

MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING

MONDAY 22nd JANUARY 2018 3PM

WURZBURG ROOM, COUNTY BUILDINGS

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

Apologies:

In attendance: District Manager Joe Lane, District Administrator Joan Sinnott, District Engineer Alan Martin, Assistant Staff Officer Liam Cullen

Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen opened the meeting at 3.10pm

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES FROM THE WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING HELD 11th DECEMBER 2018

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 11th December 2018.

ENGINEERS REPORT

Mr Alan Martin presented the District Engineer's Report:

Local Improvement Schemes

Mr Martin informed the meeting that Wicklow Municipal District has four applications for this grant scheme which have been carried over from 2014, the last time the scheme was in place. Mr Martin advised that all four projects are now complete. The projects included in the scheme are as follows.

- Drumeen Lane
- Ballard Lane
- Knockraheen Lane
- Kilmullen Lane

Speed Limit Review.

Mr Martin advised a review of the speed limits within the Wicklow Municipal District has taken place. New speed limit signs are being erected where necessary and Mr. Martin expects this work to be fully completed within the coming weeks. Housing estates are now subject to a 30km speed limit

Virgin Broadband

Mr Martin advised that Virgin Media are currently doing construction works in the town. This work involves digging up and reconstruction of paths within the town. Virgin media have advised that work in the town will be completed by the end of January 2018, they will then commence work in the housing estates within the town.

Road Schemes 2018

The District Engineer Mr. Alan Martin informed the meeting that a list is currently being compiled of proposed roads projects for 2018. He advised that following consultation with the General Service Supervisors and taking account of number of jobs to be carried over from the Roads Programme 2017, a number of projects have been identified to be undertaken in 2018. Mr Martin advised that the projects will comprise of

- Centrally funded works
- Restoration works
- Locally Funded projects – through discretionary fund

Mr Martin encouraged the Members to submit as soon as possible, all road projects they would like included for consideration in the Roads programme 2018. He asked for these submissions to be forwarded to him no later than the end on January 2018. A decision will then be made to prioritise the projects and a submission will be made to the Department for funding in February 2018.

COUNCILLORS CONCERNS /COMMENTS

Road repairs

The Members highlighted a number of roads within the District that needed urgent attention and asked the District Engineer if he could give it his immediate attention. These issues included the following.

- Wentworth Place Road – surface dressing required
- Marlton Road - surface dressing required
- Wicklow Main Street (outside Delahunts shop)
- High Street/New Street – surface dressing required
- Wicklow to Rathnew Road – large pothole outside Sinnotts garage
- Foothpath Wicklow to Rathnew Road (opposite Heatons) – overgrown ditches and grass verge needs to be cut back

The following issues were also raised by the Members.

Traffic calming measures

The issue of traffic calming measures in Glenealy was raised as well as the erection of new speed limit signs in the area. The District Engineer said he would revert back to the Members at the next meeting with an update.

Wicklow Lighthouse

The Members requested that the Wicklow lighthouse at the end of the pier be painted. The Members felt the building was in a bad state of repair.

Public Lighting

The Members queried the progress of a number of public lighting projects within the District. Money for these projects was allocated from the Wicklow Municipal District code 2017 but the works have not yet been completed. The lighting projects include:

- Bellard Manor
- Merrymeeting Hill
- Bosuns Rest
- Wicklow Skate Park

The District Administrator Joan Sinnott agreed to request an update on progress on the projects and revert back to the Members with the same at the February Municipal meeting. Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of action in response to reporting of lights not working in the district.

Bus stop close to primary healthcare centre

A discussion took place about the provision of a bus stop close to the primary health care centre on the port relief road. The Members advised that they have received a number of requests from the public asking for a bus stop to be constructed close to the health centre so that they could have access to and from the centre. It was agreed to defer this matter until the District Engineer Paul Byrne is back from annual leave as he has been in discussions with the developer/landowner and Bus Eireann.

Development at Ballinahinch Ashford

The Members voiced their concerns about the new housing development at Balinahinch, Ashford. Planning permission has been granted for 170 houses in this development, there are five different phases to this development. Works on stage two and four has already begun and these relate to the infrastructure of the development. The Members main concerns relate to the lack of infrastructure and a traffic management in place at the development. They felt that the stretch of road which is due to take the traffic from the Glendalough road will not be able to sustain the increased volume of traffic which is anticipated. The District Engineer said that he would look into this matter and revert back to the Members with a report at the next Wicklow Municipal meeting.

Hedge cutting – Hedgerows

District Engineer Alan Martin said that the Council have sent out a number of hedge cutting notices and hoped to have the last of the notices sent out within the next week before the season starts. He said the notices were been sent out to notify people that the season was beginning and that hedge cutting should commence on their property where necessary. The members felt that hedge cutting is a very contentious and serious issue. They highlighted the fact that it is bone of contention in rural

areas where some people don't cut back their hedges. They felt there should be a follow up to the letters sent out to ensure all property owners are compliant with hedge cutting laws.

Children at play signs

The Members asked for an update on the children at play signs that were due to be erected in the Wicklow Municipal District. €4000 had been set aside in the 2017 Wicklow Municipal budget for the provision of these signs. District Engineer Mr. Martin said he did not know if the signs were ordered but would look into the matter and revert back to the Members at the next meeting with an update.

Recent storms

The Members commended Wicklow County Council staff for their hard work during the recent spell of bad weather. They felt the staff went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that as many roads and estates were accessible.

UPPER VARTRY RESERVOIR WALKING LOOP/WICKLOW CLIFF WALK

The Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that two Wicklow Municipal projects have received funding through the outdoor recreational funding scheme. The two projects are

- Upper Vartry Reservoir walking loop - €76,000 received
- Wicklow Cliff walk - €76,000 received

The €76,000 received for Upper Vartry Reservoir walking loop will go towards the construction of two bridges which will link the walking route to Roundwood village.

The €75,000 received for the Wicklow Cliff walk is part of a larger project which includes a coastal erosion works as well as upgrade works to the existing Cliff Walk. While the funding for this project is welcomed by the Members it was acknowledged that further funding will be required to complete the project. The Cathaoirleach advised that further funding would be available through the Outdoor Recreational scheme. There are three different levels of funding available under this scheme.

- Projects costing up to €10,000
- Projects costing up to €100,000
- Projects costing up to €1,000,000

The plan would be for Wicklow Municipal District to apply for funding for the total cost of the Cliff Walk/Glen Beach project which is expected to cost in the region of €500,000. The Members are hopeful that the application for funding will be successful as they feel that a lot of preparatory work on the project has been completed, and the project is now ready to commence.

The Members welcomed the funding for both projects and commended the committees involved for their hard work in progressing both projects. They felt that similar projects should be targeted within the district and they highlighted the potential of the Murrough, Broadlough and Tinakilly. They discussed the possibility of accessing funding such as Leader, Town Regeneration and Outdoor Recreational funding as possible ways of sourcing income for future projects.

DISCRETIONARY FUND 2018

A discussion took place with regard to Wicklow Municipal Discretionary funding for 2018. The Members were asked by the District Engineer to forward on any projects that they would like considered for funding from the Discretionary funding for 2018. A decision will then be made to prioritise these projects and work will then be carried out if appropriate funding is available.

The Members asked for a list of the projects and spending that related to the discretionary fund in 2017 be made available to them. The District Administrator agreed to circulate this information to the Members.

WICKLOW TOWN TEAM

The Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that the Town team are currently working on number of projects within the town. He advised that they meet on a regular basis. The Cathaoirleach informed the meeting that the Chair of the Town Team, Mr Dave Shannon is willing to attend Wicklow Municipal District meetings when requested to give an overall report on the ongoing work of the Town Team. The Members felt that a strong link between the Town Team and the Municipal District could be of mutual benefit to both groups.

The Members discussed the closure of Fitzwilliam square to traffic during part of the Christmas shopping period. The closure took place from the 16th to 23rd of December. They said that there was mixed reactions from the public and traders as to whether the closure was a success. The Members felt it was a worthwhile exercise as it would help in any decisions on future proposals for Fitzwilliam Square.

TOWN TWINNING

Mr. D. J. Kenna and Mr. Fergus O'Conchobhair from the Wicklow Town twinning committee addressed the meeting. They discussed the benefits of twinning for Wicklow town and how best Wicklow Town could maximise the opportunities that arise from being twinned with other towns. Wicklow Town is currently twinned with the following towns.

Eichenzell - Germany

Montigny - France

Porthmadog – Wales

The Members thanked Fergus and D.J. for a comprehensive report on the work carried out by the twinning committee. While they acknowledged the work done by the twinning committee they felt that there is scope to develop the committee and strengthen the links with the towns that Wicklow are twinned with. They also felt that the committee need to make the people of Wicklow Town aware of the work that the committee undertake as there seems to be a lack of knowledge of the exact role of the committee. The Members asked to be kept aware of any upcoming activities that committee have planned. D.J and Fergus agreed to liaise with the District Administrator on an ongoing basis with a view to highlighting the work and activities they propose to carry out.

A.O.B

PPN

District Administrator Joan Sinnott informed the meeting of proposals from the Community, Cultural and Social Development section to issue a booklet outlining the availability of funding for projects associated with Local Authorities and the procedures involved in applying for funding. Ms .Sinnott advised that she would forward on details to the Members as soon they were available.

Newtownmountkenney local Area Plan 2018

The Cathaoirleach advised that a 4 week pre-draft public consultation period for the Newtownmountkenney LAP 2018 will take place from the 24th January – 23rd February. During this period the public may make submissions to the new plan, and to aid them in the process, there will be an information day in Newtownmountkenney on Thursday 01 February 4pm – 8pm in the Parkview Hotel. Wicklow County Council will be inviting community groups to attend one-to-one meetings earlier in the day.

Electoral Boundries

A discussion took place about the current electoral boundaries. The Members highlighted a number of areas within the Wicklow Municipal District where changes to the existing boundaries may benefit the people in that area. Newtownmountkenney was given as an example, where the boundary divides the village in two. The Members felt that this led to confusion and in some cases a difference in the level of public services that members of certain communities receive.

Wicklow Municipal District meetings

The Cathaoirleach requested that the Members submit in advance all items they wished to discuss at the meetings so that they could be included on the agenda. This would also allow for management to have time to respond to their queries at the meeting.

The Cathaoirleach also reminded the Members that the Wicklow Municipal meetings start at 3pm and requested that they be on time for the meetings as it was unfair to all involved to continuously delay the start time of the meeting.

Planning query in Laragh

A discussion took place about a recent planning permission case in Laragh. This case involved two brothers in Laragh whereby the High court overturned a Planning decision of Board Pleanala and granted planning permission to the brothers. The Members felt this decision would have major implications on future planning decisions within the County and asked if the District Administrator could arrange for someone from Wicklow County Council planning section to attend the next meeting to discuss the decision and its implication for planning in Co. Wicklow. The District Manager Mr. Joe Lane said that it would be unlikely that a member of the planning section would be in a position to discuss this case but that he would try and get an update before the next meeting.

