

MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING

MONDAY 19th NOVEMBER 2018 3PM

DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL

Present: Cathaoirleach Daire Nolan, Councillors Gail Dunne, Mary Kavanagh, Shay Cullen

In attendance: District Manager Brian Gleeson, District Administrator Joan Sinnott, District Engineer Kevin Scanlon, Clerical Officer Sinead Turner

Cathaoirleach Daire Nolan opened the meeting at 3.00pm.

Councillor John Snell joined the meeting at 3.05pm.

Councillor Irene Winters joined the meeting at 3.30pm.

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES FROM THE WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD 22nd OCTOBER 2018

It was proposed by Councillor Shay Cullen, seconded by Councillor John Snell and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District meeting held on 22nd October 2018.

PRESENTATION BY ED HORGAN ON CHRISTMAS MARKETS IN ABBEY GROUNDS

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ed Horgan to the meeting and invited him to update members on the Christmas markets to be held in the Abbey Grounds.

Ed advised that it was proposed to hold the markets in German style huts in the Abbey Grounds on the three weekends before Christmas. There would also be a funfair, crafts, food, santa, performances by local school choirs and the RTE concert orchestra would give a performance in St. Patricks Church. Ed was of the view that the markets would boost footfall and greatly benefit the town in general. He was seeking a contribution of €1,000 from the Municipal District towards the cost of marketing, i.e. leaflet drops, newspaper advertising. He said there would be no profit from the markets this year and in fact they would be running at a loss. It was proposed to donate any profits from the RTE concert orchestra recital to the local Meals on Wheels charity.

In reply to some questions from the members Ed advised the following;

Thirteen second hand huts were purchased in the UK.

It is a community initiative, all work done by volunteers and nobody was being paid. The Mens Shed, RNLI and Scouts are all involved.

The cost to the trader would be €60 per day per hut to neutralise the costs.

There would be costs involved for electricity, protective grass, health and safety, generator, advertising boards etc.

LEADER funding would be applied for next year.

Some of the local businesses had contributed to the event.

Avonmore Dairies will have a stall to promote their produce. They select four venues per year and this will help to promote the town as a “destination”. Also Mrs. Clause will be in attendance.

The members thanked Ed for his presentation, agreed that the initiative was to be commended and wished him every success.

It was proposed by Councillor John Snell, seconded by Councillor Gail Dunne and agreed to give a contribution of €1,000 towards the event.

CHRISTMAS PARKING FOR WICKLOW TOWN

The District Administrator asked the Members to consider changing the traditional Christmas Parking arrangements and to consider a pay and display for the first hour of parking with the next two hours free.

A discussion took place and the members agreed to reduce the free parking hours from three to two this year as it was hoped that this would provide ample time for shoppers to shop. It was hoped that this would free up the parking spaces somewhat and would also make it easier for the Wardens to police. It was agreed as follows: 2 hours free parking will apply to all Pay and Display Parking areas in Wicklow Town from Monday 3rd December 2018 to Tuesday 1st January 2019 inclusive.

Loading Bay restricted hours between 9a.m. to 12 noon Monday to Friday will still apply.

Free parking is available in the Seafront Car Park

The Traffic Wardens will continue to monitor and enforce illegal parking during this time

GRAND HOTEL – DIRECT PROVISION FACILITY

A meeting took place in County Buildings on Thursday 15th November between representatives from the Department of Justice, local TDs and the Members in relation to the recent announcement that the Grand Hotel would be used as a direct provision centre for approximately one hundred asylum seekers. A public meeting has now been arranged for Tuesday 20th November. The members wanted it placed on record that it was organised by Councillor Dunne and not by the Wicklow Municipal District.

The Members were of the opinion that the loss of the only hotel in the town would have an adverse impact on business, tourism and the community in general. Members stressed that they had no problem with the asylum seekers but criticised the lack of consultation from the Department of Justice and hotel management and lack of consultation with local GPs and schools as to whether they had the capacity to accommodate these people.

The Department of Justice have confirmed that a one year contract is in place and it was open to the hotel to apply again next year. The Members confirmed that they are happy to accommodate the asylum seekers within the County, however the members felt that it would be an idea to explore the possibility of finding alternative and more suitable accommodation for the asylum seekers and return a fully functioning hotel back to Wicklow after the year. They questioned whether the direct

- Road Opening Licences continue to be processed and agreed

Environment

- Grass cutting and edge cleaning continues
- Urban and Village renewal grant funding received by Wicklow Town Team/WCC for lighting historic sites around town. 2 meetings held to plan and design and procure. Good progress with tender documents next month

Planning

- Reports on applications and compliance with applications are continuing to be issued
- Estate taking in charge reports and inspections are continuing with WCC planning staff

Playgrounds

- 2 site meetings held for 2 new playgrounds in Laragh and Roundwood. Some preliminary works required at both and Contractor will commence in coming weeks

Planned repairs this month:

- Murrough – new rubber matting under swings, repair to spring/swinger seat
- Newtown – straighten see saw, and repair sit on digger

Public Liability

- 5 new claims (3 personal injuries & 2 material damage) submitted to WMD this month
- Currently working on approx. 3 live claims at various stages

Councillors Queries and Comments

It was agreed to clear back the footpath from Kidzone to the graveyard.

A list of white lining, including Hopkins Hill/Fitzwilliam Road was given to a contractor and will be carried out in the next few weeks.

Older street lights are being replaced by Airtricity with LEDs which must be signed off on by Wicklow County Council.

Condition of Dunbur Road and surrounding roads arising from works carried out by Virgin Media and Irish Water. Bonds are in place and the District Engineer will follow up.

Hedge at Greenhill Road requires cutting.

Works at Glenealy to be carried out in conjunction with Bus Eireann and a meeting is to take place shortly. The lack of signposts for Glenealy was also highlighted.

Weir at Ashford – There is a fundraising drive to replace the weir which was damaged in recent storms. The Department of Fisheries are in favour of having the weir stepped and the District Engineer is involved in talks with them.

Flooding as a result of heavy rain on 9th November – house in Seaview Heights, Rathnew was under half a foot of water and the area at Sinnott Autos was also flooded. The District Engineer advised that the Council had jetted the gullies a short time before this, that there is an issue with surface water drainage in Rathnew and the budget should be increased for this.

The members were advised that the discretionary fund of circa €400,000 was fully committed for the year. While approximately €100,000 will remain unspent at year end, this amount has already been committed to a number of specific tasks. It was confirmed that any unspent monies would be carried forward into next year in order to carry out these particular works. The District Engineer advised that some jobs had come in higher and some at a lesser cost which accounted for the local budget position.

CLIFF WALK UPDATE

The new date for signing the Agreement between the Council and the Golf Club was not yet set. It would depend on when the Chief Executive and Golf Club captain were both available, possibly in the evening.

Works have commenced and the retaining wall is nearly complete, fencing to commence next week. The target is to complete by the end of the year.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Motion in the name of Councillor S. Cullen

“That Wicklow Municipal District seek to have the Main Streets of Wicklow Town and the Main Streets of the Villages within the Wicklow Municipal District to be designated as election poster free areas”

Councillor Shay Cullen stated that he was proposing the motion in order to support and show solidarity with the Tidy Towns and groups going out of their way to promote the area. He had no issue with election posters as such but thought they should be kept out of the active areas of towns and villages. The members were in agreement but felt it would be difficult to implement and it would be dependent on the goodwill of people putting up the posters. It was suggested that a press release could be made, setting out guidelines. All members were in agreement with the motion.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The issue of a dangerous public walkway at Dunbur was raised, the District Engineer advised that a costing was being done for works here.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Councillor Gail Dunne tendering his resignation as Leas Cathaoirleach with effect from next month's meeting on Monday 17th December ending his six month term as Leas Cathaoirleach and allowing Councillor Mary Kavanagh to be elected as Leas Cathaoirleach on that day as agreed at the Annual General Meeting on 25th June 2018. This was agreed.

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the next Municipal District Meeting is scheduled for Monday 17th December 2018 at 3 p.m. The meeting closed at 5.25 p.m.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____