

Waterford councillors told biodiversity policies are here to stay ‘like it or not’

Shannon Sweeney

Biodiversity initiatives are here to stay in Waterford.

That is according to the Director of Roads at Waterford City and County Council at the September sitting of the Dungarvan-Lismore District Council.

The director was responding to councillors' concerns of untidiness in and around Dungarvan.

"Look, in the past we cut all the grass verges and we cut down lawns. I know the culture you are talking about.

"We have moved away from that. We are leaving areas on verges now and we are leaving the grass grow.

"The environmentalists will tell us that it is the right thing to do.

"It doesn't look as pleasing to the eye as it did before, it's not like a lawn, but from a biodiversity point of view it's the right thing to do," said Mr Hyne.

COMPLAINTS

The issue was first raised by Cllr Pat Nugent, who said he is getting calls from locals about a lack of maintenance on the road into Dungarvan town, the road out to Clo-



Weeds are important for the habitat of pollinators like honeybees. Stock image.

nea Beach and at Ballin-

road. He said that he understood that biodiversity was important, but so was the upkeep of the town.

"I think it has gone down, down, down, as far as people will say. Dungarvan is a tidy town..." said Cllr Pat Nugent.

Cllr Damien Geoghegan said he agreed with

Cllr Nugent.

He said he drove past an 18-inch weed recently growing up a traffic light on Wolf Tone Road and the area around the playground at McDonald's has not been tended in a long time.

Cllr Geoghegan said there is a perception that "weeds are acceptable".

"There is a lane, for example, next to the li-

brary, which links Main Street to Davitt's Quay.

The oldest piece of street furniture in Dungarvan is actually on that lane-way.

"I would ask anyone to go down and walk along it. I'd say it has never been swept. It has never been weeded.

"That is just one example I can think of right in the centre of

town," said Cllr Geoghegan.

Cathaoirleach Niamh O'Donovan said she is also getting a lot of calls on weeds and presenta-

tion.

Cllr Thomas Phelan pointed out that Clonlea Beach does not fall under the presentation team, but said the weeds do need to be looked at.

"It is looking fairly em-

barrassing.

"I know we need to be a bit more forgiving of weeds than we have been in the past, but if we need more resources, it should be coming to us at budget time," said Cllr Phelan.

THE NIGHT THING TO DO

Senior Executive Officer in the Environment Section Dawn Wallace said that she was not aware of issues in areas raised by Cllr Nugent, but there are wildflower trails coming into Dungarvan.

District Engineer Joephine McGrath acknowledged that weeds are an issue, but the council does not have enough resources to keep on top of weeds.

She said spraying has a limited effect, and they are looking for a piece of machinery that might do the job.

But they are yet to find one and rely on the community to pitch in.

"Yeah, there are weeds everywhere. I suppose we don't have people you can allocate full resources to weeds all day, every day.

"We don't have that, so we do rely on community groups and everyone to help. Pulling weeds is a task, and it takes time and pulling the weeds so you get the root out so it doesn't grow again," said

Ms McGrath.

Cllr Nugent came back in and accused the council of using biodiversity as an excuse.

"If you go back five years there was no such thing as biodiversity, right, and biodiversity has been used as an excuse not to dig them up.

"And you have to admit Gabriel, now it's very poor," said Cllr Nugent.

Mr Hyne said the measures in place are what have been agreed at the Special Policy Committee (SPCs).

He said that he accepts that wildflowers in their off-season are not as visually pleasing as when they are in bloom and green areas don't look the way they used to. But this is what needs to be done to protect wildlife.

"From a presentation point of view, our approach doesn't look as pristine as they have in the past and we accept that and this is something as a local authority, we are going to embrace biodiversity or we are not.

"A weed in a certain location adds to the habitat. It's needed and like it or not, that is what we have agreed and that is the approach we are taking," said Mr Hyne.



COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND Waterford City & County Council, Development at No.'s 3 & 4 Great George's Street, Waterford. Compulsory Purchase Order 2025, (No. 1)

The Waterford City & County Council (hereinafter referred to as "the local authority"), acting on its own behalf, in exercise of the powers conferred upon them by section 76 of the Housing Act, 1966, and the Third Schedule thereto, as extended by section 10 of the Local Government (No. 2) Act, 1966 as substituted by section 86 of the Housing Act, 1966 as amended by section 6 and the Second Schedule to the Roads Act, 1993 and as amended by the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, have made an order titled as above which will be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála for confirmation. If confirmed, the order will authorise the local authority to acquire compulsorily the land in the Schedule hereto for the purposes of development and refurbishment works, including improved access at No.'s 3 & 4 Great George's Street, Waterford

Owners, lessees and occupiers of the land described in the Schedule will receive individual written notice.

SCHEDULE II

Land other than land consisting of a house or houses unfit for human habitation and not capable of being rendered fit for human habitation at reasonable expense.
The land included in the Schedule is situated in the functional area of Waterford City & County Council.

Plot Ref. No. Deposited at the Offices of the Local Authority	Area		Townland	Electoral District Division	Description	Owners or Reputed Owners	Lessees or Reputed Lessees	Occupiers
	Hectare	Acre						
101	0.071	0.1756	Trinity Without	Waterford Metropolitan Area	Town Core	Diocese of Waterford & Lismore	Waterford City & County Council	Waterford City & County Council

Sean McKeown, Chief Executive, City Hall, The Mall, Waterford.

Dated this 19th September, 2025.

