

MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING

MONDAY 24th OCTOBER 2017 3PM

SEMINOLE ROOM, COUNTY BUILDINGS

Present: Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen, Councillors Gail Dunne, John Snell, Daire Nolan, Mary Kavanagh, Cllr. Irene Winters

In attendance: C.E.O. Frank Curran, Head of Finance Brian Gleeson, District Manager Joe Lane, Senior Engineer Breege Kilkenny, District Engineer Paul Byrne, District Administrator Joan Sinnott, Executive Engineer Graham Wynne, Assistant Staff Officer, Liam Cullen

Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen opened the meeting at 3pm

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES FROM THE WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD 25th SEPTEMBER 2017

It was proposed by Cllr. Gail Dunne, seconded by Cllr. John Snell and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District meeting held 25th September 2017.

WICKLOW MUNICIPAL BUDGET – PRESENTATION FROM HEAD OF FINANCE, BRIAN GLEESON AND C.E.O. FRANK CURRAN

Mr Brian Gleeson Head of Finance presented the Wicklow draft budget to the Members. In his presentation he outlined the factors which determine the 2018 General Municipal Allocation. The General Municipal Allocation (GMA) being the discretionary funding which is made available to the Members for allocation within the draft budgetary plan. The proposed 2018 GMA will see the Wicklow Municipal District receive an allocation of €38,000. The breakdown of this figure includes €6,000 for town twinning, €5,000 for economic development and tidy towns, €20,000 for Christmas festivals/ Christmas lights, €5,000 for other festivals and €2,000 for civic receptions.

Mr Gleeson advised the Members that the adjustment of parking fees within the District was a reserve function and that the raising or lowering of the fees would have an impact on the discretionary spend allocated to Wicklow Municipal District. The Members highlighted the fact that parking fees collected in two of the busiest car parks in the District, Glendalough and Brittas Bay go to the environmental section and that the benefit is not reflected in the Municipal District. They felt that this money should come back into the Wicklow Municipal pot.

Mr Gleeson advised the meeting that the current Wicklow County Council expenditure estimate for 2018 is €100.6m while the current income estimate for 2018 is €92.8m which leaves a current

shortfall of €7.75m. this amount is required in order to achieve a balanced budget. The Members expressed their concerns that any proposed cost saving measures may have an adverse affect on Council services. The members felt that all discretionary funding was already accounted for, however despite this even with the small amount available so far exceptional work had been carried out. The Chief Executive Mr. Frank Curran acknowledged the success of the various projects carried out by the Wicklow Municipal District in 2017.

Mr Gleeson informed the meeting that Wicklow County Council expected the Government to foot the bill for council staff pay restoration and pension increase. Instead the Government paid 90% of the bill in 2017 and indicated that they will only pay 70% for 2018. Mr. Gleeson said that Wicklow County Council plan to engage with the Government Department to get an explanation for why the Government would only be covering 70% of the bill.

The adoption of the Wicklow Municipal District GMA for 2018 of €38,000 was proposed by Cllr. John Snell and seconded by Cllr. Gail Dunne and unanimously agreed by all Members.

C.E.O Frank Curran & Head of Finance Brian Gleeson left the meeting after their presentation.

ENGINEERS REPORT

Mr Byrne presented the District Engineer's Report:

CLIFF WALK

The District Engineer, Mr Byrne advised that RPS Consultants have completed topographic and bathymetric survey works the Coastal Erosion Protection Design at Glen Beach. The timeline for the RPS activities shows completion of the final design in early 2018, which would mean that construction activities could start in Spring or Summer of 2018, assuming that any required Part 8 procedure is undertaken and approved in a timely manner, and subject to sufficient funding being available. Mr Byrne advised that Environmental Consultant Richard Nairn has visited the site. RPS proposals allows for their staff to consult with Wicklow Golf Club regarding any concerns they may have during the design development phase. Friends of the Murrough will also be consulted at this stage in the process; the initial consultations with these parties are expected to take place before the end of 2017.

RPS have indicated that the preliminary indicative cost of constructing a coastal erosion protection system at the Glen Beach would cost in the region of €500,000 (based on similar projects completed). A more exact cost will be determined once the detailed design work is completed. When an accurate estimated cost of the project is known, construction stage funding will need to be applied for and secured before the project can be completed.

Footpath from Lynhams pub in Laragh village to Laragh GAA grounds.

Work on the second stage of the footpath project has commenced, which will complete the link between Laragh village and the Green Road walkway, via the Laragh GAA grounds. Agreement has been reached with Laragh GAA club to extend the footpath through their grounds, linking up with the Green Road walkway. Work is expected to be completed on the project within the coming weeks. Mr Byrne thanked Laragh GAA for their continued support and co-operation with this project

Footpath from Roundwood village to Vartry Soccer Grounds on the Kilmacanogue Road.

Works are expected to be completed within the coming days on the footpath that will link Roundwood village to Vartry soccer grounds and also the Reservoir walks. Mr. Byrne advised that there will be a delay in installing the final electrical connection for the traffic lights on this project due to a backlog of work at the ESB. Mr. Byrne advised the meeting the project has come in on budget and on time.

Roads programme 2018

Mr Byrne informed the Members that potential road improvement and footpath construction projects are now being collated, assessed and cost estimates compiled for road projects to be undertaken in 2018. Mr. Byrne advised Members to forward him on details of all projects that they would like to be considered for inclusion in the schedule of works for 2018. Housing Estate roads will also be considered under this process.

Memorial Garden

Mr Byrne advised the meeting that sites for the two new benches at the Murrough have been identified and agreed with Cllr. Kavanagh and that the benches will be installed within the coming weeks.

Public Lighting

Mr. Byrne informed the meeting that public lighting for Wicklow Skate Park has been ordered. He estimated that based on conversations with Declan O'Brien EE in Wicklow County Council Roads Section, that the delivery and installation of the lights would take place towards the end of 2017 or early 2018.

Councillors Concerns

Cllr. Gail Dunne felt that traffic calming measures are needed in Glenealy due to the speed at which cars are passing through the village. He raised concerns that a stretch of road outside King's Public House is a particularly dangerous spot. He also raised concerns at the poor condition of the car park opposite King's Pub, saying that it was hazardous and badly in need of attention. Mr Byrne advised that he would assess the situation and carry out any necessary works if it was decided to include these works in the 2018 Wicklow Municipal District Roads Programme.

Local Improvement Schemes

Mr Byrne advised the meeting that €310,000 in funding has been recently secured for Local Improvement Schemes in Co. Wicklow for 2017. The funding will allow for the repair and improvement of small roads and laneways in private ownership which lead to local people's homes and businesses.

Mr Byrne advised that Wicklow Municipal District has four approved applications for this grant scheme which have been carried over from 2012, the last time the scheme was in place. Mr Byrne advised that one of the residents group are still in the process of collecting their contribution to the scheme. Final approval would not be confirmed until all contributions are paid in full to Wicklow County Council. The projects included in the scheme are as follows.

- Drummin Lane, Annamoe
- Ballard Lane, Largh
- Knockraheen Lane, Roundwood
- Kilmullin Lane, Moneystown

Cllr. Daire Nolan left the meeting 3.55pm

PRESENTATION BY MS. BREEGE KIKENNY, SENIOR ENGINEER, HOUSING SECTION AND MR JOE LANE D.O.S HOUSING SECTION - HOUSING CAPITAL PRIORITY 2019 - 2021 / STRATEGIC LAND MANAGEMENT

Ms Breege Kilkenny, Senior Engineer, Housing section informed the meeting that the matter of Wicklow County Councils priorities for the next phase of construction was discussed at the Wicklow Local Authority meeting held on the 12th June 2017. It was agreed at this meeting that the selection and scheme of priorities for the 2019 – 2021 scheme would be referred to each Municipal District for agreement. These priorities will then form the basis for a stage 1 application to the Department based on the overall priority as agreed at the full council meeting held on the 12th June 2017.

Ms Kilkenny advised that Circular APH 2/2017 issued in 2017 requires that each local authority to prepare a Strategic Development and Management Plan for its residential land assets by the 30th September 2017. The circular indicates that when identifying land for development, priority should be given to developing prime or frontline sites of significant scale that have the potential to yield the greatest number of homes in the short term to medium term.

Ms Kilkenny informed the meeting that all strategic land banks within the District currently zoned for housing have been identified. Sites in Ashford, Glenealy, Newtownmountkennedy, Laragh, Rathnew, Roundwood and Wicklow Town were selected as potential locations for future housing developments. A discussion took place as to which sites should be prioritised for development. The Members were in agreement that the three sites deemed most suitable are O’Sullivan Lands in Rathnew, the Greenhill Road in Wicklow Town and **Glen Chill** estate in Glenealy. The prioritising of these three sites was proposed by Cllr. Winters seconded by Cllr. Dunne and unanimously agreed by all members present.

The Members agreed that it would take combined effort by all sectors, the public sector, private sector, public private partnership and the Approved Housing Bodies to deal with the current housing crisis. A housing co-op project was mentioned as possible option in the provision of extra housing units.

WICKLOW TOWN TEAM

The Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that members of the Wicklow Town team had been in contact with him to discuss a proposed closure of Fitzwilliam square to traffic during part of the Christmas shopping period. The dates for the proposed closure were the 16th to 23rd of December or alternatively the two Saturdays before Christmas, the 16th and 23rd of December. The Members had concerns that a full closure of the square may cause traffic congestion in the town. The Members felt that the option of a partial closure of the square may be of more benefit to the traders and may also lead to less traffic congestion in the town.

The Members were of the opinion that the Town team should make an application outlining their proposed plans for Fitzwilliam Square on the dates and times mentioned and on receipt of same by Wicklow County Council a decision will be made by the District Engineer. This was proposed Cllr Kavanagh seconded by Cllr. Cullen and unanimously agreed by all the Members

A.O.B

The Members welcomed the news that Wicklow Town Hall will be reopened and felt that it would of benefit to the town to have the Wicklow Municipal district offices based in the Town Hall building.

A discussion took place regarding the relocation of Wicklow Library to the vacant Ulster bank building in Wicklow Town. The Members welcomed that fact that the people of the Wicklow town and surrounding area would have a state of the art library facility at their disposal but raised their concerns that the €3 million investment for the purchase and development of the building did not represent value for money.

The Members raised the issue of the ongoing closure of Wicklow Courthouse and the current dilapidated state the building has fallen into. The Members felt that it would be of huge commercial benefit to the town to have the court services back operating in Wicklow Courthouse. The Members vented their frustration that nothing has come of their requests to meet with the court services and the five Wicklow TD's, to discuss the possibility of reopening the courthouse. The District Administrator Joan Sinnott informed the meeting that she would make further efforts to schedule a meeting The Minister, representatives from the Court Services, Wicklow Municipal Councillors and the five Wicklow TDs to discuss the possibility of getting the court services back operating in Wicklow Courthouse.

CORRESPONDENCE.

.No correspondence

The Cathaoirleach confirmed that the next Municipal District Meeting is scheduled for ??? November 2017.

The meeting closed at 4.50pm.

SIGNED:

Cllr. Sheehy

SIGNED:

J. Sinnott

DATED:

20.11.17.