

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass
held in The Library, Market House, Dunlavin on 21st September 2015 at 10.30 a.m.**

Present: Councillor Vincent Blake
Councillor Thomas Cullen
Councillor Pat Doran
Councillor Gerry O'Neill
Councillor James Ruttle
Councillor Edward Timmins

Also Present: Mr. Sean Quirke, Director of Services
Mr. Declan Geraghty, Senior Executive Engineer
Ms. Máire Halvey, District Administrator

Apologies: Mr. Ken Jones, Executive Engineer

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor James Ruttle, opened the Ordinary Meeting.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 27th July 2015

Councillor Vincent Blake proposed confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 27th July 2015 and Councillor Gerry O'Neill seconded the proposal.

Cllr. Edward Timmins made a comment as to whether or not it would be possible to have decisions brought back to the Municipal District from the County Council for further consideration where a matter had been first approved in the Municipal District and then submitted to the full Council for approval. Mr. Sean Quirke stated that Part VIII must be dealt with by the County Council and that Part VIII could be devolved but that no decision had been made on that by the full Council.

Cllr. Thomas Cullen commented that he was surprised not to see mention of the Hangman's Bend as part of the minutes given his mention of it during discussion on roads matters.

The members requested a report on the public water supply in Dunlavin. Cllr. Ruttle stated that there was a lack on clarity on the current situation.

2. Roads and Footpaths in Dunlavin

Cllr. Timmins stated that minor issues have been dealt with but the overall situation remained the same. Cllr. Timmins is to submit an update of the situation so that a plan to resolve the outstanding matters could be formulated. Mr. Geraghty suggested that we could then look for funding. Cllr. Ruttle stated that there was a problem with water flowing down the hill by Burkes Pub, Main Street, Dunlavin.

3. Lining on Wicklow Gap Road

Cllr. Ruttle stated that lining being done only where the road was resurfaced should be a safety issue and that something should go forward from this Municipal District. Cllr. Timmins totally agreed that it was a safety matter. Cllr. Gerry O'Neill agreed and stated that in the U.K. there were warning signs and that same should be considered here. Cllr O'Neill stated that there was also a problem at the Poulaphuca Bends with bushes and small trees and that we should talk to Kildare County Council regarding cleaning back growth.

Mr. Declan Geraghty stated that the cost of white lining is €1,500 per kilometre, the cost of yellow lining is €3,000 per kilometre and the cost of studs is €1,800 per kilometre.

Cllr. Thomas Cullen stated that Kerry County Council and Galway County Council seemed to be able to get specific grants for tourism and could a special case not be made for the Wicklow Gap Road as it was en route to Glendalough. Mr. Sean Quirke stated that he would look for details regarding specific grants. Cllr. Cullen stated that the designation of the road was a matter for the NRA. Mr. Geraghty stated that the Municipal District used to have a programme for white lining but this funding was no longer available.

4. Staffing

There was also a discussion on local property tax funding. Mr. Declan Geraghty advised that the Municipal District was heading for an overspend. Mr. Quirke stated that it was no longer possible to charge wages out to other codes such as water.

Cllr. Doran referred to the reduction in staff in the Tinahely area. Mr. Quirke stated that recruitment has been restricted in the wider public sector. Mr. Geraghty stated that the District hadn't got any worker replaced in the last eight years.

Cllr. Cullen stated that all this happened when twenty per cent of the planning fees were sent to east Wicklow to build Port Access Road. Cllr. Timmins stated that this was a different issue. Cllr. Ruttle stated that the budget workshop was on that day and that now was the time to make a submission.

Cllr. Doran stated that one man is not supposed to fill a pothole on his own and that it should be three.

5. Footpath in Hollywood

Cllr. Ruttle enquired if there was any funding. Mr. Geraghty stated that he didn't have an up to date reply but that the project was in the programme but that there was no funding to date. The approximate cost was €80,000 to €90,000 and that land acquisition was also involved.

6. Bridge Maintenance

It was stated that bridges needing minor repairs haven't been done. Mr. Geraghty stated that Mr. Declan Marnane Senior Engineer had provided a report for funding for 2015 on the bridges in the sum of €204,000 with €34,000 allocated for Liffey Bridge on Sally Gap Road. Mr. Quirke stated that the bridge crew had been disbanded due to reductions in funding. Mr. Geraghty stated that the Municipal District does what it can but it can be difficult as scaffolding is often needed. Mr. Geraghty stated that Kings River Bridge also needs work but that a contractor will be required for this as the complexity of the work is beyond the crew.

Cllr. Timmins stated that Colbinstown Bridge has signs for 7.5 tonnes but that 40ft trucks were using it.

Cllr. Vincent Blake stated that he had given a list of bridges to Mr. Declan Marnane.

7. Coillte

It was stated that there was a lot of road damage e.g. lorries breaking off the edge of the road, major operations pulling out of minor roads but not contributing to the costs of roads. Cllr. Cullen stated that trees are also meeting and that Coillte was supposed to be pulling back trees fifteen feet for frost, etc. Mr. Geraghty stated that he has a meeting with Coillte once a year and works are scheduled so as not to damage soft roads and that this district doesn't have a huge problem although there was some culvert damage this year. Cllr. Doran enquired as to where the motor tax paid by forestry lorries and milk lorries was going. Cllr. O'Neill stated that he didn't agree and that Knocknadroose was suffering badly and enquired if Coillte was exempt. Cllr. Cullen proposed a liaison committee between Coillte and the County Council. Mr. Geraghty stated that we already have that once a year and that we try to get forestry near vulnerable road done during the summer months. Cllr. Ruttle enquired if it would be possible to let the councillors know and Mr. Geraghty stated that the council is only aware of Coillte works only and that there is no relationship with private contractors. Cllr. Ruttle stated that the roads are inadequate and that it's not Coillte's fault. Mr. Geraghty stated that clear felling can alter run-off of water and that this can cause problems.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Notice of Motion:

(i) Notice of Motion in the name of Cllr. Vincent Blake (22.06.2015)

“That Wicklow County Council provides a street light on the entrance to Fairgreen, Tinahely between the Courthouse and the Chemist Shop to help alleviate anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of Peter Dunne’s house.”

There were enquiries as to the cost. It was also disputed that it was a private road if it was open at both ends. It was enquired if there was any mechanism to prove that it isn’t private. Mr. Geraghty stated that all one-off lighting is dealt with by Mr. Declan O’Brien, S.E.E. and stated that he didn’t have a costing. Cllr. Blake asked if it could be costed and stated that the family dispute that it is a private road. Mr. Quirke stated that it could be a private road with public right of way and that a light wouldn’t be put on a private road.

10. Any Other Business

(i) Discretionary Spend.

The councillors were requested to advise as to what works they wished to have done and that a list of spend to date would be sent out to each councillor.

(ii) Burgage Plan

Cllr. O’Neill enquired if it might be possible to eliminate industrial use and use for housing needs.

(iii) Next Meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting in Blessington and also the budget meeting when arranged.

Mr. Jimmy Whittle of Dunlavin Forum stated that it was powerful to have the opportunity to move the meetings around and that it was great to have had the two meetings in Dunlavin and put faces to the names. Although there weren’t many members of the public at the meeting, the town was very aware that the meeting was being held here and that it had been brought up at the Forum meeting.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed: *Jim Ruttle*
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: *Máire Halvey*
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: 19th October, 2015