O’Riordan

That Waterford City and County Council call on the government to implement the recommendations of the Fifth Report of the Convention on the Constitution, and to extend voting rights in Presidential elections to all Irish citizens on the island of Ireland.

Reg. No. PJ/2025/257 (dated 2nd July 2025)

In proposing the motion Cllr. O’Riordan said the Fifth Report of the Convention on the Constitution specifically offers the extension of voting rights in Presidential elections to citizens outside the State. In the last number of years communities in Northern Ireland have learned to live together in harmony and there is a genuine desire to forge a better future for their children. Ireland is growing closer to reunification by the day. With this in mind he said he is calling on the Council to support this motion and afford to all our Irish brothers and sisters and particularly those in the six counties the right to vote in Presidential elections. He said they deserve and are fully entitled to this right and deserve the opportunity to vote for their President.

Cllr. Donal Barry seconded the motion saying it was timely. It was interesting that an individual from the six counties can stand in a Presidential election but no one living in the six counties can vote for that person.

Cllr. O’Mahoney, Hearne, Mulcahy, Kelly and Phelan all spoke in support of the motion.

Proposed by Cllr. O’Riordan, seconded by Cllr. Donal Barry and agreed by all.

9. AOB

Cllr. Fitzgerald enquired if the new guidelines on building apartments will be applied retrospectively.

Cllr. Griffin asked in light of the recent gorse fire in Williamstown that the Mayor write to developers in relation to gorse close to residential areas.

Cllr. Roche said she wanted to inform the Members and the public, that an alliance of community groups, trade unions, political representatives, cultural organisations have gotten together under the banner of the Waterford Coalition against Fascism. She invited the Members and the wider public to attend a peaceful gathering in Waterford on Saturday the 26th of July at 1:30pm.

The Mayor on behalf of himself and the Members wished Helena Dennehy best wishes in her new Director of Services role in Wicklow County Council.

S. McKeown, CE thanked Helena for her contribution during her time with Waterford City and County Council and wished her well going forward.

Cllr. Power reminded the Members of the Comeragh Wild Festival that is running from July 10th to 13th.

H. Dunphy, Meetings Administrator reminded the Members of the National Day of Commemoration on Sunday 11th July at the John Condon Memorial, Cathedral Square at 11:00am. She asked that the Members inform the public in relation to updating their details on checktheregister.ie and said a campaign requesting the public to do so will begin in the near future.

I. Grimes, DoS will send the document in relation to the new planning guidelines to Cllr. Fitzgerald.

Signed: _____
Mayor of Waterford City & County

Dated: _____