



**Wicklow County Council
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12th July 2017

Present: Cllr. Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Sylvester Bourke
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald
Cllr. Pat Kennedy
Cllr. Mary McDonald
Cllr. Miriam Murphy

Officials Present: Ms. Helena Dennehy, A/District Manager
Ms. Linda McDonald, District Administrator
Mr. Jack Kelly, District Engineer
Ms. Carmel Hecker, Clerical Officer

Rob Mulhall, Executive Engineer

Frank Cooney, Architect
Patricia McCaffrey, Cooney Architects

Item 1 - Vote of Sympathy:

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

John (Jock) Ward (Fernhill), John (Johnny) Wall, Maria Dowling, Matt Hudson, Margaret (Maggie) Fortune, Mary O'Leary, Statia Kavanagh, Pat Lambert, Teresa O'Toole (Parnell Park), Maura Cosgrove, Raymond Gaffney, Caroline Bardon, June Wynne, Betty Donnelly, Pat McCabe, Shaun Carey, Pat Lambert. Also remembered was Breda McCabe, whose son Patrick works with AMD.

A minutes silence was observed.

Item 2 – Confirmation of Minutes of the Arklow Municipal Annual District Meeting, held on the 14th June 2017.

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Annual Meeting held on the 14th June 2017 were proposed by Cllr Bourke and seconded by Cllr Fitzgerald.

Item 3 – Confirmation of Minutes from the Arklow Municipal District Ordinary Meeting, held on the 14th June 2017.

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Annual Meeting held on the 14th June 2017 were proposed by Cllr. McDonald and seconded by Cllr. Kennedy.

Item 4 – Matters Arising:

- Canon Martin Cosgrove, Moderator, Arklow Group of Parishes

Cllr Annesley spoke warmly and was highly complimentary about Canon Martin Cosgrove, Moderator, based in St. Mary and St Peter's, Church, Arklow, who is leaving to take up a new posting in Rathfarnham, Dublin, in September. Cllr. Annesley proposed that AMD should acknowledge his good work in the parish and to the community by making a presentation to Canon Cosgrove before departure and that it might be appropriate to do this at the Town Team Meeting.

Item 5 – Avondale House, Rathdrum – Masterplan Project:

Frank Cooney, Cooney Architects, made a presentation on the proposed refurbishment of Avondale House, Rathdrum. This company will be working on the project with teams from Coillte, Failte Ireland and others.

There was keen interest in the presentation, which should attract increased numbers of visitors and tourists to Rathdrum and surrounding parts of Co. Wicklow, once completed.

Cllr. Kennedy said that it would put Rathdrum 'on the map'. There are 2 families still around who lived on the estate. Public consultation would be required and roads would also need to be upgraded. Cllr. Kennedy asked if Coillte could do anything to upgrade the paths?

Planning application is likely to be made early next year.

Cllr. Fitzgerald said that public transport – trains and buses – would need to be improved. Arklow needs publicity, so it might be possible to promote Arklow alongside Avondale House.

Cllr. Bourke welcomed the project. He mentioned that the path from Corballis to Avondale needs to be improved.

Cllr. Bourke has ancestors who were on the Board of Guardians of Avondale House.

Cllr. McDonald asked if there was going to be local consultation. She said better road signage needed on M11 for Rathdrum and advertising for Avondale House. She commented that it will be a 'great asset' to the county and east.

Cllr. Murphy enquired if the 'Changing Places' programme would be included providing full range of hoist facilities/changing facilities. This issue needs huge consultation.

Co. Wicklow Tourism would like to be given presentation on the project, along with other beneficiaries, e.g. B&B, food/eating establishments etc.

Cllr. Kennedy pointed out that Glendalough can now be closed on Sundays (due to congestion/overcrowding). Gardai divert traffic away. Could that be used as an opportunity for Rathdrum/Avondale to benefit from the 'fallout'.

Frank Cooney said that Rathdrum will be the 'gateway village' for Avondale House, Arklow and South Wicklow, thereby creating big opportunities to enhance tourism and benefit from Glendalough traffic. Commitment needed from WCC regarding upgrading of roads.

Detailed public consultation needs to be brought in as an ongoing piece, both before and after Planning Permission has been sought (and approved).

Capital Funding will be available from Failte Ireland.

Mr. Cooney agreed to speak to Daithi de Foige about the pathway upgrade in Avondale. He also agreed to pursue improvements to bus and rail services.

He would need details of Wicklow Access Group and Cllr. Murphy has undertaken to liaise with Mr. Cooney in this regard.

Item 6 – Update on the Roads Programme for 2017 :

1. **Road Strengthening:** Works on L2126 at Kirikee, L2196 at Ballycoog and L2128 at Aghavannagh are now complete.
Works on R752 at Castlemacadam started on Monday (*i.e. 10th July*). Work on R772 Templeraíne scheduled to commence Monday 17th July. (Start date now put back to Monday 24th July).

The District Engineer advised that the contractor (Roadstone) was not ready to commence on Monday 10th July, as planned.

2. **Surfacing of the Main Street, Arklow:** Build out at the pedestrian crossing at the Post Office on Arklow Main Street has started. The surfacing of the Main Street is likely to start on Tuesday 8th August. Work to be done at night time.
Cllr. Fitzgerald asked that shopkeepers, businesses, Bus Eireann be informed of the work schedule. Bus Eireann will only go to Meadowvale.
Cllr. Kennedy complimented the work, stating that the workmanship is excellent.

3. **Works on footpaths:** at Parnell Park, Rathdrum and Ashleigh Close, Arklow, and the footpath from Rathdrum to Avondale are complete.

Work on the footpaths at Glenview, Thomastown, Redcross and Kirikee are scheduled to commence shortly.

Cllr. Fitzgerald enquired about the work to be done at Parnell Terrace and Mr. Kelly responded that trees need to be removed first before work can commence.

Cllr. Kennedy said it is a pleasure that the footpaths have been done in Parnell Park as nothing had been done in 40 years. Cllr. Kennedy complimented the work, stating that the workmanship is excellent.

4. **Community Involvement Schemes:** There is one scheme in the Arklow Municipal District in the current year. The applicant has paid his contribution and a code is to be opened.

5. **Surface Dressing:** Surface dressing for the Arklow Municipal District is now complete.

6. **Rathdrum Market Square:** The civil works are complete. The commissioning of a sculpture is progressing. The sculpture is likely to be in place by end of September. Cllr. Kennedy informed the meeting that the plinth in Market Square will be used, for the first time, for the Rathdrum Cartoon Festival taking place 28th, 29th and 30th July. East Coast FM will attend and there will be live music and bands performing.

Cllr. Bourke stated that nothing had happened in Rathdrum for a long time and that money needs to be spread more fairly. The new Local Government Act has allowed money to be spent more fairly.

Cllr. Annesley commended Mr. Kelly on the recent roadworks – it is a pleasure to drive on and for cyclists. He proposed that there should be cycle paths on the route to alert drivers and this was seconded by Cllr. Bourke.

Cllr. Murphy enquired about (public) transport, (for those with mobility issues) pointing out that it is difficult to access/board buses due to kerbing, as buses cannot pull in close to footpath. She asked that this be looked into with a view to making more space at stops for buses to pull in close to footpaths.

Regarding North Beach, Mr. Kelly said that a lot of work needs to be done. A temporary job, to make it passable for able bodied people, could cost in the region of €80k.

Cllr. Bourke asked if there is an inordinate risk that could result in (injury) claims, and if it is possible to create a pathway to make it accessible?

Cllr. McDonald said that the stone has dropped about 1m and asked is it safe? She is concerned about the safety aspect.

Mr. Kelly confirmed that the stone has dropped and that the tarmac has been eroded. It is ok for most people to use it.

Cllr. Murphy also enquired about the risk and asked that it be assessed.

Cllr. Annelsey asked about the price of concrete v. tarmacadam, and if concrete is 'harder' to destroy. Mr. Kelly mentioned that Mr. Mulhall had made application to the OPW.

Mr. Mulhall explained that it is tricky to sort out – it was never designed as a footpath and more money could be wasted.

Cllr. Murphy was interested in how long a 'repair' would last and Mr. Mulhall commented that it could be eroded if hit by bad enough weather in November.

Mr. Kelly explained that the rock is being eroded on the seaward side.

Cllr. Murphy asked that councillors lobby ministers to protect our amenities and beach as we may not get it back if major damage was done. Something visual is needed, siting the presentation by Avondale Project Engineers earlier as how it could be done.

Cllr. Murphy would like this item on the agenda as much as possible.

Cllr. Kennedy mentioned that the river was dredged last year and asked if the gravel from that project could be used on North Beach. Application needs to be made and money made available.

7. Allocation of Estate Development Funding 2017

The District Administrator presented the members with list of applications received from Residents Associations for above scheme. 11 applications have been received and their allocated grants approved listed totalling €8,500. Cllr. Bourke noticed that Cherrywood is not listed.

Cllr. Fitzgerald proposed approval of the grants, seconded by Cllr. Kennedy.

Ms. Dennehy asked if we can check how funding is used, and Cllr. Fitzgerald said the benefits (of the grant scheme) far outweigh the cost.

Ms. McDonald advised that details of proposed projects are requested.

8. Spending of Festival Funding for 2017:

The budget for Festival funding is €25K of which €20K will be allocated to Arklow. The Christmas lights need to be replaced, at a cost of €20K. Cllr. Fitzgerald proposed that €20k be spent.

Cllr. Kennedy is concerned that such a large amount is to be spent in one area and could it not be spread across the district. It was agreed last year that €20K would be spent this year.

Cllr. Annesley wondered if lights are being bought (again) this year. Ms. McDonald explained that some need to be disconnected this year and she would be hopeful that

lights that will be bought this year will last for several years thus freeing up funds from the budget to be allocated to other areas in the district next year.

Cllr. McDonald asked 'what is defined as a festival' to which Ms. McDonald replied 'an event in an area to attract people'.

Cllr. Annesley said that Arklow has missed out on funding over the years. Cllr. Fitzgerald mentioned the need to advertise the funding.

Cllr. McDonald asked that we look at the whole budget, for the whole area and consider Avoca.

Cllr. Fitzgerald proposed, Cllr. Bourke seconded the motion.

9. Notices of Motion:

(a) In the name of Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald

"That traffic calming measurements are put in place on the road through Rory O'Connor Place to Abbeyville. The road is widely used to access the lower end of the town." (Received 21st May 2017)

A petition signed by the residents requesting these measures a few years ago, and could be re-activated if necessary.

Cllr. Kennedy suggested speed cushions.

Cllr. Annesley proposed 10 Tonne limit (signposted) – this would allow residents report to the Gardai if breached. Cllr. Fitzgerald has received complaints of speeding and proposed that a brick speed ramp be installed. Mr. Kelly mentioned that there is already a ramp in Rory O'Connor Place and that speed cushions and additional road markings be considered. He recommended that €10k be set aside in Budget 2018 and that consultation with the residents might be necessary.

(b) In the name of Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald

"That improvements are carried out on the public footpath that runs parallel to Arklow Boxing Club." (Received 22nd May 2017).

There is cobblelock paving on Emoclew Road, where the boxing club is situated. The cobblelock has subsided and the path is now uneven. Cllr. Fitzgerald proposed that improvements be carried out. Mr. Kelly estimated the cost would be €8k and consideration for this made in next budget.


Item 10: Correspondence:

Ms. McDonald has received a letter regarding PPN at budget time and will send a copy to all via e-mail.

Item 11: Any other business:

- Abbey graveyard has been closed since February, due to wall collapse. Mr. Mulhall said quotation for repair is c. €20k. Miss Dennehy asked if the repair cost could be split between land owner and WCC. Cllr. Fitzgerald asked if it could be made safe with hoarding. Ms. Dennehy suggested that a letter be issued to the landowner or commence legal proceedings.
The cemetery cannot be opened – needs a conservationist.
Cllr. McDonald asked if we could get help or direction from Heritage Council?
- Cllr. Bourke has received complaints about grass across from building.
- Cllr. Fitzgerald enquired if any work is planned around the parade ground. Mr. Kelly said drawings will be needed and estimates obtained. Cllr. Fitzgerald said that some of the paths on Main Street are in bad condition – at The Old Ship, D’arcy Magee’s - and asked if Mr. Kelly and Mr. Mulhall would look at these in tandem with the roadworks due to take place shortly.
- Cllr. Murphy raised the issue of weeds growing through the ramp at the Bridge Hotel; bushes at Highfield overgrown; nettles in Inbher mor Park. She also asked where are all the litter bins gone? Mr. Kelly advised that the litter bin at Daybreak has been taken away due to abuse by apartment resident. Cllr. Murphy said that there is now litter where the bin was. Tidy Towns tidy the litter.
- Cllr. Kennedy asked if the hedge cutter could be sent to cut the thistles in Rathdrum, before the Cartoon Festival.
- The surface on the bridge in Aughrim is damaged due to trucks ‘unravelling’ it. Could the Wind farm €8k be used for repair? Ms Dennehy explained that funds are not ‘ring fenced’. Mr. Kelly said that funds could be applied for next year.
- Cllr. Bourke said that Avalon needs road markings and signs.
- The road that leads in to Oakwood needs signage and warnings for children at play.

Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 13th September 2017.

Signed: 
 Cllr. Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Arklow
 Municipal District.

Signed: 
 Ms. Linda McDonald, Arklow Municipal District Administrator