



**Wicklow County Council
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 08th MARCH 2017

COMMUNITY FIELD CENTRE – ALLEN PARK AUGHRIM

Present: Cllr. Pat Kennedy, Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Tommy Annesley
Cllr. Sylvester Bourke
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald
Cllr. Miriam Murphy
Cllr. Mary McDonald

Officials Present: Mr. Michael Geaney, A/District Manager
Ms. Linda McDonald, District Administrator
Mr. Jack Kelly, District Engineer
Ms. Margaret Hartnett, Senior Executive Engineer WCC
Mr. Sean Dunne, Executive Technician AMD
Ms. Sinéad Boddy, Assistant Staff Officer.

Cllr Pat Kennedy welcomed everyone to the meeting and said having the meeting in Aughrim created a little bit of history as this is the first ever Council meeting to be held in the village. He said that Aughrim was a village very close to his heart, having many friends there and having received his primary education there. He also thanked all who made it possible to have the Council meeting in the village along with the Aughrim Community, Sports and Leisure Association for the use of the premises. Cllr Kennedy spoke at length about Andy Allen after whom the community field is named. Cllr Kennedy said part of our job as public representatives is to listen to the communities and that is what we will be doing here today, listening to the community of Aughrim.

Item 1 - Vote of Sympathy:

The Members expressed votes of sympathy to the families of the following, who recently passed away:

Mark Byrne, Alec Byrne, Johnnie Cullen, Anna Hagan, Rose Deering, Alfie O'Leary, Sean Maher, William James Skuce, Father in Law of Rev Sherwood, and Betty Bernigham Lower Tinahask.

Cllr Kennedy asked that Andy Allen and Tom Keenan be remembered on this historic day.

The members expressed get well wishes to Eileen Clandillon and said she would be missed from the Music Festival this year.

A minutes silence was observed.

Item 2 – Confirmation of Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Meeting, held on the 14th of December 2016:

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 08th February 2017 were proposed by Cllr McDonald and seconded by Cllr Bourke.

Item 3 – Matters Arising:

Cllr Bourke asked to revisit the discretionary spend for 2017 and why the €1,500.00 proposed for Castlemacadam graveyard was not agreed as part of the spend. Jack Kelly DE said that roads and footpaths were more of a priority and Cllr Bourke asked that it be noted that he did not agree with this. Jack Kelly DE asked what the funding was required for and Cllr Bourke replied that it was needed to insure volunteers and this was needed to keep the committee going. Cllr Kennedy and Jack Kelly said that if funding became available throughout the year we could look at it again. Cllr Bourke said that would be appreciated. Cllr Kennedy said that this was an issue for all graveyard committees throughout the county and needs to be addressed by Wicklow County Council. IPBMI was to be contacted. Ms McDonald DA said that a notice of motion went before the Wicklow County Council and they have confirmed that they will not insure these projects. Cllr Annesley said that these volunteers are carrying out works for Wicklow County Council and if they stop the work would fall back to Wicklow County Council. The volunteers should be entitled to public indemnity. Cllr Fitzgerald said this has been raised before and insurance should be extended to the volunteers. Cllr Fitzgerald said that a further meeting has been scheduled and Cllr Kennedy said that the issue of the committees not being eligible to apply for community grants should also be raised at the meeting. Cllr Bourke asked if AMD could do some works to assist them to show that they are not being ignored.

Cllr Annesley thanked Jackie Carroll SEO Housing for the full housing report and was surprised by the report that 36 units were to be built by an AHB on the Vale Rd., and while this is positive why are we only finding out now. Cllr Murphy agreed with Cllr Annesley and said this has not come up at the SPC meeting and public representatives are not fully informed. Cllr Fitzgerald said that this application was dealt with in a very short timeframe as there is a possibility of the planning approval expiring on the site.

Item 4: To consider proposals for the upgrade of the Roundabout on the Wexford Rd./Vale Rd. junction.

Margaret Hartnett SEE presented the proposals for the upgrade of the roundabout as part of the overall scheme for the town. An allocation has been made to complete the design stage of the upgrade for the Wexford Rd/Vale Rd roundabout with the emphasis on improving pedestrian safety. It is intended to keep the roundabout system with 4 pedestrian crossings. Public consultation phase will follow the design phase.

Part 1 of the overall scheme was the upgrade at the junction at Bridge St. coming on to Main St. and there is a plan to put bollards at the new pedestrian crossing on Bridge St. Jack Kelly DE added that tabletop ramps may be added at the Main St. pedestrian crossing. Cllr Fitzgerald said that the crossing on Bridge St. was working out fine but the crossing on Main St. was a waste of time. Cllr Annesley said it was a big problem for HGV drivers as they are unable to see pedestrians when traffic is slowed. Cllr Murphy agreed with both Cllr's and said that they hadn't been listened to when the plans were agreed for two crossings at the junction. They are getting the fallout from this and when it comes to the plans for the Wexford Rd/Vale Rd junction we need to learn from our mistakes. Cllr McDonald said that more consultations were needed for the next phase. Cllr Kennedy said that this phase was in preliminary stage and Margaret Hartnett said that there would be a public consultation process and no dates had been agreed for this yet. Jack Kelly DE said that vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists were a priority and funds will only be made available to improve safety and the views of the Councillors were not ignored and are valued.

Item 5 : Presentation on the proposed re-development of the Parade Ground, Arklow Town.

Sean Dunne gave a presentation on plans to upgrade Parade Ground, Arklow and make it a focal point for the town which would include lighting up the walls of Ormonde Castle and the statue of Fr Murphy. There are also plans to remove some trees and possibly the railings at the Courthouse to make better use of the space. The upgrade works will take a number of months to complete and the works done on a phased basis.

Cllr Murphy welcomed this proposal and said that it would attract tourists to the town and the plan is a very positive step for the town. Cllr Murphy asked if there would be a consultation process before the works begin and Sean Dunne confirmed that there would be. Cllr McDonald said she was delighted to see this raised again and will really clean the area up. Cllr McDonald asked if this would come from the discretionary fund for 2017 and Jack Kelly DE said that funding has not yet been allocated for the works. Cllr Bourke thanked Sean Dunne for his work on the plans and supports the proposals and said it may slow the traffic down and make it safer for pedestrians. Cllr Bourke asked if the railings at the statue would be moved and Sean Dunne confirmed that they would be staying. Cllr Fitzgerald said that he welcomed the cleaning works on the Courthouse and that the buildings needs to be looked after. Cllr Kennedy said that the plan was great and asked if there was a cost estimate and Sean Dunne said that it would cost in the region of €200,000.00. Cllr

Kennedy said that the Town Team may be able to contribute in some way. Jack Kelly said that it would be important to get public opinion on the proposal.

Item 6: Update on the Roads Programme for 2017 from District Engineer

Cllr Kennedy said that AMD were working through the proposed works for 2017 at good speed.

Item 7: To receive a presentation from Aughrim Active Retirement Group

Margaret Brady of the Aughrim Active Retirement Group gave a presentation on the history of the group and their current activities and achievements. The main item of concern for the older residents is the lack of public transport, which impacts on mental and physical wellbeing. Ms Brady also expressed the appreciation of the group on being awarded a community grant last year.

Cllr Kennedy commended the group for all the effort they put into all their activities on behalf of the older residents of the village and knows that home security is a worry for a lot of residents. Cllr Kennedy said he has been fighting to increase the number of Gardaí for the area. Cllr Kennedy said that €26,000.00 was spent on upgrading the public lighting on the Rednagh Road last year. Cllr Fitzgerald said he has also raised the issue of Gardaí numbers with the local Inspector and is confident that the area will have increased numbers with the next passing out from Templemore Garda College. Cllr Murphy, Cllr Annesley, Cllr Bourke and Cllr McDonald also commended the group on their huge input to the community.

Item 8: To receive a presentation from Aughrim Business Association

Deirdre Fox secretary of the Aughrim Business Association gave a presentation on behalf of the businesses in the Aughrim Area. The association was established to promote the area for potential and existing businesses. All the promotional work is run on subscriptions from the members. One of the main issues in the area is the lack of an ATM, which is affecting tourists to the village as well as the residents. Businesses do not want to send customers to other towns to get access to cash. She also raised the issue of parking in the village. Cllr Kennedy said creating new parking areas was very difficult and a lot of work went into securing the land behind the Garda Station and it is very disappointing that it could not go through. Deirdre fox asked if there was a plan B and Jack Kelly DE and Cllr Kennedy said no and that bigger towns in the district also have the same issue and no land available to them. Cllr Annesley acknowledged the work the association were doing and that the larger group is well represented which is especially important in a small village. He also said that the Tidy Towns success really lifted the village and can be used to promote the village. Cllr Murphy said it was great that a small village had such active groups representing its residents and to ask for help if needed. Cllr Bourke congratulated Deirdre Fox and said that Aughrim is a real jewel in the crown for County Wicklow and said the members would help in any way they could. Cllr McDonald said it was great to get feedback and for the group to keep in touch.

Margaret Brady asked if there was a possibility of getting a bike stand for the village Main St and both Jack Kelly DE and Cllr Kennedy agreed to look into this.

Item 9: To receive a presentation from Aughrim Community Field Association

Cllr Kennedy expressed thanks on behalf of all present to the Association for using the facility for the meeting and invited Liam O'Loughlin to make his presentation. Liam O'Loughlin said it was a very special occasion and Aughrim was delighted to host the meeting. Liam said that John O'Shea (Vice President and trustee) and his wife Ann, dedicated members of the Association, could not be here today and wanted to wish them both well. Liam gave the history of the facility from its beginnings in the 1980's to the short term future plans to incorporate a small parcel of land near the field and the plans for a footbridge over the river. Liam went on to acknowledge the support from the local authority over the years.

Cllr Kennedy acknowledged all of the hard work and effort over the years in making the facility what it is today and passed on best wishes to John and Ann O'Shea. Cllr Kennedy said no price could be put on the facility and the value it holds for the residents of all ages and it is such a great facility to have in a small village. Cllr McDonald thanked Liam for the presentation and said the facility was a testament to what public groups can do for providing for their own communities and everyone should get involved. Cllr Murphy also thanked Liam and she said it was amazing to hear the history of the building of the centre and that many take for granted how this achievement came about. Cllr Murphy said it was great to hear that further development was planned and wished the Association well in future projects. Cllr Fitzgerald said the centre was a testament to the work and commitment of the people involved and it is great to have sports facilities for the community especially for the youth. Cllr Annesley and Cllr Bourke agreed that it was a great facility and a great achievement by the Aughrim community.

Item 10: To receive a presentation from Brid Owens Principal of Aughrim N.S.

Brid Owens, principal of Aughrim N.S. gave a presentation on the school and thanked the chair for the invite to the meeting. Ms Owens said that the number of children attending the school had doubled in the last 10 years which is significant for a small rural school. Aughrim now have 16 teachers and an administrative principal. Ms Owens gave the history of the building of the school as it stands today. Ms Owens said that the school has a duty of care to provide adequate facilities for the children. A departmental whole school evaluation was carried out and the results from that were excellent. Ms Owens thanked the staff of Wicklow County Council and Cllr Pat Kennedy for the time put into getting the traffic calming works started for outside the school.

All of the Councillors thanked Ms Owens for her presentation and congratulated her on the great work the school was doing for its pupils.

Item 11: To provide updates on the following projects –

Ms McDonald gave the following updates –

A -South Green Playground

The upgrade works were nearing completion and suggested an opening date of the 12th April 2017 at 12.30pm. This was agreed by all.

B -Town Team

The third Town Team meeting was held on the 22nd February and 5 sub-committees formed with the chair of each sub-committee requested to give a progress report at the next meeting.

C- Arklow Courthouse

Some funding was made available for cleaning the exterior of the Courthouse and the lighting on the walls of the building. The Chief Executive is to meet with a representative from the Courts Service to discuss the refurbishment of the building.

D- Coastal Protection Works on the North Beach

The application for funding was rejected and this should be raised at the meeting with the TD's on the 27th March.

Cllr Bourke said that TD Simon Harris would do what he could and that AMD possibly applied for too much. Cllr Murphy and Cllr McDonald said that we were let down and that this was a huge amenity to the town and needed to be protected.

E- Christmas Festival

There is an open meeting scheduled for the 28th March and it is hoped that new people will be interested in being involved at committee level.

F – Halloween Festival for Arklow Town

A meeting is scheduled in the coming weeks and representatives from the local schools have been invited to help put together some ideas for the festival.

Item 12: Correspondence:

Ms McDonald read out the reply form Rosemarie Dennison in relation to the review of the buildings under the Derelict Sites Act and the building known as the Fifty Six was considered derelict under the Act and planning intend to notify the owner. Ms Dennison asked who owns the buildings on Main St and Cllr Annesley said he thought NAMA now owned the building.

Ms McDonald read out correspondence received in relation to the proposed ramps at Woodlands and Cllr Fitzgerald asked if there was a problem with the sightlines in the estate and Jack Kelly DE said that ideally you would plan for no straight runs in an estate at the planning stage. The primary responsibility is on the driver (residents) in Woodlands to drive within the speed limit and with due care and attention. The proposal cannot go ahead without the decision being unanimous. Michael Geaney

DM said that he felt that 13 ramps and 2 cushions were enough in the estate. Cllr Kennedy said that to progress this we may need a poll of the residents and all agreed.

Ms McDonald read out correspondence received from Ian Kearon who feels the one-way system at Castlepark/Dunne's Lane is affecting his business. All agreed to put this on the agenda for the April meeting.

Ms McDonald read out correspondence received from the residents of Coolgreany Road. The Traffic Warden's presence is not working as the parents drive off when they see the warden approaching. Ms McDonald suggested that a meeting could be arranged with the residents and the members for 5:30pm after the April AMD meeting. Cllr Kennedy suggested inviting a representative from An Garda Síochána and 2 or 3 residents.

Ms McDonald read out a request from McFaddens Funfair to have the funfair in the town in the last week in May – all members were opposed to this.

Ms McDonald said she received confirmation from Laura English – Disability Federation of Ireland - that she would attend the April meeting.

Ms McDonald read out correspondence from Grace McManus - Comhairle na nÓg – who want to hold a meeting in the Chamber after the next meeting. Ms McDonald suggested that they be invited into a part of the meeting.

Item 13: AOB:

Cllr Bourke asked if there was any information available on the Village Renewal Scheme as to what towns and villages are included.

Cllr Annesley asked if it was possible to use CCTV footage as evidence when bringing people to court over dog fouling and Michael Geaney DM said he would check this out.

Jack Kelly DE said that it is proposed to improve the junction at the graveyard in Rathdrum and he would appreciate any views or comments before work goes ahead and plans are drawn up. There should be a lot of consultation on this before any plans are proposed. Cllr Kennedy said that the guidelines state that the roads should meet at a right angle as a standard. All agreed to look at this.

Cllr Kennedy asked if a meeting had been scheduled with IW yet and Ms McDonald confirmed that no reply had been received. Cllr Fitzgerald said that there may be a meeting before the next County Council meeting and he would clarify this.

Cllr Kennedy acknowledged Hugh Doyle's and Liam Lott's attendance at the meeting and the work they do for the District. He also confirmed that 5 new general operatives will be starting in the District in the coming weeks.

Cllr Kennedy said that it was part of a Councillors and public officials job is to listen to the public and that a lot was learned at this meeting. Cllr Kennedy expressed his

thanks on behalf of all there to the ladies and Liam for hosting the meeting and providing refreshments.

Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 12th April 2017.

Signed: Pat Kennedy

Cllr. Pat Kennedy, Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District.

Signed: Linda McDonald

Ms. Linda McDonald, Arklow Municipal District Administrator