

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Civic Offices,  
Blessington on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018, at 10.30 a.m.**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Tommy Cullen  
Councillor Edward Timmins  
Councillor Jim Ruttle  
Councillor Gerry O'Neill  
Councillor Vincent Blake  
Councillor Pat Doran

**In Attendance:** Mr. Sean Quirke, Director of Services  
Mr. Declan Geraghty, District Engineer  
Ms. Dionne Dixon, District Administrator  
Mr. Derek Cullen, Assistant Staff Officer  
Ms. Andrea Connolly, Clerical Officer

**Apologies:** Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Tommy Cullen, opened the ordinary meeting.

**1. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018.**

Cllr. Vincent Blake proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Annual meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018, seconded by Cllr. Edward Timmins

**2. To confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018.**

Cllr. Vincent Blake proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018, seconded by Cllr. Edward Timmins

**3. Matters Arising**

Cllr. Gerry O'Neill clarified that Cllr. Tommy Cullen had been invited to the N81 meeting that had occurred with Minister Shane Ross and provided correspondence stating such. Cllr Cullen denied having received any such invitation.

Cllr. Cullen proposed an amendment to the minutes under item 6 (Twinning with O'Neill City, Nebraska). Cllr Cullen stated he wished to have the wording "with regard to the invasion of Canada and the violence that occurred" added. All members were in agreement with the exception of Cllr. O'Neill.

**4. To consider the draft policy document on the Reserved Functions of the Municipal Districts set out under Schedule 131A(1)b; Part 2 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014.**

Lorraine Gallagher, Senior Executive Officer ,Enterprise & Corporate Services, outlined the purpose of the proposed policy – to agree a set of circumstances where the reserved functions set out in Part 2 of Schedule 14 A are to be exercised by the Municipal Districts of Wicklow County Council or the Plenary Council. She explained that all Municipal Districts are asked to consider the twenty two items included in this policy which were drafted in accordance with the legislation and to give their

views and opinions on the proposed policy which will be brought back to the full Council in September. Cllr. Timmins questioned if the Municipal District had to sign up to all twenty two functions and Lorraine Gallagher explained that all functions can be carried out by each Municipal District already but certain guidelines are to be put in place to ensure consistency across the board. A discussion followed and Cllr. Timmins proposed to remove words in brackets from point 7; number 4 "Where the matter is of strategic importance to the County as a whole (for example; the provision of sheltered accommodation or accommodation under the Traveller accommodation programme)". This was seconded by Cllr. Cullen and agreed by all.

Cllr. Cullen questioned if point 7; number 7 "Major Housing Developments in general consisting of 20 or more housing units", could be amended to include one off housing. Lorraine pointed out that an amendment would not be necessary as single houses is a reserved function of the Municipal Districts. Cllr. Doran proposed that a letter be sent to Department of Housing regarding single housing and this was seconded by Cllr. Ruttle.

**5. To receive a presentation from Housing and Corporate Estate in relation to Part 8 at Whitehall Baltinglass.**

Marc Devereaux gave a presentation on the plans for the construction of 34 housing through the Rapid Delivery Housing Scheme in Whitehall, Baltinglass. These units will consist of 11 three bedroom and 23 two bedroom units. Cllr. Cullen expressed his full support for housing in Baltinglass but recommended access to a connecting footpath to the Town Park and safety measures, such as fencing and gateways, along the river Slaney. Cllr. Timmins questioned the sixty year life span of the houses, shared by Cllr. Ruttle, and Marc explained this is the typical design life of every house including private houses. Following some further discussion amongst the Members there was unanimous approval and support for this development with the view that all suggestions would be taken on board by Marc Devereaux.

**6. To discuss the proposed development of social housing at Burgage Blessington.**

A report from Joe Lane on the Housing Scheme at Burgage More, Blessington was circulated to members. Marc Devereaux explained that they are still at the preliminary stages of this scheme and any queries with regard to this would be best dealt with by Joe Lane or Breege Kilkenny. Cllr. Cullen asked if an objection had been placed and if it had since been withdrawn. Cllr. O'Neill stated that there was no objection made by him and that he had received a report from Sorcha Walsh. Cllr. Timmins proposed to support this scheme in Blessington and Cllr. Doran seconded it.

Cllr. Timmins proposed a suspension of Standing Orders in order for the Council to consider the Council carrying out a feasibility study in the Blessington area with regard to a swimming pool. Cllr. Ruttle supported this proposal and seconded this. Ms Dionne Dixon read correspondence from the CCSD Section, in which they stated that no budget was available this year for a feasibility study to be completed. Mr Sean Quirke advised that an application under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund may provide an opportunity to pay for a feasibility study to be carried out and this would be discussed under the next item on the Agenda.

## **7. To discuss the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund**

Mr Sean Quirke outlined what the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund entailed and gave examples of each category. Category one proposals are projects which can be commenced in 2019 and are at an advanced stage of design for example Baltinglass Town Square, whilst category two proposals have clear objectives but require further development for example Baltinglass Courthouse. The fund will provide up to 75% of the total project value with at least 25% to be provided in matching contributions by the applicants. There must be collaboration between the Local Authority and community groups, other public bodies, state agencies etc. The closing date for applications is 27<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr. Cullen asked if Cllr. Timmins proposal of a swimming pool could be incorporated and Mr Sean Quirke suggested that a feasibility study for a swimming pool could possibly come under a category two proposal. Mr Declan Geraghty suggested the involvement of Blessington Town Team/Forum. Cllr O'Neill stated that a meeting had been organised with the Swimming Pool Committee the following day to discuss the matter. Cllr O'Neill also asked Mr Sean Quirke about the possibility of the Council taking over Blessington Lake as it has great tourism, recreational and leisure potential. Mr Sean Quirke explained that there would be a need for the ESB to be on board any such project.

## **8. To consider Roads Reports (national and non-national roads)**

A report on the national and non national roads was circulated to the meeting and Mr Declan Geraghty advised that surface dressing works were complete in Blessington area and due to be completed in Tinahely area by 27<sup>th</sup> July. He also advised the meeting that the Local Improvement Schemes Ovington Lane, Tuckmill was completed on 20<sup>th</sup> July and Valentine's Lane, Donard would be completed by the end of this week. Cllr. Timmins enquired if the repairs to footpaths in Baltinglass are to be done. Mr Declan Geraghty advised that no money has been allocated for this but will be looked at again in 2019. Mr Sean Quirke advised that the resurfacing works would be funded by TII and that the improvement of footpath facilities by the NTA.

## **9. To discuss Blessington Twinning Committee proposed twinning with O'Neill City, Nebraska.**

Ms Dionne Dixon read out correspondence she received via email from Ms. Maureen Phibbs, the Secretary of the Blessington Twinning Committee in connection with the use of Wicklow County Council logo. Ms. Dionne Dixon also circulated a letter received from Blessington Twinning Committee which referred to the preceding Baltinglass Municipal District and Protocol Committee meetings and the presentation made before the Members on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017, in which the Twinning Proposal was previously discussed. A letter of support from Ms. Susan Nichols, District Administrator was also included in the correspondence together with a copy of a Twinning Resolution of the City of O'Neill, Nebraska.

Cllr Cullen advised the meeting that it is considered a serious offence for another body to use the logo without the Council's prior knowledge or consent. Cllr O'Neill advised the meeting that he had met with Twinning Committee and that they were very surprised to have received correspondence from Ms. Dionne Dixon stating that they were not to use the County Council logo without the Council's prior permission. He continued by reading a statement stating that they must produce the Council logo on all correspondence once funded by the County Council. Cllr Cullen raised an objection to the group using the logo until these matters are clarified from an historical point of view and proposes suspending any decision regarding funding until then. Cllr Timmins expressed his

grave reservations about the twinning project and also did not want the funding support to go ahead. Cllr Ruttle advised that genealogy reports needed to be more substantive and Cllr Ruttle also asked Cllr O'Neill whether he was in any way related to General O'Neill from Nebraska. Cllr O'Neill confirmed that General O'Neill is his ancestor. Cllr O'Neill then read out an extract from the minutes of the Municipal District meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in which it was decided that funding would be made available to the Blessington Twinning Committee from the Twinning Budget and Cllr O'Neill also stated that Wicklow County Council had previously given its support to the twinning project. Cllr Cullen proposed that the decision regarding funding support for twinning project be rescinded and Cllr Timmins seconded this.

Ms Dionne Dixon advised the Members of the provisions in the Standing Orders in relation to the revocation of Council resolutions. Cllr Cullen proposed including a revocation of the resolution of the 28<sup>th</sup> May to be placed on agenda for next Municipal District meeting.


#### **10. Correspondence**

Ms Dionne Dixon advised the meeting she received correspondence from TII in relation to the invitation extended to them to meet with the Municipal District. The TII is not in a position to facilitate requests for meetings with individual Municipal Districts. The TII will endeavour to facilitate meeting requests with County Council delegations. A copy of the correspondence was circulated to all the Members. Cllr Cullen proposed to send a delegation of County Councillors and members of the Executive to meet TII to discuss the issues with the N81. This was unanimously agreed by all the Members. Ms. Dionne Dixon agreed that she would send a reply to the TII and she would also request that meeting be arranged through Wicklow County Council and the TII which will include all six Members of Baltinglass Municipal District.

In relation to the previous correspondence sent to Minister Ross requesting that he meet with the Members, Ms. Dionne Dixon advised that the latest correspondence received from the Minister's Office was in acknowledgement of her last letter only. Cllr Timmins advised pursuing Minister Shane Ross with regard to meeting and Ms. Dionne Dixon agreed to send a further letter to Minister Ross requesting a meeting.

Ms Dionne Dixon advised the meeting that she had received correspondence from Kildare and West Wicklow Drug Task Force requesting permission to give a presentation about their services to Members at the next meeting in September. The Members agreed with the request but suggested that the presentation be given in October, as the Baltinglass Town Renewal Group were to give a presentation on the Baltinglass Courthouse Project at September's meeting.

There being no more business Cllr Cullen closed the meeting. The next meeting will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 10.30am and will be held at the Baltinglass Courthouse.

Signed:   
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:   
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: 26 September 2018