

MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING

HELD IN DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL

Monday 25th March 2024 at 14.00pm

Present: Cllr Irene Winters, Cllr Shay Cullen, Cllr Gail Dunne, Cllr Mary Kavanagh, Cllr Paul O'Brien

In Attendance: District Manager, Brian Gleeson
District Engineer, Pat Clarke
District Administrator, Georgina Franey
Assistant Staff Officer, Róisín Carroll
Myles Buchanan, Wicklow People

Apologies: Cllr John Snell

Cathaoirleach Irene Winters opened the meeting at 14.04 p.m.

ITEM 1

Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 26th of February 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Gail Dunne, seconded by Councillor Shay Cullen and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wicklow Municipal District Monthly Meeting held on 26th February 2024.

ITEM 2

District Engineers Report

Housing:

❖ Relets/Prelets

- 3no. houses relets handed to WMD for refurbishment works. (Preparing Tenders)
- 3no. houses being worked on, through WCC Housing Framework.
- 1no. houses returned to Housing Department for allocation.
- 2no. houses on hold (tenancy considerations by Housing Department).

❖ Maintenance and operations

- On-going repairs and maintenance being progressed as required on housing stock within the WMD.
- 1 DPG outstanding, contractor appointed and waiting for start date

DTTAS Roads Programme:

DTTAS Allocations for 2024 Projects have now been released to Roads. Projects on the Restoration Improvement and Maintenance Programme have been reviewed based on pavement condition ratings.

❖ **Drainage**

- General works on verge drains, drainage inlets, gullies and road crossings to outlets are ongoing throughout the MD.
- Programme for cleaning of gullies continuing within the Wicklow MD. Drain surveys are still being carried out on problem areas as required.
- Drainage works on the R772, at the Milltown lane junction and to be completed in coming weeks. Substantial drainage inlet works completed along Milltown lane and adjoining roads completed in last few weeks. The drainage network is currently being reviewed in this area.
- Drainage works at Knockrobin completed which was causing severe damage to the road. Surfacing works has been completed at the end of Feb
- Substantial verge and footpath cleaning have been completed along the footpath to the Newtown GAA pitch.
- A culvert collapse was repaired on the Glenealy road in cooperation with the WCC Bridge Rehab crew and the Wicklow MD staff.
- Drainage crossings are under construction on Conlon's hill, Newtown to remove excess water off the roads in this area.

❖ **Safety Projects**

- Pedestrian Crossing civil works is finished at Mountain View in Newtown. Installation of belisha beacon poles are completed. ESB connection required to energise crossing. Lowering of wall has been completed to increase visibility at this junction.
- Upgrade of crossing point at St Laurence's school is complete, ramp surfacing completed at school. Barriers have been installed at crossing point.
- Upgrade of Road markings on R755/ R756 between Wicklow Gap and Djouce has started, approx. 14km of centre line completed plus 4km of edge markings, further lining has been completed but weather has not been favourable in March. Chevron signage and delineator posts have been installed on the Wicklow Gap.
- Periodic School Signage has been installed at certain locations in the WMD. Roundwood National School and Nuns Cross. All signage to be completed by end of the month.

❖ **WCC Projects**

- Works required to stabilise the steps and retaining wall area at Parnell Bridge is complete. New safety railings to be installed as soon as they are manufactured.
- New anti-slip surface to be installed on bridge deck in Q2 when weather is suitable.
 - A substantial review of the town centre street furniture was carried out with the removal of planters from certain locations. Works on paving completed on footpaths on Main Street and church street car park. With additional road markings carried out at the Upper mall road in response to HGV's taking the lower mall route. Signage has also been reviewed and updated

Fáilte Ireland:

❖ **Abbey Grounds;**

- Project continuing with Architect/ Structural Engineer and a Quantity surveyor working on tender package for the Coach House area at present. Tender package has been advertised. Tender assessment to be carried out mid-April once tenders are received.
- Detailed designs still progressing for Amphitheatre seating and performance area.

- Material finishes being worked through at present on certain elements of the design.
- Connection agreements with Utility providers are being progressed.
- Site compound for construction works has been started. Erection of temporary site fencing has been installed around areas of interest on site, as per National Monuments requirements.
- Design works on new entrance for parochial house are being progressed, with site works to start as soon as ground conditions improve.

Community Recognition Fund/Outdoor Recreation:

- Brittas Bay Blueway funding for accessibility works; works have commenced on upgrade to toilet facilities. The upgrade includes a disabled toilet, improved water storage and improvement of security facilities. – Tank has now being installed, increasing the storage capacity to 26,000 litres. Disability access ramp and new showers have been installed. Final finishes and painting to be completed over coming weeks.
- The Assembly Hall facility works started on Monday 4th of March as specified, with a completion date of June 2024. Works will include the upgrade of electrical and heating systems, refurbishment of existing toilets and kitchen facilities, creating of a meeting room space upstairs to create a multi -functional building for different user groups, plus other aesthetic improvements throughout the building.

Town & Village Renewal:

- Wicklow Town – South Quay connections to Main Street (Connectivity Project); Seating (at Scouts Hall) have been installed. Three ornate arches with lanterns are currently being fabricated for installation along the Doctor’s Steps. – 7 murals now complete. Installation of Fabricated ship to town hall gable complete. Installation of Heron sculpture at scouts den complete. ‘Mini’ murals around the town still ongoing. Lighting along mall and Market square elements to be completed by end of March.
- Newtown - Streetscape Enhancement Project works are complete.
- New bins (mixture of compactor and larger big belly bins) have been installed in response to complaints on litter issues. Additional street furniture such as benches, bollards and planters have been erected to further enhance the appearance of Newtown. WMD is working with the Newtown Forum on finalising locations.
- Compactor bins have been installed in Glendalough, Laragh and Roundwood to promote a cleaner environment but also to increase efficiency from an operational point of view. These bins have smart technology built into them and will communicate back to base when full and require emptying.
- ❖ **NTA Projects**
- Consultants still working on pedestrian and cycle improvement scheme, initial survey completed on the Marlton Rd and Rocky Rd, linking to Train Station on Station Road.

Additional MD projects:

- WCC have issued payments for the following connections. WMD has received MPRN’s to progress completion:
 - Laragh Pedestrian Crossing
 - Moneystown Pedestrian Crossing

Scheduling of ESB to energise this equipment is being progressed but is slow.

- Road markings progressing around the MD, some have been carried out around the town, with others refreshed at certain locations. Roundwood, Annamoe, Laragh.
- New ramps were installed on the approach to the Greenhills/Convent Road Junction in the interest of safety.
- Ramp re-installed on the Dunbur Road and at Flannerys shop to reduce vehicle speeds in this area, with the re location of the pedestrian crossing at the Dunbur park junction to follow up in the coming weeks. Works to start when resources are available.
- Murrough Masterplan being worked on at present, with concept drawings completed, landscape architect required to detail up concept. Identification of existing services underway at present. Services have now been identified and tender documents are being finalised - expected to be issued soon.
- Substantial cleaning of footpath area from Aldi in Rathnew to the M11 Junction 16 slip will be completed by Monday 25th March, which had deteriorated due to overgrowth.
- Tender issued to contractors for tree surgeon work around the district, removal of hazardous trees, stumps etc. Most of this has now been completed. Arborist is reviewing further list of trees this week with a report expected back in due course.
- Surfacing works at Fishers Junction was completed last week by the Developer under the supervision of the MD staff. Paving to the footpath areas have been completed in the next week which improves the street scape to the entrance to Newtown. Traffic signals are awaiting an ESB connection. This is being progressed by the developer.
- WMD have installed benches and planters to this area to enhance it even further.
- Footpath along Murrough (mucky section) has had fine screening laid on top of it to create a better surface to walk along. The constant poor weather is responsible for this path becoming so mucky.

MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS

- Members thanked the District Engineer for the works on the Murrough Path.
- Junction at Ballinahinch Wood Junction- Any update from the NTA? District Engineer advised he has spoken to Michael Flynn, Vartry Wood's developer and Planning and will revert back.
- Could WMD purchase own foam stream machine for weeds? District Engineer advised WMD have tried and tested the foam stream machine and it does not work, he proposed to use a low level spray for certain areas. District Engineer will identify the areas and relay back to the members. District Manager advised the policy does allow a business case but it is a time consuming process and we have to do something in the meantime to upkeep the town as the alternatives aren't working.
- Members thanked the District Engineer for the HGV road marking at the Mall.
- Riverwalk needs to be rolled and re-seeded, land damaged from the Christmas Markets.
- Ballinalea, Ushers Glen ramps need painting. Housing put in 118 units and they need to step in and not leave everything to the MD.
- Update on Pedestrian Crossing at Dunbur - District Engineer advised works commenced today 25/03/24.
- The loading bay outside the Mariner Pub, drivers being issued with parking tickets, could road markings stating loading bay be placed at this location to make it clearer for road users- District Engineer advised he will look into this.
- Update on Aires Park, no accommodation available for the Fleadh 2024. District Engineer advised OPW put down rock armour near the recycling centre, he also advised he will discuss parking with the OPW for the summer months.
- Knockafropa Lane, road very poor and needs road surfacing- District Engineer advised this location is on Wicklow MD's list for road resurfacing works which will be carried out in due course.

- Periodic signs at Moneystown School- District Engineer advised signs have been erected and working with ESB for connection.
- Murrrough Masterplan - District Engineer advised it's to go to a Part 8.
- Ball Alley update - District Engineer advised this is a weather sensitive project.
- Part 8 NTMK update - District Engineer advised the Part 8 is not a WMD project it falls under Leonora Earls, Director of Planning, Economic & Rural Development. He will request an update for the next meeting as to what works the consultants have completed.

ITEM 3

Estate Development Grants 2024

District Administrator, Georgina Franey presented a report on Estate Development Grant applications received in 2024 which was circulated to the members prior to the meeting.

The assessment of applications was based on:

- The size of the estate.
- Size of green areas to be maintained.
- Number of Local Authority houses in the estate.
- Type of planned maintenance/improvement works.
- Previous EDG's received and reason for same.

25 Applications received

2 Had just 1 LA house in the estate

2 Had no LA housing

1 Had no Residents Association

20 Assessed and considered as follows:

Area:	Estate:	Grant allocation:
Wicklow Town	Ballyguile (Mountainview)	€700.00
	Broadlough View	€500.00
	Hillview	€500.00
	Hawkstown Park	€1,000.00
	Carraig Beag	€300.00
	Burkeen	€400.00
	Darragh Park & Lakeview Grove	€300.00
	Rosehill	€300.00
Rathnew		
	Carrig Court	€400.00
	Broomhall	€300.00
	Merrymeeting View	€1,000.00
	The Bank & Ballybeg	€150.00
	Seaview Heights	€600.00
	Drumkay	€1,000.00
	Kirvin Hill	€250.00
	Carrig View	€500.00
Gleann Chill	€500.00	
Newtownmountkennedy		
	Sycamore Drive	€500.00
	Springfield Heights	€300.00
	Mountainview Drive	€500.00
		€10,000.00

MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS

- The members thanked Georgina Franey for the presentation of the funding and noted the report was very informative.
- Members welcomed the extra €2,000 allocated to the Estate Development Grant 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr Gail Dunne and seconded by Cllr Paul O'Brien to approve the Estate Development Grants for 2024.

ITEM 4

Correspondence

None

ITEM 5

Any Other Business

Proposed IPAS centre - River Lodge House at Trudder, Newtownmountkennedy

The members had a long discussion over the proposed IPAS centre at NewtownmountkennedyTMK. The members thanked District Manager Brian Gleeson for arranging a meeting with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to be held on Tuesday 26/03/24. Many concerns were raised including the following:

- The proposed centre is receiving national headlines and there is a 24 hour protest taking place at the site.
- The lack of consultation and information from IPAS is creating a division in the community and a vacuum for the far right to exploit.
- Cllr Shay Cullen expressed anger at the way the issue is being handled and called for clarity on what is being proposed for the people of Newtownmountkennedy. He noted his disgust and frustration at the misinformation.
- Cllr Paul O'Brien recalled a meeting with IPAS in 2018 regarding the Grand Hotel where councillors were informed they would be advised of all future projects; he went on to say that this was only lip service as there now have been two separate occasions where they only learned plans when residents noticed activity taking place. He also expressed concern that communities are distrusting of local representatives as they think they are withholding information when in fact this is not the case.
- Cllr Mary Kavanagh stated it would be the fourth time local reps have met up with department officials in recent years. She added works have already commenced at the location with trees being cleared and hard core surface being laid. She also raised concerns that tents going to the location and emphasised tents are not suitable for people to live in in the 21st century. She further commented people need to be able to express their concerns without being labelled as bigots or racists.
- Cllr Gail Dunne stated that it is a Country wide problem and the Gardai, Local Authorities and Councillors are given information. He noted that the Grand Hotel was initially supposed to house 70 people for 1 year.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 15.10 pm

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Date: _____