

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Hollywood Community Centre, Hollywood on 28th September 2020, at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Cathaoirleach Patsy Glennon
Councillor Vincent Blake
Councillor John Mullen
Councillor Avril Cronin
Councillor Edward Timmins

Apologies: Councillor Gerry O'Neill

In Attendance: Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager
Mr. Dermot Graham, A/Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Pat Byrne, Executive Engineer
Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator
Ms. Andrea Connolly, Assistant Staff Officer
Ms. Theresa O'Brien, Planning Development and Environment
Ms. Mary Millet, Croí Rath Naoi, County Wicklow Partnership

Cathaoirleach Glennon opened the Baltinglass Municipal District Ordinary meeting and welcomed the attendance of both Mr. John Coogan and Mr. Dermot O'Brien from the Burgage Graveyard Committee to the meeting.

- 1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 27th July 2020.**

Cllr. Mullen proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 27th July 2020 and this was seconded by Cllr. Blake.

2. Matters Arising

Mr. Hickey, District Administrator, outlined the Standard Operating Guidance for attendance at Council Meetings by Elected Members, Council Officials and Others and attendance at other meetings or County Buildings. Mr. Hickey advised members of the guidelines in place

regarding Covid19. These included maintaining a social distance of two metres, using hand sanitiser regularly and the option of wearing face coverings.

Cllr. Mullen proposed a vote of sympathy to the Brennan family, Carnew on the passing of Mary Brennan, wife of the former TD Paudge Brennan. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Blake and Cllr. Timmins all expressed their wishes to be associated with the vote of sympathy.

Cllr. Blake expressed his congratulations to the Tinahely Ladies football team on winning the senior football county final recently. Congratulations were also expressed to the Baltinglass football team on their senior county final championship win. Members noted that it was great to see both men and women's teams across the Municipal District doing well on the playing field.

Mr. Hickey advised members that a progress report on the Blessington Greenway was included in members packs for their perusal.

3. Correspondence

Mr. Hickey advised members that correspondence had been received from the Ciarán Jones Bridge Action Group regarding the upkeep of the area in Ballysmutton, Manor Kilbride which is a well known beauty site. Concerns were raised over campsites being erected on the site over the June bank holiday weekend which resulted in rubbish being dumped, campfires being lit regularly and the issue of water contamination as temporary toilet had been created going straight into the river. The issues have been reported to an Gardaí. It was proposed to erect a fence between the road and the river in order to try and deter this happening again. The bridge is dedicated to the memory of Garda Ciarán Jones and a lot of work is done in conjunction with the Pure Mile scheme in keeping this area clean and tidy. Members outlined their support for the Ciarán Jones Bridge Action Group and proposed that the Municipal District should examine the area and carry out works to remedy the situation.

Mr. Hickey advised that correspondence had been received from the Community Pool for West Wicklow Committee thanking the members of Baltinglass Municipal District for their continued support and expressing their appreciation for the grant they received under the Community Awards Scheme. They also expressed delight at the announcement by the Chief

Executive, Wicklow County Council of the Council's commitment to the development of a swimming pool and sports facilities in West Wicklow. The Community Pool for West Wicklow Committee proposed the holding of bi-monthly meetings between themselves and Wicklow County Council to progress the project. Cllr. Blake noted that there was a better chance of getting support from the Department for a more substantial project like a sports centre, than a swimming pool on its own and Ms. Kilkenny, District Manager, added that this would form part of a master plan for the whole area and Ms. O'Brien would have more information on this at the October meeting.

Mr. Hickey advised that correspondence had also been received from Blessington Allotments Campaign thanking members for the grant received through the Community Awards Scheme which will be used to introduce a grow your own initiative to the students of Blessington Educate Together National School in the coming months. They added that a grant application had been made in September 2020 through County Wicklow Partnership and was successful. It was hoped this funding could be used to develop a site in Blessington for allotments and the site deemed most "shovel ready" was located at Knockieran Car Park. Blessington Allotments Campaign are asking Wicklow County Council to consider the leasing of this potential site for the purpose of community growing facilities. Included with the correspondence was an example of a licence agreement with Kilkenny County Council. Mr. Pat Byrne advised members that he had met with the chairman of the Blessington Allotments campaign and they had visited a number of sites in the area. These included Knockieran, Carriglen, green areas in various estates and a site at the entrance to Oak Drive which seemed the most favourable. Cllr. Timmins asked how big the site was and Mr. Byrne replied there were two folios for the site and these were being investigated. He added that once acre of the site could be allocated for allotment use with pedestrian access but no vehicle access and a couple of road improvements at the junction were required.

The District Administrator informed members of an email that had been received from Ms Gráinne Quinn on behalf of the Castleruddery Pure Mile Group raising concerns over the road safety at the crossroads in Castleruddery, flooding at the bend at Graces Timber Mill, road signage and the provision of a community recycling centre in the area. The provision of the community recycling centre to be raised with the Environment section to see if it could be delivered.

3. To nominate a representative from the Baltinglass Municipal District to the Wicklow County Council Access & Inclusion Committee.

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Glennon outlined the background to the committee and its aims and objectives. The Cathaoirleach asked the members for nominations for a representative to the Wicklow County Council Access & Inclusion Committee. Cllr. Cronin proposed Cllr. Mullen for the position and Cllr. Timmins seconded this proposal.

5. To receive a presentation from Mary Millet, Croí Rath Naoi, County Wicklow Partnership on Social Inclusion Week Pride activities.

Ms. Mary Millet from County Wicklow Partnership presented the members with a detailed report on activities planned for Social Inclusion Week. These include an open top pride bus travelling a specific route around County Wicklow and this will take in all libraries including the Carnew Hub. Music has been organised at various stops and these include a jazz band, brass band and Kildare Youth Services. It is hoped that there will be a high visibility of support. Tusla Childcare, Public Participation Network, Glending Residents Association and Blessington District Forum are all on board with this event. Mr. Hickey advised he had received a request from Blessington District Forum asking permission for a Pride flag to be flown outside the Baltinglass Municipal District office for the event and asked if there were any objections. Cllr. Blake questioned if this was a week long programme and Ms. Millet replied that it was the lead to Social Inclusion Week.

6. To consider Roads Reports (national and non-national roads).

A progress report on the N81 from Mr. Pat Byrne, Executive Engineer, had been circulated to members. Mr. Byrne advised that resurfacing works at Saunders Grove, Ballinacrow Upper and Hollywood Lower have now been completed as have drainage works at Hempstown. Works at Knockroe bend realignment are near completion with some landscaping and fencing works to be done. Cllr. Blake asked if it was correct that €75,000 had been allocated for a sculpture to be installed at this site and if the members would have any input. Mr. Byrne

stated that funding had been allocated for an art installation. Mr. Hickey advised that €75,000 has been ring fenced for an art installation and he had been in touch with the Arts Officer regarding it. The Arts Officer had advised that the funding for the project is ring fenced under the Per Cent for Art scheme and cannot be used for anything else; the details of the project are being worked out at the moment. Ms. Kilkenny added that the art installation on the N11 had come back to the members for their agreement but the main point was that if there was no sculpture the funding would be withdrawn. Cllr. Blake asked if local schools could have some input into the project and Ms. Theresa O'Brien advised that expressions of interest from local schools and artists are usually made through the Arts office and would come back to the members for their recommendations. It was agreed that the District Administrator should contact the Arts Office to ensure that there was community engagement in the project.

Mr. Graham briefed members on the non national roads report which had been circulated to members. He advised members that all Restoration Improvement works in Blessington area had been completed and Tinahely area schemes would be tendered and completed by the end of next month. Works were ongoing at Kevin Street, Tinahely and these would be completed by early next week. All Restoration Maintenance works had been completed in both areas. He advised that a schedule of footpath works will be reviewed next month for both areas. Cllr. Blake questioned what works were planned for the junction, Kennys Corner, in Carnew. Mr. Graham replied that there were two options being looked at; the first was a filter lane for traffic coming from the Gorey side and the second option of a mini roundabout on the Aughrim side. Cllr. Blake also enquired about an update on white lining in the area and Mr. Graham replied that a tender would go out this week.

7. To receive an update from Theresa O'Brien, SEO, Planning Development and Environment on Burgage graveyard.

Ms. O'Brien presented an update on Burgage graveyard to the members stating that the existing graveyard is near full capacity with no possibility to extend. She advised members that one option of removing trees in the graveyard had been looked at and priced at a cost of approximately €70,000. This would increase graveyard capacity by seventy two plots. Ms. O'Brien stated that some of the trees extend onto private property but that landowners consensus should not be an issue. The other option would be to procure new grounds near

Blessington. She added that an application for a feasibility study to be carried out through the Community, Cultural & Social Development section on a thirty acre site at Burgage to include a swimming pool and leisure centre. This land is already zoned and the first draft is being drawn up. Mr. John Coogan, Burgage Graveyard committee, raised concerns over the graveyard filling up quite quickly as the population of Blessington increases. Cllr. Glennon asked if the preferred option was to remove the trees and this was agreed unanimously. Mr. Byrne asked Mr. Coogan if removal of trees at the front of graveyard or the back would be best suited and Mr. Coogan advised that the front would be a better option.

Cllr. Mullen noted that an anomaly was brought to light recently that there was no budget allocated to maintain the graveyards in the Tinahely area of the district and asked how this could be addressed. Mr. Graham stated that before the Local Government Reform in 2014 Tinahely Engineering area would have been allocated a budget for graveyard maintenance but this seems to have disappeared when the districts changed over. Ms. O'Brien stated that she would make a note of this and it would be addressed at the Budget meeting in October.

8. To consider Christmas Light Funding.

Mr. Hickey advised the members that each year an allocated budget of €10,000 is made available for Christmas lighting throughout the district. He proposed restricting funding to towns and villages this year rather than housing estates, as due to covid areas were restricted in their fundraising this year for Christmas lights and proposed 14th October as the closing date for applications. Cllr. Timmins welcomed this allocation and asked how much was available. Mr. Hickey advised that a budget of €10,000 was available.

Cllr. Mullen noted that due to Covid 19 restrictions this year there would be very few festivals taking place and that it had been proposed to hold a fireworks display in the county show grounds in conjunction with Tinahely Christmas Lights Committee and the Tinahely Show Committee. This event would be free to the public and covid safe as families would stay in their cars to watch the display. Ms. Kilkenny noted national public health guidelines would need to be adhered to for this type of event.

9. To discuss the disposal of site to Aurora Telecom for the development of a collocation cabin.

Mr. Hickey advised members that the acquisition of a site to Aurora Telecom for the development of a collocation cabin had been brought up at the June Baltinglass Municipal District meeting and a follow up email and drawings of site had been circulated to all members. Mr. Hickey advised that if members are in agreement it is intended to dispose of the site to Aurora Telecom in return for the provision and installation of fencing around Blessington skatepark and playground to an agreed specification. The disposal of the site will have to go to a full Council meeting for member's approval. Cllr. Timmins asked if there were any disadvantages or if planning permission was needed. Cllr. Glennon questioned if there were any health implications on having this cabin beside the skatepark. Cllr. Glennon proposed inviting Aurora to attend next meeting as National Broadband will also be in attendance. Ms. Kilkenny noted that having Aurora Telecom at the next meeting would be beneficial and the disposal notice could then be brought to the November meeting of Wicklow County Council. Ms. Kilkenny also noted that it was important that broadband facilities are improved in the area and it would help the locality to have another facilitator in the area.

10. To pass a resolution for the holding of the October Ordinary Meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District in a venue at the discretion of the Cathaoirleach at 10.30am on Monday 27th October 2020 as set out in the Municipal District of Baltinglass, Standing Orders, regulating the business and proceedings of the Municipal District.

Mr. Hickey advised that the next meeting is due to take place on 19th October 2020 and not the 27th October and asked members for suggested locations. Ms. Kilkenny advised that she would not be available on that date but would appoint a proxy to attend. Cllr. Cronin proposed Donard Community hall and all members were in agreement.

11. Any other business

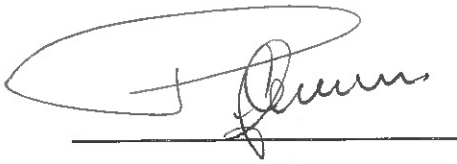
Ms. Kilkenny acknowledged the difficult decision members had to make regarding the Local Property Tax but expressed her disappointment on the decision not to maintain the Local Property Tax at the same rate as last year. She noted that this decision would have implications on the district and it would be difficult to advance a number of projects next year that require match funding. Cllr. Glennon stated he understood the difficult financial situation facing Wicklow County Council but that it was important that any cuts are shared across the Municipal Districts and not one is cut disproportionately and that support is still offered to this district.

Mr. Hickey advised members that no Policing Plan Committee meeting had taken place since earlier this year and Mr. Graham asked if this could take place through Zoom. Mr. Hickey advised he would check with the Superintendent in Baltinglass if this can be accommodated. He added that a copy of a passport from Wicklow Tourism was included in members packs along with stickers promoting outdoor Wicklow walks and activities. He also informed members of the submission from Blessington for the Bank of Ireland Begin Together Awards 2020. He advised that Blessington had been shortlisted along with Kinsale in Cork in the population category 4,001 to 7,000. Mr. Hickey thanked Cllr. Glennon for his input and Cllr O'Neill who kindly put some of his discretionary fund towards the cost of a video production for the awards. Mr. Hickey thanked all the volunteers that had made the Hello Neighbour initiative a success. He added that the results would be announced on 6th Oct on Ireland AM.

Ms. Kilkenny advised that at a recent Waste Management meeting it came to light that residents in Blessington are refusing to accept a brown bin from the main waste collector. Ms. Kilkenny also noted the white line on the Wicklow Gap needs to be relined as it is clearly visible up to a point and then disappears. Mr. Byrne stated that the issue with the white line is in the Wicklow district and he has discussed this with the engineer who is to reinstate.

There being no other business the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Glennon, concluded the meeting.

Signed:



Cathaoirleach

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:



Gar-an-Hickey

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated:

19/10/2020