

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC POLICY  
COMMITTEE COUNCIL CHAMBER/ZOOM MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2022**

**Present:** Cllr. Vincent Blake, Cllr. Melanie Corrigan, Cllr. Anne Ferris (remote), Cllr. John Mullen, Cllr. Gail Dunne, Kevin Macann (KM), Niamh Wogan (NW), Brendan Martin (BM), Caroline Fox (CF), Clodagh Whelan (CW), Jenny Sherwin (JS), Carina Holmes (CH), Irene Sweeney (IS), Aisling Hubbard (AH), Máire Halvey (MH), Michael Nicholson (MN).

**Apologies:** Cllr. Miriam Murphy, Deirdre Whitfield, Lisa Mc Mahon, Mai Quaid, Sile Stewart, Patricia Reilly, Declan O' Brien

**In Attendance:** Sinead Cassidy, Sandra Dunne

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Cllr. Blake opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Cllr. Blake gave the list of apologies.

Cllr. Blake advised that Carina Holmes is stepping down from the committee. Cllr. Blake thanked Carina for her contribution and wished her well in her new role. Carina advised she is joining the LCDC and is sorry to leave the committee.

**{1} Adoption of the Minutes**

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022 was proposed by MC and seconded by JM.

**{2} Matters Arising**

No matters arising.

**{3} Project Ireland 2040 Rural Regeneration Programme Updates**

- **CLÁR**

CW provided an update as per report circulated in advance of the meeting.

CW updated the SPC on the population increase of 6.4% in County Wicklow - CLÁR DEDs from 2016 to 2022. CLÁR Letters of Offer have been issued to relevant community groups.

Cllr. Blake recommended that it is continued to look at adding additional areas under CLÁR.

CW advised that she will look into the process involved and confirm what additional supports are required if CLÁR is to be extended.

MN confirmed that this query arises on a regular basis at the National Network meeting. MN confirmed there are no plans in place to extend the areas at present.

- **Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS)**

DW sent her apologies. MN provided an update as per report circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

MN advised WCC are awaiting a decision on applications for Town and Village Projects and may receive a decision this week. The committee will be updated as soon as WCC receives an update.

- **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)**

CF provided an update as per report circulated in advance of the meeting.

CF confirmed that WCC ORIS applications were all approved and that WCC have been awarded the maximum funding allowed.

Measure 1 - funding of €495k was awarded for a Roundwood Recreation area – bike hub, bridge, signage and promotion.

Measure 2 - 3 successful applications as detailed in report.

€30k was awarded for a number of smaller projects.

WCC were awarded a total of €1.4m for ORIS projects.

CF confirmed that WCC will continue to work in collaboration with Coillte, the National Parks and landowners on projects.

- **Community Enhancement Programme 2021 (CEP)**

MH provided an update as per report circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

MN advised that due to late notification of 2022 CEP funding, the scheme will be advertised in January 2023 with a closing date of 31st March 2023.

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- **Community Awards Scheme 2022**

MH provided an update as per report circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

MH confirmed the CAS funding will be advertised in February 2023 to ensure there is no clash with other funding schemes.

Cllr. Dunne thanked all of the CCSD staff for their hard work in administering these grants.

- **Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF)**

DW sent her apologies. MN provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

URDF funding is not open to date. It is expected that it will be open for applications in the New Year. MN confirmed that WCC will resubmit 2 applications that were unsuccessful in 2022 – Arklow and Bray Harbour projects - as they were substantial and very worthwhile projects.

CH queried the amount of funding available under RRDF. MN confirmed that the projects cost up to €10m each.

Cllr. Mullen expressed frustration on the lack of progression of the Baltinglass RRDF project.

- **Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF)**

DW sent her apologies. MN provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

Cllr. Dunne stated the URDF has been a huge asset to Wicklow Town and has resulted in substantial improvements within the Town, including the Library and the Market Square.

#### **{4} Strategy Updates**

- **Food & Beverage Strategy**

DW sent her apologies. MN provided an update as per report circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

- **Greenway Strategy**

**Blessington eGreenway**

CF provided an update as per report circulated in advance of the meeting.

The planning application is with An Bord Pleanála. CF will contact An Bord Pleanála for an update on the decision date. CF is currently working on submissions and engaging with land owners. It is envisaged that there will be an Oral Hearing for this project.

CF advised that there is an issue with Phase 1 repair works. Pat Byrne (Area Engineer) is working to complete the repair work before Christmas and therefore this phase will be open shortly.

**Arklow to Shillelagh Greenway**

CF provided an update as per report circulated in advance of the meeting.

Cllr. Mullen attended a Greenway task force meeting this morning. The project team are working through the routes and it is hoped to have website published shortly. A public meeting will also be held. The project team are hoping to have this finalised by Spring/Summer. The project is painfully slow.

CH requested clarification on the difference between a Green Route and Greenway. MN confirmed a Green Route is one step down from Greenway. In some cases it is a better option to apply for a Green Route and apply for an upgrade to a Greenway as there is limited funding available for Greenways.

CH requested clarification on An Bord Pleanála and why the decision takes so long. MN confirmed there is no statutory requirement for An Bord Pleanála to give a planning decision within a certain timeframe.

**Wicklow to Greystones Greenway**

CF provided an update as per report circulated in advance of the meeting.

In response to Cllr. Corrigan's query on the Kilmacanogue to Southern Cross Greenway, CF confirmed this is being dealt with under the Roads Department and TII.

- **Play & Recreation Strategy**

**Playgrounds**

MH confirmed there are no new playgrounds planned.

MH confirmed The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth are providing a small amount of funding which will be used to retro fit playgrounds and purchase accessible play equipment.

AH confirmed that communication boards will be erected in all playground and in response to Cllr. Corrigan's request, AH will advise the committee when the communication boards are fitted.

Under the Blueway project, Cllr. Dunne requested an update on beach access. CF confirmed that approx.. €140k has been allocated to Greystones Beach. CF stated most of this funding is allocated to the marketing and promotion of the blueway. A new board walk will be fitted on completion of the Part 8 process.

Cllr. Dunne requested that Wicklow beach is considered for funding under the Blueway. CF confirmed there is limited funding, however, Wicklow has been identified as a blueway hub so this could be considered. Cllr. Dunne stated the Harbour area would not take a lot of money as the ramp is already there. CF to visit the area with Cllr. Dunne.

#### **Leisure Centres**

CF confirmed Wicklow and Arklow Coral centres are performing really well. CF highlighted the increase in costs of energy costs and this is having an impact on the leisure centres. The leisure centres receive subventions on an annual basis. It is likely that they will require a higher subvention in 2023.

#### **Maintenance of Playgrounds**

MH provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

Cllr. Dunne highlighted the issue of the Ashford playground remaining closed. This is a frustrating situation for the residents of Ashford. MN shared Cllr. Dunne's concerns and advised that negotiations are ongoing to resolve this matter. MN thanked MH for all her work dealing with the queries in relation to this matter.

Cllr. Corrigan provided an update on Bog Meadow playground and she thanked MN and WCC for assistance in completing the application.

- **Age Friendly Strategy**

CW provided an update as per report circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Blake and NM highlighted the success of the launch of the Beyond the Trees Avondale.

NW thanked CW for the work and confirmed the OPC members really enjoyed the event. CW will provide this feedback to the OPC.

- **Arts Strategy**

JS provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

MN thanked JS for the comprehensive report.

JS is looking forward to welcoming new staff to the Arts office in 2023.

- **Creative Ireland Strategy**

JS provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

Cllr. Ferris highlighted the fantastic work completed by JS and the staff at the Arts office on their social media platforms. The Arts Office are updating daily and keeping the public informed of all of the events they run.

- **Library Strategy**

BM provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

MN congratulated BM and all the library staff for all their work and the Warm Winter Welcome Programme.

Cllr. Dunne thanked BM and all the Wicklow Library staff and he stated the library is now seen as a community hub within Wicklow Town.

BM confirmed there is an average of 10 libraries per County - Wicklow have 13.

CH also congratulated BM and the library staff on the Warm Winter Welcome Programme and suggested they share the concept with other Counties. CH thanked the library for all their work at increasing the numbers availing of the library services.

CH raised a question in relation to the demographic of people that have not returned to the library since Covid. BM confirmed they do not have a demographic breakdown.

NW commended Bray Library for encouraging inclusivity and encouraging children to use the library.

- **Migrant Integration Strategy**

DW sent her apologies. No update provided.

#### **{5} Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Updates**

- **Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Updates**

AH provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

AH advised that Covid Support Funding was undersubscribed. If there are any community groups that wish to apply for funding, WSRP will accept later applications.

- **Healthy Ireland & Healthy Wicklow**

AH provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

#### **{6} Disability Inclusion Steering Committee Update**

CW provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

CW and MN confirmed the launch of the Accessibility Toolkit which took place in the Arklow Bay Hotel on 2nd December was a very successful event.

#### **{7} Pride of Place Update**

CF provided an update as per report circulated to committee prior to meeting.

The winners of the competition will be announced at a Gala Awards Ceremony, which will take place in January 2023.

#### **{8} Any other business**

MN highlighted the press release in relation to archaeological and architectural Heritage Funding Grants for 2023.

MN highlighted the press release in relation to the Community and Voluntary Energy Support Scheme (CVESS). The closing date is 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 – the scheme is being processed via Pobal and it is designed to help the sector with their increased bills, which is having an impact on the operations of many community and voluntary groups.

KV raised a query in relation to ongoing projects and the increased cost of labour and materials. Groups are under pressure to complete projects within the limits of the awarded grants. Cllr. Mullen advised all groups that are under pressure to complete projects should keep an open line of communication with the department.

Cllr. Blake wished the committee members a very Happy Christmas and Happy New Year.

**(9) Proposed dates for future meetings**

- Mon 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- Mon 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023
- Mon 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- Mon 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Adoption of meeting dates proposed by Cllr. Mullen and seconded by NW.

**{10} Date for future meetings**

- Mon 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 – Venue TBC.

Signed:



Date:

27- 3- 2023