

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Blessington Civic Offices, Blessington on 27th January 2020, at 10.30 a.m.

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

Apologies: Mr. Michael Flynn, Senior Engineer

Cllr. O'Neill opened the Baltinglass Municipal District meeting and wished all a happy New Year. He also welcomed Ms. Kilkenny to Baltinglass Municipal District in her new role as District Manager and looked forward to working together in the future.

- 1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 16th December 2019.**

Cllr. Mullen proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 16th December 2019 and this was seconded by Cllr. Timmins.

2. Matters Arising

Cllr. Mullen noted that it was good to see the Cathaoirleach back to good health and wished him all the best. Cllr. Mullen raised concerns over the street lighting issue in Shillelagh and Carnew and asked what could be done to get this issue sorted as it has been ongoing for a

while. Mr. Graham, A/Senior Executive Engineer, advised that the ESB connection was in place and he was awaiting Airtricity to connect the wires for the lights to the connection in Carnew. Mr. Graham also outlined that all public lighting faults are reported and recorded on the Deadsure system and are dealt with by Airtricity according to their work schedule.

Cllr. Timmins also noted that it was good to see Cllr. O'Neill back to good health and also welcomed Ms. Kilkenny to her new role. Cllr. Timmins raised the issue of public lighting in Deerpark, Baltinglass which has still not been resolved. Mr. Graham advised members that a connection agreement had been signed with the ESB a number of months ago and he was waiting for the connection to be put in place. Mr. Graham advised that Wicklow County Council have a maintenance contract with Airtricity and there is an issue with the supply of the old style bulbs as only one factory internationally that is still manufacturing them and this is contributing to a delay with repairs. Nationally local authorities are rolling out a programme to replace the inefficient old public lights with more efficient LED lights.

Cllr. Timmins also queried if correspondence had been sent to the surrounding county councils with regard to getting support for the N81 upgrade as discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Hickey, District Administrator, advised that he had been speaking to an engineer in Kildare County Council regarding the N81 and would be writing to the District Administrator, Tullow Municipal District office in Carlow. Cllr. Timmins asked if correspondence could also be sent to South Dublin County Council also and Mr. Hickey advised that he may hold off writing until after the General Election and would write to the neighbouring authorities to look for their support for the upgrading of the N81. Cllr. O'Neill concurred with Mr. Hickey and noted that hopefully we will be welcoming some new T.D's after the election and it would be interesting to see who would be the new Minister for Transport.

Cllr. Cronin also welcomed Ms. Kilkenny to her new role and questioned if any correspondence had been sent to Blessington Tidy Towns and Blessington Forum following their requests at previous meetings. Mr. Hickey confirmed that a reply had been sent to Blessington Tidy Towns but he was awaiting an address for Blessington Forum. Cllr. Cronin also asked if there had been any update with the spotlight on the courthouse in Dunlavin.

After some discussion regarding the public lighting issues Ms. Kilkenny, District Manager, proposed the District Administrator draft a letter to Airtricity outlining the issues that Councillors have brought up and requesting these be addressed. Cllr. Mullen asked if a log of all lighting repairs could also be requested and Ms. Kilkenny agreed that a breakdown of all repairs that have been logged on the Deadsure system be requested and to include outstanding repairs works also.

Cllr. Blake offered a vote of sympathy to Mr. Pat Kennedy former Senator and Lord Mayor of Limerick noting that he had played a large part in relocating Kerry Foods to Shillelagh.

Cllr. O'Neill noted that a request had been made regarding funding for the works at the Credit Union roundabout on the Naas Road, monuments in Baltinglass and other such works. Mr. Hickey noted that no written formal request had been received.

3. Correspondence

Mr. Garvan Hickey informed the members that he had received a number of letters, one from Blessington Allotment Committee and another from Blessington Swimming Pool Committee and copies had been distributed to members for their consideration. He advised members that following on from a suggestion, at a previous Baltinglass Municipal District meeting, of smaller allotment sites being developed rather than one large site would be examined. Cllr. Timmins asked where the site for the allotments would be located and Mr. Hickey advised that a portion of land at Carrig Glen had been identified but did require fencing and water connections. He noted that no funding was available for further development and would cost in the region of €15,000 to €20,000. He advised that the next step would be to get in touch with the residents association in Carrig Glen to advise them of the possibility of developing community allotments on the County Council land adjacent to the estate. Cllr. O'Neill noted that residents in Carrig Glen had expressed their concerns at groups from private estates using land at Carriglen as allotments. He also questioned why some of the thirty two acres at Burgage could not be used for development of allotments instead. Mr. Hickey responded that the Housing section had advised that the application for the development of community allotments at Burgage was premature until the development of a master plan for the site and the provision of houses.

The letter received from Blessington Swimming Pool Committee outlined the disappointment the committee felt at the decision from the Sports Department not to fund the next phase. Members noted their disappointment at the Departments decision.

4. To receive a presentation from Mr. Michael Flynn, Senior Engineer, on Blessington Ring Road

In Mr. Michael Flynn's absence Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager, presented a report on the Blessington Town Inner Relief road, copies of which had been circulated to members. She advised members that obtaining funding was the next step in progressing the relief road and advised an application was being prepared for submission as part of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). The RRDF application has to be submitted before the 28th February 2020. The application will for funding will include projects highlighted in the Blessington Health Check which was completed by Future Analytics and would include development of the main street and market square. Ms. Kilkenny also advised members that as a large section of the inner relief road runs through county Kildare it would be necessary to enter into a Section 85 agreement with County Kildare in order for Wicklow County Council to be the lead agency to progress this project. She added that she had left messages with the engineer in Kildare County Council and was awaiting a call back to arrange a meeting to discuss the development to the relief road. Mr. Derek Cullen from Enterprise and Corporate Services was due to attend the Blessington Town Team meeting and give a presentation to the Town Team on Tuesday 28th January 2020.

Mr. Pat Byrne, Executive Engineer, advised members that Transport Infrastructure Ireland had completed a High Accident Site Report on the Main Street in Blessington and had drafted a design car parking layout for the town but this could not go ahead without the Inner Relief Road being completed. Cllr. Timmins asked if funding for the inner relief road could be sought through TII as he feels that West Wicklow have been let down with the upgrade of the N81 not going ahead. Ms. Kilkenny explained that any new housing developments granted planning permission would also have to develop the inner relief road as per planning conditions, whether in Kildare or Wicklow.

Cllr. Blake noted that when he had met with Minister Shane Ross last year the issue of funding from TII for development of the inner relief road had been brought up and the indication from the Minister was that he was supportive of this. He also questioned if parking fees would be introduced to West Wicklow as this had also been discussed. Ms. Kilkenny informed members that no decision had been made on parking charges in Blessington.

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

Mr. Dermot Graham, A/Senior Executive 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 all pavement works on the N81 have been completed and updated members on progress at Knockroe Bend Realignment and outlined the major works scheduled for this month. Mr. Graham advised members that the three year programme is in place since 2019 and will be advised in the coming weeks of allocations for the Baltinglass Municipal District for Restoration Improvement Works and Restoration Maintenance Works. This will be divided between Blessington and Tinahely areas equally.

A schedule of works is to be compiled by Mr. Dermot Graham and Mr. Pat Byrne to renew and replace existing damaged footpath assets within the Municipal District.

Mr. Graham advised members that two bridge rehabilitation projects have been approved for Tinahely area and these works will be carried out by Wicklow County Council bridge crew. These works are located at Highpark, Shillelagh and Boley Bridge, Shillelagh. He also advised there are currently five applications for Community Involvement Schemes and there are eleven Local Improvement Schemes within the Baltinglass District. Allocations for these schemes have not been advised yet and approval will depend on funding available.

Cllr. Mullen asked for an update on footpath works at Kelly's Hill and Kevin Street, Tinahely. Mr. Graham advised that he was waiting on Eircom to come back regarding the ducting and that concreting would commence within two to three weeks on Kevin Street. Cllr. O'Neill pointed out that members can utilise their discretionary funding for footpath works also.

Mr. Pat Byrne, Executive Engineer, advised that he had scheduled a meeting with TII to discuss the bus stop at Hollywood and a meeting with the landowner the following day.

Cllr. Glennon asked if there was any update on the request to TII to reduce the speed limit to 80km per hour at the Hollywood junction. Mr. Byrne advised that letters had been sent to TII and that a full review of the speed limits on the N81 was due next year. Cllr. O'Neill asked if the timeframe for the review can be checked.

Cllr. Blake questioned if the budget of €15,000 would cover the bridge rehabilitation works at Boley Bridge, Shillelagh. Mr. Graham advised that underpinning works are required on one arch but that bridge works are done centrally and some changes are due. He also noted that the WCC bridge crew work one or two months of the year due to a reduction in funding for bridges.

Cllr. Timmins asked if there were weight restrictions in place on certain bridges, specifically Colbinstown and Mr. Graham advised that not too many have formal weight restrictions. Cllr. Timmins noted that the weight of some of the vehicles using the bridge may have an impact on them.

6. To discuss the Fire Service in Baltinglass Municipal District

The Cathaoirleach Cllr. O'Neill, advised members that presentations of 1916 to 2016 commemoration medals had been made to the Fire Services in Blessington, Dunlavin, Baltinglass and Carnew. The Cathaoirleach had made the presentations in Blessington and Dunlavin and Cllr. Blake and Cllr. Mullen had been in attendance for the presentations at Tinahely Fire Station. The Chief Fire Officer had attended the presentation in Carnew Fire Station. Cllr. O'Neill added that a great night had been had by all and the members commended the hard work done by all the fire crews. The Cathaoirleach noted that facilities in Dunlavin and Baltinglass are behind other areas, a site in Milltown has been identified in Dunlavin but there has been no movement on it. While with respect to Baltinglass an application has gone in for a new fire station and both the Chief Executive and the Chief Fire Officer are engaging with the Department to get funding for it.

Cllr. Timmins advised that he had been in contact with the Chief Executive and submissions had been made for the relocation of the fire station to Lathaleere, Baltinglass and is very hopeful that this will go ahead. Cllr. Glennon pointed out that it was a pleasure to be able to present some of the medals to the fire fighters and noted their dedication to service.

Cllr. Cronin commented that she hadn't been able to attend the presentation in Dunlavin Fire Station as she had other commitments but commended the hard work done by the fire crew in Dunlavin. She noted that they were tight for space in the current location and asked if progress can be made on the relocation to the Milltown site. Cllr. Cronin also noted that there was a plan to move the council yard to Milltown and asked if there was any progress on this. Cllr. O'Neill asked if the Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Aidan Dempsey, could attend the next Baltinglass Municipal meeting. Mr. Hickey advised that he would invite the Chief Fire Officer to the next meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District. Mr. Hickey noted that he had been in contact with the Chief Fire Officer prior to the meeting and he had outlined his commitment to pressing Department of Housing Planning and Local Government for funding for a new Fire Station for Baltinglass. Mr. Dempsey had also outlined that the fire crew in Baltinglass are fully resourced and are very committed to the community they serve. While regarding the moving of the Council yard in Dunlavin to Milltown was funding dependent, KWETB had been in touch with Wicklow County Council over a year ago about purchasing the current depot but this had not progressed.

Cllr. Blake commended the work being done by the fire service across the county and noted that there is a danger with the push towards a full time fire service nationally the smaller fire stations will loose out and the crews will be based in the main towns.

7. To discuss and consider Funding Applications received.

Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator, advised members of grant schemes that were available. These included the Community Awards Scheme, Community Pride Scheme and the Estate Development Funding Scheme and asked members to distribute to groups or organisations that would be interested in applying for funding. He advised that the closing date for all was the 28th February 2020 and application forms are available on Wicklow County Council website.

Mr. Hickey outlined that an application for funding had been received from Lifehack for funding for the launch of the Grow Remote Baltinglass/ West Wicklow Chapter in the courthouse in Baltinglass. He added that last year he had met with Billy Timmins and Rachel Kane from Lifehack regarding the development of hot desks in the courthouse and facilitating people to work closer to home. The request is for a contribution of approximately €500 towards the launch and Mr. Hickey recommended funding the project from the Economic Develop Fund. Cllr. Cronin added that Dunlavin District Forum had rolled out a similar initiative with the Hive and queried if any funding was available. Mr. Hickey advised that they could apply for the Community Awards Scheme or the Community Pride Scheme which could be suitable for such an initiative or funding could be sought through the Local Enterprise Office. Cllr. Cronin noted that the Municipal District should be innovative and support the development of enterprise and co-working spaces. Members agreed to allocate funding for the launch.

Mr. Hickey also advised members that correspondence had been received from West Wicklow Festival enquiring if funding could be made from Baltinglass Municipal District. He added that funding of €2,000 had been made last year and the previous year from the Festival Fund. A copy of the funding application was circulated to members prior to the meeting. Mr. Hickey also that Coollattin Canadian Connection had also been in contact seeking funding, a copy of the application had been circulated to members for their consideration. Cllr. O'Neill proposed that funding could be included on next month's agenda. Cllr. Mullen commented that the work being done by Coollattin Canadian Connection was very important to the area by attracting tourism and stressed the importance of supporting this group. He also noted that the archives are now being digitised and are available on line. Cllr. O'Neill agreed with Cllr. Mullen to fully support funding for Coollattin but did comment that other groups will also be seeking funding and suggested waiting until the next meeting to discuss. Cllr. Blake noted that his understanding was that Coollattin Canadian Connection were anxious to get confirmation of funding as they needed to prepare budgets for the coming year. Cllr. Timmins proposed granting the same funding as last year to group. Mr. Hickey advised he would get in touch with Coollattin Canadian Connection and inform them that funding would be granted but that the amount would be agreed at the February meeting. After a detailed discussion it was agreed that the funding applications from West Wicklow Festival and Coollattin Canadian Connection would be considered at the February meeting.

8. To discuss the Discretionary Fund 2020

Mr. Garvan Hickey, District Administrator, advised members that a budget of €180,750 has been allocated to the Baltinglass Municipal District Discretionary Fund 2020 budget, which divided equally would be an allocation of €30,125 for each member. He added that a list of work projects had been submitted from some members. Mr. Graham suggested a list of approximately three to four projects and advised to liaise with Mr. Pat Byrne and himself before the next district meeting on 24th February. Mr. Pat Byrne reminded members that works had been completed on ramps at Woodleigh Estate, Blessington recently and funding needed to be sourced.

9. Any other business

Cllr. Mullen queried how the recent funding of €3.5 million for Baltinglass Town Centre under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund would be spent and if the members had any input. Mr. Graham advised that funding would be spent on public realm works including the boardwalk in Baltinglass Park and that design projects were being procured presently. Cllr. Timmins asked if the parking layout in the town centre and the installation of a footbridge had been included. Mr. Graham replied that the footbridge had not been included in the allocation. Cllr. Timmins noted that the development of a footbridge over the river Slaney was a priority.

Cllr. Cronin advised that Dunlavin GAA had been in touch asking if bins could be installed in the club grounds. She also asked if the recycling bins could be reinstated in Dunlavin village. Mr. Graham answered that Wicklow County Council would not provide bins as Dunlavin GAA club is private property. Cllr. Cronin also asked if gritting could be done around schools in Grangecon and Dunlavin during the cold weather. Mr. Graham outlined the set gritting routes for national, regional and local roads and explained that it would not be practical to grit all areas. He advised that the gritting routes are mapped on the council website. Cllr. O'Neill noted that piles of grit were left in certain areas around local roads for the public to use on icy areas but a sign may be required to highlight this as some signs had been removed. Mr. Hickey advised he would follow up with Mr. Roger Morrisson on reinstating the recycling bins in Dunlavin.

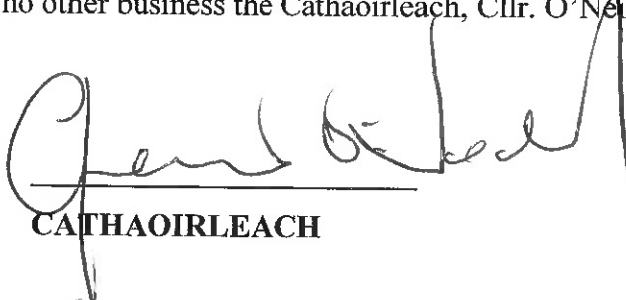
Cllr. Glennon raised concerns over the memoriam situated on the N81, marking the location where a motorcyclist was killed, he considered it too close to the road and asked if it could be moved in a little.

Cllr. O'Neill enquired about speed signs for Deerpark and Mr. Graham replied that he had the signs in the depot and would get them erected in due course.

The Cathaoirleach asked if more members could attend the Blessington Town Team meetings, one to be held on Tuesday 28th January, as items such as the Blessington CCTV and Health Check were up for discussion. Cllr. Timmins noted that the CCTV had been brought before the Baltinglass Municipal District and had been unanimously agreed by all members. Cllr. O'Neill disagreed and noted that he had raised concerns over the four cameras pointing towards housing estates. Mr. Hickey added that the CCTV system had been discussed at three separate meetings and advised that a meeting was scheduled in February with the National Committee. The Superintendent from Baltinglass District and a representative from the Data Protection Office would be in attendance and Riordan Consultants would make a recommendation to proceed with application for funding. Mr. Hickey advised he would circulate a copy of the report including the maps to all members. He also advised that the Blessington Health Check had been completed and distributed to all members and to please make him aware of any changes.

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

Signed:



CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed:



DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated:

24/02/2020

