

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Blessington Civic Offices, Blessington on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 10.30am**

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

**In Attendance:** Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager  
Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer  
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator  
Ms. Andrea Connolly, Assistant Staff Officer  
Ms. Caroline Fox, Community & Enterprise  
Ms. Sheena Hubbard, Community & Enterprise

**Apologies:** Councillor Patsy Glennon

Cathaoirleach Cronin welcomed all to the meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District in the new chamber in Blessington and opened the April meeting of the Baltinglass Municipal District.

**1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

Cllr. O’Neill proposed the minutes of the March meeting and Cllr. Blake seconded them.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **3. To discuss the establishment of an eGreenway communications working group**

Ms. Fox, Community & Enterprise, introduced Ms. Sheena Hubbard to the members and advised that her main role will be in communications and the development of the eGreenway website and social media platforms. She advised the meeting that, following Cllr. Mullen's suggestion, a communications working group would be set up to include individuals from community groups, business groups, farming groups and any members that would like to be involved. Ms. Fox advised that up to three hundred submissions have been made to An Bord Pleanála and she hoped to have a synopsis of these submissions available before the next meeting. Cllr. Mullen welcomed the formation of a working group and noted it would be beneficial in managing issues and future issues. He thanked officials for their work on this amazing project. Cllr. O'Neill noted that it would be better to wait for An Bord Pleanála's decision as there are still car parking and traffic lights issues that need to be resolved. Cllr. Blake stated he had no issues with the setting up of committees for any project but queried if there would be any duplication. He also raised the issue of parking for local businesses. Ms. Kilkenny, District Manager, advised the meeting that the members will make the decision on who sits on the committee and suggested keeping it to a maximum of twenty. Ms. Fox stated that the communications working group will act as a platform for local businesses affected by these issues and noted that this group will improve communication within the local community. Cllr. Timmins added his support to the setting up of this working group and Cllr. Mullen noted the importance of this group and making the public aware of its existence in order to address any issues that arise. Cllr. O'Neill stated he is in favour of the setting up of a working group for the Greenway but feels it would be a better option to wait until An Bord Pleanála have made their decision on 7<sup>th</sup> July. He raised concerns that a number of businesses have already been set up and queried if a franchise has been awarded. Ms. Fox clarified that no franchise has been given out and the establishment of this working group will provide important feedback on these issues to business owners.

Following some discussion it was agreed to include the six elected members, four Wicklow County Council staff, and two to three representatives from each sector, to include business groups, rural groups and the IFA.

### **4. To discuss and consider Baltinglass MD twinning budget for 2022.**

Mr. Cullen, District Administrator, advised the meeting that there is a twinning budget of €3,000 available for the district and proposed the allocation of €1,250 for officially twinned groups and €500 for non twinned groups. Cllr. Blake noted Coollattin Canadian Connection were getting less this year than requested and there were only two applications in. Mr. Cullen advised that three applications were received but one group did not specify an amount. Ms. Kilkenny advised that the twinning budget for the district may be increased

this year as there are more twinning groups in place. Cllr. Blake proposed these allocations and Cllr. Mullen seconded this proposal.

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

Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer, briefed the members on the N81 Progress Report. He advised that the contract for surfacing works at Monaspick and Annalecky on the N81 has been awarded to Kilsaran and these works will commence shortly. He added that a new staff member has been appointed to oversee works on the national roads and the three main schemes he will oversee on the N81 are the Hollywood bus stop, speeding south of Baltinglass and the crossings at Texaco in Blessington. Both Cllr. Timmins and Cllr. O'Neill thanked Mr. Byrne for the ongoing footpath and road works in the area but questioned if the Hollywood bus stop and the speeding issues at Texaco could be addressed. Mr. Byrne advised that a park and ride facility is favourable for Hollywood but that TII have more issues that need addressing. He added that landowners have been approached but it is a lengthy and drawn out process. On the issues of speeding at Texaco, he advised that surveys and reports need to be completed prior to any works. Cllr. Blake queried if the new engineer will be based in Tinahely or Blessington and Mr. Byrne advised that he will be working out of Wicklow and will cover the national roads.

Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer, presented the meeting with the non national roads report, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He advised that rates and prices have risen by 20 to 30% and this may impact the number of schemes completed under the Restoration Improvement works. Currently preparation works are being carried out. He added that there are four live applications for Community Involvement Schemes but that it is more likely that two out of three will be completed this year. Cllr. Mullen queried if there was any update on footpath funding from the NTA and Mr. Byrne advised that an update on the allocation of €1 million over two years targeted for rural areas would be available at the next engineers meeting and he would provide information to the members. Cllr. Blake queried when works would commence at Back Bawns Lane, Knockananna and on the Glenashouk Road and when works could be completed at the junction of Kilavaney church. Mr. Graham advised that whitelining and signage has been completed at Kilavaney but that more works are required. He added that locations for signage have been marked on the Glenashouk road and will be completed in the next week.

#### **5. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

## 6. Any other business

Mr. Cullen advised members that applications for festival funding will need to be submitted before the end of May.

Mr. Byrne, District Engineer, reminded the members that when public roads are being closed for events it is necessary to have traffic management and insurance in place. He added that by law traffic management must be in place and in order to put out road signs, a course must be completed. Cllr. Mullen noted that with all events back this year, including the Tinahely show, it would be advisable to touch base with the PPN and make them aware of these conditions.

Cllr. Blake queried an incident that occurred in Tinahely recently and asked if it was illegal to park opposite a continuous white line. Mr. Byrne advised that Gardaí can deem it illegal to park dangerously and Mr. Graham stated that it is illegal to park on a footpath. The District Administrator informed members that it is illegal to park opposite a continuous white line.

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_