

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in  
Germaines, Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 11.00am**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Tommy Cullen  
Councillor Jim Ruttle  
Councillor Gerry O'Neill  
Councillor Vincent Blake  
Councillor Edward Timmins

**In Attendance:** Mr. Sean Quirke, District Manager  
Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator  
Ms. Andrea Connolly, A/Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Pat Doran  
Mr. Declan Geraghty, District Engineer  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer

**1. To consider the adopted Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031**

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cullen opened the meeting by welcoming all to the final meeting of current Baltinglass Municipal District. He advised members that a meeting of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly had taken place on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May and the Draft Report had been adopted and was now gone to the Minister for his approval. The Cathaoirleach noted that at the meeting there were three motions voted on that would affect West Wicklow –

1. To omit the upgrade of the N81 and the link from Tallaght to Hollywood with the M9 from the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy
2. To include in the plan a proposal to link the Luas line to Blessington
3. To include in the plan development works on the Baltinglass Ringforts

Cllr. Cullen expressed his disappointment that only two out of three motions were to be included in the plan and the fact that the upgrade of the N81 lost out on inclusion by only one vote (11 votes to 10). He noted that all Wicklow elected members present had voted to keep this motion included in the plan but had narrowly lost out.

Cllr. Ruttle queried as to who recommended omitting the upgrading of the N81 and associated works. Cllr. Cullen informed the meeting that it had been proposed by the executive of the assembly. Cllr. Blake noted that it was important that we keep pressure on the Minister to reinstate the N81 upgrade.

Cllr. Timmins also voiced his disappointment and highlighted the importance of the upgrading of the N81 from a safety aspect. He urged members to keep this motion to the forefront and proposed sending a resolution to the Ministers Office outlining this. The resolution read as follows: "That the Baltinglass Municipal District requests the Minister to reinstate the upgrading of the N81 and the link from Baltinglass and Dunlavin to the M9 in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. This is vital for the safety of road users and the economic development of the region."

The motion was seconded by Cllr. Blake and supported by all members present with Cllr. O'Neill suggesting a slight amendment to the wording (Include wording or omit reference) of the resolution. Following a discussion between the members it was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill that the District Administrator write not only to the Minister Eoghan Murphy as outlined in the motion but also to the five TD's in the county. This was seconded by Cllr. Blake and all members present signed the motion to highlight their agreement. Cllr. Cullen noted that it was important not only from an economic point view but also from a health and safety view and it was important that any influence that could be used to convince the Minister to include the upgrading of the N81 should be used. Cllr. Cullen suggested that following the Local Elections, Baltinglass Municipal District should write to Minister Murphy and invite him to a meeting in Blessington.

## **2. To receive a report on Estate Development Grants 2019**

Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator, read through the Estate Development Grants 2019 report which had been circulated to the members before the meeting. Cllr. O'Neill questioned why Downshire Park in Blessington had not received any funding as they were eager to start works on the green area. Mr. Garvan Hickey explained it was due to the fact that there were no Local Authority houses in that estate. Cllr. Timmons offered his support to all local groups but did stress the importance of the need to ensure all grants and funding are receipted and recorded thoroughly. Cllr. Cullen agreed with Cllr. Timmins and advised members of the need to have a process in place as it was Wicklow County Councils responsibility to ensure these funds are distributed fairly. Cllr. Blake agreed with the need for traceability but also reminded the members of the great work that is done by these groups and committees and the rewards gained from them. He supported Cllr. Timmins on the need for a paper trail but also stressed the important work being done by Pure Mile and Tidy Towns groups. Cllr. Blake also noted that Mountain View Residents association had submitted an application but were not included in the allocation. The District Administrator informed the meeting the application that he had not received an application but if it was agreeable to members he would get in touch with the residents association and assess the application. This was agreed by members. The allocation of the estate development grants as outlined in the report was proposed by Cllr. Blake and seconded by Cllr. Ruttle.

Cllr. Cullen suggested that that the new members of the Baltinglass Municipal District council should consider the setting up of a recognition fund for private gardens. He commended the work done by all estates and suggested a fund of €2,000 for individual gardens within an estate.

Cllr. O'Neill remarked on the monument in Market Square, Blessington and asked if money had been granted towards the cleaning of this. Cllr. O'Neill considers the Boyle monument, which was built in 1845 and is inscribed with a record of the local landlord's generosity to the people of Blessington, as inappropriate. Mr. Hickey explained that funding for this project had come from Town & Village Renewal

Scheme. Cllr. Cullen proposed a change to the engraving on the Boyle monument and suggested a commemoration to the Famine and Cllr. O'Neill seconded this. Mr. Sean Quirke, District Manager, advised the members that issues of ownership and protection status of the monument would have to be investigated.

Cllr. Timmins questioned if funding had been allocated to the water feature in Baltinglass and noted that signs for the area had still not been erected. He also commended the Cathaoirleach on his work on the Baltinglass ringforts and noted the significance of this project being included in the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy Plan. Cllr. Cullen advised the members that €6,000 had been allocated for the water feature in Weaver's Square in Baltinglass.

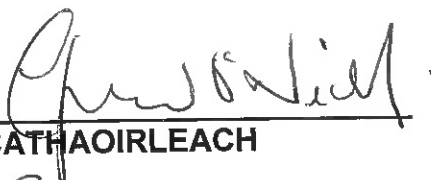
Cllr. Timmins paid tribute to the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Cullen noting that he had always been a strong advocate for the people of Baltinglass and surrounding areas and wished him well in his retirement.

Cllr. O'Neill offered his best wishes to Cllr. Ruttle, Cllr. Doran and the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cullen, on their retirement and wished them the best of luck for the future. Cllr. Ruttle and Cllr. Blake also added their best wishes to the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Cullen on his retirement. Mr. Sean Quirke, District Manager, also offered his best wishes to the three retiring members and wished them well in health and happiness for the future.

Cllr. Cullen thanked all for their best wishes and wished the election candidates the very best in the upcoming election.

There being no other business, Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Tommy Cullen concluded the meeting.

Signed:

  
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:

  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated:

18/6/2019

