

**MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING
MONDAY 25th JANUARY 2021 3.00PM
HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM.**

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

In attendance: District Manager Brian Gleeson,
District Engineer Kevin Scanlon,
District Administrator Joan Sinnott,
Assistant Staff Officer Anne Marie Kelly,
Myles Buchanan Wicklow People.
Sr. Collette Keane.
Arno Verbeck (Project Manager Codling Wind Park)
Rupert Judson (Deputy Manager Codling Wind Park)
Denise Horan (Community Liaison Officer Codling Wind Park)
Liz Dillon (Stakeholder Manager Codling Wind Park)
(Team from Codling Wind Farm joined 3.30 and left at 4.30pm)

Cathaoirleach John Snell opened the meeting at 3.00 pm.

ITEM 1.

Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 21st December 2020.

It was proposed by Cllr Paul O'Brien, seconded by Cllr Gail Dunne and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 21st December 2020.

ITEM 2.

To consider report and drawings from the Wicklow Town Team as circulated in relation to funding received under the Town & Village Enhancement Scheme for Portable Street Awnings.

District Administrator Joan Sinnott presented the details to the members which were circulated to the members prior to the meeting. Ms. Sinnott outlined that WMD & the Town Team was successful in receiving funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme for portable street awnings. It is proposed that the awnings be erected at Market Square in a bid to create a year round pedestrian space and encourage greater social activity in this area of the town. The placement of these awnings will necessitate the removal of 4 mature trees from the square, and it is proposed to re-plant these at the entrance to the Gaol. These proposals were discussed with local businesses.

The members expressed their support for these proposals and commended those involved in securing the funding.

Observations:

- A positive for the town, and an ideal location especially so close to the Gaol with the hope that tour groups could make use of the space.
- Will generate much needed life back to this part of the town.
- Support new commercial activity.

- Choice of materials should be given due consideration i.e. from a vandalism point of view.
- Will the awnings be protected, and will there be security cameras in the vicinity to monitor any possible anti-social behaviour?
- Will the awnings be strong enough to withstand high winds/storms?
- Hope that root balls of the trees being replanted will not be disturbed.

ITEM 4. (item brought forward by Cathaoirleach)

Discretionary Fund Update.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that there are currently 54 projects at varying stages relating to projects agreed from 2018 up to 2020.

It was agreed to send on a spread sheet/progress report to the elected members in the coming days. It was requested that this item be put on the Agenda for the next monthly meeting.

District Manager Brian Gleeson informed the members that the schedule of works for 2021 will be affected by public health restrictions and that there will be a limited window of opportunity to carry out works. He requested the members to direct MD staff in what jobs they wish to prioritise.

Observations/Queries:

- A lot of jobs completed, but also a lot outstanding.
- What is happening with regards to the proposed works at Ballinastoe Crossroads?
- An update was requested on what works are still outstanding in Newtownmountkenndy.
- Concerns that some jobs will be left behind.

ITEM 5. (brought forward).

One Way System Wicklow Main Street Update.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that plans to progress a trial on the proposed main street one way system have been delayed due to the current public health restrictions. It is hoped to commence discussions with stakeholders and the elected members early February. To date some of the junctions have been examined, and it was agreed to prepare a more detailed update for the members at the next monthly meeting, and to circulate an up to date set of plans.

ITEM 6. (brought forward)

District Engineers Report.

Covid: Staff stood down for lockdown 3 on Friday 8th January. Currently only essential works.

Housing:

- Work continuing on general maintenance and repairs.
- Technical support to WCC-Housing Dept:
 - Re-lets and emergency accommodation:
2 standard, 0 emergency accommodation, 8 returned to WCC Housing Dept, 2 have works continuing on site, 2 house purchases being finalised.
 - DPGs: No info
 - 1 fire damaged house being assessed

Roads and Footpaths:

- Church Hill temporary 1-way system operational for past 2 months. New ‘hard’ barrier installed to increase deterrent to driving up wrong direction. Most residents/users ok with system, some minor adjustments to road markings required on Station Road side of hill.
- M11 to Ashford footpath improvement works continuing at Ashford end.
- Wicklow Town Main Street 1-way design complete and agreed. Plan for commencing to be carried out in February. A meeting between WMD and Roads is proposed prior to any external consultation.
- Newtown footpath widening design complete. Final design details with NTA and procurement to follow. Awaiting confirmation of grant award.
- Town & Village (Accelerated Schemes 1 & 2) projects have been approved. Pedestrian traffic management in Laragh and Roundwood. Laragh project in progress, say three weeks work remaining and traffic management equipment procured for Roundwood project. – Roundwood may start as soon as restrictions are lifted to a suitable level.
- Town & Village (Accelerated Scheme 3) Wicklow Town Team presentation to follow.
- Annamoe Town and Village 2020 application (main scheme) was successful. Desktop related work in progress. (Circa €100K plus matched funding).
- Road Opening Licences (approx. 15) continue to be processed and agreed.

Environment:

- Two projects being considered for 2021 Climate Adaption Grant should funds be made available. (Finalise works at Vartry Weir and Drainage works on along Slaughter Hill). Preliminary survey of Slaughter Hill has now been completed (topography).

Planning

- Reports on applications continue.
- 2 Section 254 applications processed for tables and chairs.

Playgrounds

- Ongoing maintenance and repairs.
- Procurement complete for units (to replace damaged equipment) at Ballynerrin Playground and for a new level access roundabout at the Murrough Playground. Contractor likely to be unavailable until after restrictions.

Public Liability

- 3 new cases (2 material damage, 1 personal injury) and 1 settled/closed.

Outdoor Recreation:

- Reservoir Car Park, Roundwood. Complete. Opened 23/12/20.

Comments/Queries:

- Works urgently needed on wall at Ball Alley.
- Sequencing of traffic lights at Grand Hotel need to be adjusted.
- Update required on Fitzwilliam Square – looks like a roadway is running through pedestrianised area. What is the proposed completion date? Width and height of footpaths are cause of concern. – *Kevin Scanlon* – Designers of the square designed it for ‘universal access’. Will request more information from Margaret Hartnett and Tony Quirke on these issues and circulate to members.
- Double yellow lines needed outside Art Shop on Bridge Street. Cars are parking on footpath, which will lead to damage.

- A lot of extra littering observed around the town, particularly coffee cups. More bins needed – maybe some smart bins. Can businesses take some responsibility also?
- Reports of broken pedestrian light in Glenealy Village.
- Directional signage needed for An Tairseach Organic Farm and Ecology Centre.
- Funding under the Town & Village scheme welcomed for Annamoe Village.
- Praise for the Vartry Carpark, a huge success.
- Requests made for salt/grit to be made available to housing estates in the town.
- Works on Ashford footpath commended.
- 8 Social Housing Units on former FCA site welcomed.
- Dog fouling at memorial site on the Murrough a problem. Can railings be installed to prevent dogs entering? – Perhaps discretionary funds could be used for this.
- Footpath at Merrymeeting Hill badly needed for safety of residents.

ITEM 7. (brought forward)

Correspondence.

District Administrator Joan Sinnott read aloud a letter received from Wicklow Chamber of Commerce received in December, thanking the Town Team and WMD staff for facilitating and organising the road closure of the Main Street on the 3 Sundays in December to facilitate safe pedestrian access for Christmas shoppers.

ITEM 3 (put back).

Presentation on the proposed Codling Wind Farm off Wicklow being developed by Fred Olsen Renewables and EDF Renewables.

The team from Codling Wind Park presented plans for a proposed wind park 13km from the coastline between Wicklow Town and Greystones which were circulated to the members prior to the meeting. This development involves a joint partnership between Fred Olsen Renewables and EDF Renewables.

Main Details:

- Early stages of development - offshore surveys, site investigations and stakeholder/public engagement commenced and to continue in coming months. Various permissions stages to go through 2021-2023. Anticipated that construction could start in 2024 all going well.
- 13km from coastline, 125km² site size.
- Up to 140 turbines, with 250 – 320 tip height.
- Anticipated that when complete will have potential to contribute power to 1.2 million homes.
- Aimed to provide a sustainable energy source and potential to remove 1.5m tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually. Will assist in reaching targets set for Ireland under the Climate Action Plan 2019.
- 2-3 bn investment. 1,000 Construction jobs and 70 long term jobs. Benefit to local economy.

Questions/Comments.

- Members expressed strong support.
- Very significant benefits to local economy and job opportunities for young locals.
- Hope that Wicklow Harbour will be the chosen operations and management base.
- Encourage the development team to engage with elected members if problems are encountered.
- Details of community fund requested.

- What happens when 35 yr licence expires? – *Arno Verbeek* – 35 year licence if granted will stipulate that a dismantling plan/decommissioning plan be prepared and submitted.
- Concerns so close to shore, and development cannot be to the cost of wildlife. – *Arno Verbeek* – Environmental Impact assessment will be carried out. Studies over many years have been carried out on the local wildlife. Will ensure no negative impacts.
- Will proposed development have a further negative impact on coastal erosion? – *Arno Verbeek* – Rising sea levels largest cause of coastal erosion. Proposed development will not contribute to coastal erosion.

ITEM 8

A.O.B.

The members passed a vote of sympathy on the passing of Ms. Sally Cahill, a former Wicklow Town Council employee.

CATHAOIRLEACH JOHN SNELL CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 4.55 PM.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____