

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in Blessington Civic Offices on 24th July 2023 at 10.30am

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

In Attendance: Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager
Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator
Ms. Aideen Russell, Assistant Staff Officer

Housing and Corporate Estate

Theresa O'Brien, Senior Executive Officer

Corporate Enterprise

Deirdre Whitfield, Town Regeneration Officer

Cathaoirleach Edward Timmins opened the July meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District and welcomed all present.

Vote of Sympathy

Cllr. Blake expressed a vote of sympathy to The Lennon family on the passing of Joe Lennon of Hillbrook, Coolboy, Co. Wicklow and to The Elliott Family, on the passing of Patrick (Paddy) Elliott of Coolattin Road, Carnew, Co. Wicklow.

Cllr. Glennon expressed a vote of sympathy to The McGee Family and to Cllr. O'Neill and the Flynn family on the passing of Melissa McGee, Donard, Co. Wicklow.

A minutes silence was observed.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 26th June 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr. Mullen, seconded by Cllr. Cronin and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 26th June 2023.

2. To confirm and sign minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 26th June 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr. Blake, seconded by Cllr. Mullen and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 26th June 2023.

3. Matters Arising – None.

4. To receive a presentation from Eibhlin Byrne, DCEDIY on the proposed modular homes for Baltinglass Municipal District.

Eibhlin Byrne explained her position regarding the proposed modular homes and stated that she was given the task to liaise with the Local Authorities and Councils affected by the sites chosen and to, in brief, walk alongside the Local Authorities and Councils during the process. In this case, a three year permission for modular homes in Dunlavin and Baltinglass. None of which can go ahead without the Agreement of a Section 183 on the lands in question. Which the Councillor's will vote on at a full council meeting.

Questions & Answers

- Cllr. Timmins thanked Eibhlin for her presentation and for her openness, he expressed that the job she had been given was a difficult one. He feels that the process was fundamentally flawed from the get go.
- Cllr. Cronin also thanked Eibhlin and stated that she appreciated her coming to the meeting. She expressed her disappointment in the handling of the process and stated that little or no communication had been made with the Representatives who are on the front line dealing with the public's concerns and fears. Cllr. Cronin expressed the concerns regarding infrastructure, amenities, school places, doctors surgery places, transport, all of which are at full capacity or are non-existent. Cllr. Cronin has contacted the government and to date has not received a reply.
 - Eibhlin stated that they have been assured by Irish Water that there is an adequate supply. She said that a lot of the families do have transport and allocations will be made taking school age and places available into consideration. Eibhlin told The Members that there will be a national campaign to inform the public.

- Cllr. Glennon stated that he supports the refugees and that the Municipal District was not trying to be obstructive. But respectfully suggested that if the module homes are built that they will not be moved after three years. He would like to know the long-term vision. Cllr. Glennon feels let down by Wicklow County Council, putting forward the poorest / smallest district instead of the larger districts, Arklow, Bray, Wicklow / Greystones.
- Cllr. O'Neill spoke about how hard the Representatives had worked to have the lands rezoned in Baltinglass for badly needed open space / recreation. He himself has met with the public to try and ease concerns. He feels that the whole process is wrong and stated that he will not be supporting the proposal for Baltinglass and Dunlavin at the full council meeting. Cllr. O'Neill stated that he too had contacted the Minister and to date had not received a reply.
- Cllr. Blake expressed his disappointment that the sports facility could be lost in Baltinglass. He asked Eibhlin how many sites were built in Ireland and asked were the residents happy.
 - Eibhlin responded that 5 sites were built in Ireland and that yes, the residents were very happy.
- Cllr. Mullen stated that the issue is not our willingness to accommodate / welcome people but the sites chosen. Sites which are problematic. He has concerns regarding the services, schools, transport etc. He feels that if this is going to be done, it should be done right.
- Cllr. Timmins went through the background of the process asking the question; why out of 139 sites proposed, were 4 of the 5 sites in the west of the county? He stated that the process is flawed and requested that the whole thing be dropped.
- Ms. Kilkenny thanked Eibhlin. She stated that the terms/details of the Section 183 will be specific and will be made available to The Members prior to the full council meeting.

Suspension of Standing Orders

It was proposed by Cllr. O'Neill, seconded by Cllr. Timmins and unanimously agreed to suspend standing orders to allow a member from Baltinglass Bulldogs Basketball Club to address the room regarding the proposed development and the impact it will have on future development of a sports complex in Baltinglass.

5. Update on Baltinglass MD Housing.

Ms. O'Brien gave a detailed update on Baltinglass MD Housing to The Members.

Questions & Answers

- Cllr. Blake commented that if the members felt the housing maintenance budget was insufficient that it is the Members who adopt the budget and all funding can be reviewed during the budget process.
- Cllr. Glennon thanked Ms. O'Brien for always getting back to him and asked that she keep The Members informed of future updates on the Part 8 in Burgage.
- Cllr. Cronin enquired about the status of the disposal of a piece of land at Church Terrace, Dunlavin, which has caused the development to be delayed.
 - Theresa agreed to investigate the matter.
- Cllr. Timmins stated that he feels the Law Department are holding up progress and it needs to be addressed.
- Cllr. O'Neill asked for an update on three sites on Sparrow Road and requested detailed monthly reports from Housing.

6. Update on Baltinglass RRDF

Mr. Cullen and Mr. Byrne explained the tender process and time schedule of same, they were asked by The Members to keep the pressure on so that it does not slip behind schedule.

Mr. Byrne informed The Members that himself, Mr. Graham and Mr. Flynn are reviewing all options for the proposed foot bridge in Baltinglass.

Mr. Graham informed The Members that work on the parks is ongoing. He also said that there has been some vandalism and that the Gardaí have been informed.

- Cllr. Glennon welcomed the progress being made and said it was great to see something happening.
- Cllr. Timmins asked if subcontractors could be brought in to get things moving.

Mr. Cullen informed The Members that he has consulted with Mr. Martin regarding the Court House and was advised that works will be carried out on a phased basis. Phase 1 works will include remedial works to the building. WCC are currently engaging with architects to obtain drawings for phase 1.

Ms. Kilkenny advised that the remedial works are under CCSDs remit.

7. To discuss and consider the junction improvement at Lockstown Vallemount

A map detailing the proposed junction improvement at Lockstown Vallemount was distributed to all The Members, it was proposed by Cllr. Cronin, seconded by Cllr. Glennon and unanimously agreed to proceed with the Part 8 application.

8. 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.

Members Comments and Observations:

National Roads - No Comments.

Non-National Roads

- Cllr. Mullen enquired about the Shillelagh footpath and was informed that work is due to commence on this project in October 2023.
- Cllr. Glennon requested that the junction in Kiltegan Village be assessed for signage and road markings as it has been reported to him as being dangerous.
- Cllr. Blake asked for an update on the works to be carried out on the L7246.

9. To review and consider LECP

Ms. Whitfield gave a brief update on the LECP which was circulated prior to the June meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District.

- The Members were unanimously supportive of the Draft Plan.

10. Correspondence

Mr. Cullen advised that the Tinahely show will take place on the August Bank Holiday Monday and that Wicklow County Council will be hosting "The Best of Wicklow" in their Marquee. The "Best of Wicklow" will showcase products and services associated with Wicklow County Council.

- Cllr. Mullen thanked Mr. Cullen and all the staff of Baltinglass Municipal District for the work being done in preparation for the Tinahely Show.
- Ms. Kilkenny thanked Mr. Cullen for taking charge of "The Best of Wicklow" Marquee.

- Cllr O'Neill queried Wicklow County Council's involvement in the proposed provision of a Blessington Community Centre.

Mr. Cullen advised Cllr. O'Neill that Wicklow County Council had not entered into any arrangement regarding a lease of a building for this provision and that there was no arrangement to pay management fees for any property relating to same.

- Cllr. O'Neill asked Mr. Cullen to get an update on this project.

Mr. Graham thanked everyone for their kind wishes and generosity on his recent marriage, saying their good wishes, kindness and generosity was very much appreciated.

9. Any other business - None

10. Date of next meeting

The next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting will be held on the 25th September 2023.

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

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____