

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Seminole Room, County Buildings, Wicklow on 26th September 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present: Cathaoirleach John Mullen
Councillor Edward Timmins
Councillor Vincent Blake
Councillor Patsy Glennon
Councillor Avril Cronin

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. Deirdre Whitfield, Community Enterprise
Mr. Tony Quirke, TWES/Roads
Mr. Declan O'Brien, TWES/Roads

Apologies: Councillor Gerry O'Neill

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Mullen, opened the September meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 25th July 2022

Cllr. Blake proposed the minutes of the July meeting and Cllr. Glennon seconded them.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. To receive an update on RRDF projects

Ms. Deirdre Whitfield updated members on the Baltinglass RRDF project. She advised members that the masterplan for Baltinglass had been tendered as a whole project with three key elements: Public Realm Works, The Courthouse and the Townpark. She added that consultants are currently working on a report which is due to be submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development for reassessment due to rising costs. Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager, informed the members that Wicklow County Council are following up with the Department on the Town Park works and it is hoped these works can go ahead within department guidelines with the funding that has already been allocated. It is hoped these works can be completed in house and the public realm and the courthouse will be separate from these works. Cllr. Timmins expressed his annoyance that this project has been ongoing for the past two years and stated that Covid is not a good enough excuse for these delays. He noted that the Townpark is only a small part of the 3.5 million euro granted for this project and queried the figures on the tender and what has been spent so far on consultants fees. Cllr. Glennon concurred with Cllr. Timmins and noted that the town park is a small part of this project and is not addressing the major works. He queried if there was an update on the extra funding for the bridge in Baltinglass and Ms. Whitfield replied that this had been submitted separately and was the remit of another department. Cllr. Glennon stated that projects have been completed in other parts of the county and is of the opinion that West Wicklow has been forgotten about. Mr. O'Brien replied that tender figures cannot be revealed as they may need to be tendered again but would update members on the spend on consultants fees. Ms. Kilkenny stressed that this project is a top priority for Wicklow County Council and delays were caused due to issues with the design and redesign. Cllr. Cronin noted there was a lot of frustration in Baltinglass and one of the main causes was the lack of communication with the local community. She stressed that this project needs to be progressed as soon as possible. Cllr. Mullen noted that RRDF funding had been allocated to a number of projects in 2019 including the Baltinglass project and queried how many of these schemes had proceeded. He agreed that changes had been made to the original design which may have caused some delay but once permission has been received by the Department for the construction of the Town Park works need to commence as soon as possible. He stressed that this project needs to be kept on the agenda and kept a top priority for this district.

Following some discussion it was agreed that members would be updated as soon as a response was received from the Department and this project would be kept a priority with Wicklow County Council. The Cathaoirleach thanked all staff for their update.

4. Update on Baltinglass CCTV project

Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator, advised the meeting that approval is sought from the members to proceed with the Baltinglass CCTV project following the circulation of a report from J & N Consultants. He added that funding of €40,000 is available for this project and locations of cameras have been identified following a walk around of the town. He advised that amendments to these locations can be made by the members or following public consultation. Changes cannot be made once the application has been submitted and approved by the Department. Cllr. Mullen enquired if the project has gone to public consultation yet and Mr. Cullen advised that the report must first be approved by the members and the Joint Policing Committee and then a public consultation will follow. Cllr. Blake advised that the district JPC be involved in the process also. Mr. Cullen advised that the CCTV scheme in Blessington has now been awarded to contractors and cameras will be in situ within the next few weeks.

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 annual clean up of the N81 has been completed with gullies and cuts cleaned and this should help with the issue of dirt on the N81 which was raised at the last JCPC meeting. He also advised the meeting that the main pavement scheme on the N81 Tuckmill to Saundersgrove has been delayed as the tender process has not yet been completed with works not expected to commence until March or April of next year. TII are to update. Mr. Byrne also advised of minor drainage and resurfacing works on the N81 at Mullycagh, Hollywood and Tinode, Blessington, these works are due to commence in October. Cllr. Glennon welcomed improvements to the north of Blessington on the N81 but queried if the stop lines at some junctions could be relined. Mr. Byrne advised that all stop lines on the N81 are due to be redone shortly.

Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer, updated members on the non national roads report. Following his report a number of issues were raised by the members, Cllr. Cronin welcomed the news that the Lugnatryna to Dunlavin road has now been included in the restoration improvement schemes for this year. However, she did raise concerns on the linemarkings at the junction from Tulfarris to Vallemount and noted they were quite bad. She also queried if it was possible to slow traffic down from the crèche to the school in Donard as it is quite a narrow road which makes it dangerous for children walking along. Mr. Byrne advised that roadmarkings will be redone at a later stage this year. He added that the purchase of land is an issue at Donard and had previously looked into putting a footpath in place behind the wall but the site is subject to planning which may be an issue. He advised that improvements could be made to address this issue with roadmarkings and signs but these do not include a footpath. Cllr. Timmins queried at what stage the Whitestown safety improvement works were at and Mr. Byrne replied that the Whitestown

junction has been identified by TII as needing improvement but the business located at this junction has recently applied for planning permission to haul clay and one of the conditions of planning is the requirement to improve part of this junction with TII approval. He added that this is a long drawn out process. Cllr. Blake raised a number of issues which need to be addressed including the issue of recently installed seats in Carnew attracting anti-social behaviour, blocked shores at Upper Ballard, Shillelagh and the need for white lining to be completed in the district. Cllr. Mullen reminded his colleagues that their list of their discretionary works needs to be submitted as soon as possible. Cllr. Glennon noted that there were concerns that there could be issues with discretionary budgets not spent this year and Cllr. Mullen noted that some of these projects have been addressed through the additional NTA funding. Mr. Graham advised that the additional funding for rural footpath works can be completed up until next year and these projects can be completed during quiet times. Cllr. Mullen queried if the district had a full allocation of outdoor staff and Mr. Byrne advised the members that some works had been tendered out to contractors.

6. Correspondence

The District Administrator advised the meeting that an invitation had been received to attend a commemoration mass to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Tom Kehoe and would take place on the 9th October in Knockananna at 2pm with refreshments afterwards.

Mr. Cullen reminded members that nominations for the Blessington eGreenway Communications Group were due as soon as possible. Cllr. Mullen asked if the Public Participation Network could suggest nominees for the group and noted it was important to ensure the group was as inclusive as possible.

Mr. Cullen advised the meeting that an invitation had been extended by the Blessington Twinning Group and Castel de Majeure to attend the signing of a Friendship Agreement in mid November and asked if any of the members would be interested in attending.

7. Any other business

Ms. Kilkenny, District Manager, advised members that a number of electric chargers were being installed in the district. This initiative is in conjunction with Eir, Easygo and the Roads Section in Wicklow County Council. They would cover several locations in the district and advised that the correct locations needed to be identified. Cllr. Mullen welcomed this news and hoped that this initiative would increase the number of electric cars in the district.

10. Date of next meeting

The next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting will be held on the 24th October 2022.

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

Signed: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____

DRAFT