

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Civic Offices, Blessington on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019, at 10:30a.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, District Manager  
Mr Declan Geraghty, District Engineer  
Mr Dermot Graham Executive Engineer  
Mr Garvan Hickey, District Administrator  
Ms Lisa Moore, Clerical Officer

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Tommy Cullen welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

Cllr. O'Neill proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and this was seconded by Cllr. Doran and agreed by all members.

**2. To confirm and sign minutes of the Special Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.**

Cllr. Ruttle proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and this was seconded by Cllr. O' Neill and agreed by all members.

**3. Matters arising.**

There were no matters arising.

**4. To receive a presentation from the Blessington Allotments Committee.**

Mr Dan McCormack, committee member of the Blessington Allotment Committee and resident of Deerpark, Blessington circulated a handout to all present on the proposed Blessington allotments. Mr McCormack outlined that in June 2018, approximately 30 persons showed an interest in the idea of an allotment for the area. Community consultation had been undertaken using the Blessington Information Leaflet and online using the Blessington Blog Facebook page. A public meeting was then held in March 2019 where the Blessington Allotment Committee was established. Mr McCormack also welcomed all present to attend their next monthly meeting.

Mr McCormack outlined the benefits of an allotment from a social and a health perspective. A discussion then took place around the cost of the project to participants. Mr McCormack suggested that there be an allowance for those who can't afford it. Fingal County Council/South Dublin County Council and the UK were referenced as examples of how the allotments could possibly be managed. The proposer made reference to the 1926 act advising that responsibility lay with the Council to provide land for this purpose. Mr McCormack expected that out of a 1 acre site there would be a possible 36 plot allotment.

The Cathaoirleach Cllr Cullen thanked Mr McCormack for his detailed presentation, and said it was important for Baltinglass Municipal District to take the lead in the county for a variety of reasons and fully supports the proposal.

Cllr Timmins also supported the proposal noting this was a good example of how Local Government can link up with the community. Cllr Timmins pointed out that it would be low cost to implement and that there are a number of possible locations that can be developed and hoped all support it.

Cllr Ruttle thanked Mr McCormack for his presentation and document handout and highlighted this had been on his agenda before but housing had a need for the land at the time, but he can now see this proposal happening. Cllr Ruttle highlighted the need to connect people with nature.

Cllr G O'Neill thanked Mr McCormack and said he had worked with Mr McCormack before in identifying land for development of allotments. There is now a need for approval to move forward.

Cllr V Blake outlined his support for the proposal and wants to sow the seed with pushing forward and he also referenced the success of the men's shed to date.

Mr Hickey informed the meeting that at the March meeting it was agreed at the last meeting that a formal request would be submitted to the Housing Section to see if they would agree to the development of Community Allotments at the land at Burgage. A response had been received back from Housing noting that the development of allotments at Burgage was premature until a master plan was developed for the site. Community allotments could be considered for inclusion in the plan for the site a part of the master plan.

Mr. Hickey also noted that members had been in touch regarding possibility of developing a site at Carrig Glen with the possibility of two acres where 1.5 acres could be managed by the Baltinglass Allotment Committee and 0.5 acre to the local school for their needs if required. Additional costs such as fencing and getting the site ready; to include water connection would be necessary. Mr G Hickey advised that this is a long term project and would need buy in from the committee and additional funding to ensure that the project is developed to its capacity.

Cllr Timmins asked that the Burgage site be considered as it is the most advantages, accessible and suitable area and would welcome housing's cooperation. Mr Hickey explained that housing were not dismissing Burgage but needed to consider the master plan for the area and highlighted that Carrig Glen may have a better turnaround time and this would be discussed at the next meeting of the Special Policy Committee (SPC). Cllr Cullen suggested that Mr McCormack and Mr G Hickey walk the sites to identify which would be best and maybe organise soil testing. Cllr Cullen also stated that there would need to be a strict interview panel to ensure this project works for all and to eliminate high turnover of allotments.

Cllr O'Neill asked to keep the option open to source private land for the project. Cllr Cullen asked that the project be kept on the agenda and wished Mr Dermot McCormack well for the future.

- 5. To receive a briefing from Mark Devereaux, S.E.E. Housing and Corporate Estate regarding Part 8 Application for Housing Development in Shillelagh.**

Mr Benan Clancy (Executive Architect) said that 22 houses were designed for rapid build in Shillelagh and the drawings are now ready for planning. The development will be totally separate from the existing Chapel Lane and there will be a possibility for a phase II development. These single story type houses are ideal for persons with mobility difficulties with good lighting from both sides due to the design. There will be low walls to the front with no gates, therefore, drive in. A model of the development was shown to the members.

Cllr Blake noted that existing houses don't have back entrances and public lighting is not working properly. Cllr Blake requested a separate entrance for these houses and it was confirmed by Mr B Clancy that there would be. Cllr Blake also highlighted that there is a current problem with sewage in Shillelagh and a requirement for Irish Water to be pressurised into solving this issue. Cllr Blake outlined his support for the application.

Cllr Doran asked if any of the houses would be prefabricated type and was assured by Mr Clancy that the rapid build would be either timber framed or steel framed with an A rated Air to Water system which would mean no oil or gas required for heating. Cllr Doran then welcomed the suggested build.

The project was proposed by Cllr V Blake and seconded by Cllr P Doran and agreed by all members present.

Cllr Blake noted that Carnew, Baltinglass and Tinahely now need Part 8 prepared for the areas and a push with Irish Water was required in order to progress. All members agreed with Cllr Blake.

**6. To receive a presentation from the Community, Cultural and Social Development Section on the feasibility study for a swimming pool in West Wicklow.**

Mr Gar Houlihan introduced himself as a Sports activist; specialist for over 30 years and who has the experience of doing 30 other feasibility studies and then outlined key issues identified during the feasibility study.

Blessington area pool would be in competition with neighbouring pools such as Naas and Tallaght swimming pools this was based on 24 mile each way travel time. People expect a fun Pool with warm water and integrated changing areas with disability access. Swimming Pools are now seen as social meeting points and considered part of peoples social network. Mr Houlihan looked at the demographics of a 20 minute maximum drive from Blessington and identified a 25,000 catchment population and would expect that figure to grow to 27.5K by the expected time the swimming Pool is built. A 5-lane, 25m swimming Pool with a small child's Pool with a life expectancy of 25 years has been suggested as most appropriate. This would include village type changing rooms (for families), a fitness and aerobics room for persons requiring membership. It is expected that year 4 or 5 is when the project will break even. He noted that Wicklow County Council currently do not charge rates for the Arklow and Wicklow Pools. Mr Houlihan also pointed out that a sinking fund would be needed in order to provide cover for outgoings in the future. Total cost would be in the region of ten to twelve million euro.

Cllr Cullen asked what the annual running costs of the facility would be. Mr Houlihan referred to his presentation and said a possible 100,000 loss for the first number of years, but membership fees should cover day to day running costs in year four.

Cllr Timmins thanked Mr Houlihan and asked if he could provide copies of the presentation and any backup information in relation to the figures presented.

Cllr O'Neill thanked Mr Houlihan for the presentation and requested a hard copy of same. Cllr O'Neill asked where the location is as Blessington was mentioned, but other areas such as Lacken could be considered also, but highest population is possibly the best location.

Cllr. Ruttle would like a swimming pool similar to Carrick on Shannon and wants a pool west of the county competing with FAI, GAA. Cllr. Timmins said West Wicklow has a low density population, so would argue for the purpose of funding/grants, that living in a remote area should not discriminate against the application. There are 2,811 children registered in schools in the catchment area.

Cllr Cullen noted that all members unanimously agree to support the project and see that it stream 1 funding. Cllr. Cullen thanked the members for their work to date and thanked Mr Houlihan for his presentation. Cllr Cullen also thanked the staff of Wicklow County Council and the Blessington Swimming Pool Committee for their involvement to date.

**7. To consider Roads Reports (National and Non – National roads).**

Mr Geraghty noted there was no change to the National report since last month.

Mr D Geraghty presented the non national roads report to the members and hard copies of same were distributed. He advised that a contractor had been appointed for the Blackmoor road and works were to start this week. There are no Local Improvement Schemes (LIS) going ahead in 2019 for Blessington to date. A community Involvement Scheme (CIS) will be going ahead for the L8349 (Knocknaboley – Corragh road) as residents had come up with the funding required.

Mr D Graham (Executive Engineer) read out his report indicating that works were complete on the Kilranelagh Lane. The Dying Cow to Ballyraheen has been put back due to a rally in the area and Kevin Street, Tinahely is to start in May. All surface dressing to be done June/July. There were 7 application received for the LIS with 2 being approved (Ballymanoge Lane, Tinahely and Kierseys' Lane). There were 4 applications received for CIS in the Tinahely area, these have been cost estimated to a total of approx 360K.

Cllr Cullen thanked Mr Graham and staff of the Tinahely area for the road improvement work carried out at Kilranelagh Lane, leading to a graveyard 400 years old; which has provided ease of access to the people in this area. Cllr Cullen outlined he was happy with the progress on roads to date and thanked the members, engineers and staff of Wicklow County Council for their work over the last 5 years.

Cllr Timmins made reference to lighting, Mr D Graham said this was an ESB & Supplier issue and he will try push on as there is a lack of progress with regard to street lighting.

Cllr O'Neill voiced his concern regarding movement at Wood End Bridge and concerned as to why it was not included in Bridge rehab works for this year.

Cllr Doran voiced his concern over public lighting which was paid for out of his discretionary fund which was to be installed on Soldiers Bench, Carnew some years ago, Mr Graham said works are now on the way and ducting had been completed.

Cllr Blake brought to the attention of Mr D Graham the Killavaney Church road and wants to see the design/proposal. Mr Graham is to provide the survey with the level of white lining.

Cllr Doran announced that he will not be seeking re-election at the Local Elections 2019. Cllr Doran thanked his fellow Councillors and staff of Wicklow County Council for their support and friendship during his time as councillor.

Cllr. Cullen paid warm tribute to Councillor Doran thanking him for his excellent service saying he will be sorely missed due to his vast experience and outstanding work for the people of Wicklow since 1985. Cllr Timmins paid tribute to Cllr Doran for his contributions to the Municipal District of Baltinglass, acknowledging that Cllr Doran took the 1<sup>st</sup> Chairmanship and complemented Cllr Doran on his unique style "Call it as it is" and welcomed his quality, honesty and directness.

Cllr J Ruttle also paid tribute to Cllr Doran saying he was one of the only survivors of the 1985 elections and complemented Cllr Doran for his involvement in the Community Care centre in Carnew.

Cllr J Ruttle also announced that he will not be seeking re-election at the Local Elections 2019 and expressed his thanks to all during his 39 years as a public representative. Cllr Ruttle said he had a good relationship with all members during this time. Cllr Ruttle talked about his interest in Education and working with Mr Godfrey Timmins in the 1970's to sustain services in the town and hoped that funding will be allocated to the Greenway project. Cllr Ruttle said it can be a long road and a tough game; he won 5 elections in a row and now looks forward to travelling and enjoying life socially. He wished all members well in the upcoming elections and remembered all who had been the past, mentioning Paudge Brennan, Godfrey Timmins and Vincent Blake Snr. Cllr Ruttle thanked Katherine his wife for her support throughout the years and his constituents for their support during his time.

Cllr Cullen thanked Cllr Ruttle for his service to Wicklow saying he deeply appreciated what he had done and that he would be sadly missed. Cllr Timmins thanked Cllr Ruttle for his service to West Wicklow, saying that he was always a friend being helpful and open and a he had a superb knowledge of the west rural Wicklow, that he was a testimony to success returning time after time and his late father and brother felt the same and wished Cllr Ruttle and Katherine his wife the very best and will be sadly missed.

Cllr Blake also wished Cllr Ruttle well for the future and thanked him for his time serving West Wicklow where he always worked in the best interest of the community. Cllr Blake thanked Cllr Doran saying he had left behind a great legacy; he thanked him for his cooperation over the years and wished him well for a long and happy life.

Cllr O'Neill expressed his best wishes to both Cllr Doran and Cllr Ruttle, and said during the past 5 years there had been ups and downs but respected the representatives who got the mandate, and he thanked the staff of Blessington and wished the members well in the upcoming elections.

Mr Sean Quirke of behalf of the staff acknowledged the loss of experienced hardworking members over the past 30/40 years, who have supported the work of the community and who kept in touch with the persons on the ground. Mr Quirke wished good health to both Councillors and wished them happiness in their retirement.

Cllr T Cullen thanked the staff of Wicklow Council for the past 5 years; he thanked Mr Garvan Hickey and his predecessors for their cooperation and hard work during this time.

**8. To discuss the Schedule of Municipal District Works.**

The Municipal District Works schedule was circulated to members and Mr Sean Quirke, highlighted the main areas of expenditure and noted that the total figure for the district amounted to a little over eight million euro. The schedule of works was adopted unanimously by members.

**9. Correspondence.**

Mr Garvan Hickey read an email from the Dunlavin & District Forum which asked that Dunlavin be a priority on the schedule of works and roads. A detailed list with their requests was included on the email.

Cllr Blake asked if there had been any response from the Carnew School and was advised by Mr Hickey that there had been no letter back from the school. A letter had been sent to Carnew school acknowledging their previous correspondence.

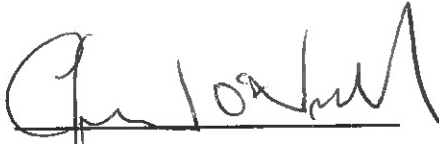


**10. AOB**

There being no more business Cllr Cullen closed the meeting thanking all for their attendance and reminded the members that he proposed Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April @ 10 am to meet again regarding the EMRA report.

There was then a presentation to both Cllr Jim Ruttle and Cllr Pat Doran of images of West Wicklow by local photographer Martin Blake to mark their retirement from Baltinglass Municipal District and to thank them for their contribution.

Signed:

  
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:

  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: 18/06/2019

