



Comhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

Local Enterprise Office

Business Advisor (Grade VI) – Ref:

52/2024

Closing Date for receipt of application:

Thursday 23rd January, 2025 at 12 noon sharp



W I C K L O W

Human Resources Department, Wicklow County Council

wccrecruitment@wicklowcoco.ie | (0404) 20159 | www.wicklow.ie



Comhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin

Wicklow County Council

County Wicklow is located in the province of Leinster, and has a population of 155,485, 9.2% growth persons as stated in the preliminary 2022 census figures on the CSO website <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2022/censusofpopulation2022-preliminaryresults/>

Wicklow shares its border with four other counties and has a total land area of 2,027 km². The topography of Wicklow is largely mountainous, with the Wicklow Mountains being the largest continuous upland region in Ireland. Wicklow is the 13th largest of the Republic of Ireland's 26 Counties and is the 14th largest Local Authority area in terms of population.

Wicklow County Council is the Local Government Authority for County Wicklow and is responsible for the delivery of the full range of services. Wicklow County Council seeks to enhance the county's attraction as a place in which to invest, work, and live, and takes the lead role in shaping the strategic vision of the county. It provides a diverse, multi-layered and evolving range of services to both citizens and visitors to County Wicklow, which include the provision of housing, planning, development, environmental, roads and traffic, leisure and community services. It also has an enhanced role in leading out economic and community development in the County. The Council works in partnership with other state, public and private bodies in the delivery of critical infrastructure and shared services.

Wicklow County Council has an elected body comprising of 32 elected members and employs a workforce in excess of 800 employees, currently covering 5 Municipal Districts – Bray, Greystones, Wicklow, Arklow and Baltinglass. Our employees work in a dynamic and progressive local authority which promotes training and development of our employees who are our most valuable resource.

The 2025 annual revenue budget for the local authority is approximately €168 million. The Council also continues to invest in the infrastructure of the county and through its Capital Investment Programme.

The day to day running of the Council is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and the Management Team

Contents

The Competition	4
Local Enterprise Office Permanent Business Advisor (Grade VI).....	4
The Position	4
Qualifications	4
Duties.....	5
Principal Conditions of Employment.....	6
Probation	6
Salary.....	7
Hours of Work.....	7
Travel	7
Garda Vetting.....	7
Health.....	7
Residence	7
Annual Leave.....	7
Retirement Age.....	7
Superannuation	8
Application Process.....	9
Application form	9
Competencies for the post	9
Selection Process.....	10
Short-Listing	11
Interview Stage	11
Pre-Employment Checks	12
Panel	12
Terms and Conditions	12
Frequently Asked Questions	14



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Wicklow County Council

The Competition

Local Enterprise Office Permanent Business Advisor (Grade VI)

The Position

The Council is seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant experience for the position of permanent Business Advisor (Grade VI).

Qualifications

1 Character

Candidates shall be of good character.

2 Health

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

3 Education, Training, Experience, etc.

Each candidate must have, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms:

- Strong organisational and project management skills and experience and proven ability to manage a range of multiple projects and competing priorities at one time to meet demanding and tight deadlines is essential.
- Have the ability to influence collaborate and connect across internal and external stakeholders to the benefit of clients is essential.
- Financial literacy skills to undertake evaluation and assessment of project proposals for financial assistance and other supports, including carrying out due diligence to qualify the funding requests.
- Excellent communications and business report writing skills with demonstrated evidence of robust IT literacy (i.e. MS Office skills including Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint) is essential.
- Excellent research capability, analytical skills, writing and presentation skills.
- Knowledge, understanding and comprehension of the key business growth sectors and client categories in which the LEO's operate and an ability to translate this knowledge and understanding into developing supports and initiatives to achieve effective business impacts and results.
- Understanding of compliance and governance requirements as they relate to funding through the LEO.

- Candidates must hold a clean, current Class B Driving Licence and will be required to have access to his/her own car.

Education, Training, Experience, etc

Each candidate must, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms:

(a) Hold a professional qualification in Business and/or Financial Management (level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications) or an equivalent professional Business qualification.

(b) Have a strong understanding of the needs of small and micro businesses and the role of the Local Enterprise Office in particular the current challenges facing small businesses in relation to amongst others sustainability, innovation and export.

(c) Have minimum 12 months' experience in a client facing Enterprise Development role assessing the needs of micro-enterprises and delivering appropriate supports.

In the event that an offer of employment is made, the candidate will be required to submit all relevant Educational Qualifications in order to meet the requirements above.

Duties

The LEO Business Advisor will perform such duties as may be assigned from time to time which will involve the facilitation, implementation and promotion of the policies and objectives of the particular City/County Council for the advancement of the Local Enterprise Office.

The Business Advisor will report to the Head of the Local Enterprise Office, or any other officer as designated by the Chief Executive.

Such duties include inter alia:

- Develop and lead initiatives designed to support microenterprises increase performance and competitiveness including programmes such as Digital Transformation and Green which will help to build resilience.
- Engage the portfolio companies who are growing, to support them to reach their potential and increase market share by maximising uptake of the full range of LEO supports.
- Develop and identify initiatives that will help LEO clients with their exporting activities and work in collaboration to ensure clients are directed and can have access to the most appropriate support as it pertains to their stage of export.
- Encourage and support LEO clients to invest in R&D and begin a process of incorporating RD&I in the commercial activities.
- Such other duties as the Head of the Local Enterprise Office may assign to the role so as to promote the objectives of the office.
- Meeting with clients and providing one to one business advice, including advising grant and loan applicants, assessing grant applications and presenting applications to the evaluation committee on behalf of the client.
- Developing and managing a range of business related training and mentoring programmes and events.
- Managing projects from early stage to delivery, including managing procurement processes and contract management, communicating LEO programmes and activities, and promoting an enterprise culture though the use of social media and other communication tools.

- Responding to First Stop Shop enquiries and assessing client's business needs and recommending relevant supports to grow their business.
- Staff management and supervision.
- Payment administration and budget monitoring and reporting.
- Reporting to senior management and providing regular reports and updates on metrics and key indicators while ensuring that work conforms to procedures and standards.
- Providing administrative assistance to the Evaluations and Approvals Committee or other groups or networks supported by the LEO.
- Proactively making suggestions to address challenges and improve operational efficiency and customer service.
- Learning new IT systems and tools including social media.
- Learning about different sectors, attending training courses and updating skills as required.
- Develop and lead initiatives designed to support microenterprises increase performance and competitiveness including programmes such as Digital Transformation and Green which will help to build resilience.
- Engage the portfolio companies who are growing, to support them to reach their potential and increase market share by maximising uptake of the full range of LEO supports.
- Develop and identify initiatives that will help LEO clients with their exporting activities and work in collaboration to ensure clients are directed and can have access to the most appropriate support as it pertains to their stage of export.
- Encourage and support LEO clients to invest in R&D and begin a process of incorporating RD&I in the commercial activities.
- Such other duties as the Head of the Local Enterprise Office may assign to the role so as to promote the objectives of the office.

Principal Conditions of Employment

A panel may be formed from which future temporary positions may be filled. The position will be fulltime, Permanent and pensionable.

Probation

Where persons who are not already permanent officers of a Local Authority are appointed, the following provisions shall apply;

- (a) there shall be a period after such appointments take effect, during which such persons shall hold office on probation;
- (b) such period shall be six this period may be extended at the Chief Executive discretion;
- (c) such persons shall cease to hold such office at the end of the period of probation, unless during such period, the Chief Executive has certified that the service of such persons is satisfactory.

Salary: €55,641.00 – €67,977.00 per annum

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time in line with national policy. The holder of the office shall pay to the local authority any fees or other monies (other than his/her inclusive salary) payable to and received by him/her by virtue of his/her office or in respect of services which he/she is required by or under any enactment to perform. Starting pay shall be determined in accordance with appropriate Departmental Circular letters. New Entrants will be placed on the minimum of salary scale.

Hours of Work

The person appointed will be required to work a 35 hour per week Monday to Friday which equates to a 7 hour to be accounted for with attendance hours of 9.00 a.m. to 5.00p.m. with one hour lunch between 1.00p.m. and 2.00p.m. Evening and/or weekend work may be required as part of the role.

Travel

The holder of the office will be required to hold a valid Irish/EU full driving licence for class B vehicles or a licence acceptable to NDLS for exchange, free from endorsement and disqualification. They must be a competent driver and shall drive a motor car in the course of his/her duties and for this purpose, provide and maintain a car to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. The Local Authority must be indemnified on their insurance.

Garda Vetting

Candidates may be subject to Garda Vetting. Appointment(s) will be considered having regard to receipt of satisfactory Garda Vetting, particularly to determine suitability to work with children/vulnerable adults.

Health

For the purposes of satisfying the requirements as to health it will be necessary for successful candidates, before they are appointed, to undergo at their expense a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the local authority. On taking up appointment the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to candidates.

Residence

Holders of the office shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement will be 30 days per annum exclusive of public holidays and Good Friday.

Retirement Age

There is no mandatory retirement age for new entrants to the Public Service as defined in the Public Services Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.

Persons who are NOT new entrants to the Public Service as defined in the Public Services Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004 and the Public

Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act 2018, are subject to a compulsory retirement age of 70 years.

With effect from 1st January 2013, persons who are pensionable under the terms of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme will have a minimum retirement age of 66 years initially rising in line with the State Pension age changes. Members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme have a compulsory retirement age of 70 years.

Superannuation

Persons who become pensionable public servants on or after 1st January 2013 will become members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and, as such, will be required to pay contributions of 3% of pensionable remuneration and 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children).

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of the net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children).

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 5% of their pensionable remuneration.

All persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority will be required in respect of the Local Government (Spouses and Children's Contributory Pension) Scheme, to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

Application Process

Application form

Application forms are available on our website www.wicklow.ie

Completed applications forms must be submitted to wccrecruitment@wicklowcoco.ie or by post to Recruitment, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town, on or before the closing date of **Thursday 23rd January 2025 at 12 noon sharp**. Late applications or any amendments to applications will not be accepted.

Competencies for the post

Key Competencies for the post include the following and candidates will be expected to **demonstrate sufficient evidence within their application form** of competence under each of these.

Please provide an example, giving consideration to the role and essential requirements outlined in the Candidate Information Booklet. **Responses should not exceed 600 words**. Please aim to provide your best evidence in this section, as the below information may be used for shortlisting and/or interview purposes.

Key Competencies for the post of Business Advisor are set out as follows:

	MANAGEMENT & CHANGE
Strategic Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to be effective in translating the mission and the vision into operational plans and outputs. • Demonstrates innovation and creativity in securing successful strategic outcomes. • Demonstrates flexibility and an openness to change.
Networking & Representing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to develop and maintain positive and beneficial relationships with relevant interests. • Demonstrates the ability to sustain a positive image and profile of the local authority.
	DELIVERING RESULTS
Problem Solving and Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to act decisively and make timely, informed and effective decisions.
Operational Planning:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to contribute to operational plans and develop team plans in line with priorities and actions for their area of operation, having regard to corporate goals, operational objectives and available resources. • Demonstrates the ability to establish high quality service and customer care standards.
Communicating Effectively:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to recognise the value of and requirement to communicate effectively. • Demonstrates effective verbal and written communication skills

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates good interpersonal skills.
	PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Personal Motivation, Initiative and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is enthusiastic about the role and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles. • Does more than is required or expected, anticipating the situations and acting to pre-empt problems. • Creates new opportunities. • Have strong business acumen with experience that demonstrates an understanding of the small and micro business environment in Ireland and the needs and requirements of owner-managers of small businesses. • Have a detailed knowledge of the LEO supports, services and processes and the range of public and private supports available to small enterprise in Ireland. • Have sound commercial awareness and strong business planning, evaluation & research skills • Be familiar with the preparation of accounts and interpretation of financial statements. • Have strong project management skills. • Have strong interpersonal, report writing, presentation and communication skills
Resilience and Personal Wellbeing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates appropriate and positive self-confidence. • Operates effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace.
	KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE/LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Knowledge & Understanding of the Role/Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the role of Local Enterprise Office in the context of wider local authority service deliver. • Demonstrates knowledge & understanding of the structure and functions of local government. • Demonstrates knowledge of current local government issues, future trends and strategic direction of local government.

Selection Process

Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or on behalf of the local authority. Panels may be formed on the basis of such interviews.

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application;
- Preliminary interview, which may also include a presentation;
- Completion of an online questionnaire;
- Competitive interview, which may also include a presentation;
- Work sample/role play/media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

** Please note that Wicklow County Council reserves the right to hold any part of the selection process by way of remote/video-call platform or other appropriate methodology.*

Before proceeding with this phase of the selection process you should satisfy yourself that you meet the minimum qualification criteria for the post as set out above. This will prevent you from incurring unnecessary expense in progressing in the competition.

Short-Listing

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to shortlist applications. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the application forms or a shortlisting interview.

The information you supply in the application form will play a central part of the shortlisting process. Wicklow County Council's decision to include you on the shortlist of candidates going forward to the next stage of the process may be determined based on this information.

Where, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition and the standard of knowledge, training or experience in general of such persons, Wicklow County Council considers that it would be reasonable not to admit all the persons to the competition, Wicklow County Council may admit to the competition only persons who appear likely to it to attain in the competition a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment.

You will be contacted in relation to any interview dates and times. You may also be contacted in relation to the requirement to complete an online questionnaire should this be included in the selection process. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you must produce photographic identification when registering your attendance at the Human Resources Department.

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to shortlist candidates in the manner it deems most appropriate. **Shortlisting may be on the basis of information supplied on the application form and the likely number of vacancies to be filled. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.** The candidates shortlisted will be invited to attend for interview. **Interviews may be held in person or by online process through Microsoft Teams.** The Council will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates in attending for interview.

Interview Stage

The interview is your opportunity to give evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience and the Local Authority's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role as advertised.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that Wicklow County Council is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the Regulations or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is

important therefore for you to note, the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense, as Wicklow County Council will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred.

Wicklow County Council may at its discretion require candidates to attend a preliminary interview in which case admission to the competitive interview would be conditional on candidates reaching such a standard as Wicklow County Council considered appropriate in the preliminary interview.

Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by Wicklow County Council. The Board(s) will assess the merits of candidates (except insofar as they are assessed otherwise) in respect of matters referred to in the prescribed Qualifications and any other relevant matters. Only candidates who reach such a standard as Wicklow County Council considers satisfactory in the competitive interview shall be considered for selection and placed on a panel. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for interview.

Pre-Employment Checks

Before contracts of employment are entered into, various checks are undertaken. These include medicals, references and may include Garda Vetting. The Council will invite those successful candidates who accept an offer to fill a vacancy to attend a medical assessment. References for successful candidates will also be checked and Garda Vetting, if necessary, will be completed at this point.

Panel

Candidates whose names are on a Panel and who satisfy the local authority that they possess the qualifications declared for the office and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may, within the life of the Panel, be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise.

The life of the Panel will be for one year from the date it is formed, it may be extended at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

Terms and Conditions

Examples of some of the current Employee Benefits include:

- The Council's Blended Working Policy
- A range of Family Friendly Policies
- A staff Health Screening Programme
- Availability of a Cycle to Work Scheme
- A range of Learning and Developmental Opportunities
- Paid Maternity and Paternity Leave
- Automatically entered into a pension scheme

- Access to the services provided under Wicklow County Council's Employee Assistance Programme

Wicklow County Council will require the person to whom appointment is offered to take up the appointment within a period of not more than **one month** and if the person fails to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as Wicklow County Council in its absolute discretion may determine, Wicklow County Council will not appoint him/her.

Employment may be terminated by either side by giving at least one calendar months' notice. In the event that employment is terminated prior to the completion of any particular contract, the appointee shall co-operate with the Council in ensuring that all files/records are up-to-date and present in an acceptable manner.

It should be noted that the terms of Paragraph 13 of Circular Letter EL 02/09 - Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement may need to be considered in some instances. It is a condition of this scheme as set out in the Department of Finance Circular 12/2009 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector.

Furthermore, persons who have availed of a Redundancy Payment Scheme should know that is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the Scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment. Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of either of the above schemes.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SHORTLIST CANDIDATES IN THE MANNER IT DEEMS MOST APPROPRIATE.

Wicklow County Council will send an acknowledgement of your application in the weeks after the closing date of the competition. If you do not receive any confirmation, please contact wccrecruitment@wicklowcoco.ie

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Who can I contact if I have a query in relation the Recruitment Campaign?*

If you are unclear in relation to any aspect of the recruitment and selection process, please read the briefing document and frequently asked questions carefully before contacting Wicklow County Council's Human Resources Department. If you still need to contact the Human Resources Department please send your query via email in the first instance to wccrecruitment@wicklowcoco.ie.

2. *What happens if I cannot attend a particular stage of the competition?*

The onus is on you to attend for all stages of the recruitment competition at the locations, dates and times notified. Wicklow County Council cannot change dates and times of any particular stage of the process.

3. *I have submitted my CV. What happens next?*

Wicklow County Council will carry out an eligibility check on all CV's to ensure that they meet the minimum qualifications for the post. You do not need to contact the HR Department. If you do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements for the post based on the information submitted on your application form, you will not be invited to interview.

Depending on the number of candidates remaining at this stage of the competition it may be necessary to hold a shortlisting process. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the application forms or a shortlisting interview/assessment. You will be contacted by email in relation to any interview dates and times. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you must produce photographic identification when registering your attendance at the Human Resources Department.

4. *What happens on completion of the shortlisting process?*

Wicklow County Council will contact all applicants advising them of the results of the shortlisting process. If you have been successful at this stage you will be invited for a final interview.

5. *What happens after undertaking the final interview?*

If you qualify at final interview stage you will be placed on a panel and ranked in order of merit. Vacancies may be filled from this panel as they arise and in order of merit. Please note that being placed on a panel is not a guarantee that you will be appointed to the position.

6. *How will Wicklow County Council communicate with me throughout the Recruitment and Selection Campaign?*

Wicklow County Council will contact you when necessary at each stage of the competition by email. It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address in the course of this recruitment campaign, as any email will be sent to the email address originally supplied with your application form. It is important to note that the email address you provide when submitting your application form must be one that you can access at all times.

The onus is on the applicant to inform the Human Resources Department of any change in postal address, email address or mobile telephone number throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing wccrecruitment@wicklowcoco.ie

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that s/he is in receipt of all communication from Wicklow County Council. Wicklow County Council accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.

www.wicklow.ie



wccrecruitment@wicklowcoco.ie



@wicklowcoco



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