

Signed

BLESSINGTON TOWN TEAM

Minutes of Meeting

Held at the Offices of Wicklow County Council at Blessington, Co. Wicklow
on Tuesday 4 December 2018 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Gerry O'Neill	Baltinglass MD
Cllr Jim Ruttle	Baltinglass MD
John Horan	Blessington Greenway (Chairman)
Liam Fay	Blessington & District Forum
Michael Sargent	Blessington & District Forum
Jason Mulhall	Blessington Tidy Towns
Shaun Durcan	Gardai
Sean Quirke	District Manager
Susan Nicholls	Enterprise and Corporate Services
Garvan Hickey	District Administrator
Dan Kenny	Business Network
Simon Murphy	Business Network

Apologies:

Declan Geraghty
Michael Doyle
Kilian McGreal
Christine Flood

The Chairman expressed sympathy on behalf of the members to Cllr Ruttle and his family on the death of his Mother-in-Law, to Church of Ireland Parish Secretary Joan Griffith on the death of her mother and likewise extended very best wishes to Church of Ireland Minister Reverend Leonard Ruddock who is presently recovering in hospital.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 November 2018 having been previously circulated were approved by the members and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting followed a prepared agenda and dealt with the following matters.

Tidy Towns Public Realm

- Jason Mulhall advised that a copy of the Blessington Health Check Phase 1 as presented at the last meeting by Eoghan Ryan should be available shortly. This document will have a number of actions to be assigned to various bodies at the next meeting.
- The Chairman asked if what has been developed in Phase 1 could now kick off the discussions on how we move forward on Phase 2 and if an updated draft might be available for the January meeting.
- Jason Mulhall advised that a Sustainable Energy Committee has been set up to liaise with a company called Future Fit. The first objective of this committee will be to generate an Audit Report for projects to be actioned in the town over the coming years.

- Jason Mulhall summarised the present position in regard to CCTV noting the following
 - WCC will act as Data Controller.
 - The last meeting with the CCTV Consultant was two weeks ago.
 - Now necessary to identify the next steps.
 - Need for WCC to nominate a person to link with Forum, Gardai and the Consultant.
 - Need to look at equipment and its storage.
 - To date we have followed the Arklow model.
- Councillor Ruttle advised that the JPC had ratified the Blessington CCTV application today and confirmation to that effect will issue from WCC and it is anticipated that Garda Commissioner Harris will - on foot of the JPC decision - now schedule the Blessington application to proceed to a presentation to Department of Justice.

Infrastructure

- It was noted that there have been no actions since the last meeting.
- Michael Sargent stated that with the Greenway application now submitted and proposals for circa 1200 houses in the town, we all need to ensure that the town is in a better position from an infrastructure point of view following construction of the 1200 houses. The model of procuring beneficial community infrastructure worked twenty years ago, can it work today?

Business

- Simon Murphy reported that business people had met recently although the attendance was not as large as hoped, the meeting was convened by the Town Team.
 - Simon Murphy advised that work is presently continuing on the building of a database and that following from the meeting of business people the sub-group comprising himself, Dan Kenny and Kilian McGreal was endorsed and received a mandate from the people at the meeting.
 - It is intended to convene another meeting to be notified by the sub-group where the sub-group will be updating on the Health Check and will be holding discussions on perhaps widening their brief to cover such items as for instance, car parking.
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- The Chairman confirmed having attended the business meeting and agreed that all at the meeting had confirmed the three person sub-group committee and agreed that future meetings should be called.

Tourism

- John Horan confirmed that the Greenway application had been submitted in advance of the 30 November 2018 deadline. This will be an e-Greenway with several bicycle and other charging points

- The Greenway cost is €8.47m, net €7.66m with WCC contributing €810,000.
- It appears 22 applications have been submitted and that the decision will be announced in the first quarter of 2019.
- The meeting complimented John Horan on his considerable input to the application.

AOB

- Jason Mulhall advised that the Forum has set up a sub-committee to review Burgage Castle. While the committee are reviewing the history etc. at the moment, the ESB has commissioned a structural report which should be available in the first quarter of 2019. This report will be copied to Wicklow County Council and the National Monuments Section of the Office of Public Works to determine what direction will be taken and decisions will then be made on the way forward.
- Jason Mulhall advised that Tidy Towns are looking at public water dispensers similar to a project to be carried out in the Greystones Municipal District in partnership with their Town Team & Tidy Towns Group.
- Jason Mulhall stated that the Town Team should be conscious of upcoming grant funds and have projects ready for submission. Such projects could include the completion on the relief road and placing cables underground in the Main Street. In summary, both Jason and Dan Kenny were of the opinion that projects should be prepared and be ready in advance of any grant funding being announced. Projects can be defined by the Municipal District, Elected Representatives & Community and then submitted in partnership.
- Councillor Gerry O'Neill enquired regarding a member joining the Town Team from Disability Ireland. The Chairman pointed out that Disability Ireland has representation on the Forum and a sub-committee is now active from the Forum including non-Forum members and that the committee will report to the Forum and to the Town Team through Kilian McGreal and the Healthy Blessington project.
- Sean Quirke confirmed that there has been no movement as yet on the Local Area Plan. It was noted that the Forum will be convening a further public meeting as a follow on from the September meeting to summarise proposals for submission to WCC.
- Liam Fay confirmed that discussions are ongoing with the ESB in regard to having electric connections at the Four Stone tree and the Monument. Further information will be provided in the coming months with respect to the possibilities of what can be achieved.

This concluded the business of the meeting with the next meeting being scheduled for Tuesday 8 January 2019 at 5.00pm.

Signed: 
Chairman

8/1/19.