

**MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING
MONDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 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.
Dave Shannon Chairperson Wicklow Town Team (joined 3.00pm left 3.40)
Ciara Martin Perks Newtownmountkennedy District Forum (joined 3.00 left 4.00pm)

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 25th January 2021.

It was proposed by Cllr Irene Winters, seconded by Cllr Shay Cullen and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 25th January 2021.

ITEM 2.

Update on Wicklow Town Team Given by Chairman Dave Shannon.

Chairman of Wicklow Town Team Dave Shannon gave an update to the members of all current activities/projects being undertaken by the town team in each of the sub groups.

Tourism: LEADER funding secured for a Heritage trail in Wicklow Town which is now nearing completion. 24 locations of interest selected, with storey/information boards to provide a background and information on each site. Visitors will also be able to listen to this information on their smart phone.

In talks with the tourism department WCC with regards to developing a walking loop from Market Square to Ballyguile, looping around Dunbur and back.

Plans are being considered to erect a statue of St. Patrick at Travelahawke beach in recognition of his first arrival to Ireland at this location.

Greenway: The Irish Rail report on coastal erosion report is now available. In order to proceed further with the project, an Environmental Impact Study is required of which significant funding will be required. Mr. Shannon called on the members and staff of WMD to write to the local TD's requesting continued support for this project.

Park & Ride: The Town Team have been in discussions with the NTA with regards to the provision of a park & ride facility with shuttle buses running to DART and Luas services, also discussed the possibility of a bus corridor (running both north & south), from junction 4 to 14.

Commercial: The Part 8 for the proposed pontoon at South Quay has been granted, waiting now for the offshore licence to be granted in order for this project to proceed. It is hoped that when operational, it will increase capacity in the port.

The Town Team have had discussions with the Codling Bank Wind Park team, and are prepared to assist the group in their endeavours.

Digital Group: Website working well. Have been in contact with WCC regarding the creation of a digital hub, informed however that Claremont Campus is the priority. Wicklow Enterprise Park does have 'hot desks' available could be used as a small digital hub for the town.

Public Realm: Hoped to have lighting of historical buildings completed in the near future. Murals, lighting on Quarantine Hill, Salthouse Lane and Doctors Steps being examined in hopes to increase connectivity between Quays and Main Street.

Youth Group: Recently formed. Have come up with a proposal for a theatre for the town. LEADER has provided funding for a feasibility study which must be completed within 4-6 months. Will share that information once complete.

Courthouse: The Town Team are calling on the staff and members of WMD to write to the Department of Justice with regards to seeking reassurances and a timeline for the reopening of the vacated courthouse on Market Square. If it is not the intention of the Department of Justice to use it for court sittings, the question was asked can it be given over for community use?

The members were in agreement to write to the Department of Transport, local TD's and Irish Rail with regards to the proposed Greenway. It was also agreed to send a letter to the Department of Justice with regards to the vacated Courthouse.

Mr. Shannon thanked the members and staff for their continued support, and extended an invitation to all to attend the next AGM.

ITEM 5 (brought forward).

Update on outstanding works Newtownmountkennedy.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that there are a few outstanding jobs which will be finalised in the coming weeks.

The members praised the work of former Cllr Daire Nolan for his work in Newtownmountkennedy. The members also praised the staff of WMD, the Tidy Towns group, NTMK Forum for their contributions and that NTMK is now almost unrecognisable. The members felt that the town has benefitted greatly over the past few years.

The members expressed the need for a secondary school in the town. They also stressed that further expansion of the town should not be undertaken without investment in infrastructure.

The Cathaoirleach requested that the list of outstanding jobs be sent to reps from the Town Forum.

ITEM 3.

Discretionary Fund Update.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon presented an update on the discretionary job list to the members.

He informed the members that funding has been secured for works at the Ashford Weir, and that NTA funding has been received which will fund some of the jobs already on the discretionary list.

Comments/Queries.

- €10k for footpath works in Sycamore Drive not on this list.
- Traffic calming needed for Ballynerrin.
- Works on Dunbur Road crossing and footpath to Rugby club needed urgently.
- Should use this down time to prepare for the upcoming works on the proposed Rathnew to Glenealy footpath.
- Frustration that a lot of projects have not started and list getting longer.
- Can the €10k set aside for works at the old promenade be used elsewhere along the Murrough as parts are quite boggy.
- Need to get a start on the traffic calming works at Ballinastoe.
- Lack of consultation with the members with regards to funding applications for certain NTA projects. Members expressed their frustration at the lack of input and involvement. The proposed footpath to Glenealy (€400k applied for) particularly questioned.
- If undertaking a footpath from Rathnew to Glenealy, the sewer line should also be looked at.
- Footpath from Kidzone to graveyard needs to be widened.
- Parts of Church Street car park in bad repair. Can funds allocated for works on Bridge St be diverted to repairs in the carpark?
- The securing of funding into the District very much welcomed.
- Requested that this progress report be sent to members every 2 months.

District Manager Brian Gleeson reminded the members that the NTA funded jobs will have to be prioritised, and that there will be a limited window of opportunity to have these completed. He also advised that there is very short lead in time to prepare NTA funding applications. He requested the members to come back with a list of priority jobs for 2021 in respect of the Discretionary Funding Allocation.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon explained to the members that the NTA have specific criteria for proposed projects, and that they favour and promote projects that join population centres and improve greater connectivity for walkers and cyclists. It was agreed to send the members a copy of the criteria.

ITEM 4.

Update on Fitzwilliam Square.

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that works on the square are substantially complete, and snagging is currently underway.

Comments/Queries:

- Can the new bin installed be moved towards Pineto's?
- Concern that children may walk on top of the wall at the pedestrianised area, and fall down onto the metal railings, can this be looked at?
- Will handrails be installed along the steps?

ITEM 6.

District Engineers Report.

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

Housing:

- Work continuing on general maintenance and repairs.
- Technical support to WCC-Housing Dept:
 - Re-lets and emergency accommodation:
1 standard, 0 emergency accommodation, 2 returned to WCC Housing Dept, 4 have works continuing on site, 2 house purchases being finalised.
 - DPGs: 1 out to tender, 3 onsite, 2 stair lifts completed
 - 1 fire damaged house work in progress.

Roads:

- A number of new footpath and road scheme funding announced this week. Separate report to follow.
- Pothole repairs continue. Sites at Brittas Bay and Newtown done.
- Major drainage jobs on Glenealy-Rathdrum road, Ballyhorsey and Newtown currently being addressed.
- Gritting since 24th January, 4 single and 7 double runs
- Road Opening Licences (approx. 10) continue to be processed and agreed.

Environment:

- Climate Action budget is being used to rent the Big Bellied Bins for the Wicklow Area for a period of 6 months.
- A Charger for EVs will be installed in the Murrough Depot. MD looking at possibility of incorporating EV Vans into the fleet.
- Foamstream Machine was purchased and will be deployed in the coming months in the towns along the East Coast. Initially it will be used for weed control in playgrounds and graveyards.
- Biodiversity projects: Swift and Brittas Bay.
- The first stage of application for a Better Energy Community (BEC) has been passed with the following projects in the Wicklow MD approved:
 - Wicklow Town Hall – Installation of Solar PV Panels and Lighting Upgrade.
 - Coral Leisure Centre – Heat Pump Upgrade
 - Clermont – Heating Controls for the building and Solar PV Panel.

Planning

- 0 Section 254 applications processed for tables and chairs.

Playgrounds

- 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.
- Procured repairs and some equipment replacement for adult gym along promenade

Public Liability

- 1 new case (1 material damage, 0 personal injuries) and 0 settled/closed.

Comments/Queries:

- Footpath urgently needed from Ballinahinch Woods Estate to Ashford Village on the Roundwood road. Should be a condition of planning permission for the recently approved Estate, can this be checked? - *Kevin Scanlon – An Bord Pleanála granted permission for the additional houses with the condition that a footpath pedestrian crossing be installed.*
- Problems with water logging on the Riverwalk at the back of the old Vaha site.
- Sequencing of traffic lights at Grand Hotel much improved.
- Can the stop sign on High Street be moved slightly to enable pigeon club members ease of access to the building when loading and unloading their vehicles?
- Commend staff for leaving grit at the entrance of some estates during recent frosty snap. Can storage bunkers be purchased for this purpose?
- Concerns raised regarding significant water ponding in the cul de sac in Ballinalea Estate.
- Moss growth on the cycle path on the port road causing issues.
- Will the cycle path on the Dunbur Road be re-instated?

ITEM 7.

Correspondence.

None received.

District Administrator Joan Sinnott did however advise the members that the closing date for receipt of applications for Estate Development grants is the 5th March. Ms Sinnott advised that this has been advertised and also promoted on social media.

ITEM 8.

A.O.B.

It was queried why there are no motions put forward at the WMD meetings? Cathaoirleach John Snell advised members that any issues not on the Agenda can be raised under A.O.B. and that members can be accommodated in this way.

District Manager Brian Gleeson explained that motions brought forward to a meeting, must be given in writing 30 days in advance.

CATHAOIRLEACH JOHN SNELL CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 5.05 PM.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____