

**MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING  
MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2019 3PM**

**DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen, Councillors Gail Dunne, Paul O'Brien, John Snell, Irene Winters, Mary Kavanagh.

**In attendance:** District Manager Brian Gleeson, District Administrator Joan Sinnott, District Engineer Kevin Scanlon, Assistant Staff Officer Anne Marie Kelly,

Myles Buchanan Wicklow People.

Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen opened the meeting at 3.00pm.

Senior Marine Officer Paul Ivory entered the meeting at 3.40pm and left at 4.30pm

Administrative Officer Merlin Ovington entered the meeting at 3.40pm and left at 4.30pm.

**ITEM 1.**

**Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019.**

It was proposed by Councillor Gail Dunne, seconded by Councillor Paul O'Brien and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

**ITEM 2.**

**To consider the Wicklow Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plan 2020.**

The report of the Chief Executive on the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal Districts of Wicklow County Council for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting. The Draft Budgetary Plan had been prepared in accordance with Section 102 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 58 of the Local Government (LG) Reform Act 2014.

District Manager Brian Gleeson presented the Budgetary Plan to the members and advised that it is proposed to allocate €44,000 to Wicklow through the General Municipal Allocation, and noted that this is an increase on 2019's figure of €38,000. This increase is made possible due to an additional source of income from roundabout sponsorship.

The members voiced frustration at the lack of benefits Wicklow Municipal District receive from car parking income generated from the Glendalough and Brittas Bay car parks, despite them being located within the District.

It was requested to discuss car parking income and expenditure at a future meeting.

District Manager Brian Gleeson advised the members that funds left over from any under-spend on discretionary spending could be carried forward to next year.

It was proposed by Cllr Gail Dunne and seconded by Cllr John Snell and unanimously agreed to adopt the Draft Budgetary Plan for Wicklow Municipal District.

### **ITEM 3.**

#### **Engineers Report**

##### **Housing:**

- Work continuing on general maintenance and repairs.
- Technical support to WCC-Housing Dept:
  - Re-lets (quantities increasing following transfers to new houses):
    1. 12 pre-transfer inspections carried out
    2. 11 standard. 4 purchases. 16 transferring to new houses
    3. 4 returned to WCC Housing Dept.
    4. 6 have works continuing on site.
    5. 3 tenders accepted to start on site soon.
  - DPGs: 4 completed, 6 ongoing and 3 tenders accepted.
  - Part V: 0 completed.

##### **Roads and Footpaths:**

- 1 CIS road in Laragh to be done in coming weeks.
- Roads in charge queries continue to be processed.
- Road Opening Licences (approx. 10) continue to be processed and agreed.

##### **Environment:**

- Brittas Bay trial mowing scheme works underway.
- Public meeting re Brittas Bay environmental measures held last week.
- A clean-up of the Murrough was carried out.
- Grass cutting and edge cleaning continues.

##### **Planning**

- Reports on applications and compliance with applications continue to be issued.
- Estate taking in charge reports and inspections continue with WCC staff.

##### **Playgrounds**

- New playground in Roundwood, works are now underway.
- Gym equipment repair material unavailable so Contractor assessing other options.
- Newtown equipment replaced and repaired.

##### **Public Liability**

- 5 new cases and 2 settled.

##### **Discretionary Works:**

- Glenealy bus bay completed. Ramp and crossing to be completed in October.
- Ballinastoe equipment ordered, road crossing for ESB in coming weeks.
- Riverwalk and Sailing Club steps lighting to be installed in October.
- Dunbur Rd crossing, ramp and lights to be installed in October.
- Newtown traffic survey remains on hold until consultant is appointed.
- Roundwood toilets. Scope of works to be agreed on site.
- Newtown footpaths. Complete.
- Ashtown Lane footpath. No works till October.
- Glenealy footpath and lines. No works till October.
- Maritime Project. Contractor moved items for refurbishment.
- Ballynerrin playground lights. Location and details to be agreed on site.

- Murrough wildflowers. Complete.
- Footpath widening Kidzone to Glebemount. Complete.
- Sinnott's Corner green area. Payment to be made to group.
- Laragh traffic calming. No progress till after Part 8 works complete.
- Merrymeeting footpath. Scope of works to be agreed on site.
- Seaview Heights resurfacing. Scope of works to be agreed on site.
- Brittas Bay crossing. Traffic count complete. Design underway.
- Ashford Weir report submitted. To be examined with relevant parties.
- Rosanna footpath. Sections widened and cleared. Mt Usher section complete.

#### **Town & Village Renewal Grants**

- Newtown footpath and streetscape works. WCC-Roads crew currently onsite working through jobs. Lights ordered. Footpaths constructed and link to playground. Parking possibilities require further investigation.
- Wicklow Lighting at historic sites project. Contractor appointed. Civil works commenced. ESB to finalise connection details on Thursday.

#### **Councillor's questions and queries.**

After presenting his report, District Engineer Kevin Scanlon advised the members that the number of housing re-lets and DPG's had increased over the course of the month.

He also updated the members on the Biodiversity plan for Brittas Bay, whereby an initial trial mowing programme had commenced on a section of the North Beach in an effort to facilitate improved management of biodiversity on the site. Mr. Scanlon advised that the works carried out by Wicklow Municipal District staff had gone well.

The members raised concerns regarding the progress on some of the Discretionary Projects. In particular, the lighting at the Ballynerrin Playground, Footpath for Ashtown Lane and the ramp and crossing for Glenealy Village. An update was also requested regarding the installation of the pedestrian crossing on the Dunbur Road.

Mr Scanlon's report had detailed the progress on these projects.

Mr. Scanlon suggested that it may be preferable to carry forward discretionary funding for the Toilets in Roundwood and add this to the 2020 allocation in order to ensure completion of the required works.

The lack of progress with regards to the repair of the gym equipment on the Murrough was raised as an issue, and a suggestion was made to source another contractor to carry out the repairs.

It was agreed that Cllr Kavanagh would liaise directly with District Engineer Kevin Scanlon to discuss the proposed Memory Garden.

It was reported that the street light outside the Garda Station on Bachelors walk has not been working for many months, leaving a significant portion of Bachelors Walk in darkness at night. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon agreed to send the details to Declan O'Brien Executive Engineer in the Roads Department Wicklow County Council.

It was queried at the meeting why fencing had recently been erected at the entrance to the Ashtown Reservoir, and was there planning permission in place for it. Cllr John Snell advised that the Varray Fly Fishing Club operate from this reservoir, however the area is in the ownership of Wicklow County Council. Cllr Snell advised that it is unsafe for members of the public to walk around the reservoir. It was also stated at the meeting that this reservoir has never been open for public access and that the Club endeavour to restrict access for safety reasons, to prevent damage to club property and anti social behaviour.

Concern was raised regarding the traffic situation at the Dunnes Stores Junction in Newtownmountkennedy. It was outlined that it is particularly dangerous at this junction when there are articulated trucks turning into Dunnes, which results in traffic backing up. It was requested that this problem be dealt with as soon as possible. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon advised that currently a plan is being examined to deal with the problem at the junction.

An issue was raised with regards to the out of hours emergency line for housing repairs, whereby a tenant placed a call over the weekend to report a major leak in one of the water pipes in their property. The tenant was informed that a plumber was unavailable to carry out the repair. It was asked if there is a list of contractors available on the out of hours service, or is there only one contractor on this list. Dissatisfaction was expressed with the current service. The necessary repair was subsequently carried by a member of the Wicklow Municipal District outdoor staff.

The rise in the number of DPG works and number of houses being prepared for re-lets was warmly welcomed, and it was expressed that this is a great opportunity to move people who wish to either upsize or downsize, and that the DPG works will make homes more accessible and amenable for tenants. Inspection of properties prior to being re-let was also welcomed.

#### **ITEM 4.**

##### **Presentation by Mr. Paul Ivory, Senior Marine Officer.**

Senior Marine Officer Paul Ivory was invited to the meeting to present a detailed report on port activities in Wicklow.

Mr. Ivory stated that from the ports commercial end, R.F. Conway & Co Ltd are the current shipping agents located in the port. The main imports coming through the port include timber from Sweden, the exports being mainly logs, scrap metal, fuel and recycled glass.

Since January 2019, 98 ships had come through the port and at present there are 15 regular fishing boats, 60 leisure craft and 3 tug boats which regularly use the port and a large log ship comes through the port once a month.

Mr. Ivory then outlined the main legislation governing the operation of ports in Ireland, including the Harbours Act, Safety Health & Welfare at Work Act, Oil Pollution Act, Harbour Bye Laws, Maritime Safety Act, Explosive Bye Laws, International Maritime Legislation, and Pollution Control Act amongst others.

The Maritime Business Development Group was established subsequent to the transfer of responsibility of all 4 of the County's ports to Wicklow County Council. Mr. Ivory outlined his involvement in the preparation of business plans in conjunction with the group and stakeholders to develop strategies to enhance and expand economic development of the port.

Mr. Ivory is responsible for preparing an oil pollution contingency plan, and monitoring any oil pollution in the port and taking the appropriate action if this occurs. He is responsible for the removal of wrecks and port and harbour waste.

There are various clubs based around the port including Wicklow Sea Swimmers, and at the beginning of the swimming season, buoys are installed to define the bathing area and prevent vessels from entering. Other clubs include Wicklow Sailing Club, Wicklow Sub Aqua Club, 2 rowing clubs and the Sea Scouts. The RNLi Lifeboat is now temporarily moored in the Port.

Mr. Ivory also inspects all navigation lights on a monthly basis and ensures the slip way is cleaned and cleared on a monthly basis, and that life rings are checked regularly. He is responsible also for

repairs to the pier infrastructure. Recently works have taken place to fill cavities in the pier, and South Quay is now almost complete. There is some damage to the Packet pier where paving and concrete is missing. There is now new floodlighting at the pier and the ladders on the quay walls have been replaced. The gates to the pier are now automated and can be controlled remotely.

Administrative Officer Merlin Ovington informed the members that the annual budget for Wicklow Port is €400,000, and has an income of €375,000 which is mainly generated from cargo ships.

One of the main challenges facing the port is lack of space to berth boats. At present it is not possible to berth at South Quay due to structural problems there. Currently the port is limited in what size ship it can take in.

Concerns were raised by the members with regards to the poor condition of the public toilets at the beach and the bad impression this leaves with visitors. Frustration was also expressed at Wicklow County Council's failure to purchase a property to accommodate the Vartry Rowing Club.

The members thanked Mr. Ivory and Mr. Ovington for their comprehensive presentation.

#### **ITEM 5.**

##### **Christmas Lighting.**

A request was made by Wicklow Town & district Chamber of Commerce for funding towards this year's Christmas lights in the town. The members were broadly supportive of the proposal to provide funding, however they suggested the Chamber should also consider exploring other funding sources for the Christmas lights next year. The members stated that they are mindful of the other towns and villages in the District who do not receive this funding.

It was proposed by Cllr Shay Cullen and seconded by Cllr Irene Winters and unanimously agreed by all the members to provide €20,000 to the Wicklow Chamber of Commerce towards the cost of the Christmas Lights for 2019.

#### **ITEM 6.**

##### **Correspondence.**

No correspondence received.

#### **ITEM 7.**

##### **A.O.B**

It was asked if the recommendations of the Town Team report on parking presented to the members at the July meeting were going to be examined. District Administrator Joan Sinnott advised that a press release had been made promoting parking tag and the 15 minutes free parking.

The members requested a detailed report outlining what revenue is generated from parking in the town, what is the associated expenditure, and a costings for new parking signage.

It was requested to add parking as an item on next month's Agenda.

One of the members reported an issue with the rock armour on the Murrough walkway shifting away, leaving the adjoining houses at risk of flooding.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon advised that he would contact Senior Engineer Marc Deveraux from the Environment in relation to this matter.

CATHAOIRLEACH SHAY CULLEN CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 4.45PM

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_