

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass  
held in Civic Offices, Blessington on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 at 10.30 a.m.**

Present: Councillor Vincent Blake  
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  
Ms. Breege Kilkenny, Senior Engineer  
Ms. Deirdre Whitfield, Community Culture & Social Development

Apologies: Councillor Pat Doran

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor James Ruttle, opened the Ordinary Meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

The Cathaoirleach requested that the minutes be amended with regard to the discussion regarding the zoning of lands at Burgage More to state that Councillor Cullen indicated that it was open to Cllr. O'Neill to bring a motion before the Council at any time. Cllr. Ruttle indicated that he would support this motion.

**2. To receive a Presentation on Glending Housing Remediation Scheme**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Breege Kilkenny, Senior Engineer to the meeting. Ms. Kilkenny gave a presentation on the progress to date with regard to the refurbishment of the properties, the current situation with regard to application for funding. Ms. Kilkenny also outlined the position with regard to compensation regarding the cost of the refurbishment and stated that Wicklow County Council was waiting for the other parties to come back that that the best option is mediation. Ms. Kilkenny also stated that discussions had started with the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government on the next step forward which it hoped will be in three stages.

The Members made the following comments/queries:-

- How long before the units will be available
- The defects were well known.
- When will this matter come to Court?
- Are we throwing good money after bad?

Ms. Kilkenny advised that it would be approximately three to four years before all units were remediated and occupied.

Ms. Kilkenny advised that the matter was in the High Court and that a summons had been issued and a response was awaited which could take six to eight months and if

not received, legal advice was to proceed with a full court case or no rely would be received from the other side.

Ms. Kilkenny advised that Housing & Corporate Estate is currently targeting Baltinglass Municipal District and that there were twelve project appraisals for consideration. Ms. Kilkenny stated that the Architect is due to take up duty shortly and would be starting work on this.

Councillor Timmins stated that Billy Timmins T.D. had entered a Parliamentary Question regarding housing projects and the reply was that Blessington was not on the list at which Councillor Timmins said that he was surprised. Ms. Kilkenny stated that Wicklow County Council was given a week to submit a list of "shovel ready" projects. Councillor James Ruttle stated that the need is here and that of two sites, there were water problems in one and waste water problems in the other.

Councillor Vincent Blake said that at a presentation from IALG, the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government had said that they would be flexible. Councillor Blake stated that Wicklow County Council's standing isn't what it should be in the Department and that we were all responsible for that.

Councillor Gerry O'Neill stated that there was a glimmer of hope regarding Billy Timmins T.D.'s parliamentary question and reply received and the upgrade of water and waste water treatment works.

Councillor Ruttle enquired if it would be possible to buy houses. Ms. Kilkenny replied that Wicklow County Council was looking for houses on a regular basis. Councillor Blake stated that there were houses in Tinahely but that the Council doesn't appear to be interested. Councillor Ruttle stated that acquisitions of properties should be pushed vigorously. Ms. Kilkenny stated that she would mention it regarding the properties, one in Shillelagh and one in Tinahely.

Ms. Kilkenny is also to check regarding the 600 units for which planning has been received in Blessington as to whether there are included in the usage figures for Irish Water.

### **3. To consider Local Economic and Community Plan for County Wicklow**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Deirdre Whitfield to the meeting. Ms. D. Whitfield stated that she was here to answer any queries following her presentation to the Members on the Local Economic and Community Plan at the previous meeting and to take any submissions from the Members.

The Members made the following comments:

- There is a need for assessment and counselling for children in the area who currently have to go to the Lucent Clinic in Tallaght or Athy and that it was best to have treatment in the area where the child is from.
- N81 – is an impediment to development in the area and there are health and safety issues.
- Companies should be getting more support in terms of training.
- A more systematic method of training staff by specific businesses - would be a help for companies locating here.
- Broadband is very bad and it is a major issue and it appears to be disimproving.

- Major towns have industrial sites but there are none in small villages – should be more supportive of areas where this is potential for development, e.g. Kerry Foods, local area not able to tap into spin off from such larger companies.
- R747 needs improvement (Mr. Sean Quirke confirmed that this is still in the Development Plan.)
- Public Transport – isolation of Dunlavin which is caught between two major routes but has no direct public transport link.
- West Wicklow Network – think thank plan will become part of this.
- Planning & Economic Development – could anyone be a champion of businesses regarding planning applications, etc. i.e. a one stop shop for businesses.

Councillor Gerry O'Neill stated that some people had been fined for putting up signs. Mr. Sean Quirke stated that signage is not the way to go and that broad band is an issue. Councillor Gerry O'Neill stated that there was a double standard with regard to planning with Russborough which has 211 spaces being given planning permission to access directly on to the N81 but individuals were not given planning permission.

Mr. Sean Quirke said that there was a need to help organisations that weren't as well organised to apply for funding. Councillor James Ruttle stated that there was substantial funding available to date. Councillor Edward Timmins stated that the District Administration should work on ensuring funding for the area.

Ms. Whitfield informed the Members that their submissions would be considered for the overall plan.

#### **4. To discuss Baltinglass Courthouse**

It was agreed that a meeting should be held on site with CIC and members of the Municipal District staff to seek clarification regarding accessibility, security of library, and access to premises. Also, clarification was to be sought re. cleaning, electricity, telephone and heating costs as any lease of the property should be cost-neutral.

#### **6. Correspondence**

Letter from ABO Wind was distributed with agenda to the Members inviting them to an open day at Gibbett Hill Wind Farm on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

#### **7. Any Other Business**

##### **(i) Speed Limits in Housing Estates**

Areas have been marked on map and Member requested to look at it. Councillor Gerry O'Neill stated that there is a death trap at Cross Chapel and a recent fatality and enquired if there was any chance of traffic calming at the lakes and Silverhill turn (in Kildare's area) and a review of Blessington area. It was advised that Tom O'Leary is looking a speed signs at the moment and Declan Geraghty is to speak to him regarding both places.

##### **(ii) Mass Path in Stratford**

Part of a hedge along the Mass path has been knocked down and replaced by a fence is extending half way into the path and leaving it very narrow. The Planning Department have said that they will look into it as part of the next Development Plan. Declan Geraghty stated that it would appear the right of

way is still there but reduced and that it may be up to an individual to go to law to enforce it as it is not registered as a right of way or Mass path. Councillor Edward Timmins enquired as to whether or not the Council had a role and Mr. Sean Quirke said that he would talk to the Planning and Law Departments.

(iii) Baltyboys Cemetery

Councillor James Ruttle stated it appeared that everything was being centralised including burials and this was not what local communities were about. Councillor Gerry O'Neill stated that he agreed. The Members were advised that there was rock in the cemetery and that marked out graves could not be used because of this. Land offered in Templeboden by the Football Club was rejected. Councillor Edward Timmins stated that it was important that villages have their own graveyard. Councillor James Ruttle stated that 3 sites had been identified. Councillor Gerry O'Neill stated that he would like to see copy of policy. Mr. Sean Quirke said that the SPC would be the best place to deal with this matter. IT was stated that in Leitrim graveyard, families were not allowed to maintain graves because of insurance, etc.

(iv) Féile

Councillor Vincent Blake stated that the Féile had been a great success and that the following teams from the County had won, Luke O'Tooles Boys' team, Knockanna Girls' team and Carnew Girls' team and that he would like to compliment all three. All Members agreed with this and a letter of congratulations is to be sent.

(v) Vote of Sympathy

A vote of sympathy was passed in respect of those who had died in the balcony collapse in Berkeley, California and a minute's silence was held.

(vi) Location of next Municipal District Meeting

Councillor Timmins queried the possibility of having the next meeting in Dunlavin - it was agreed that the July meeting would be held in the Library, Market House, Dunlavin.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed:

  
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:

  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated:

27<sup>th</sup> July 2015