



**Wicklow County Council  
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

**ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2017**

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

**Officials Present:** Mr. Michael Geaney, District Manager  
Ms. Linda McDonald, District Administrator  
Mr. Jack Kelly, District Engineer  
Mr. Rob Mulhall, Executive Engineer  
Ms. Sinéad Boddy, Assistant Staff Officer

**Redevelopment of Avondale House**

Presentation by: Daithí deForge, Coillte  
Frank Cooney, Architect  
Alan Hill, Project Consultant

**Item 1 - Vote of Sympathy:**

The Members expressed votes of sympathy to the families of the following, who recently passed away: Janie Mc Donald, George Hayes, Joe Steenson, John Mc Manus, May Lynch, John Sullivan, Peter Bracken, Alison O Neill, and James Colvin.

A minutes silence was observed.

**Item 2 – Confirmation of Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Meeting, held on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017.**

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were proposed by Cllr Kennedy and seconded by Cllr Fitzgerald.

**Item 3 – Matters Arising:**

- ✚ Ms McDonald gave an update on staffing levels and confirmed that a new Clerical Officer would be starting on the 8<sup>th</sup> January and AMD would also be sharing another Clerical Officer with Greystones Municipal District in the New Year. Cllr Fitzgerald expressed his thanks to all in getting this sorted and is delighted to see the issue resolved.

- ✚ Ms McDonald advised that an update had been requested on the status of the AMD landline number from Mr. Liam Fitzpatrick Head of I.T. but had not been received as yet. Cllr Fitzgerald said it's disgraceful that two years later this has not been resolved, calls are going to WCC and without casting aspersions on WCC staff, the delay in getting to speak to AMD staff is un-necessary. It should be a simple fix and the call centre model will not work.
- ✚ Ms McDonald commented on the Revenue report circulated at the last meeting and that the income recorded to date for parking charges was over €249,000, as reported in the CE's monthly report to the Members.

**Item 5: To receive an update on the Roads Programme 2017.**

The District Engineer Jack Kelly again invited observations from the Members on the proposed roads projects for 2018, circulated at the last meeting. Cllr Fitzgerald asked when the 2018 works could start and Mr. Kelly said that the allocations from the Department would only be known in February.

**Item 6: Update on the Harbour Projects that recently received FLAG funding.**

Ms McDonald updated the members on the reply received from WCC on these projects as follows:-

- a) Storage Units - Estimated cost of this project is €200,000, with WCC to co-fund the sum of €60,000. Currently the site assessment is being carried out. Technical staff have carried out a survey of the proposed site and they are preparing preliminary drawings for the proposed area. This project completion date is March 2019.

There is a proposal to carry out interim painting of these containers.

There was limited resources to do so in 2017 which will be reviewed again January 2018.

- b) Fishermen's Hoist - Estimated cost of this project is €25,750, with WCC to co-fund the sum of €7,625. Quotations are currently being sought for the repairs to the hoist. When the repair works are carried out, onsite training on the hoist's operations can commence. This project's completion date is September 2018.
- c) Lightship Lantern – Estimated cost of this project is €28,000, with WCC to co-fund €8,400. Site assessment on going and quotations are being sought for the restoration of the lantern. This project's completion date is December 2018.

Cllr Annesley commented that painting the containers seemed like throwing good money after bad and asked why it would take until 2019 to complete the works; businesses in the area have made numerous complaints. District Manager Michael Geaney said that the

money was there and a Part VIII planning process would need to be completed for the storage units and this would extend the timeframe.

**Item 7: To receive an update on the following projects:**

**(a) Abbey Graveyard**

Work has commenced and will be completed by the end of the year.

**(b) Arklow Town Team**

Next meeting has been scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2017. LEADER meeting with Wicklow Partnership held to discuss the 8 applications and 3 of these could be submitted in full by February 2018. The health check report from Towns Matter will be received early in the New Year. The Team has been informed that the members are agreeable to the introduction of the Painting Grant Scheme for the town and also to the issue of letters requesting the co-operation from businesses to improve the attractiveness of their premises.

**(c) Arklow Courthouse**

Funding for the roof repairs has been approved and a contractor will commence works in January 2018. It has been indicated that a Fire Safety Certificate will be required for the building and this means extra works will need to be carried out which will impact on the renovation costs.

**(d) Coastal Protection Works on the North Beach**

Two applications to the OPW have been unsuccessful due to the works being considered maintenance rather than capital works. The OPW have requested a further study of the area. This has not progressed as an application for damage during the storm has been made and we are awaiting the outcome of this claim before commissioning the study.

District Manager Michael Geaney confirmed that the claim has been unsuccessful and it's not considered damage to infrastructure.

Executive Engineer Rob Mulhall suggested that the best way forward would be to try and re-instate the beach using groynes. There is no funding available to repair the existing rock armour and it is recommended that a study be carried out to identify the best way to solve the problem. Funding may be available for this study and it would be best to identify the long term solution. Mr. Geaney said that revetment of the rocks would also be required to prevent a breach and to prepare for future storms. Cllr Murphy asked why the OPW didn't say that in the first place and Mr. Mulhall said that they did. Cllr Bourke said he supports Rob's proposal and this has been on the agenda for over 20 years and has been continuously ignored. The groynes should be re-instated and there are existing reports available from past applications. Members stated their frustration at Minister Simon Harris saying that all they needed to do was apply and the funding would be made available. Cllr Kennedy asked if the funding was re-allocated elsewhere. Cllr Bourke said the wooden groynes were used previously and asked if this would be an option again, Mr Mulhall said that would not be decided until the survey was completed. Cllr Annesley agreed that the Kynoch's groynes were there over 100 years and worked at protecting the beach.

**(e) Redevelopment of the Parade Ground**

Part VIII to be advertised and submitted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January to the Planning Section. The presentation to the Town Team was favourable.

**(f) Christmas Festival**

Both the 25<sup>th</sup> November and the 9<sup>th</sup> December events were a great success with a lot of positive feedback on the new lights for the town and the lighting under the bridge. The prize giving event will take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> December in the Library. Cllr Annesley thanked Linda for the time and effort put into the festival and very well done to the committee and the outdoor staff. He suggested that a market be held every month in Arklow and put it to the members. Ms McDonald said this had also been mentioned at the Town Team meeting. Cllr Kennedy agreed and said the market would be a huge benefit to the town and would fully support it. Cllr McDonald said that the location would need to be reviewed. Cllr Fitzgerald suggested Castlepark. Cllr Annesley congratulated AGB for their efforts in raising €1,100.00 for charity on the day.

**(g) Rathdrum Square**

The sculpture is near completion and should be in place early January. It is understood that Gorey Credit Union has purchased the vacant building on the square and a planning decision is due on same before the end of the year.

**(h) Coastal path walk**

Signs have been erected since the last meeting stating that the footpath is officially closed. Discussed further under Item 5.

**(i) Primary Health Care Centre**

Arklow – Planning application to be lodged in the first half of 2018.

Rathdrum – Planning application to be lodged before end of 2017.

**(j) Bank of Ireland Enterprise Town Awards**

Arklow was shortlisted and the awards night held on the 15<sup>th</sup> November in Tullamore and unfortunately Arklow didn't receive a prize. Greystones were named runners up in our section and Blessington won their section.

**(k) Chambers Ireland Awards**

Arklow had entered the "George Campbell" event under Heritage and Built Environment. The other counties shortlisted were Cork County Council for Spike Island and Louth County Council for – bringing new life to Drogheda's Old Abbey Lane.

**(l) LAMA Awards**

The Halloween Festival has been entered under the Heading Arts and Culture and the Flower Basket Scheme under the heading Community Based Initiative. Finalists will be announced next week and the awards take place in February 2018.

**Item 4: To receive a presentation on the redevelopment of Avondale House from Daithí deForge (Coillte, Recreation Manager), Frank Cooney (Architect and Project Lead) and Alan Hill (Project Consultant, tourism specialist).**

Frank Cooney thanked WCC for supporting the project and said the second stage of the four stage plan, conceptual design stage was now completed and the next stage would be putting together the detailed design plan.

Mr. deForge stated that Avondale was to be the flagship in forest parks fitting in with Avondale being the birthplace of forestry with the forestry school. The project will explore the stories of Avondale in the design of the park with an emphasis on creativity. The inspiration of Samuel Hayes and Charles Stewart Parnell will play an important role in telling the history of the estate and forestry. The stories will make Avondale a real recreation destination for tourists both domestic and from abroad while highlighting Ireland's Ancient East. Fáilte Ireland are on board and see Avondale being a signature experience in Ireland's Ancient East and that visitors will stay longer, spend more and generate economic activity.

The brand visuals are essential in making this work – the entrance will be visually appealing and an orientation space highlighting the spirit and story of Avondale, connecting visitors to the trees and open, outdoor spaces. D DeForge outlined the different elements that would create the park both indoor and outdoor and envisaged a huge potential for a multi-use event space.

Alan Hill said that as the client Coillte had been given the lead on this project and that Fáilte Ireland was involved and supportive along with the strategic alliance with the OPW, National Parks & Wildlife Services. The partnership would lead to a rounded and sustainable project. D deForge and A Hill both emphasised that local community involvement and consultation informed this presentation and that without the local community the project would not have traction.

Cllr Murphy said it great to see the team back so soon and keeping the members informed, the project is great for the county and especially the district. Cllr Bourke said the presentation was great and we will be super proud of Avondale. He asked if the project was in any way similar to the Center Parcs project in Co Longford and D deForge said that they had different market targets and that the Avondale experience would feed out into the local services like accommodation. Cllr Murphy asked if wheelchair users would have access to all parts of the park and children with special needs would not be segregated.

Cllr Kennedy thanked the team for the presentation and the project was long awaited and needed to happen he also asked if they could estimate the number of visitors the park would attract and D deForge said that the current visitor number was 26,000 per annum and on opening the re-developed park that number should double. The members raised concerns about traffic management and neighbouring residents and D deForge said it would be a nice problem to have and that the design stage would investigate and identify any issues that might arise and the objective would be to enhance natural flow first and have other exits available if necessary. District Engineer Jack Kelly said that traffic issues would be addressed in the planning stage and the levies set would take into account any further works required.

Cllr Murphy asked who would manage the park company and D deForge said there were different models that could be followed and that could be WCC with a management company.

**Item 8: Notices of Motions:**

**(a) In the name of Cllr Pat Kennedy**

***“That funding is allocated as soon as possible for the turn on Main St., Aughrim , in front of the Meath Arms pus, as this section of the road is unravelling” 07/11/2017***

Because of the very heavy turning traffic on this section of the roadway has been severely stressed over the years. To renovate the road it would be necessary to plane out the worst section and then add a new layer of asphalt. The estimated cost of the works is €14,000 which could be considered under the Discretionary Program. It should be noted that some drainage works are required at this location and these should be undertaken prior to the construction works.

**(b) In the name of Cllr pat Kennedy**

***“That remedial works be carried out as soon as possible on a section of footpath that runs from Savills Cross to St Saviours School in Rathdrum” 07/11/2017***

Approximately 100 metres of this footpath is in a poor state of repair. I would estimate the cost of replacing this footpath at €15,000, which could be considered under the Discretionary Program.

**(c) In the name of Cllr pat Kennedy**

***“That funding be made available to start a footpath from Furnace Grove to Lower Avonbeg Heights as there are 18 houses here without a footpath” 0711/2017***

At present there is no footpath along this section of road in Ballinaclesh, which is approximately 230 metres in length. I would estimate the cost of providing a footpath at €25,000 if money can be provided under the Discretionary Programme; I would recommend that €12,000 be allowed under the 2018 programme.

**Item 9: Correspondence**

Correspondence was received from Karen Kennedy, Rathdrum Christmas Lighting Committee, asking that the balance of funds allocated to them but not used in the sum of €3,500 be ring-fenced for use by the committee next year to complete what they started this year. All members agreed that this could be done. Cllr Kennedy thanked the committee for their consideration of this project.

**Item 10: Any Other Business**

✚ Cllr Fitzgerald said that the section of road at the Applegreen garage on the Wexford Rd. is subsiding and the temporary resurfacing works are not adequate to resolve the problem there. Cllr Annesley said the problem could lie with lorries pulling up there to use the service station. Cllr Fitzgerald suggested that bollards might resolve

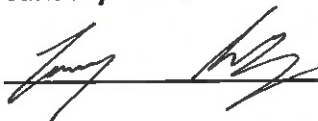
the problem and could funding be sought for this. District Engineer Jack Kelly said he would look into this.

- ✚ Cllr Kennedy asked if we could identify which estates in the district are due to have fabric upgrades carried out.
- ✚ Cllr Murphy said she had received a request for a meeting with the Meadowvale residents by email. Cllr Fitzgerald and Cllr Annesley said they had already met with representatives from the estate and had been assured that there was no objection to social housing and that the issue was around the entrance/exit to the site and they are looking for other options to be considered. Cllr Kennedy said he supported the Part VIII process and would meet with them. Cllr Murphy said that 3 or 4 documents requested had not yet been received from WCC and they would like to meet with the members. Cllr McDonald said she wasn't getting a clear answer from the residents if anything had changed on the plans that were submitted and approved in 2005. All that changed is the internal plans for the units and the general site plan remains the same as approved. Cllr Kennedy proposed that the members meet with some of the residents and all agreed to meet at 2.30pm on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

District Engineer Jack Kelly re-iterated that the Part VIII planning process is thorough and advised against undoing that process.

- ✚ Cllr Murphy said she had been contacted by Nancy Quinn about dumping at the right of way near the caravan park. Cllr Annesley said that a licence would surely be required for the movement of waste. Cllr Bourke said possibly not if they own the site. Cllr Annesley said it's a public right of way and why is WCC not addressing this matter. Cllr Bourke said that the fear of a High Court case may be holding them back. Ms McDonald said it should be addressed by Waste Management Services and she will refer it on to them.

**Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

**Cllr. Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District.**

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

**Ms. Linda McDonald, Arklow Municipal District Administrator**