

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass

held in the Civic Offices, Blessington on 23rd May 2016 at 10.30 a.m.

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

In attendance: Mr. Sean Quirke, Director of Services
Mr. Declan Geraghty, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer
Ms. Máire Halvey, District Administrator
Ms. Deirdre Norton, Clerical Officer

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

1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25th April 2016.

Councillor Pat Doran proposed confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass and Councillor Tommy Cullen seconded the proposal

2. Presentation

Mr. Adrian King and Mr. Brian Kennedy of Kildare National Roads office gave a presentation on the proposed Route Selection for the N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Road Improvement Scheme.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland has confirmed that Kildare County Council should proceed to publish the preferred route. The proposed Road Improvement Scheme is now at 2 – Route Selection stage. During the presentation, it was stated that this route will improve road safety and journey times, that it has been on the website since 2012 and has now received approval and that the proposed route corridor has been submitted to Planning Authorities to seek to reserve the corridor and that there can be no planning in the 300m corridor. However, Mr. Sean Quirke stated there may be some scope within the corridor and that each application would be looked at on a case by case basis.

Following the presentation, the Members had the following comments - Councillor Tommy Cullen stated that there may be a lot of congestion at roundabouts and asked why only a single carriage way to Blessington – the meeting was advised that Transport Infrastructure Ireland requested Kildare County Council to go back and do traffic counts regarding this. Councillor Edward Timmins stated there are more accidents south of Blessington and there is a call for a dual carriageway – the meeting was advised that traffic volumes are not high enough. Councillor Tommy Cullen stated the traffic volume is now higher than 12 months ago and in 2007/08 the volume was extremely high. Councillor Gerry O'Neill queried as to whether or not the 300m corridor include a light rail strip. Councillor Tommy Cullen stated on a number of

occasions he had proposed a LUAS line and that also that he would like to see a dual carriageway coming from Hollywood. The Members requested that the plans be made available in both Baltinglass and Dunlavin Libraries. Councillor Edward Timmins stated the lack of road infrastructure at present was less attractive to businesses setting up. A new road would be a huge economic uplift for the west, firstly Blessington and then Baltinglass. Councillor Gerry O'Neill added the sooner the better that the road was improved.

Councillor Tommy Cullen enquired about Hangman's bend and if Transport Infrastructure Ireland was keen to advance it. Mr. Adrian King advised that it was currently on his desk. Mr. Brian Kennedy advised that a constraints report had been done on it.

3. Roads Report

Declan Geraghty advised all roads in Blessington Area will be completed in one and a half weeks and that surface dressing would be completed in June/July. Councillor Vincent Blake enquired if there was any additional money and Mr. Declan Geraghty advised that it would be late summer maybe before notification would be received regarding this. Mr. Sean Quirke stated that funding was at its lowest level ever and that the situation might improve in 2018.

Councillor Gerry O'Neill enquired regarding Crosschapel and Mr. Declan Geraghty advised that Transport Infrastructure Ireland was currently looking at the entire N81 regarding speed limits, lining, etc.

Councillor Tommy Cullen queried the speed limit on the road from Baltinglass town to the Hospital which is a popular walking route. He said speed is out of hand on this route and speed limit needs to be reduced to town centre speed limit. The meeting was advised that this matter would be referred to the Roads & Transportation Department of Wicklow County Council.

4. Glór na Cásca

Councillor Jim Ruttle advised it was a great day. Wished to state it was a great community effort and well organised. Councillor Pat Doran wished to congratulate everyone and Wicklow County Council for the kerbing done. Councillor Gerry O'Neill wished to congratulate Tom Kehoe and stated that it looks great. Councillor Vincent Blake said it was a very professional job and wished to thank Wicklow County Council staff and the contribution made by the Baltinglass Municipal District Committee. Councillor Edward Timmins wished to echo all the other speakers and praise the good choice of location. Councillor Tommy Cullen further thanked Councillor Blake and Timmins for the suggested location. Councillor Gerry O'Neill queried any update on the other monument in Blessington and if the committee is involved in anything. He stated the committee should be very vigilant of public money and where it's going and not to support groups that under the guise of something else.

5. Tourism Projects

It was agreed to consider possible Tourism Projects at the June Ordinary Meetings so that the funding for 2016 could be agreed.

6. Correspondence

Ms. Máire Halvey read an email from Ms. Theresa O'Brien, Administrative Officer, Community Cultural and Social Development regarding the possibility of funding for County Wicklow

Volunteer Centre from the Municipal Districts. Councillor Cullen enquired how much is in Baltinglass MD budget. Councillor Timmins enquired regarding funding from property tax. Mr. Sean Quirke stated that the Members might consider giving €1,000 from Economic Development budget. Councillor Timmins enquired regarding the possibility of funding coming from Community & Enterprise fund. Councillor Blake proposed €1,000 from a fund and Councillor Cullen stated communities need help with Christmas lighting. It was agreed to look at getting funding from a central fund first.

7. Another Other Business

(i) Housing Rents

Councillor Tommy Cullen mentioned rent increases and can it be put on agenda for the next meeting as there has been very large rent increases and enquired if it was discussed at the Housing SPC.

(ii) Votes of Sympathy

Councillor Blake wished to pass on his sympathy on the passing of Jack Boothman and also Mrs. Kathleen Leeson, mother of Kay Leeson. Councillor Doran stated that he wish to extend his condolences on the passing of Sr. Clare, Daughter of Charity, Carnew.

(iii) Burial Grounds Sub-Committee

Councillor Pat Doran was nominated to represent Baltinglass Municipal District on the sub-committee set up to consider the Burial Grounds Policy.

(iv) Dumping at Coolkenno

Councillor Blake stated that this is a huge problem. Mr. Dermot Graham, stated the site in question is unsecured and also a repossessed site. Councillor Doran stated that he wished to give his support to everything Councillor Blake had said.

(v) Development in Blessington

Councillor Gerry O'Neill suggested writing to Irish Water regarding services in Blessington and that developers are prepared to start building in Blessington if the infrastructure was in place and it's now a huge crisis.

(vi) Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on 27th June 2016 in Civic Offices Blessington and will be preceded by the Annual Meeting.

SIGNED: Jim Ruttle

CATHAOIRLEACH

SIGNED: Máire Halvey

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

DATED: 27 June 2016