

MINUTES OF JUNE MONTHLY MEETING OF GREYSTONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD IN THE CIVIC OFFICES, MILL ROAD, GREYSTONES, CO. WICKLOW ON TUESDAY 27TH JUNE 2023 AT 7.30 P.M.

Present: Councillor S. Stokes, Leas-Cathaoirleach
Councillors T. Fortune, D. Mitchell, L. Scott & G. Walsh

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 M. Barry

At the outset the members passed a vote of sympathy to former Town Councillor Fiachra Etchingham and his family on the recent death of his brother Dr. Colman Etchingham. A minutes silence was observed in remembrance of him.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor L. Scott, seconded by Councillor G. Walsh and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 30th May, 2023, as circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Members again requested that a meeting of the Cliff Walk Management Committee be organised as soon as possible and that the report on the Community Recognition Fund allocated to Greystones be circulated, as discussed at the May meeting.

2. PRESENTATION ON THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE LCP FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

As Ms. Deirdre Whitfield had not yet arrived, it was agreed to proceed with item 3 on the agenda.

3. REPORT FROM GREYSTONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT ENGINEER

A 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. He informed the members that he was the only technical member of staff in Greystones effectively as the technician was absent on maternity leave and the Assistant Engineer was working between Greystones and Wicklow. He stated that the situation was the same in all departments of the Council as they were finding it impossible to recruit new staff. He stated that this was affecting the work on Chapel Road which would be done as resources allowed. He pointed out that the job would probably take a year to complete and that the tender would include timeframes and he stated that any disruption during the works would be minimised.

In relation to Dr. Ryan Park the District Engineer stated that discussions were ongoing with staff in relation to having an audit carried out to identify what was required. He stated that talks were progressing with landowners in relation to having the Cliff Walk re-opened and he stressed that the landowners had been very involved and helpful in this regard, contrary to recent comments. He pointed out that recent road narrowing works carried out at Glenheron and Bellevue Hill were fully compliant with the Road Design Manual and he stated that they would be improved when the final road surface was applied. He stated that the roads and footpaths in Kilcoole needed attention and would be included on the roads programme. He informed the

members that the funding provided for the provision of a footpath on the eastern side of the R761 between Knockroe and Kilcoole had been lost as the work did not proceed due to a failure to reach agreement with a landowner involved. He stated that other than proceeding with a Compulsory Purchase Order, he was not sure how this could be progressed. He agreed to provide Solar Powered bins in Kilcoole and he pointed out that the Part 8 for Improvement Works at Killincarrig Village had to be re-done as the Chief Executive's report had not issued within the statutory timeframe. He informed the members that any issues with the ramp at Farrankelly Close were a matter for the Housing Section.

In response to queries from the members in relation to Sea Road in Newcastle, the District Engineer stated that a speed survey could be carried out at any identified areas to determine if there was an issue. He agreed to replace the bin at Newcastle beach with a solar powered one. He advised that some of the trees on the Charlesland dual carriageway might need to have their crowns raised but that such work would not be carried out until September after the nesting season. He informed the members that the final option for the Part 8 for Covent Road Delgany works would come before Greystones Municipal District in due course and he pointed out that the new speed limits in the county came into effect on 1st June 2023 and that delivery of new speed limit signs was awaited. He advised that the Safe Routes to Schools team consulted regularly with residents in relation to works in the vicinity of St. Kevin's N.S. and he stated that quotations were being sought for remedial works at the Charlesland playground and that a new sign for Kenmare Heights was on order.

The District Administrator informed the members that security had been put in place at the harbour marina, in consultation with Wicklow County Council, in an effort to prevent issues that had arisen in the past.

Members welcomed the Engineer's report and thanked him for the works being carried out in the district, despite staffing issues. They queried the lack of staff since the positions were agreed posts. They welcomed the provision of temporary toilets and additional bins at the south beach and they suggested that it might be safer to remove the barriers from the Cliff Walk and just have signage instead as people were climbing over the barriers. They stressed the need to progress the Part 8 for Killincarrig Village and the upgrading of Dr. Ryan Park and sought timeframes for these projects and they asked that the trees at Charlesland dual carriageway be cut back as soon as possible.

The District Manager stated that local authorities could not compete with private businesses in offering incentives to staff and with the country at full employment it was difficult to recruit staff. In relation to the Cliff Walk he pointed out that the Council had to keep barriers in place for insurance purposes. He warned people against using the walk because of the dangerous drop to the sea. He stated that the Council was frustrated to have missed the statutory timeframe for the Killincarrig Village Part 8 due to staff shortages so they did not want to give new dates until such time as it was confirmed that staff were available.

PRESENTATION ON THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE LECP FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Deirdre Whitfield, Town Regeneration Officer with Wicklow County Council to the meeting. A copy of the draft LECP Framework document and a Powerpoint presentation had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting. Ms. Whitfield went through the presentation and gave background information on the LECP process. She outlined the stages and timelines for the LECP and the Socio-Economic Statement and gave information about consultation and the Vision and high level goals for Wicklow as recommended by the Advisory Steering Group which included Climate Action; Enterprise, Innovation and Creativity; A Connected County; Equality, Diversity and Just Transition and Health, Resilience and Well-Being. She advised the members that any feedback they had could be incorporated into the Implementation Plan in due course.

The members welcomed the presentation and thanked Ms. Whitfield for her attendance and for the huge amount of work on the plan to date. They stated that the challenge would be getting the plan activated when

it was fully completed. They spoke about the need for transport infrastructure and jobs in the district that would cater for the huge expansion in population here and identify skills shortages and opportunities for upskilling. They commended the level of consultation but expressed disappointment that they did not get any input into the plan before it went to the MD stage, in particular in relation to Climate Change & Biodiversity where the word 'sustainable' was mentioned thirty times with no specifics.

Following further discussion the District Manager informed the members that the public effectively wrote the LECP and that a lot of work already done came from the last plan which was largely disrupted by Covid 19.

Ms. Whitfield requested any feedback from the members by mid-July so that it could be incorporated into the Implementation Plan. She stated that a local workshop on the Implementation Plan could be organised and she pointed out that it was hoped to have the draft plan before all the members of Wicklow County Council at their September meeting.

1. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Motion in the name of Councillor S. Stokes:

"Greystones Municipal District should seek a recycling centre. It should also be noted that the Greystones Municipal District is the only Municipal District in County Wicklow without such a facility."

The District Administrator informed the members of the contents of an email reply received from Wicklow County Council in relation to this motion which stated that the Recycling Centres were set up when there were no green bin collections available to householders. As all households in the district can now avail of a green bin service, and Bray Recycling Centre is only 5.2 km from Greystones, there are no plans to provide a further recycling centre in Greystones as the priority was to refurbish and repurpose the existing centres.

Members supported this motion and following discussion it was agreed to revert to Wicklow County Council to request that a recycling centre be provided in the Greystones Municipal District to cater for the increased population in the area.

(b) Motion in the name of Councillor D. Mitchell:

"In view of the proposals to have 2 large wind farms meeting close to the coast off Greystones, the Council should prepare a Sea Scape Visual impact Assessment (SVIA) of the proposals".

Councillor D. Mitchell stated that the Council should arrange to have an independent SVIA carried out of the proposed Codling and Dublin Array windfarms off the coast of Greystones which he said would be the biggest and the most visually impacting in the country. He understood that the Wind Farm companies would be required to do assessments as part of their planning applications but he suggested that an independent assessment was also required as the proposed wind farms would be taller than Bray Head and would stretch all along the coast.

While members supported the motion in principal, they were hesitant in calling for one if it delayed the wind farms and they were not sure what purpose it would serve.

The District Manager cautioned the members about calling for such a plan before a planning application was lodged and he pointed out that a lot of documentation would need to be submitted by the developers as part of their planning application.

Members voted on the motion as follows: In favour – Councillors D. Mitchell, S. Stokes and G. Walsh; Against – Councillors T. Fortune and L. Scott and it was agreed to forward the motion to Wicklow County Council.

2. CORRESPONDENCE

1. The District Administrator informed the members of a request received from Sugarloaf Lions Club that the Civic Offices be lit up in gold for the Childhood Cancer Awareness Week in September and this was agreed.
3. The District Administrator informed the members of the contents of a reply received from Irish Rail in relation to works on bank holiday weekends. It was agreed to circulate a copy of this letter to the members.
4. The District Administrator informed the members of the contents of an email received from a resident in Kilcoole in relation to various works in the village. She stated that the issues raised had been covered in the District Engineer’s report.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The District Administrator stated the need to agree allocations to Tidy Towns groups, twinning, etc. from the 2023 Municipal District budget.

Cllr. G. Walsh stated that funds raised by the St. Patrick’s Day Parade Committee covered all the costs of the 2023 parade so that no contribution was required this year. The District Administrator advised that any funding required for the 2024 parade would be from the 2024 budget.

Following discussion it was agreed that a list of all the usual allocations and requests for funding be circulated to the members and that the matter be discussed again at the July meeting.

2. The District Administrator informed the members that she had received a request for a contribution of €4,750 towards the cost of reprinting the Greystones Town Map estimated to cost a total of €9,500 which seemed excessive. She stated that she was seeking further clarification from the printer in relation to costs and that she was looking at all options for getting tourist information out to members of the public and would report back to the members.
3. Councillor S. Stokes informed the members that a representative from a school in Holyhead had recently met representatives from St. David’s School with a view to setting up an exchange visit. He stated that there was also contact between the Rugby Club and the Rowing Club in relation to exchange visits.
4. Members requested that the Greystones Town Team be invited to make a presentation to the members at a meeting of Greystones Municipal District and this was agreed.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

SIGNED: _____ CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____ DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

DATED THIS: _____ DAY OF _____ 2023