



**Wicklow County Council
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9th MAY 2018

In Allen Park, Aughrim

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

Officials Present: Mr. Michael Geaney, District Manager
Ms. Linda McDonald, District Administrator
Mr. Brendan Doyle, District Engineer
Ms. Sinéad Boddy, Assistant Staff Officer

Item 1 - Vote of Sympathy:

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

Maeve Power, Andy Keogh, Teresa Byrne, Bernard Mulpeter, Charlie Melia, Catherine Fitzgerald, Ellen Wolohan, Elizabeth Browne, Elizabeth Child, Louie Keogh, Dominic Ryan, Maura Martin, Julia Brady.

A minutes silence was observed.

Item 2 – Confirmation of Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Meeting, held on the 11th of April 2018.

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 11th April 2018 were proposed by Cllr Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr Kennedy.

Item 3 – Matters Arising:

Cllr Annesley thanked Liam O Loughlin and the members of the Aughrim Active Retirement for organising the hall for the meeting today.

Cllr Annesley welcomed DE Brendan Doyle to the meeting.

Cllr Kennedy enquired if a letter had issued to IW – Aughrim remains stagnated in relation to planning and housing. DM Michael Geaney confirmed that no response had been received to date.

Item 4: To receive a presentation from Aughrim Active Retirement Group.

Margaret Brady from Aughrim Active Retirement gave a presentation on behalf of the group and thanked AMD for the opportunity to present.

It was noted that the communication around the recent boil water notice from IW was inadequate and has led to subsequent health issues throughout the town.

The issue of parking in the town and the previous proposal to use land adjoining the Garda Station was also raised and the fact that it had not progressed any further since the last meeting.

Ms McDonald DA said she would follow up on the parking proposal and look for confirmation in writing.

Also raised was the lack of public transport for the town and that the proposed scheme would only service those who consume alcohol and it seems that vintners have more power. Ms Brady also highlighted that older people in Aughrim can pay up to €50 for taxi journeys to attend medical appointments and expressed disappointment that no meaningful measures are being put in place to address this on-going issue. Cllr Annesley acknowledged that this is a problem nationally.

Further discussion continued regarding the boil water notice and Michael Geaney DM stated that 3 clear samples would be required before the notice could be lifted. Ms Brady stated again that no notification had been received and notice was only given online and that it wasn't even mentioned on the news. Cllr Murphy said that it was mentioned on the news bulletins on the local radio station. Cllr Fitzgerald said that it was irresponsible of IW not to communicate the notice better and Cllr Kennedy agreed that and commented that IW were good at the good news spin only and that timely communication was required.

Cllr Kennedy suggested that a request should go to An Garda Síochána to request that a young Garda could be stationed in the house and this would be a visible presence in the town. Ms McDonald agreed to write to Chief Superintendent JP Quirke with about the lack of Gardaí in the area.

Item 5 : To receive an update on housing projects within the district.

Ms McDonald gave an update on the projects in the district –

- 20 units under construction at Avondale Heights Rathdrum – completion later this year.
- 1st phase of Delany Park, 17 units – Completion November 2018.
- Conversion of Old Library building St Mary's Rd – 7 apartments – completion end of 2018.
- 2nd and 3rd phase of Delany Park – 47 Units – Part VIII granted – commencement date to be confirmed.

It was noted that 5 individuals conformed homeless in the district and more than 600 on the social housing register for the district, 3657 for the County.

Cllr Fitzgerald pointed out that WCC has a duty of care to these people and we are facing a huge problem and that the anomaly in applying for RAS or HAP taking people off the register is not helping when they need to re-register when they come out of these schemes. He also stated that tenants cannot be forced to give up family homes and downsize and that the opportunity is there to let people know of upcoming options for housing. Cllr Murphy said that a lot of people don't realise they need to re-register if they are coming out of the RAS scheme.

Cllr Annesley said that there seems to be a lack of interest from builders generally in schemes advertised recently.

Cllr Bourke asked if we were doing enough in looking for additional funding and should we aim higher as we are not hitting our targets. Can something be done to improve this.

Cllr Kennedy asked if Government policy on rural one off housing had changed and Cllr Annesley said that WCC were looking for 4/6 units as one off builds would not solve the problem.

The allocation of DPGs was discussed and it was noted that cases in greater need were given priority and that the cases considered with lower needs never get funding leading to residents in need of grant assistance becoming prisoners in their own homes. Cllr Fitzgerald stated that Housing was inundated with applications and the allocation of funding was not sufficient to meet needs.

Item 6: To discuss street lighting repairs for AMD

An up to date report on lighting repairs was discussed and was considered to be conservative. The delay in getting repairs completed was also discussed and it was suggested that the brighter evenings might improve the number of repairs carried out.

Item 7: To receive an update on the Arklow Harbour FLAG Projects.

An update was given on the following projects –

- Installation of fisherman's hoist – training would commence once the upgrade works were completed.
- Fisherman's units – site assessment has been completed and preliminary drawings and costings have been prepared.
- Skua Lightship – tender for renovation to be awarded in the coming weeks and the site for the lightship will be the roundabout at junction 20 – discussed with TII.

Item 8: To receive a report from Brendan Doyle Senior Executive Engineer on the following works - update on the following –

- **Road Strengthening**

Strengthening works on the L-6126 – Glenmalure and the L-2196-0 & L-2196-30 – Moorshill/ Ballinasillogue have now been completed. The road strengthening job on the R748 at Rosnastraw has been granted with Plazamont Ltd. appointed as contractor. These works are expected to commence before next month's district meeting.

There are three remaining road strengthening jobs to be sent out to tender, namely the R752 at Avoca (Tinnahinch), R772 at Ferrybank and the L-2188 at Kish. It is intended that these projects be issued to the market within the coming weeks for completion during the summer months.

- **Surface Dressing**

A list of surface dressing has been compiled and issued to the Roads Department. Feedback is currently awaited as to when these works can be scheduled for completion during the summer months. These works include the following:

- L-6197 – Ballycoog to Clone (overlaid last year by private contractor Moriarty)
- L-2143 – Annacurragh to Preban (overlaid last year by private contractor Moriarty)
- L-2116 – Ballydowling
- R-754 – Avoca to Conary
- L-6126 – Glenmalure (overlaid week commencing 23rd April 2018)
- L-2196-0 & L-2196-30 – Moorshill/ Ballinasillogue (overlaid in the last month)
- L-7136 – Cappagh/Askanagap

Discretionary Projects

With regard to the discretionary projects list of approximately 15 different projects agreed, each of the projects are at varying stages of progression. At a high level the following is noted;

Projects complete:

- Footpath at Emoclew Road Boxing Club & Wexford Road Arklow

Projects nearing commencement/Ongoing:

- Footpaths at Glenview Thomastown – awaiting PO
- Footpaths at Coolgreaney Road – awaiting PO
- Footpath near St. Saviours NS Rathdrum – Works are ongoing

Projects at pricing/pre-commencement stage:

- Traffic Calming Avoca NS
- Footpaths at the following locations;
 - WCC Housing Estate Kirikee
 - Avonbeg Heights Ballinaclesh
 - Parnell Park Rathdrum
 - Ashleigh CLS and Mountain Bay Arklow
- Resurface road at Main junction in Aughrim
- Painting grant scheme Arklow Town
- CCTV Arklow Town
- Street light at Beech Road
- Parade Ground Arklow
- 4 Age Friendly Parking Spaces & Signage

Footpaths/IPB Remedial Works

There are a number of locations identified for remedial footpath works. The current status is that the extents of footpath repairs are being marked up physically to enable potential contractors review and quantify the work involved. Once this work has been completed the works will be issued to contractors for pricing. It is our hope that all of the footpath repair/upgrade works can be completed within the coming summer months.

Low cost Safety Schemes

There are four pedestrian crossing schemes approved under the low cost safety schemes. These schemes are currently being prepared for contractor pricing with the aim of works commencing in the coming weeks once winning contractors are identified and appointed.

Item 9: to receive a report from Rob Mulhall Executive Engineer on the following projects.

Abbey Graveyard

Work is on-going with the refurbishment of the damaged headstones. These should be completed within the next week or so. Arrangements are being made to cut the grass within the graveyard and clean up any litter in preparation for the imminent opening.

Arklow Courthouse

The fire report for the courthouse was due to be submitted to WCC Fire Officer last Friday. We do not know how long it will take to get the report approved but we'd expect that it should be approved prior to the June meeting. Once the fire report is complete we will be in a position to further develop budgets for the renovation of the upper and lower floors.

Refurbishment works are on-going on the roof and weather permitting they should be completed within next 2-3 weeks.

Redevelopment of the Parade Ground

The manager's report for the Part VIII is currently being drafted. We are hoping to enter negotiations with Irish Rail in the coming weeks regarding parking arrangements at mass times in the train station car park. We hope to include a number of proposed parking alternatives for mass patrons within the final manager's report in order to allay fears of the public regarding the shortage of parking at mass times. It is our hope that the manager's report will be submitted for approval prior to the next meeting.

Works by Virgin Media

Works by Virgin Media will continue for another 6 months.

Skua Lightship Lantern Project

Discussed with Item 7.

Item 10: to Receive a report from Linda McDonald District Administrator on the following projects:

Arklow Town Team

Ms McDonald advised that the next meeting was to be held next week.

Cllr Murphy said she was following up with S Meeres UCD about applying for a grant to display her work on Arklow Town and for Sept –Oct 2018.

Flower Basket Scheme/ Irrigation Scheme

Civil works for the irrigation scheme are starting and hoped to have baskets hung in early June. The application for LEADER funding for the scheme would not now be eligible.

Cllr Annesley wished to pass on his appreciation for the work Van der Wels put into the scheme.

Ronnie Delany Sculpture

The tender process is now open.

The total required for the project is €85,000 and the current shortfall is €52000.

Cllr Fitzgerald suggested AMD write out to prospective sponsors again.

Arklow Flood Relief Scheme

WCC and IW are working to integrate the FRS works and the WWTP works in Arklow town. An EIS statement will be required and it is hoped to have the schemes completed by 2020.

The planning application for the WWTP should be submitted in mid-July.

Cllr Annesley asked if the recent dive survey was relevant to these works and Michael Geaney DM said survey was relevant to both. Members agreed that IW and WCC need to provide regular updates on both and Ms McDonald DA and Michael Geaney DM both agreed that it will be kept on the agenda.

Item 11: To set a date for the Annual Meeting

The annual meeting was scheduled for 3pm, 13th June 2018.

The following schedule was agreed –

2.00pm Chamber of Commerce Presentation

3.00pm Annual Meeting AMD

3.20pm Presentation from Arklow Bay Hotel

3.30pm Ordinary Meeting AMD

5.30pm Refreshments

7.00pm Arklow Town Team Meeting

Item 12:Correspondence.

Twinning reception 17th May 4.30pm – Chamber and Foyer area.

Notice issued in relation to revised opening hours for AMD offices – public counter open until 4pm.

Item 13: Any Other Business.

Cllr Bourke paid tribute to Kevin Byrne who is retiring after 37 years of service.

The debris under the 19 arches bridge needs to be removed.

The grass around the Poundhill area and the Dublin Road roundabouts need to be trimmed on the approach to the town. Ms McDonald said that there had only been a few dry days since the spell of bad weather.

Cllr Kennedy also wished Kay Leeson a long and happy retirement.

He asked if the scouts could paint the Whitebridge in Avoca as a project. He expressed disappointment at the closure of Avondale house over the summer months.


The recent aggravated burglary in Arklow has caused concern over the number of Gardaí stationed in the district being inadequate to cover the area and that the cover per capita was a lot lower than what was provided for cities.

It was noted that the members were disappointed that no LIS scheme were granted in the area for this year and Cllr Bourke asked if there would be supplementary scheme this year.

The members were asked to nominate sites in the district for the installation of street furniture.

Cllr Annesley wished all those retiring over the next few weeks and asked if replacements had been appointed yet. Brendan Doyle DE and Michael Geaney DM both said they were following up on getting the staff in place.

Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 13th June 2018.

Signed: 

Cllr. Miriam Murphy, Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District.

Signed: 

Ms. Linda McDonald, Arklow Municipal District Administrator