

**Minutes of the Budgetary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass
held in The Civic Offices, Blessington on 24th October 2016 at 10.30 am.**

Present: Councillor Vincent Blake
Councillor Thomas Cullen
Councillor Gerry O'Neill
Councillor James Ruttle
Councillor Pat Doran

Also Present: Mr. Sean Quirke, Director of Services
Mr. Declan Geraghty, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Máire Halvey, District Administrator
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer

Apologies: Councillor Edward Timmins

The Leas Cathaoirleach, Councillor Vincent Blake, opened the Budgetary Meeting in the absence of Councillor Edward Timmins.

1. To consider the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Baltinglass for the financial year ending 31st December 2017.

Mr. Sean Quirke informed the members that the proposed budget among the Municipal Districts is estimated at €21,141,431 with €20,000 initially set aside as an estimate for the Baltinglass Municipal area but this has not been finally approved yet and won't be confirmed until after the County Council budget meeting in November. He added that this amount is an increase on last year's estimate and he informed the members that the figure quoted today was to be noted and agreed by the members in order for it to be brought before the full council for progression.

The members raised the following issues –

- €20,000 is a very small amount for the size of the Baltinglass Municipal District. The electoral area is the largest area in the county.
- There needs to be some equalisation of discretionary funding as other Municipal Districts get substantially more. This seems to be regressing and is becoming more and more disproportionate for the Baltinglass Municipal District.
- When the budgets for the Municipal Districts from 2008 to last year are compared, there is approximately a difference of €20 million.
- Is the budget based on capitalisation?
- Twinning – there has been talk of Blessington being twinned with a town in Nebraska, USA. Will this afford us more funding? This Municipal District should not be at a loss because we're not twinned with anyone.
- The Municipal District should also look at twinning with The Peak District in England as it has proved greatly beneficial in learning how they managed tourism.
- Suggest that we put the issue of twinning on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Sean Quirke agreed with the members that the amount estimated is quite small and the members should raise the issue at the main budget meeting or at the Corporate Policy group. He also stated that this is not the final amount and that it is not based on capitalisation. He added that some of the other Municipal Districts are given more funding because they have festivals relevant to their towns, such as Summerfest in Bray and the Seabreeze festival in Arklow.

Acceptance of the Draft Budgetary Plan was proposed by Councillor Pat Doran and seconded by Councillor Vincent Blake.

The members voted on the proposal as follows:

	For	Against	Abstain
Cllr. Vincent Blake	✓		
Cllr. Pat Doran	✓		
Cllr. Tommy Cullen			✓
Cllr. Gerry O'Neill		✓	

This concluded the meeting.

Signed: **Edward Timmins**

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: **Máire Halvey**

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: **23 November 2016**