

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Civic Offices, Blessington on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019, at 10.30 a.m.**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Gerry O'Neill  
Councillor Edward Timmins  
Councillor Vincent Blake  
Councillor Patsy Glennon  
Councillor Avril Cronin  
Councillor John Mullen

**In Attendance:** Mr. Sean Quirke, District Manager  
Mr. Declan Geraghty, District Engineer  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer  
Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator  
Ms. Andrea Connolly, A/Assistant Staff Officer

**1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019.**

Cllr. Blake proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and this was seconded by Cllr. O'Neill.

**2. Matters Arising**

***Tinahely Recycling Centre***

In reply to Cllr. Blake regarding the proposed Tinahely Recycling Centre, Mr Garvan Hickey, District Administrator, advised the members that there had been no submissions received as of yet. The closing date for receipt of submission is the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019. Tinahely Community Projects Group was in the process of doing a leaflet drop to houses in the Beechwood Drive estate informing them of the proposed recycling centre.

### ***Kiltegan Water Supply***

Cllr. Blake noted that the boil water notice had been lifted in Kitegan but asked if reassurance could be obtained from Irish Water that this issue has now been rectified and that the filtration works completed are a solution to the water problem.

### ***EMRA Report***

Cllr. Cronin enquired if there had been any correspondence from Minister Eoghan Murphy following the proposal to write urging him to keep the N81 upgrade works to the top of the list at the previous Baltinglass Municipal District meeting in June. Mr. Hickey advised members that he was awaiting a response.

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### ***Allotments in Blessington***

Cllr. Timmins asked if there had been an update on the allotments in Blessington. Mr. Hickey advised the members that he had met with the Chair of the Allotment Committee and they had visited two proposed sites in Carrig Glen but at present he is awaiting a response from the committee. The allotment committee is considering a number of sites.

### ***Estate Development Grants***

Cllr. Cronin advised members that she had received a query from Dunlavin Residents Association regarding increasing funding from the Estate Development Grants as Dunlavin Residents Association maintain three estates and they felt the amount they had received was inadequate. Cllr. O'Neill suggested that instead of one group applying for funding each estate should apply separately. Members noted that it was important to recognise the work done by estate development committees across the Municipal District.

### **3. Correspondence**

Mr. Garvan Hickey informed the members that an email had been received from Dunlavin Forum regarding funding opportunities, drainage works in the graveyard and road improvements. Cathaoirleach Cllr. O'Neill advised members that he had been asked by the forum to arrange meeting with Baltinglass Municipal District members. The Cathaoirleach proposed that the October Ordinary meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District should take place in Dunlavin Courthouse or Dunlavin Library on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019 in order to facilitate the Forums request. This was agreed unanimously by members.

The District Administrator advised the members that he had also received correspondence by email from the Baltinglass Forum regarding issues in Baltinglass. An invitation had been extended to all members to a meeting to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, in Baltinglass. Cllr. Mullen queried if councillors have the ability to allocate budgets and reinstate staff levels in the District as these were some of the issues raised by Baltinglass Forum. Cllr. Timmins explained that councillors do not have a full say on where budgets are allocated but they do have full control over the discretionary fund. Cllr. Glennon questioned the total budget for the discretionary fund and Mr. Sean Quirke advised members that the figure was €180,750 and each member had an allocation of approximately €30,000. Cllr. O'Neill noted that the public lights in Deerpark in Baltinglass had been funded through the discretionary fund.

#### **4. To consider National and Non National Roads Reports**

Mr. Declan Geraghty, District Engineer, presented a report to the meeting on non national and national roads and copies of same were distributed to the members. He advised members that road improvements works and the road maintenance programme had been completed in the Blessington area. There was one Community Involvement Scheme in Blessington area which would be completed shortly. He informed the members that bridge works were as listed on report and works at Tuckmill were ongoing.

Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer, gave a brief overview of works taking place in the Tinahely area – road maintenance works were completed and road improvement works are progressing. He advised members that two Local Improvement Schemes were going ahead in Tinahely area, Kierseys Lane and Ballymanogue Lane. There were four applications received for Community Involvement Schemes with provisional approval given to Kennystown Lane in Carnew. Mr. Graham explained that he had met with representatives on a number of occasions and that they had been experiencing funding issues so this scheme will not be going ahead. An application had been made from another group, Coopers Lane and discussions have been ongoing and he was confident this would go ahead. Safety improvement works were ongoing in Kiltegan, the design layout would be finalised and construction would begin in September. Cllr. Blake commented that he was disappointed to hear that Kennystown Lane would not be going ahead and thanked Mr. Graham and staff for their hard work and time they had put towards this scheme.

Cllr. Mullen asked if there was an update on Killavane junction. Mr. Graham replied that surveys had been done and a proper design layout was required as parking was an issue at this junction. He explained that linemarking will make an improvement in this area. Cllr. Blake requested a copy of this drawing when it is completed.

Mr. Geraghty advised members that a request had been made at the previous Baltinglass Municipal meeting for a copy of the three year roads plan which has been distributed to all members. Cllr. Cronin questioned if members have an input into this plan or if they can suggest roads that need reviewing. Mr. Geraghty replied that the input of councillors is taken on board along with a number of other factors including traffic volumes and road condition. A discussion followed on the how roads are rated and graded and Mr. Geraghty explained that there are eighteen roads included in the three year plan but fifty roads are under consideration for resurfacing and some do not get rated.

Cllr. O'Neill raised concerns over the Local Improvement Schemes and questioned how if one resident out of ten objects to scheme then said scheme cannot go ahead and asked if anyone had any views on this. Cllr. Timmins suggested writing to the Minister for Transport and getting clarification on this matter. Cllr. O'Neill proposed the motion and Cllr. Timmins seconded it.

Mr. Declan Geraghty outlined the works on the National Roads Report. He advised members that five areas of the N81 had been resurfaced as these areas had been identified as not meeting requirements. He also advised that pavement works were to commence north of Blessington at the end of August and works at Knockroe bend were to commence at end of August. He advised members that an up to date report should be available for the next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting. Cllr. Timmins requested the updated N81 report and the engineer from Wicklow, Pat Byrne, attend next meeting. He also questioned the cost of pavement works from Kiltel to Blessington. Mr. Declan Geraghty advised the total cost for these works was approximately €1 million. Cllr. Timmins noted that budget could have been spent elsewhere. Mr. Sean Quirke, District Manager, advised members that TII assesses work programmes for the N81.

Cllr. O'Neill noted that the budget of €1 million would have been better spent on the installing of a slip lane at the junction for Crosschapel as the public have requested. Cllr.

Timmins proposed a letter be written to TII requesting their attendance at next meeting along with Ms. Deirdre Forde and Cllr. Glennon seconded this motion. Mr. Geraghty advised members that senior management have checked the Ring Road in Blessington and area hoping to progress with this and that the members need to push this. Mr. Quirke also added that a turning lane design has been re-submitted to the roads section.

#### **5. To discuss ESB Bridge Maintenance**

A report was distributed to the members on ESB bridge maintenance for their consideration. Mr. Geraghty gave a brief breakdown on this report and explained that the five bridges on roads around Blessington Lakes are owned and managed by the ESB including the surface of the bridges. Although the ESB are of the belief that the council are responsible for the road surfaces of the bridges. He advised members that Knockieran Bridge is in need of resurfacing and if Wicklow County Council were to take responsibility of Knockieran Bridge then it would cost in the region of €18,000.

Cllr. Mullen noted that the ESB were in a better financial position to the County Council and the ESB should not be left off their responsibilities. Cllr. Timmins informed the meeting that while he agreed in principle with the Council taking over looking after the surface of the roads on the bridges he was concerned about the cost and questioned if the additional expenditure would come from existing budgets or if extra funding would be made available. Mr. Quirke advised members that at present no additional funding was available. Cllr. Cronin noted that this would be significant additional expenditure and that clarification should be got on who was responsible for the surface. The Cathaoirleach Cllr. O'Neill informed the meeting that the surface of the road at Knockieran bridge was in need of work and noted the build up of weeds at the sides of the bridge.

After some discussion it was agreed to write to the ESB requesting clarification and documentation on who was responsible for the surface of the bridges. This was agreed by all members. It was also noted that members were not in favour of the Municipal District taking over responsibility of the road surface and associated works from the ESB.

## **6. To consider Blessington Town Twinning proposal**

Cllr. O'Neill presented a briefing on the Blessington Town Twinning proposal which was circulated to all. Cllr. O'Neill outlined the connection with O'Neill City in Nebraska and explained to the members how the motion to twin with O'Neill City has been passed by Baltinglass Municipal District members two years ago but had experienced some difficulties and twinning had not been completed. Cllr. O'Neill asked the members for their views on the proposed twinning. Cllr. Mullen asked if the Blessington Town & District Forum are on board with this and Cllr. Glennon advised that he had no objections. Cllr. Timmins stressed the importance of getting local support and a record should be kept of any funding made to Twinning committees. Cllr. Blake noted that Baltinglass Municipal District can support the initiative but are not officially involved, similar to the Coolattin Canadian connection it is a community project. He also questioned if this motion had been discussed with the Blessington Town Team. Cllr. O'Neill replied that this motion has already been discussed with the Blessington Town & district Forum but not with the Blessington Town Team. Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator, advised that as this was a community project and not a Municipal District project and it was important to have public buy in. Cllr. O'Neill requested a special meeting be held in order to discuss further. It was agreed by members that there was no need for a special meeting and the issue could be dealt with at the meeting. Cllr. Timmins pointed out that it was important that the people of Blessington are behind the twinning and it is properly constituted.

Cllr. Glennon proposed the following recommendation that "Baltinglass Municipal District supports the efforts of twinning the town of Blessington with O'Neill City in Nebraska and wish them well in their efforts". Cllr. O'Neill seconded the recommendation and it was agreed by members.

## **7. To discuss Baltinglass Municipal District Health Check**

At the June Baltinglass Municipal District meeting it was agreed that all members submit their priorities to Mr Garvan Hickey in order for him to draft a workplan for the Municipal district. Mr. Hickey proposed that a document be drafted internally rather than through a consultant as the budget available for this is €10,000 and there are few consultants available. Cllr. Mullen noted that is a big task to get this document compiled and it may be possible to

get additional funding from LEADER. He advised that LEADER is a rural fund and that West Wicklow could be classed as a rural area and with that has unique needs. Cllr. Blake supported this proposal and asked if County Wicklow Partnership could be approached regarding funding also.

## **8. Any other business**

Cllr. Timmins questioned if there was an update on the walkway from Blessington to Glending Woods. Mr. Geraghty replied that the obvious route is through the Gaelic grounds and that discussions would need to take place with the GAA in order to progress the route.

Cllr. Glennon asked about the possibility of vacating the depot in Dunlavin and if it could be used as a carpark for the church once done. Mr. Quirke advised that discussions had been held with KWETB and they had expressed interest in acquiring the depot.

Cllr. Cronin asked if funding had been given from Transport Infrastructure Ireland for bus stops and questioned when works can commence on these. Mr. Garvan Hickey confirmed that funding had been given for Blessington (€10,000), Baltinglass (€10,000), Manor Kilbride (€5,000) and Hollywood (€5,000) communities for bus stops from the Community Enhancement Programme 2019, this funding is separate from TII funding, a separate application had been submitted for a bus stop in Hollywood.

Cllr. Mullen advised members that there was a KWETB issue ongoing in the Carnew/Tinahely area which needed attention. In 2012 the school transport system changed the catchment area for some areas of Tinahely to Hacketstown instead of Carnew. Cllr. Mullen proposed a letter be sent to KWETB requesting that if there is a demand for places in Carnew school then there should also be places available for these students on school transport. Cllr. Blake voiced his support on this issue.

Cllr. Blake thanked the staff of Baltinglass Municipal District for their work during the judging of the Pride of Place both in Blessington and Tinahely areas. He also asked if road markings of the ramps on Kelly's Hill, Tinahely could be reinstated.

Cllr. Cronin asked for an update on the lights in the playground in Dunlavin. Mr. Hickey replied that this had been logged with Airtricity and he was awaiting a reply.

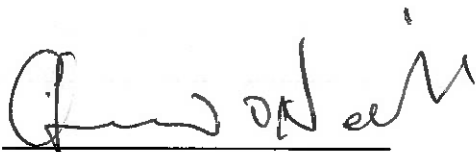
Cllr. Blake questioned why the playground in Carnew was closed and Mr. Graham informed him that he was not aware of this as the local community group look after the playground.

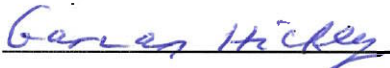
**9. Date of next meeting**

The Cathaoirleach asked members if they would agree to have the date for the September Ordinary meeting brought forward to the 16<sup>th</sup> September and this was agreed unanimously by members.

The Cathaoirleach noted that the Special meeting provisionally arranged for the 9<sup>th</sup> September would not take place and the consideration of the Part VIII in respect of the proposed development of a recycling facility at School Road, Lugduff, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow would be included on the agenda for the Ordinary meeting on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September.

There being no other business the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. O'Neill, concluded the meeting.

Signed:   
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:   
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: 16/09/2019