**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING OF GREYSTONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD IN THE CIVIC OFFICES, MILL ROAD, GREYSTONES, CO. WICKLOW ON TUESDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 7.30 P.M.**

Present: Councillor G. Walsh, Cathaoirleach

Councillors T. Fortune, D. Mitchell, L. Scott & S. Stokes

Also Present: Mr. M. Nicholson, Greystones Municipal District Manager

Mr. R. O’Hanlon, Greystones Municipal District Engineer

Ms. T. Kearns, Greystones Municipal District Administrator

Ms. K. Coughlan, Greystones Municipal District

Apologies from: Councillor J. Neary

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1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
2. It was proposed by Councillor S. Stokes, seconded by Councillor D. Mitchell and agreed that the minutes of the annual meeting held on 28th June, 2022, as circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.
3. Councillor T. Fortune requested that the last paragraph of Item 4 in the minutes of the June monthly meeting be amended to include ‘Councillor T. Fortune asked that comments made by the District Manager be withdrawn. The District Manager did not withdraw his comments’ at the beginning of the paragraph. It was then agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 28th June 2022, as amended, be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.
4. Councillor D. Mitchell requested that ‘Councillors Fortune, Mitchell & Stokes expressed their opposition to the permanent closure of the upper vehicular access into Applewood Heights’ be inserted at the beginning of the second paragraph of item 3 in the minutes of the July monthly meeting. It was then agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 26th July, 2022, as amended, be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

1. **PRESENTATION ON SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL FOR ST. KEVIN’S SCHOOL, GREYSTONES**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. Conor Page, A/Senior Executive Engineer and Mr. Aaron O’Connor, Executive Engineer from Wicklow County Council to the meeting. The members had been emailed a copy of a Powerpoint presentation on the proposed Safe Routes to School Scheme for St. Kevin’s School in Greystones and Mr. Page and Mr. O’Connor went through the presentation and explained the details. They answered any questions from the members in relation to same. They stated that it was hoped to start work on the scheme next summer.

Members welcomed this proposed scheme and requested that consultations take place with local residents groups where it was proposed to open up accesses to St. Kevin’s school in Hillside, Church Lane or Oaklands. They expressed concern about the length of time the approval process took in light of the fact that there were a total of twenty four schools in County Wicklow and the need for safer routes to them all and especially to the schools at Blacklion where serious issues have been raised. They mentioned the need for periodic speed limits to apply at all schools in the district.

Mr. C. Page informed the members that a speed limit review was being undertaken and that submissions could be made under the public consultation process. He pointed out that a lot of the earlier works and reports for the Safer Routes to School schemes were undertaken by the Green Schools Officer from An Taisce before being passed to the County Council for overseeing the implementation of the schemes which were funded by the NTA.

1. **REPORT FROM GREYSTONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT ENGINEER**

The report from the District Engineer had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting together with an update on NTA projects and the District Engineer answered any queries from the members in relation to same.

The members thanked the District Engineer for his report and for the works being carried out in the district and during discussion on the report they enquired about the Transport Study being carried out and in particular about the proposed link road from Ballyronan to Kilcoole which was rumoured to be opposed by TII, and they requested that three additional benches be provided in Burnaby Park in Greystones.

In response to queries from the members, the District Engineer stated that it was hoped to have the Transport Study available in late October and that it was proposed to provide covered bicycle parking at the rear of Greystones Train Station, on Killincarrig Road and beside the South Beach Playground. He stated that the road works associated with the proposed housing development on Lott Lane, Kilcoole would meet all statutory requirements but he did not know if the sharp corner on the Lott Lane would be removed as part of the works. In relation to the footpath on the eastern side of the R761 between Knockroe and Kilcoole he stated that discussions were ongoing with the landowner to complete this. He informed the members that consultants had been appointed to look at options for connecting Greystones harbour to the train station in Kilcoole and the provision of a footpath on Sea Road Kilcoole but that the NTA might suggest that this was done in stages.

In response to queries about the re-opening of the Cliff Walk between Greystones and Bray the District Engineer stated that he was awaiting a report from the Council’s Law Agent to enable progress to continue on this. He stated that the Council would provide additional benches in Burnaby Park but he could not give a timeframe as pressure on staff resources was very high at present and grant funded works had to be completed first so that the funding was not lost. He pointed out that while no funding was provided for ‘Pathfinder’ schemes, they were given higher priority by the NTA and he stated that the lighting at the Pigs Hollow was delayed by staff shortages. In relation to proposed works at Seaview, Kilcoole he stated that the residents were opposed to the works at the entrance to the estate. He pointed out that all new housing estates were built to the proposed standard and there were no issues in relation to emergency access. He pointed out that the Killincarrig Village upgrade works would be subject to prices at the time of being carried out and that additional NTA funding might have to be sought.

The District Engineer informed the members that it was hoped that the proposed boardwalk for Greystones would go to Part 8 soon and that construction could commence in January 2023 and he pointed out that the NTA Kindlestown Cycle scheme would run from the entrance to Applewood Heights to Bellevue Heights.

In response to a query from Councillor S. Stokes, the District Manager stated that the family who wished to sponsor a chess table in Burnaby Park should submit as much detail as available to the District Engineers office for approval.

1. **ALLOCATION OF FUNDING TO TIDY TOWNS GROUPS, TOWN TWINNING, CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, ETC.**

The District Administrator informed the members that the local Tidy Towns Groups had been allocated funding last year as follows: Greystones €5,000 and Kilcoole, Delgany and Newcastle €3,000 each. She stated that €5,000 had been allocated to the Greystones Town Team as a contribution towards Christmas Lights. It was agreed to allocate similar sums to these groups this year on submission of a breakdown of their income and expenditure. It was also agreed that funding up to €4,000 be provided to cover any expenses for the People of the Year Awards.

The District Administrator pointed out that a large delegation, including the Mayor, Town Clerk, Councillors and members of the Holyhead Male Voice Choir, were coming over from Holyhead in November to mark the 10th anniversary of the twinning between the two towns. She stated that a programme of events was currently being prepared, details of which would be provided closer to the event, and that estimated costs would be in the region of €2,500 to €3,000. This expenditure was agreed.

In relation to a suggested payment of €3,000 towards the maintenance of the Greystones.ie website, it was agreed to seek further clarification in relation to this, prior to any agreement.

1. **UPDATE ON AUDIT OF STAFF IN MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS**

The District Administrator informed the members of the contents of a report received from Wicklow County Council in relation to the audit of staff. The report stated that the outdoor workforce plan had been reviewed over the last six months and that General Operative and Driver competitions had been held to regularise positions and fill new posts arising from the plan. It concluded that additional staff and drivers had been allocated to the Municipal Districts.

While members welcomed the review they expressed disappointment that the process had taken so long with no additional staff being allocated to bring the number of staff in Greystones Municipal District up to the same level as that in the other Municipal Districts and they enquired about who made the decisions in relation to staff numbers. They spoke about the work undertaken by the Greystones Tidy Towns Committee and the need for Council staff to complete works previously carried out by the Committee.

The District Engineer stated that the Council supported the Tidy Towns Committee in any way possible but that they did not have staff resources to carry out necessary works like potholing, so had no plan to fill the gap for works previously done by the Tidy Towns Committee. He stated that, despite the increased population of the area, there were no additional volunteers on the Tidy Towns Committee.

The District Manager informed the members that the first part of the workforce audit was to look at existing vacancies and getting those filled. He stated that the second part of the study would compare the numbers across the Municipal Districts. He referred to the shortage of outdoor staff in the GMD, and to the loss of technical staff at present due to sick and maternity leave, and he stated that the GMD officials were frustrated at the situation and were pushing for more staff. He stated that the other Municipal Districts would fight to keep their staff if it was decided to re-allocate staff from the overall staff numbers in the county and that similarly, if it was decided to hire additional staff, then funding for same would be an issue. He suggested that the members raise the staffing of the Greystones Municipal District again with the Chief Executive in advance of the Wicklow County Council budget process.

1. **NOTICES OF MOTION:**
2. Motion in the name of Councillor S. Stokes:

“Greystones Municipal District should seek completion of the ramp / steps at Farrankelly Close, so that the walls blend in with other nearby estates."

Councillor S. Stokes stated that the residents of Farrankelly Close were unhappy with the finish of the ramp at the estate, and while it was a costly job, they wanted a stone cladding finish similar to other estates in the locality.

The District Engineer stated that this work was carried out by the Housing Section in accordance with the tender documents so it was incorrect to say that the ramp was not completed. He stated that the Greystones Municipal District did not have funding to complete the expensive cladding requested by the residents. He stated that the Council had provided a pedestrian crossing at the estate together with planting on the banks and had offered to provide planting and other suggested options to help screen the ramp which were refused by the residents.

The District Administrator informed the members that the Housing Section did not have any funding either to enhance the ramp which was completed as per tender. She stated that the residents did not appear to be open to any options other than stone cladding.

The members, while adopting the notice of motion, agreed that this was a funding issue and suggested that alternative options be discussed with the residents.

As time was running short, it was agreed to extend the meeting by ten minutes.

1. Motion in the name of Councillor D. Mitchell:

“Dr Ryan Park should be maintained as a public park with vegetation cut back, large trees maintained, public lighting, tarmac paths & fencing to increase attractiveness and reduce antisocial behaviour”.

Councillor D. Mitchell stated that Dr. Ryan Park should be properly maintained as a public park, similar to Burnaby Park. He stated that anti-social behaviour was affecting residents in the nearby estate and he asked that this issue be raised at the next Policing Plan Committee meeting.

Councillor S. Stokes stated that there was a local biodiversity hub active in part of the park but that the southern end should be upgraded and a large log there removed.

The District Engineer stated that the proposals would enhance the area but again, Greystones Municipal District did not have the staff resources to upgrade and maintain the park. He stated that the area would be opened up once the construction hoarding was removed which should discourage anti-social behaviour.

1. Motion in the name of Councillor L. Scott:

"That an accessibility audit of the beaches in Greystones Municipal District is carried out as a matter of urgency and a plan to address deficiencies is drawn up following audit recommendations."

Councillor L. Scott stated that people were having difficulty accessing the beaches and the sea in areas of the district and while initiatives like the beach mat were helpful, the Council needed to look at a plan to make the beaches more accessible.

Following discussion it was agreed to request the Environmental Services Section of the Council to arrange for an audit by the Disability Federation of Ireland Officer.

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**
2. The District Administrator informed the members that a Mr. Cormac Breathnach had offered to donate two sculptures to the Municipal District and she agreed to circulate the details so that the members could make an informed decision at the October meeting. She pointed out that the sculptor was a relative of the late Ronnie Drew who lived in Greystones.
3. The District Administrator referred to an email received from Bord na Mona, which had been circulated to the members, seeking to make a presentation on the proposed Ocean Wind Realt na Mara offshore wind project. Following discussion it was agreed to receive the presentation at the January 2023 meeting.
4. The District Administrator informed the members that the report being carried out by Irish Rail into the incidents on their systems in July had not been completed and was not yet available.
5. The District Administrator informed the members that the next meeting of the Greystones Municipal District Policing Plan Committee would be held on Tuesday 25th October 2022 at 6.30 pm prior to the monthly meeting.
6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was discussed.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

**SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_CATHAOIRLEACH**

**CERTIFIED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR**

**DATED THIS :\_\_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_2022**