

CEANTAR BARDASACH CHATHAIR CHILL CHAINNIGH
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY CITY

MIONTUAIRISCÍ AR IMEACHTAÍ AN CHRUINNITHE MHÍOSÚIL A TIONÓLADH
AR AN 11 Ú IÚIL 2025 AG 2.30PM

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 11th JULY, 2025
AT 2.30 P.M.

Mayor, Councillor John Coonan Presiding

Present/ I Láthair:-

Councillors/Comhairleoirí: Cllr Eugene McGuinness, Cllr Seán O'hArgáin, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr David Fitzgerald & Cllr Joe Malone.

Apologies :

Also Present:

Mr. Tim Butler, Director of Services, Ms. Margo Hayes, Senior Executive Officer, Mr. Stan Cullen, A/Senior Engineer, Ms. Annette Fitzpatrick A/Senior Executive Officer, Ms. Josephine Coyne County Librarian, Mr. Seamus Kavanagh Senior Engineer, Ms Ann-Marie Delaney, Staff Officer.

MAYOR'S SUMMONS OF MEETING:

Notice dated 13th June 2025 convening a Monthly Meeting for this date was read.

1. A dhaingniú Miontuairiscí Cruinnithe - Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting:

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 13th June 2025, having been previously circulated, were tabled for confirmation.

It was:

Proposed By: Cllr. John Coonan.

Seconded By: Cllr. Seán O'hArgáin.

And Agreed:

"That the Minutes as presented to the meeting be hereby adopted".

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 20th June 2025, having been previously circulated, were tabled for confirmation.

It was:

Proposed By: Cllr. Eugene McGuinness.

Seconded By: Cllr. Andrew McGuinness.

And Agreed:

“That the Minutes as presented to the meeting be hereby adopted”.

2. Cúrsaí thabhairt ar aghaidh ordú ón Méara - Matters brought forward by direction of the Mayor:

Mayor John Coonan attended the First Scouts Group celebration of their new extension in Ardnore, which was funded by a grant from the Local Authority, extended his thanks to the Local Authority for the support given.

Attended Relay for Life for cancer research which had great attendance.

Also attended the opening of new Sullivan’s Brewery and extended his thanks to the public and Local Authority for all their support.

Received correspondence from Kilkenny Cycling Group, Roisin Hickey in relation to a proposed Pump Cycle Track at Dunmore Biodiversity Park or at any other appropriate site in Kilkenny. Cllr. Coonan advised he spoke with Parks and Active Travel Departments and they were favourably disposed for this amenity. Requested support from the Members to look favourably on this proposal as there are grants and various supports available, would bring forward as a Notice of Motion for the next Monthly Meeting.

Cllr. John Coonan spoke about the work related accident on Kennyswell Road, offered condolences on behalf of the Council to the deceased gentleman’s family.

3. Butts Area Regeneration Framework Plan - Presentation.

Ms. Annette Fitzpatrick presented Elected Members with the Butt’s Regeneration Framework Plan including details of:

- Last Public Consultation held on 25th June and was very well attended – 45 surveys were completed.
- Summary of survey was as follows – 87% of who attended were residents, 96% would support the ideas for existing homes, 96% would support the overall regeneration plan framework and 96% found the event helpful.
- Selection of Additional Comments - generally, people found the event very helpful, with a lot of information provided on the plans for the Butts, traffic issues prevalent, with improved pedestrian crossings and other measures requested, concerns were raised about the footbridge at Kennyswell, houses in the back field and in the KCC yard.
- Highlights from Housing Stock Condition Survey – Regular Maintenance – leaks, stairs external doors etc., Maintenance Programme – smoke/carbon heat detectors, safety restrictors on upper windows, tank/pipework insulation, ventilation and Further Investigation – fire stopping in attics, chimney structures, wall structures

- and roofs.
- Existing Housing Stock - Pilot houses at Pearse Street & Connolly Street, explore potential redesign solutions, engage with tenants, align units to current space standards where possible, improve energy efficiency and decanting of residents, depending on extent of work.
 - Proposals for Green Field to rear of Connolly Street – Move playing pitch to this location, provide dressing rooms and be overlooked by new housing.
 - Proposals for St. Joseph’s Road Site - Widen St. Joseph’s Road to provide tree lined avenue, include housing along St. Joseph’s Road, with a Green space and play area (age friendly & family units).
 - Proposals for Sr. Anthony’s, Lord Edward Street - Age friendly housing, family housing and Green space/food growing area.
 - Roads/Traffic within the Butts - Rat run” from Tullaroan Road, support for changing traffic movement/explore 1-way system, Traffic sub-committee, prohibit right turn from Tullaroan Road.
 - Waterbarrack - Develop as a general amenity area, footbridge to Kennyswell to improve accessibility, Basketball court/boules area and Handball alley – Protected Structure – requires work.

Ms. Annette Fitzpatrick also outlined the next steps in the process which are

- City MD for approval
- Costing of identified Projects
- Submit Framework to Department for approval
- Implementation Plan
- Part 8’s/Planning for projects.
- Link to webpage.

The members welcomed the updates and thanked Ms. Fitzpatrick for the inclusive element to the consultation process and this should serve as a template for consultation processes going forward. Members are happy to give their full support to this Framework.

Elected members queried if there was any update in relation to:

- Indication of a Timeline for the project.
- How many houses to be completed at a time.

Ms. Annette Fitzpatrick responded:

- Works will go on for a number of years as it is quite a substantial project, will work as fast as they get through approvals and statutory planning processes.
- Works on pilot houses should be happening very soon.
- Expecting another house to be vacant shortly also.
- Housing Section have committed to holding onto any house that may become vacant in the Estate.
- Works to existing houses will not require Part 8 and can progress once the Department gives funding.
- Other projects will have to go through Part 8 process and will then re-engage with residents.

4. *Plean Forbartha Leabharlainne - Library Development Plan 2025 - 2029.*

Ms. Josephine Coyne presented Elected Members with the Library Development Plan 2025 - 2029 highlights as follows:

- Operating Environment - 8 library branches, mobile library service, supported by administrative library headquarters and Local Studies Department. Serving population of 104,160 people with 74% based in rural locations, 24% of population joined/renewed in 2024, open 311 hours a week.
- Capital Development - increase of 388% of visitors to new Mayfair Library and also increase of 142% in membership.
- Development of the library app, self service, printing etc.
- All branches have had energy efficiency audits.
- National & Local programmes - Right to Read, Healthy Ireland, Age Friendly etc.
- Promotion of culture and heritage - Creative Ireland, Bookville etc.
- Rebuilding Post-Covid - since 2019 compared to 2024 usage and engagement increased as follows - 22% items borrowed, 14% library visits, 42% library members and 8% opening hours.
- Embracing Digital Services - use of online resources increased dramatically during Covid up 360% from 2019 to 2024. Borrowbox and Irish Newspaper Archive are the 2 most popular. Digital offering has been expanded to include comics, film streaming etc.
- Needs Assessment - extensive consultation - held 4 staff workshops, public survey - 394 responses, survey of schools, key stakeholders - 32 responses and KCC Management Team and Elected Members.
- Applied to relocate Local Studies and Headquarters to Carnegie Library, will be advised if funding is available in August.
- Received a grant to purchase a new mobile library.
- Relocation of Callan Library to Friary building.
- Book spend per Capita is €2.19 - National Book Spend target is €4 need to try and hit national target. Expenditure on Library service is 3.6% of overall LA Budget.
- Constantly reviewing opening hours - My Open Library is operating in Castlecomer and will be commencing in the Mayfair Library from September 2025 and will also commence in Thomastown when opened.

The members thanked Ms. Coyne for the presentation and also thanked library staff and also staff in Mayfair for helping a member of the public outside of normal working hours which was very much appreciated. The Elected Members will address and support additional funding to reach national book target.

Elected members raised the following:

- If opening hours could be extended in particular for exam students.
- Is move to digital having an impact on people reading books.
- If a separate building is required for County Archivist.
- Has funding for Carnegie been progressed.
- Consider naming Exhibition Room, The Hubert Butler Room.

Ms. Coyne thanked the members for their positive comments and responded as follows:

- My Open Libraries – Castlecomer, Kilkenny and Thomastown will be open until 10p.m. which will accommodate everyone including students.
- Digital move did have an impact on reading in the beginning but reading has now settled and it hasn't had the negative impact that was thought.
- There are plans to build a designated building for Archives.
- Will take on board the suggestion of The Hubert Butler Room.

Mr. Tim Butler responded in relation to Carnegie Library query as follows:

- Permission to fill Archivist Role should be given soon.
- Carnegie Library will be the place to go to retrieve archives.
- Expect to hear if proposal for Carnegie Library and surrounding area is successful by end of August and then can apply for funding.

4. *Boithre - Municipal District/Roads Monthly Update.*

Mr. Stan Cullen like Cllr. Coonan offered his condolences to the friends, family and colleagues of Mr. Robert Connolly following tragic accident at Kennyswell Road, also thanked the Emergency Services for their dignity and professionalism which was a great comfort for those affected.

Mr. Stan Cullen made presentations as follows:

(a) *Kilkenny City and Environs Heavy Commercial Vehicles Management Plan Amendment.*

- Following approval in 2015, Phase 2 of the HCV Management Plan was introduced in 2018 following completion of St. Francis Bridge.
- Poor definition of routes resulted in enforcement difficulties.
- Review identified proposals to improve the plan, taking account of improvement works on Dean St and the opening of William Roberston Way.
- Parnell Section 38 of the Roads Act 1994 - Consultation open between 2nd May and 23rd May 2025. Submissions up to 4pm on 4th June 2025.
- Four submissions received - Seeking HCV restrictions or speed limit reduction on Dublin Road; Observations for additional measures on Ballybought Street, Pennyfeather Way, New Road, Hebron Road; Impacts on Grange Road; Impacts on HCVs through the city.
- Key changes are removal of traffic from Circular Road and new alternative route from Western Environs by way of St. Francis Bridge.
- Responses to all matters prepared and will be issued.
- Proceed with the implementation of signage in accordance with Phase 2 of the HCV Management Plan, as amended.

Elected Members raised the following:

- Next step for the Ring Road Extension particularly the sections on the Western Environs.

- Figures for reduction of traffic on Greensbridge.
- Need for Traffic Control Measures on Greensbridge in order to stop speeding - maybe a raised pedestrian crossing to slow the traffic down.

(b) *Kilkenny City Parking Control Bye-Laws 2025.*

- Parking provision within the city is carefully and efficiently managed for the benefit of local residents, businesses and visitors and effectively in areas where there is evidence of excess demand for available spaces.
- Deter illegal parking.
- To ensure accessible bays are kept clear for use of valid permit holders and loading bays are kept clear for use by commercially taxed vehicles.
- To promote the use of alternative modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.
- To facilitate local residents accessing parking at or near their homes. To deter inappropriate parking in residential areas
- Aim to update the Parking Control Bye-Laws - The parking bye-laws have not been reviewed since 2012 - update Bye-Roads at Green Street, Greenshill, Nuncio Road, St. Fiaccres Place, Kells Road and College Road which are all under pressure.
- Public Consultation will highlight issues relating to illegal parking.

Members are happy to give their approval for this process to proceed.

Proposed by Cllr. Eugene McGuinness.

Seconded by Cllr. Sean O'hArgain.

(c) *Municipal District/Roads Update (Presentation).*

- Restoration Improvement - Kennyswell Road.
- Restoration Improvement - High Street.
- Restoration Maintenance - Bennettsbridge Road.
- Footpath Repairs - Marble Crescent and The Weir.
- Drainage Repairs and Footpath Repairs at Pearse Street.
- Drainage Works - Castle Road.
- Active Travel Works - Outrath Road.
- Maintenance - e.g. Street Sweeping, Cleaning (power washing), Litter bin emptying and litter picking, Linear parks maintenance, Street furniture repairs, gully maintenance, pothole repairs, line marking and miscellaneous.
- Laneway Cleaning - St. Mary's Lane.
- Canice's Place Maintenance.
- Ring Road Roundabout Cleaning - Bohernatounish Road.
- Roundabout Maintenance - College Road & Springhill.
- Gully Cleaning.
- Illegal Dumping.

Elected members raised the following:

- Kennyswell Road - residents fear speeding issue.
- Section of footpath under the bridge at O'Loughlin Road - 2 people have fallen in last few weeks, needs to be replaced. Cannot wait needs to be looked at

immediately.

- Green Area in Francis Terrace – are bollards going to be installed.
- St. Kieran’s Cemetery – building needs to be painted, archives need to be filed correctly, if a map can be drawn up of the various graves in the cemetery and toilets need to be cleaned.
- Signs for campervans at Riverside Drive.
- Update on Roundabout at Black Quarry Hill.
- Update on cul-de-sac sign for Bishop Birch Place.
- Are clothes banks worth the effort as seem to be a constant issue.
- Flooding issues Castlecomer Road, left hand side of Newpark Hotel - when are works expected to commence.
- Can footpath from Weir to Glendine Inn be widened.
- If presentation can be given in paper format.
- Hi-Vis jackets for people out walking.
- If paper handouts of presentations could be handed out at meeting.

Mr. Stan Cullen responded:

- Works at Kennyswell Road should be completed this afternoon and a Speed Survey will be carried out – results will determine precautions to be taken as necessary.
- Footpath at O’Loughlin Road – all reports are logged and put on a priority list for problematic footpaths. Approximately 4 years of work on list. Will look at this immediately.
- Going to go with a fence at Green Area in Francis Terrace which has been costed, no timeframe for completion.
- Looking at prospect of painting and cleaning up St. Kieran’s Cemetery. Following up with staff to ensure records are maintained. Will consider best way to set up map of graves if it’s feasible.
- Sign for campervans went up at Riverside this morning, situation will be monitored.
- Sign for cul-de-sac at Bishop Birch Place will be erected.
- Roundabout at Blackquarry Hill is being reviewed, engaging with TII to progress matter.
- Will check issue of flooding on Castlcomer Road.
- Would have to consider wearing Hi-Vis walking very carefully. Has it’s place nationally.
- Conscious of trying to limit printing of paper but will check if a special case can be made for Elected member who requested handout.

Mr. Tim Butler responded as follows:

- Clothes banks are being managed by Environment Section and considered SPC 4. This is an issue that is being addressed nationally. KCC will continue to manage clothes banks and ensure that the areas are properly maintained.

The members welcomed the updates from Mr. Stan Cullen and Mr. Tim Butler and thanked Mr. Stan Cullen for the presentations.

(d) Link Roads Northern and Western Environs.

Mr. Seamus Kavangh, Senior Engineer, Roads presented Elected Members with the Link Roads Northern & Western Environs highlights as follows:

Kilkenny City North Transport Project – C1.5km long

- Received €200,000 in funding from Department of Transport in 2025 to proceed to procure Consultants.
- Out with Consultants at present, Tenders due back 30th July.
- Consultant to be appointed by September.
- Go through Options process which will take approximately 18 months to 2 years at least.
- 3 Non-Statutory Public Consultations to be held.
- Will update with timelines later in the year and then every quarter after that.

Freshford Road to CBS School.

Looking at link to Bleach Road and transport options, walking, cycling, bus stops etc.

R7 – (i) CBS to Tullaroan Road and (ii) Tullaroan Road to Kilmanagh Road.

- Received €150,000 to look at Traffic Modelling and preparing reports for Kilkenny Ring Road Extension, to submit application for funding from Department of Transport as cost of works will be in region of €10m.
- Advanced stages for (i) CBS to Tullaroan Road may be semi permanent solution and not be the final solution.
- Approximately 1 km from Freshford Road to CBS and Kilkenny County Council are in process of taking this road in charge.

Lousybush Lane Access Road

- On link road to the school, preparing documents for Tender, will not be ready before school returns.
- In the long term will make this an Active Travel route, taking all the cars off the road which will facilitate and benefit the residents living in the area.

The members welcomed and thanked Mr. Seamus Kavanagh for the presentation and updates and raised the following issues:

- Enquired what will the situation be like when the schools open, huge surge in students in addition to St. Canice's and Loreto students.
- To engage in an information campaign between now and end of August and have personnel on the ground including An Garda Siochana at the end of August when schools return.
- Has R5 – Kilmanagh Road to Dean Street project been abandoned.
- Timeframe for completion of R7.
- Crucial to engage with landowners from very beginning in relation to Kilkenny Ring Road Extension.
- Importance of getting kids back cycling to school.
- Have a Social Media campaign to explain to that there is a pedestrian/drop off route to the CBS

Mr. Seamus Kavanagh responded as follows:

- Students can get out of cars and walk to school from Lousybush Lane in the first few weeks to help ease the pressure.
- R5 is not abandoned – R7 is a priority at present as it's where housing is going to be developed, schools etc.
- R7 shorter term projects should be delivered within 2 – 3 years and long term projects within 4 – 5 years which will ease pressure on schools.
- Once Consultant is on board will liaise with landowners straight away.
- Bus service is being be looked at under Mobility Management Plan.

Mr. Tim Butler responded as follows:

- R5 is still an important link.
- A lot of work had been undertaken with CBS and we will continue to do so. CBS will be engaging with all parents.
- Mobility Management Plan is responsibility of CBS.
- Anticipate difficulties for a while but it should all settle down as students find their own pathway to school – link from Cantwell's up to roundabout will not be in place by September.

5. *Fógraí Rúin - Notices of Motion.*

14(25): Proposed by Cllr. David Fitzgerald

Seconded by Cllr. Andrew McGuinness

"That Kilkenny MDC undertake a survey of the Breagagh river adjacent to the Robertshill Housing estate to establish the flood levels and any actions necessary to address the flood risk to homes at this location."

Cllr. Fitzgerald spoke on his motion.

Advised that residents are concerned of on-going flood risk. Council would undertake all necessary surveys to ensure no flooding beyond the normal flooding to reassure residents. Enquired if Office of Public Works Report could be published for residents to inspect.

Mr. Tim Butler responded that the Breagagh was an Area for Further Assessment.

The report has just recently been completed by Office of Public Works and a scheme for the Breagagh will be considered in the future. Mr. Bulter stated he had corresponded with the residents when the Lauhoff was put in and explained it was an area of further assessment. It will be a Phase 2 Scheme and will be circulated to members after the meeting. Mr. Butler advised he would check if report could be published and let members know at September meeting.

5. **Aon Ghnó Eile - Any Other Business**

- Regina, Heritage Officer extended an invitation for a City Walking Tour – whenever it would be suitable to all to take in Talbots Tower etc.
- Rothe House are happy to host the new Kilkenny Municipal District Meeting in September, would need prior notice if there are presentations.
- Congratulations to Cllr. Andrew McGuinness on his appointment as Chairperson of Southern Regional Assembly.

- Issue an invitation to Former President Barack Obama to come to visit St. Canice's Cathedral as his great-great granduncle Bishop John Kearney is buried there.
- GAA Mental Health Campaign in November.
- Sympathies were extended to family of Rita Lacey who passed away at the age of 97 and was the oldest resident of St. Canice's Parish.

That concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed:

MAYOR

Date:
