

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in Coláiste Bhríde, Carnew on 24th April 2023 at 10.30am

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

In Attendance: Ms. Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive
Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager
Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator
Ms. Denise Walsh, Staff Officer
Ms. Ann Marie Butler, Staff Officer
Ms. Aideen Russell, Assistant Staff Officer

Young Social Innovators Project & Erasmus+

Staff & TY Students - Coláiste Bhríde, Carnew

Coollattin Canadian Connection Twinning Project

Mr. Kevin Lee

Ms. Eleanor Lee

Cathaoirleach John Mullen opened the April meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District and thanked the staff of Coláiste Bhríde, Carnew and Baltinglass Municipal District Team for bringing to fruition a meeting to the South of the District.

Cathaoirleach John Mullen requested that the meeting be extended until 1pm to allow all the agenda to be covered. Cllr. Glennon proposed the extension and Cllr. Cronin seconded it.

Ms. Emer O'Gorman asked to be excused from the meeting at 11:55am.

Votes of Sympathy

Cllr. Blake expressed a vote of sympathy to Yvonne Whitty and her family on the passing of her Father Edward (Eddie) Whitty of Preban, Aughrim, Co. Wicklow. Cllr. Mullen requested to be associated with same.

Cllr. Glennon expressed a vote of sympathy to our Colleague Margaret Doyle and her partner John on the passing of her beloved Father Peter Doyle of Rathattin, Newtown, Hollywood, Co. Wicklow.

A minutes silence was observed.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 27th March 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cronin, seconded by Cllr. Blake and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 27th March 2023.

2. Matters Arising – Inciated in Agenda.

3. To receive a presentation from Coláiste Bhríde students and staff to include young social innovators project and Erasmus+.

The Principal, Ms. Linda Dunne of Coláiste Bhríde, gave a short welcome speech to all at the meeting. Ms. Dunne outlined the wonderful work to date carried out by the school and expressed the schools excitement for the upcoming building works, which is going through the planning process.

The presentation of the young social innovators project was given by a group of TY students. All the TY students presented members with individual speeches giving a comprehensive description of each topic of their project. The students studied the amount of screen time used by their peers and devised a detox sheet to help them to acknowledge that there is a problem with overuse. All the students saw the benefit of putting their screens down and found they enjoyed new hobbies and healthier ways to spend their time.

They would like everyone to recognise that overuse of devices is an addiction, not a habit.

Questions & Answers

- Cllr. Timmins complimented the project.
- Cllr. Blake thanked the students for coming up with a great idea.
- Ms. Kilkenny asked for the student's advice on cutting the amount of screen time our children have.

All agreed that the detox sheet would help with acknowledging the amount of time spent on devices, the breaks needed and that setting timers to remind people to stop, does help.

- Ms. O’Gorman congratulated the students on their presentation and agreed the importance of having other activities, hobbies and not using / charging devices in the bedroom to help cut screen time use.
- Cllr. Glennon congratulated the students on their professional presentation.
- Cllr. Cronin stated that she found the project very interesting, highlighting the overuse of devices by parents too. Cllr. Cronin said well done to all involved.
- Cllr. O’Neill congratulated the students and all involved, stating there is more to life than a mobile phone, sport / art / literature to name but a few.
- Cllr. Mullen thanked all the students and stated he would love to see the final results of the project.

Mr. Ciarán Somers gave a detailed presentation on Erasums+, stating how proud Colaiste Bhríde is of partaking over a number of years and the benefits for the school. Promoting Arts and Languages has seen a large uptake by both teachers and students volunteering to participate.

4. To welcome Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, Emer O’Gorman to the Baltinglass Municipal District meeting.

Cllr. Mullen welcomed Ms. O’Gorman to the meeting and invited her to speak. Ms. O’Gorman expressed her delight at being invited and how she is looking forward to working with the six Councillors, Ms. Kilkenny, Mr. Cullen and all the team in The West to make tourism a priority, our Towns & Villages thrive and bring investment into the county to make improvements needed.

Questions & Answers

- Cllr. Timmins wished Ms. O’Gorman all the best. He spoke of the importance of the regeneration of the Town Centre, people shopping and working locally and enjoying local amenities.
- Cllr. Blake thanked Ms. O’Gorman for attending the meeting and stated the importance of encouraging development in the south of the district and the issues we face with planning.
- Cllr. Cronin thanked Ms. O’Gorman for being present at the meeting and asked that the small villages are not forgotten, stating that small rural communities need our support. Cllr. Cronin spoke of the lack of public transport and ongoing problems with the N81.
- Ms. O’Gorman agreed that the N81 is not fit for purpose and will invite Mr. Chambers, Junior Minister for Transport to a meeting in The West of the County to see for himself that the improvements needed are crucial.

- Cllr. Glennon welcomed Ms. O’Gorman and wished her well. He stated that Ms. Kilkenny keeps in contact with The West, spoke of the progress on the Ring Road, the proper infrastructure needed and welcomed the idea of getting all stakeholders working together for the good of the District.
- Cllr. O’Neill thanked Ms. O’Gorman for coming to the meeting in The West of the County. He discussed the need for the voice of the Cllr. to be listened to as they are elected by the people. He spoke of the problems being created by the lack of an up to date plan for Blessington as Planners are working off the 2013 to 2019 plan when making decisions on planning.

Ms. O’Gorman stated that she cannot do her job without the Councillors and agrees that their voices need to be heard. Ms. O’Gorman said she is happy to sit down individually and collectively with The Members to discuss what is needed in rural villages and stated her door is always open.

- Cllr. Mullen thanked his colleagues for their constructive input, saying they may have political differences but work really well together for the greater good of the District.

5. Baltinglass RRDF

- Mr. Graham’s crew are on site and works are progressing nicely.
- Mr. Byrne informed The Members that he had received the revised specification with cost savings at 10am that morning. He detailed the 4 new options open for discussion and requested that The Members vote on which one to go with at this meeting to allow tendering to proceed. After discussing all 4 options it was proposed by Cllr. Timmins, seconded by Cllr. Blake and unanimously agreed to proceed with option 4.

Mr. Byrne informed The Members that he will be meeting with Michael Flynn on Thursday to discuss extra funding.

Members Comments and Observations:

- Cllr. Timmins happy to proceed with option 4 and would like a group set up to meet on a regular basis to ensure projects proceed in a timely fashion. He requested that The Members be updated on the outcome of Thursday’s meeting with Michael Flynn. That we should tender immediately and would hope to be on the ground by September.
- Ms. O’Gorman strongly recommended option 4 to allow works to get on the ground and start spending as soon as possible.
- Cllr. Blake agreed that option 4 was the best option to ensure works start soon.

- Cllr. Glennon was happy to support Mr. Byrne's recommendation of option 4.
- Cllr. Cronin stated that the level of frustration regarding non- commencement of works is high. Happy to support option 4.
- Cllr. O'Neill stated that he trusts the Area Engineer's knowledge, therefore happy to support option 4.
- Cllr. Mullen happy to support the unanimous decision to proceed with option 4.
- Ms. Kilkenny will be keeping the pressure on appropriate directorates to ensure we are on the ground for September.

6. Update on a number of proposed and ongoing RRDF and CCSD projects within Baltinglass Municipal District.

The District Engineers updated the members on a number of proposed and ongoing RRDF and CCSD projects within Baltinglass Municipal District, a report was circulated to the members prior to the meeting.

Members Comments and Observations:

- It was proposed by Cllr. Timmins and seconded by Cllr. Mullen that an invitation be sent to Ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, WCC to give a presentation to The Members regarding the Heritage in our district and the tourist opportunity it could create.
- Cllr. O'Neill requested to be put on record that he does not support private enterprise being funded by the Town & Village Renewal Scheme.
- Cllr. Mullen requested that CCSD inform The Members with background information of all government funding approved in our district.
- Following on from Cllr. Mullen's request Ms. Kilkenny said she will raise the communication problem between CCSD and The Members.
- Cllr. Cronin agreed that we need quarterly updates from CCSD regarding funding.

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

The District Engineers updated the members on the Baltinglass MD national and non-national roads reports, both of which were circulated to the members prior to the meeting.

Mr. Byrne & Ms. Kilkenny expressed the importance of The Members getting wish lists into the Engineers so they can incorporate same into their plans and budgets.

Members Comments and Observations:

- Cllr Timmins thanked the engineers for their reports and works on funding. Happy with the update on the Hollywood Bus Stop.
- Cllr. Glennon stated that projects were advancing nicely.
- Cllr. O'Neill enquired about the proposed bus shelter at Lamb Cross and Mr. Byrne ensured him he is continuously working to progress this project and will have the bus shelter installed ASAP.
- Cllr. Cronin thanked the Engineers for the work done to date on active travel and was told by Mr. Graham that he will look at Cllr. Cronin's requests for further works in his area and will see if time and money allows them to proceed.
- Cllr. Timmins requested that further speed ramps be added to Old Lathaleer Estate.
- Cllr. O'Neill questioned the cost of consultation fees etc. regarding Active Travel funding and was informed by Mr. Byrne that there is a process that has to be followed to be awarded funding.
- Cllr. Glennon requested improved signage at the Kiltegan junction.

8. Update on Coollattin Canadian Connection twinning project and consider their request for funding for 2023.

Mr. Kevin Lee and Ms. Eleanor Lee gave a comprehensive and extremely interesting presentation regarding the work they are carrying out on their twinning project.

It was proposed by Cllr. Blake, seconded by Cllr. Glennon and unanimously agreed by all The Members that they were happy to sign off on €1,250.00 funding to help with the wonderful work being done.

9. Correspondence

- Mr. Cullen informed The Members that we now have €10,000.00 for festival funding and applications are open until the 31st May 2023.
- An invitation from Castel Maggiore was received regarding a further twinning event, stating that both France and Germany representatives would be present.

10. Any other business - None

11. Date of next meeting

The next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting will be held on the 22nd May 2023.

There being no other business, Cllr. Mullen, concluded the meeting.

Signed: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____