



**Wicklow County Council
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th November 2019

Present: Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Sylvester Bourke
Cllr. Tommy Annesley
Cllr. Pat Kennedy
Cllr. Peir Leonard
Cllr. Miriam Murphy

Officials Present: Mr. Helena Dennehy, Senior Executive Officer
Mr. John Bowes, District Engineer
Ms. Theresa O'Brien Senior Executive Officer (Cemetery)
Mr. Merlin Ovington, Administrative Officer (Cemetery)
Ms. Esther Breslin, Staff Officer (Derelict Sites)
Ms. Richella Wood, Staff Officer (Age Friendly Town)
Ms. Sinéad Boddy, Assistant Staff Officer

Item 1 : Vote of Sympathy:

The Members expressed votes of sympathy to the families of the following, who recently passed away:

Monica Jameson, Margaret Elliot, Eileen Wadden, John McDonagh, Kevin O'Reilly, Mary Kent, Carmel Rowe, Denis Bulman, Bridie Burke, Nellie Byrne, Peter Wolohan, Danny Bermingham, Ben Cranny, Audrey Larkin, Mairead Brewster, Phyllis Woodbyrne, Teresa Lambert, Pat Bracken, Harold Leeson, Nicholas Cummins, Paddy Dowling, Elizabeth Gibbs, Vera Webster.

A minutes silence was observed.

Item 2: Confirmation of Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Ordinary Meeting held on the 09th October 2019.

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Ordinary Meeting held on the 09th October 2019 were proposed by Cllr. Bourke and seconded by Cllr. Kennedy.

Item 3: Matters Arising

Cllr. Annesley presented the medals and certificates for Arklow, Aughrim and Knockananna, collected at the National Tidy Towns awards ceremony in Blackrock, Co. Louth. Co Wicklow won 2 gold medals and 3 silver medals overall. It was a great achievement for all the hard work over the last year and it is positive to see everyone working together. Cllr Fitzgerald commended all involved.

Cllr Murphy advised that a review of the footpaths in the Ferrybank, Parnell Tce. and Duckpond area had been carried out by John Bowes and Rob Mulhall.

Item 4: To discuss the launch of Arklow Age Friendly Town.

Richella Wood, Age Friendly Officer, circulated the Arklow Town Plan for implementation of age friendly initiatives and how they were developed. Arklow was chosen two years ago to be the first Age Friendly town in Co. Wicklow. Following on from the initial survey conducted in the town, the following actions have been completed. These include six designated parking spaces in the town for those over 55 years, 41 local businesses have signed up to being Age Friendly with stickers on the windows identifying the premises. Other actions that were identified and need to be started are - a care and repair programme, new bus routes and a befriending service would be a welcome addition.

Cllr Fitzgerald thanked Richella Wood for the work involved in moving this project along and asked that the issues highlighted in the walk-ability report be considered when allocating the discretionary funding for 2020. Cllr Murphy asked if there was a budget for the initiative and Richella Wood replied that there is an overall county budget as successful projects are to be implemented throughout the county. Cllr Annesley said that there is no respect shown to the elderly when contractors working in the town need to block the footpaths for works – this is something that could be improved. Cllr Leonard asked that toilet facilities be considered for the beach area. Cllr Bourke congratulated Richella Wood on the projects to date and enquired if bus links would be improved. Richella Wood confirmed that this will be discussed in the future.

Item 5: To discuss the interment of ashes at St Gabriel's Cemetery.

Theresa O'Brien referred to the meeting in Redcross earlier this year and the survey conducted in the town in relation to the preferred interment options for residents from the area. The survey returned 84 replies with 59 opting for cremation – 54 of those indicated a preferred option for ashes – the columbarium wall getting the 3rd highest number of first preferences. Discussion on the cost of installing a columbarium wall followed and Merlin Ovington AO, asked if the members wished to proceed with the

plans for St Gabriel's. Cllr Leonard said that the move toward cremation from the industry must be considered and that a columbarium wall could be a viable option for extending the capacity of St Gabriel's. The members discussed the costs of installation and the cost to individuals/families per niche and the general consensus is that it is a viable option. Theresa O'Brien SEO agreed to come back to the members with details of the full costs for the proposed columbarium wall in Bray MD early next year. The estimated cost per niche will be €1200 which will include all finishing and inscription and this is based on similar type costs currently charged in other cemeteries. These costs would need to be finalised at a later date.

Item 6: To receive a presentation on Derelict Sites in Arklow MD

Esther Breslin SO, gave a report on the current derelict sites register for Co Wicklow. A full description from the legislation of what constitutes a derelict site was relayed. There are currently 4 sites on the Wicklow County register with none in AMD. 2 sites were removed from the register for AMD in 2019. A building in Arklow town was painted by the Tidy Towns group with a donation from the property owner. Cllr Murphy stated that this was only a facelift and the structure has not been improved. Esther Breslin SO indicated that a complaint form can be submitted and that this is the initial step of the process for placing a site on the register. Cllr Leonard asked if this could be done by an individual and Esther Breslin SO replied that individuals or groups could submit the complaint form. Cllr Annesley said that the Tidy Towns groups were working against themselves but would make no apology for this as the improvements around the town were evident. The members identified sites in the town that should be considered for entry/re-entry on the register and Esther Breslin SO re-iterated that a complaint form must be submitted. Cllr Kennedy asked how long the complaint process was. Esther Breslin SO confirmed that the owner receives notice and the site is revisited after 12 months and a determination is made at that point whether or not the site is placed on the register. Cllr Leonard stated that the legislation is not worth the paper it's written on. Cllr Annesley said that 104 letters had issued prior to 2014. Cllr Leonard asked if an audit of properties had taken place and Helena Dennehy SEO confirmed that this had been discussed at a Town Team meeting and they had considered sending letters to the property owners.

The differences between the vacant sites and derelict sites legislation, was discussed.

Item 7 : To consider the adoption of the 2020 Draft Budgetary Plan for Arklow MD.

The draft budgetary plan was considered and adopted by all. Helena Dennehy SEO noted same and reminded all present that this was subject to adoption at plenary level.

Item 8: To receive a report from John Bowes, District Engineer on the following works -

Roads Programme 2019

Works are complete under the 2019 Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations

DTTAS Restoration Improvement Programme 2019

Road Strengthening works at 7 locations were completed in June 2019.

DTTAS Restoration Maintenance Programme 2019

Surface dressing works at 7 locations were completed in July 2019.

Discretionary Projects

9 projects (plus 1 added) were agreed and each of the projects is at varying stages of progression.

Footpaths/IPB Remedial Works

8 project locations were agreed plus 2 added and all works are now substantially complete.

Low cost Safety Schemes

There are 3 pedestrian crossing schemes approved under the DTTAS low cost safety scheme 2019. The schemes are located as follows:

- Emoclew Road – Civil works complete and lights are installed awaiting connection.
- Redcross – due to commence next week.
- Avoca – Civil works to be completed this week.

CIS and LIS Road Works

2 LIS applications were shortlisted in 2019 – Kilqueeney and Killballyowen – all surfacing works have been completed.

1 CIS application was received in 2019 – Killacoran.

2 CIS applications have been received for 2020 and 2021 schemes.

Cllr Bourke thanked John Bowes DE for works carried out throughout the year. He also asked if the DE would consider further hedge cutting around J20 and Scratenagh area. John Bowes DE acknowledged that complaints about this area had come in the last few days and that the crews were concentrating on other areas and did not consider the growth as particularly dangerous but was overgrown – it is a long stretch and does fall to AMD to cut it back.

Item 9 – To discuss possible projects for remaining Town Twinning funding.

Cllr Bourke asked that the members consider establishing an exchange with German students next year and that the MD could initiate this on behalf of the schools. It was agreed to look at this in January 2020.

Cllr Leonard expressed an interest in establishing a twinning with a Scandinavian town in the future – once the harbour works are complete.

A funding submission from Arklow Town Twinning will be considered at the December meeting.

Item 10 – Christmas Parking Arrangements.

Members agreed to the proposed parking arrangements. Parking section to be notified.

Item 11 – To discuss issues with Public Lighting in Arklow.

The members discussed the delays in getting repairs to public lights in the district. They agreed that it has never been this bad before and acknowledged that WCC staff are doing all they can to move things along. The issues with lighting on the Wexford Road were discussed Cllr Fitzgerald asked the DE to contact Declan O'Brien about getting outstanding works on new installations started and repairs made to faulty lights. Helena Dennehy SEO said that the issue was with Airtricity and ESB Networks and she would follow up on this.

Item 12 – Notices of Motions

(a) In the name of Cllr. Peir Leonard

“That the Council give permission for the green space adjacent to Harbour Court, Tinahask, Abbeyville and Harbour Road be developed as a community garden to support local biodiversity, a sustainable food resource and a space for inclusive community interaction, mental health and wellbeing.” (received 12th September 2019)

Cllr Leonard outlined her vision for the space and conformed that funding has been sought under the LA21 grants. Cllr Leonard proposed that all adjoining residents be approached and encourage them to support the project. It is intended that the space will be owned by all and will be self-sustaining.

Cllr Fitzgerald said that plans were previously proposed for this site and queried the ownership. John Bowes DE had contacted the registered owners and CJ Louth Solicitors who both verbally confirmed that WCC were the owner and the transfer was to be updated with the PRA.

Cllr Kennedy asked what size the plot was and Cllr Leonard confirmed that it was approx. 2 acres.

John Bowes DE confirmed that the transfer of the land was subject to the condition that land would be leased to the bowling club.

Cllr Bourke said that this is bog land and may not be suitable for a garden. Cllr Leonard said that a soil specialist would be on board to advise, if necessary.

Cllr Fitzgerald proposed that it goes on the agenda for the January meeting. Helena Dennehy SEO recommended that the ownership be confirmed first.

(b) In the name of Cllr. Miriam Murphy

*“That Arklow Municipal District install bike stands in both public car parks to enable the public and visitors to have a secure area for their bikes.”
(received 12th September 2019)*

All members agreed to support this motion. Cllr Kennedy asked that Rathdrum be included in this motion. John Bowes DE said it would be considered under discretionary funding in 2020.

(c) In the name of Cllr. Miriam Murphy

“That Arklow Municipal District provides a speed ramp in the area of Woodland Green due to a high level of speeding cars entering this residential area.” (received 12th September 2019)

John Bowes DE confirmed that a survey of traffic speed in the area was completed. Cllr Fitzgerald seconded the motion. John Bowes said it would be considered under discretionary funding in 2020.

Item 13 – Correspondence

No correspondence received.

Item 14 – Any Other Business

Cllr Bourke asked if there were 2 benches available for Barndarrig – John Bowes confirmed that 2 were earmarked for Barndarrig.

Cllr Murphy said it was great to see Redcross and Aughrim qualifying for funding under the TVR scheme. Cllr Bourke said that Avoca and Barndarrig would be next.

Cllr Fitzgerald said that it was his intention that Mary Hickey be honoured for her achievements and asked that this be noted for discussion in January. He also mentioned Sean Crowley’s achievements in boxing, Arklow Rowing Club’s success in Hong Kong and asked that a letter from the members issues to the club. He also mentioned Liam Scale’s call up to the U-21 international soccer team.

Cllr Kennedy expressed his thanks to all involved in the BOI National Enterprising Town Awards judging day and wished the town well on awards night – 5th December 2019.

Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 11th December 2019.

Signed: Patrick Fitzgerald

Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District.

Signed: Claire Lawless

Ms. Claire Lawless, District Administrator, Arklow Municipal District