

**MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING  
MONDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020 3PM**

**DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL**

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

**Apologies:** Cllr Irene Winters.

**In attendance:** District Manager Brian Gleeson, District Administrator Joan Sinnott, District Engineer Kevin Scanlon, Assistant Staff Officer Anne Marie Kelly, Clerical Officer Deirdre Bradshaw, Ivan Sheane Wicklow Active Retirement.

Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen opened the meeting at 3.12 pm.

Cllr John Snell entered the meeting at 3.15pm.

**ITEM 1.**

**Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

It was proposed by Councillor Gail Dunne, seconded by Councillor Mary Kavanagh and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**ITEM 2.**

**Wicklow District 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. 7 standard. 0 purchases.
    2. 3 returned to WCC Housing Dept.
    3. 7 have works continuing on site.
  - DPGs: 1 due to start on site. 1 out to tender. 2 being assessed.
  - Part V: 0 houses snagged.

**Roads and Footpaths:**

- 2020 roads grant allocations received for county. Individual jobs to be agreed next.
- Traffic warden in Newtown moved to school road and zebra crossing to be installed.
- Drainage blockages in various locations repaired.
- Gritting carried out on 18 nights. 3 of these were double runs.
- Road Opening Licences (approx. 7) continue to be processed and agreed.
- 2 road closure applications processed.

**Environment:**

- Brittas Bay mowing trial underway. 1<sup>st</sup> cut complete. 2 more to follow.
- Great response to survey of sea buckthorn. More projects and trials possible.
- Hedge cutting and edge cleaning continues. Notices sent to 5 landowners.

**Planning**

- Part 8 projects currently on display are Clermont, Ballintreskin and Greenhill Road.
- 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, substantially complete. Community athletics project next door is ongoing with site works and clearance.
- Ongoing maintenance and repairs.

**Public Liability**

- 8 new cases and 0 settled.

**Discretionary Works:**

- 2020 allocation to be discussed elsewhere in meeting.
- Merrymeeting footpath quote due back this week. Start in next 2 weeks.
- Newtown traffic calming road crossings done and works continuing.
- Ballynerrin playground lights. Ducts and cables installed, awaiting delivery of lights.
- Seaview Heights resurfacing. Drainage works and surfacing completed last week.
- Glenealy ramp installed last week. Lining to following. Assessing crossing type.

**Town & Village Renewal Grants**

- Newtown footpath and streetscape works. WCC-Roads crew currently onsite. 70% of works complete. Trees planted. Footpaths 80% complete. Public lighting LED bulbs complete. Dunne's junction lights agreed with Gardaí/Town Team.
- Wicklow Lighting at historic sites project. ESB have agreed connection points. Ducting and civils ongoing. Lights for 1<sup>st</sup> few sites being ordered for installation.

**Councillors Questions and Queries.**

The members requested an update on the the traffic lights in Newtownmountkennedy. Mr. Scanlon advised that it is proposed to remove the traffic lights at the Church, and place new sets of lights at the junction to the entrance of the Dunnes Stores car park.

One of the members requested an update on the expected opening of the playground in Roundwood. Mr. Scanlon advised that it is anticipated to have the playground open towards the end of February.

Concern was raised in relation to the progress with the backlighting of the historical buildings project. District Manager Brian Gleeson advised that progress is ongoing on this project.

The members raised concern with regards to the public lighting in the Town. It was stated that there are a number of lights which have not been working for many months and dissatisfaction was expressed with SSE Airtricity's perceived lack of response to repeated calls to repair the lights. It was pointed out that the rollout of the LED lighting is due to happen in 2020, however this should not mean that SSE Airtricity should defer replacements until then. The members requested that a representative from Airtricity be invited to the next WMD meeting, however Cllr Gail Dunne proposed suspending standing orders at the next WCC meeting in order that the issue of public lighting be addressed, and sought the support of his fellow WMD Cllrs in this matter. Cllr John Snell voiced his support for Cllr Dunne on this matter.

Other issues raised included:

- Cobble Lock paving in the Town coming loose causing trip hazards.
- Raw sewage running down through Pier View, Bayview Grange and De La Salle Court.
- Pedestrian crossing for Dunbur Road not in place as yet.
- Commencement of the Merrymeeting footpath considered urgent with the occupation of the new housing development Hazelbrook Rise. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon advised that he is awaiting a quotation from a contractor for these proposed works.

The staff of WMD was thanked for taking the decision to move the Lollipop Lady in Newtownmountkennedy from the Main Street to the L-5048 outside the Junior School, and it is reported that the parents are very happy with this move. Special thanks were given to the staff on the recent resurfacing works carried out in Seaview Heights Estate.

### **ITEM 3.**

#### **Update on works on Fitzwilliam Square.**

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that Fitzwilliam Square has now been blocked off, and the contractors are currently working on the railings and removing the topsoil. The first road closure is now in place, and if members of the public or business owners have any issues with the work, that they should be directed to the contractor on site – Shareridge Ltd, who now have a site office located on the Murrough. Mr. Scanlon went on to advise that Wicklow Town is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), and that there will have to be an Archaeologist on site at certain times during the works. Although the works were originally tendered for a 12 month period, the contractor has indicated that it is now unlikely that the works will take this long to complete.

The members requested if there could be an option to place a pedestrian crossing from the Square to Track One Sport Shop. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon advised that he would look at the finalised proposals and forward them on to the members.

Other issues/questions included:

- Option to move the pedestrian crossing at the Bank of Ireland – reported as dangerous.
- Can the gas mains be extended to Phil Healy's pub whilst the roads are being dug?
- Important that the electric connection for the Xmas lights is left in-tact at Fitzwilliam Square.

### **ITEM 4.**

#### **2020 Discretionary Funding.**

A report was circulated to the members at the meeting detailing the discretionary budget for 2020.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that he would forward a list of possible projects for them to consider in the coming days.

District Manager Brian Gleeson advised the members that of the €393,500 overall budget,

- €18,750 to be allocated to footpath repairs/renewal (granted under the Local Footpath Renewal Scheme).

- €93,750 allocated from IPB Capital Redistribution Payment for the public liability claims 'hotspots'.
- €237,000 allocated from Public Realm Discretionary Funding.
- €44,000 from the general Municipal Allocation.

Mr. Gleeson went on to inform the members that there will be an over-spend of €20,000 carried forward from 2019 if all planned projects go ahead, and to bear this in mind when considering their proposed discretionary spending for 2020. He also asked the members to consider setting aside some money for 'match funding' if some of the grant applications applied for by the Town Team are successful. The members requested that the Town Team inform the District Office of planned projects before submitting any grant applications. One of the members expressed opposition to allocating match funding out of the discretionary fund. It was felt that the reason for the recent vote in favour of increasing the Local Property Tax was to generate extra income to provide match funding for successful grant applications. The District Manager informed the meeting that the increase in the Local Property Tax was to accommodate the match funding for the bigger URDF and RRDF Projects.

One of the members informed the meeting that the footpaths in Wicklow Town are in a bad state of repair and need replacing. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members it costs approximately €100 per square meter for footpath replacement and to bear this in mind.

It was asked if funding could be applied for under the Urban Renewal and Development Fund for Wicklow town. District Manager Brian Gleeson informed the members that funding had been sought under the Urban Regeneration Fund in 2018, however the application had not been successful. He also advised that the projects to be put forward for URDF funding in 2020 will be decided on shortly.

#### **ITEM 5.**

##### **Election Posters.**

The members were in full agreement of an election poster ban for all towns and villages located within the District in line with their previous decision in May 2019 to ban local election posters. They requested that a press release be issued to the media to this effect. Concern was expressed that posters were erected on roundabouts causing a serious traffic hazard for motorists.

#### **ITEM 6.**

##### **St. Patrick's Day Parade.**

It was proposed by Cllr Shay Cullen and seconded by Cllr John Snell and unanimously agreed to make a donation of €1,500 to the St. Patrick's Day Committee to help with the running costs of this years' event.

It was proposed by Cllr Gail Dunne and seconded by Cllr John Snell and unanimously agreed to make a donation of €4,500 to the Wicklow Town Twinning Association.

#### **ITEM 7.**

##### **Correspondence.**

District Administrator Joan Sinnott read out an email received from Fiona Byrne, Group Leader with the 7<sup>th</sup> Wicklow Scout Troup to the members in which she outlined that the building which they currently occupy on South Quay needs substantial works to be carried out to it in order to bring it up to current fire safety regulations. In her email, Ms. Byrne stated that some fundraising had been carried out, and requested the members to consider making a financial contribution to this cause.

The members requested further detail to be submitted itemising exactly what is needed and what they already have. It was asked if volunteers could be sought to help with the works as opposed to hiring building contractors. The members also suggested that the Scout Group should consider applying for funding under the Community Grant Scheme. Cllr Shay Cullen proposed to consider this request as part of their discretionary fund discussions.

Ms. Sinnott also read out an email received from Ms. Rosemary Kavanagh of the Wicklow Town Team in which she requested the members to consider providing funding from their discretionary budget towards this years' Feile Chill Mhantain. Ms. Kavanagh hopes to establish this festival as annual event and will be working with a number of groups to deliver this project – Cainteoiri Chill Mhantain, Comhaltas Ceoltoiri, local schools and local sports clubs. It is envisaged that this Irish festival will be unique to the area and will help tourism, trade and promote the Irish language.

The members requested a detailed breakdown of the running costs for this festival, and suggested that perhaps the Town Team should be encouraged to apply for grant funding also.

**ITEM 8.**

**AOB.**

District Administrator Joan Sinnott put forward a suggestion to mark the recent achievements of the Wicklow Tidy Town Committee in winning gold medals in the 2019 Supervalu National Tidy Towns awards. Wicklow Town was awarded the honour of being named County Wicklow's tidiest town, received a category E gold medal (population range 5001 – 10,000). The gold medal is the first ever received by Wicklow. It was proposed to hold a Cathaoirleach's reception after the March WCC meeting, and Ms. Sinnott suggested that the other Tidy Town groups in the District be invited and presented with their cheques from the discretionary fund for this occasion.

CATHAOIRLEACH SHAY CULLEN CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 4.25 PM

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

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

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