

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY BUILDINGS, WICKLOW ON MONDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2018, COMMENCING 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

COUNCILLOR P. VANCE, CATHAOIRLEACH, COUNCILLORS T. ANNESLEY, J. BEHAN, V. BLAKE, S. BOURKE T. CULLEN, S. CULLEN, G. DUNNE, P. FITZGERALD, T. FORTUNE, C. FOX, M. KAVANAGH, P. KENNEDY, M. MCDONALD, G. MCLOUGHLIN, D. MITCHELL, M. MURPHY, D. NOLAN, O.O'BRIEN, D. O'BRIEN, G. O'NEILL, J. RUTTLE, J. RYAN, J. SNELL, B. THORNHILL, E. TIMMINS, G. WALSH AND J. WHITMORE.

APOLOGIES:

COUNCILLORS P. DORAN, N LAWLESS, S. MATTHEWS AND I. WINTERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

**MR. F. CURRAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
MR. T. MURPHY, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MR. J. LANE, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
MS. L. GALLAGHER, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR
MS. C. FLOOD, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MS. A. ROBERTS, ASSISTANT STAFF OFFICER
MR. G. DUFFY, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE**

At the outset of the meeting the Cathaoirleach advised the Members that proceedings were being covered by RTE and that there was a photographer from the National Paper present. This was noted and agreed.

ITEM 1

Presidential Election, 26th October, 2018:

That Wicklow County Council hereby resolves to nominate one named person to be a candidate at the above-mentioned election to the Office of President, in accordance with the Presidential Elections Act, 1993, from the following 2 candidates:-

Proposed by Cllr. C. Fox, seconded by Cllr. J. Ruttle:-

Name: Gavin Duffy

Address: Kilsharvan, Bellewstown, Co. Meath.

Occupation: Training and Development Advisor

(Copy of consent to the proposed nomination by Wicklow County Council and confirmation of eligibility for election to the Office of President is enclosed from Mr. Duffy)

Proposed by Cllr. J. Behan, seconded by Cllr. J. Snell:-

Name: Joan Freeman

Address: 37 Weston Drive, Weston Park, Lucan, Dublin 20

Occupation: Senator

(Copy of consent to the proposed nomination by Wicklow County Council and confirmation of eligibility for election to the Office of President is enclosed from Senator Freeman)

The Cathaoirleach advised that at meeting held on Monday the 3rd of September, 2018 the elected members had agreed to nominate one person as a candidate in the forthcoming Presidential election and that two nominations had been received with due notice given with the Agenda circulated on Wednesday last in accordance with Section 16 of the Presidential Act, 1993.

Referring to the agenda he advised that two nominations had been received.

Mr. Gavin Duffy, proposed by Cllr. C. Fox and seconded by Cllr. J. Ruttle and Senator Joan Freeman, proposed by Cllr. J. Behan and seconded by Cllr. J. Snell.

He welcomed Mr. Gavin Duffy to the chamber and then invited both Cllr. C. Fox and Cllr. J. Behan to present on their respective nominees.

Cllr. C. Fox advised that he felt that there should be a wide choice on the ballot paper in as far as possible for people to decide on the next President and urged the elected members present to use their vote and vote for either one or the other candidate. He proposed Mr. Gavin Duffy on foot of the presentation made by him to the elected members the previous week. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. J. Ruttle.

Cllr. J. Behan in agreeing with the point made that the members exercise their constitutional right to nominate a candidate proposed Senator Joan Freeman. He referred to the presentation made by Senator Freeman the previous week and her background in establishing Pieta House. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. J. Snell.

The Cathaoirleach advised that news was reporting on Twitter that Senator Joan Freeman having secured the backing of Galway City Council as a nominated candidate for the Presidential Elections would be withdrawing from selection at Wicklow County Council. He adjourned the meeting for ten minutes with the consent of the elected members to verify the withdrawal with Senator Freeman.

The meeting resumed at 7.30 p.m.

The Cathaoirleach advised that confirmation had been received from a Spokesperson for Senator Freeman that the Senator has secured four nominations for various Local Authorities and in the interest of democracy she was withdrawing from Wicklow County Council. She asked that her deepest thanks be conveyed to the Members for their offer of support and for the proposer and seconder of her nomination but that she was officially withdrawing from the selection process so as to allow the nomination of another candidate.

The Cathaoirleach put it to the floor that there was one nomination, Mr. Gavin Duffy, proposed by Cllr. C. Fox and seconded by Cllr. J. Snell and asked if there was any dissent. As there was no dissent to the proposal the Council resolved that Mr. Gavin Duffy be the nominated one named person by Wicklow County Council to be a candidate at the Presidential Election on the 26th of October, 2018 to the Office of President.

The Meetings Administrator advised that Mr. Gavin Duffy had confirmed in writing his consent to the nomination by Wicklow County Council and had confirmed his eligibility for election to the Office of President which was circulated to the Members with the Agenda.

The Cathaoirleach congratulated Mr. Gavin Duffy on his nomination and invited him to address the meeting. Mr. Duffy thanked the elected members for their nomination advising that it was a very special night for him and his family and referred to the insight he had gained in the process to the great work carried out by County Councillors and the Local Authorities around the country. He acknowledged the withdrawal of Senator Freeman from the nomination process of Wicklow County Council and referred to the commitment they had made in that whichever person received the four nominations first would leave the field open to democracy. He acknowledged Wicklow County Council's endorsement and the responsibility going forward to make the Council proud that they had nominated a person worthy of being on the ballot paper. He concluded by again thanking the elected members.

ITEM 2

Notices of Motion

1. Notice of motion in the names of Cllr. Christopher Fox and Cllr. Jim Ruttle (12th March 2018).

That this Council would consider during extreme weather events designating certain roads as "Local Access Only". Inappropriate parking, car journeys and car abandonment during the recent snowfall severely impacted the council clearing our road network and in some cases delayed residents getting out of their homes by a number of days. The designation of Local Access Only should be done by way of bye-law if necessary'.

Response: The practicalities of introducing a scheme permitting 'Local Access Only' on certain public roads would need careful consideration. Issues such as the legal status of such designation of local roads, erection/removal of the signs and enforcement would need to be considered. The matter will be discussed at the next meeting of Municipal District Engineers. It would be helpful if members would identify areas of particular concern and bring them to the attention of their local area office or the Transportation and Roads Directorate.

Cllr. C. Fox referred to 'snow tourists' who get into difficulties driving their cars in the snow which end up getting stuck and abandoned, and the difficulties that this causes for residents in the area. He referred in particular to roads such as the Red Lane, up as far as the Sally Gap and also the Kilmacanogue to Roundwood Road. He referred to instances where the emergency rescue services are called out. He proposed that a bye-law be put in place so that the District Engineer would have the power to place a sign at a location which would say '*due to weather conditions this road is restricted to local access only.*' This motion was seconded by Cllr. J. Ruttle and agreed by the elected members to refer the motion for discussion at the next District Engineers meeting.

2. Notice of motion in the name of Cllr. Edward Timmins (10th May 2018).

That all betting advertising, online betting websites and over the phone betting come with a warning of the dangers of gambling, that it is addictive and may lead to serious financial difficulties. In addition that monthly statements be sent to all people who hold betting accounts. That this be communicated to the relevant minister".

Following a brief discussion on the matter it was agreed to forward the motion to the Minister of State at the Department of Equality and Justice for consideration.

3. Notice of motion in the names of Bray Municipal District Councillors (22nd May 2018).

"That Bray Municipal District condemns the decision by Wicklow County Council to exclude the Sa Bhaile organisation from providing future support for homeless people in North Wicklow having encouraged them to extend their remit to include North Wicklow in recent years. That the Director of Housing meet with Sa Bhaile and that the Members call on Wicklow County Council to reconsider this matter urgently".

Cllr. J. Behan advised that the organisation had ceased existence since the end of August and wanted it noted that it was a fantastic voluntary organisation which helped the homeless before the local authority got involved in this area. He complimented the serviced that was given but that the funding had ceased despite the strong feeling of the Elected Members of the Bray MD that something should be done to secure funding so that the service could be continued.

4. Notice of motion in the name of Cllr. J. Behan (14th May 2018).

"That this Council joins with colleagues around the country in demanding that the Government reverse its decision to take Versatis Pain Relief patches from over 25,000 Irish citizens suffering from chronic pain."

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Behan, seconded by Cllr. V. Blake it was agreed that the motion be forwarded to the Minister for Health for consideration.

5. Notice of motion in the name of Arklow Municipal District Councillors (3rd July 2018).
“That this Council discuss the urgent need for a new road infrastructure in Arklow Town”.

Response: A Local Area Transport Plan will be considered subject to Funding and availability of NTA.

Elected members from the Arklow MD made the following points:-

- The town, with a population of some 14,000 is choked with traffic
- There are only two options at certain times of the day, to either use the bypass or sit in traffic for some 20 minutes.
- It is extremely difficult for motorists to get through the town as there is only one bridge and the amount of heavy goods vehicles driving through the town has increased because of extra business at Roadstone.
- Traffic management plan is required urgently
- It is quicker to go to Gorey and get parking that shop in Arklow because of traffic.

The Chief Executive advised that it is proposed to make an application through the Urban Regeneration Fund in this matter and if the application is not successful he suggested that the traffic management plan be prepared.

6. Notice of motion in the names of the Baltinglass Municipal District Elected Members: Councillors T. Cullen, P. Doran, E. Timmins, J. Ruttle, G. O Neill and . Blake. (23rd July 2018).

“That Wicklow County Council writes to the TII in order to arrange a meeting between the TII and Wicklow County Council and the Delegation would consist of the Elected Members of Baltinglass Municipal District as selected by that District in order to discuss their numerous concerns arising from the indefinite suspension of the N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Cross Road Improvement Scheme. The Elected Members have also requested that relevant members of the Executive also be in attendance at such meeting”.

Response: Wicklow County Council will write to the TII to request a meeting between the TII and Wicklow County Council and Delegation of the Elected Members of Baltinglass Municipal District.

Elected members from the Baltinglass Municipal District made the following points:-

- This 31 km stretch from Hollywood to Tallaght has been designed and approved some 12 years ago and the TII advised that it will not be looked at again until 2027
- A large number of fatalities have occurred on this stretch of roadway over a period of 40 years and there are a number of accidents per week. It is also a danger for farmers and landowners living on it.
- The matter has been discussed many times at Municipal District level, and about a month or two ago the Minister visited Blessington and none of the elected members were aware.
- Call to keep the matter on the agenda, it is a road that has had no serious improvement in many years, although some bends at Hollywood have been taken off, which is welcome.
- The M7 has been upgraded from Naas back to the turn off to the N9 at ten miles south of Naas and it has been brought up to 3 lanes. There is real traffic chaos on the M7 and more and more traffic using the N81 to avoid the M7.

- A sub committee has been formed at MD level and they have met to try and move the matter forward.
- Council urged to keep it on the Agenda.

On the proposal of Cllr. J. O Neill, seconded by Cllr. E. Timmins the motion was agreed.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

CLLR. PAT VANCE
CATHOAIRLEACH
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

MS. LORRAINE GALLAGHER
**SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER/
MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR**

Date _____