

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Hollywood Community Centre, Hollywood on 22nd June 2020, at 11.00 a.m.

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

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. Caroline Fox, Community, Cultural and Social Development

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Glennon opened the Baltinglass Municipal District Ordinary meeting.

- 1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25th May 2020.**

Cllr. Timmins proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25th May 2020 and this was seconded by Cllr. Blake.

- 2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

- 3. Correspondence**

Mr. Garvan Hickey informed the members that Aurora had been in contact regarding the purchase of a site just up from the playground and near Aldi for the development of a

colocation cabin with supporting equipment for broadband. He advised members that a formal application was in progress but he wished to make members aware of their initial interest. Copies of initial draws of the colocation cabin were available for members information. Cllr. Blake questioned if they were involved with the National Broadband Plan and Mr. Graham advised members that Aurora are a separate private and commercial company. He added that there will be a booster control centre located in Blessington and one in Kilcoole also. Cllr. Mullen commented on the unusual nature of the broadband plan in the county and asked if a presentation could be organised on how the plan is to be rolled out over the next few years. Ms. Kilkenny, District Manager, suggested Mr. Hickey contact the National Broadband Plan to request a letter outlining the roll out of broadband services in the district and in particular within the Baltinglass loop as it may be difficult to get a presentation organised. Cllr. Glennon questioned what Aurora would gain from the development of a router in Blessington and Mr. Hickey informed members that as far as he was aware Aurora is a carrier –neutral service provider and works to support all carriers and telecom operators to increase their network coverage and connectivity. They offer a complimentary service to the National Broadband Ireland roll-out.

Cllr. O'Neill asked if there was an update on the Chief Executive's submission to An Bord Pleanála in relation to the strategic housing development application on land at Kilmalum Road. Ms. Kilkenny advised that the Chief Executive's report is due on the 25th June and an update will be available for the next meeting.

4. To discuss the Baltinglass Municipal Schedule of Works 2020

Mr. Hickey advised members that copies of the Baltinglass Municipal Schedule of Works 2020 had been circulated prior to the meeting for their perusal. Cllr. Timmins noted that a budget of €21,150 was allocated for the maintenance and upkeep of burial ground allocated to Blessington area and questioned if there was a budget allocated for the burial grounds in the Tinahely area. Mr. Graham, A/District Engineer, advised that this was an historical issue and there was once a separate budget for the Tinahely area. Cllr. Timmins proposed this issue be brought up at the budget meeting in October. He also noted that the allocated budget of €10,000 for Economic Development and Promotion is a lot less than other districts and the

street cleaning budget is quite low compared to other districts with a similar population. Cllr. Glennon advised that these issues will need to be addressed at the Wicklow County Council budget meeting in September.

Cllr O'Neill noted that maintenance of the public convenience in Blessington was costing approximately €40,000 and in his opinion this was too high. He proposed a full report on these costs be available for the next meeting and Cllr. Timmins seconded this proposal. Mr. Hickey advised members that the total cost of maintenance of the public convenience was in the region of €36,000 and some income was generated from this service but not a substantial amount. Cllr. O'Neill also noted that funding had been allocated a number of years ago for public toilet facilities at Poulaphouca but these were no longer open to the public.

Cllr. Blake questioned if the IPB budget would be divided between the two areas and Mr. Hickey confirmed that yes it would be divided equally. He also asked where the allocation for Parks & Open Spaces would be spent and Mr. Hickey replied that it would be used for all parks in the district including Shillelagh and Knockananna. Cllr. Timmins proposed the adoption of the Baltinglass Municipal Schedule of Works 2020 and this was seconded by Cllr. Mullen.

5. To consider Roads reports (nation and non-national roads)

Mr. Graham read through the report on national and non national roads which had been circulated to the members detailing the planned road works. Mr Graham advised the members that road maintenance works were due to start later this week weather permitting. Surfacing works would commence in the Blessington area and then move to Tinahely area. Cllr. Timmins requested that the white line be extended at Kilmurray on the R747 after the surface dressing has been completed. Mr. Graham confirmed that once works are completed the white line would be re-instated. Cllr. Mullen thanked Mr. Graham and Mr. Byrne for the detailed report but raised concerns over the excessive layout of bollards in Knockananna. Mr. Graham explained that funding had been made available from CLÁR to improve road safety at the junction and a design layout was being tested to reduce speed. Cllr O'Neill acknowledged the works that have been completed on Woodend bridge and thanked both engineers for their detailed roads report. Cllr. Glennon raised concerns over the lack of white lines on the top of Wicklow Gap and asked if communication could be made with Wicklow

District with regard to getting them re-instated. Mr. Byrne confirmed that he had been in contact with the engineer in Wicklow and white lining would be completed. Cllr. Blake questioned if a 200mt section of road at Coolkenno could be considered for road resurfacing.

Mr. Byrne briefed members on the N81 progress report which had been circulated to members. He advised members that works at Knockroe Bend Realignment had recommenced since the 18th May and are progressing well and works should be completed by the end of August. Cllr. Timmins questioned if any progress on reducing the speed limit at Hollywood cross to 80km and Mr. Byrne replied that a speed review is due to be completed next year. Cllr. Glennon noted that although TII have an overall say on reducing speed limits, as a statutory function of the Local Authority, this issue needs to be pursued.

Cllr. O'Neill queried if there had been any update from the ESB regarding the responsibility of bridges on Blessington lakes. Mr. Byrne advised that he had met with ESB staff recently and they were certain that responsibility of surface maintenance lies with Wicklow County Council and ESB maintain the structure of bridges. A legal document outlining these responsibilities is to be forwarded to Mr. Hickey.

Cllr. Cronin questioned if there had been any progress on the installation of the bus stop at Hollywood. Mr. Byrne advised that TII need to approve bus stops and want to locate the bus stop off the N81 as they have raised safety concerns over bus stops on the N81. He added that the plans for a new footpath in Hollywood are making good progress. Ms. Kilkenny advised that a proposal for a bus stop had been included in a capital projects application and every effort was being made to get completed.

6. To discuss the development of a footpath at Red Lane, Blessington.

Cllr. O'Neill advised the meeting that an extension will soon be underway at St. Mary's National School on Red Lane, Blessington. He proposed an application be made to extend the footpath from Knockieran Bridge to the Red Lane, a distance of approximately 4 km, through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. Mr. Hickey advised that footpath projects are excluded from Town and Village Renewal Scheme but the Outdoor Recreations Infrastructure Scheme announced recently may be an option. He added that he would speak to Mr. Nicholson from CCSD for further advice.

7. To receive a report on the progress of the Blessington Greenway.

Ms. Caroline Fox, Community & Enterprise, presented the members with an update on the progress of the Blessington Greenway. She advised members that design consultants had been appointed and a detailed design of the route should be available by October. She added that flood data had been received from the ESB and a walkover of the entire route completed. She also advised that the building originally housing the HSE had now been purchased and would now house the Interpretive Centre. A drone survey had also been completed and mapping out of the route was now underway. She advised that works would commence on a construction trial section of the route from Valleymount carpark to Ballyknocken, a distance of 5kms, and would link the two villages. This would give an indication on how to develop the entire route.

Following Ms. Fox's report a number of concerns were raised by the members. Cllr. Cronin queried who would be responsible for the maintenance of the greenway and the timeline for completion. Ms. Fox advised that there would be one or two general operatives and a small vehicle appointed to maintain route on a daily basis and route should be completed within eighteen months from start date, hopefully September or October 2020. Cllr. O'Neill raised concerns over the overall cost of the project and the provision of public toilets and a board walk at Burgage bridge. Cllr. Mullen questioned if a code of conduct would be implemented. Ms. Fox advised that the project would cost approximately €10 million overall with €5 million granted from the Department. She continued that the main investment will go towards the 28 km route. Public toilets will have to be provided and the ESB, as the main landowners, have a long term agreement in place with Wicklow County Council. She advised that boardwalks will have to be looked at individually as costs could be an issue. Once bylaws have been adopted a code of conduct for users will be drafted. These issues will be discussed further.

8. To discuss and adopt the Discretionary Expenditure 2020.

Mr. Hickey advised members that following on from the previous meeting the discretionary expenditure list of projects required adopting and a report on the proposed works with the discretionary funds was circulated. Cllr. Mullen proposed and Cllr. Blake seconded this motion.

9. To discuss the development of Community Allotments in Blessington

Ms. Kilkenny advised the members that following on from the previous meeting Mr. Byrne and Mr. Hickey had identified sites within the Blessington area suitable for allotments on council owned land. These sites included:

- Carrig Glen Estate
- Oak Drive Junction & N81
- Burgage
- Local Estates – green areas

She advised that the option of designating small sections of green areas within each estate for the use of residents of the respective estates as allotments was a preferable option. She added that each estate would take ownership of this area from the Local Authority and they would be responsible for the maintenance. Ms. Kilkenny suggested that funding could be sought from the Community Cultural and Social Development section. Ms. Kilkenny advised that the cost of land at the Burgage site would be in the region of €300,000 per acre and the site at Carrig Glen has sufficient space for cars to pull in. Cllr. Glennon noted that the option of using green areas within estates may not be a runner as half of the residents would not be in favour. Ms. Kilkenny added that many of these estates have significant green areas, a small area could be used for allotments and they would not detract from play areas for children.

Cllr. O'Neill queried if the Local Authority would provide a contribution towards costs of a private site. He suggested a half acre site at Russborough as an option as car parking could be provided and there would be no issues with exiting onto the N81. Ms. Kilkenny advised that the role of the Local Authority is to examine community owned land and a site at Russborough would be a community group making a private arrangement. Mr. Hickey advised the members an application for funding could be sought through the Town and

Village Renewal Scheme and from LEADER but if funding was not successful he asked if any members were interested in ring fencing of their discretionary budget approximately €5,000 to €8,000 per member from next year's allocation to help with costs in developing a site and getting the project up and running. Mr. Hickey noted that Baltinglass Municipal District does not have a budget for community allotments and funding would have to be sourced from alternative sources. All members agreed that it was too early to agree funding from next year's discretionary fund but that they would be willing to consider contributing towards the cost if budgets remained similar to this years.

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

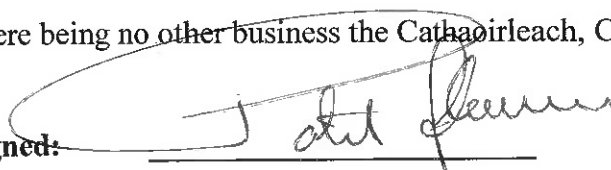
Cathaoirleach Glennon proposed holding the July meeting in the Imaal Hall in Dunlavin and all members were in agreement. Ms. Kilkenny advised the members that she would not be available for the next meeting but Ms. Teresa O'Brien would take her place.

11. Any other business

Mr. Hickey advised the meeting that the Outdoor Recreation funding Schemes were still open for applications along with CLÁR and Town and Village and Rural schemes.

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

Signed:



CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:



DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated:

28/07/2020

