

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in County Buildings, Wicklow on 4th December 2023 at 10:30am. (November Monthly Meeting)**

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

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

EasyGo Commercial Team

Mr. Dermot O’Toole

**Apologies:** Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager  
(Joined the meeting at the end)

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

**1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Blake, seconded by Cllr. Glennon and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023.

**2. Matters Arising – None.**

**3. Update on Electric Vehicle Charger Installations for West Wicklow.**

Mr. O’Toole gave a presentation to The Members regarding the upcoming installation of Fast / Slow electric vehicle chargers in West Wicklow. He informed The Members that eight locations will have the chargers installed before the end of the first quarter of 2024 starting

in North West Wicklow and moving south. He explained that County Wicklow has the highest rate in the Country for electric vehicles and a large number of tourists, confirming the need for the planned installations.

### **Questions & Answers:**

- Cllr. Mullen thanked Mr. O'Toole for his presentation and asked him to explain the difference between Fast and Slow chargers.
  - Mr. O'Toole clearly explained that a Fast charger is DC and Slow AC, fast charging can boost the battery from 24 – 300KW in 15 – 20mins. Slow charging takes several hours. He also explained that fast charging is a more expensive way of charging than slow and is mostly used to top-up EVs rather than fully charging them.
- Cllr. Glennon enquired about the connection time of the chargers, stating that we had previous issues with chargers being installed and left without an ESB connection for a considerable amount of time. Cllr. Glennon also commented on a post he had seen on social media regarding EVs being stranded in a snow storm.
  - Mr. O'Toole agreed that there can be problems with ESB connection time but assured The Members that EasyGo have engaged with the ESB before signing contracts with Wicklow County Council and are 80% confident that connections will be made in a relatively short amount of time. Regarding Cllr Glennon's observation about EVs being stranded in a snow storm, Mr. O'Toole stated it was all the more reason to increase charging points across the country.
- Cllr. Blake enquired if there is a problem with the supply of power in some locations in The West. He asked do we have AC in all areas and how many points there are per unit.
  - Mr. O'Toole stated that the ESB's website clearly shows the power for each location and power has been confirmed prior to charger installation. There are some locations that will need ESB works. He advised Cllr. Blake that two EVs can be charged per unit and the power is shared if both are being used.
- Cllr. O'Neill thanked Mr. O'Toole for coming to the meeting and enquired about the cost difference between fast and slow charging.
  - Mr. O'Toole informed The Members that as there is less capital investment for slow chargers they are approximately 15-20% cheaper than fast chargers. Charging costs 60c per KW for slow vs 70c per KW for fast. He stated that 90% of charging is done at the homes of EV owners.
- Mr. Byrne asked if EasyGo had the capacity to move EVs on once their battery is charged.
  - Mr. O'Toole informed The Members that EV owners sign up to the EasyGo App and it is in their terms & conditions that an extra fee can be charged if the vehicle isn't moved on after a period of time once charged. EasyGo at

present do not charge the fee, alternatively the alert the user via the App and request the EV be moved.

- Cllr. Timmins asked if EasyGo pay a fee for the use of the public road used where the chargers were installed.
  - Mr. O'Toole advised Cllr. Timmins that they were not charged a fee.
- Mr. Graham asked how long an EV on 20% would take to charge on a fast charger.
  - Mr. O'Toole advised that depending on the model of the car it would take 20-25mins. 50 KW an hour. But he stated that the fast chargers are used as a "splash & dash" facility and the majority of users would charge fully once they are home / work / hotel etc.

#### **4. Update on Baltinglass RRDF**

Mr. Byrne informed The Members that the Baltinglass Town Centre project will start in the second week of January 2024.

Mr. Graham inform The Members that although work is not progressing in The Park at present there is work being carried out in the background with procurement etc.

Mr. Cullen advised The Members that he was in discussions earlier today regarding The Courthouse and reverting to the original plan to repair and do cosmetic works on same. CCSD were currently seeking quotations on costs for works to be carried out.

#### **Members Comments and Observations (RRDF)**

- Cllr. Timmins acknowledged that Mr. Flynn is driving the Baltinglass Town Centre project and stated that it is critical that we see work commencing in January 2024.
- Cllr. Blake asked if the proposed work on the walkway to be carried out on The Bridge in Baltinglass will affect the Dutchman's.
  - The members were advised by both Mr. Byrne and Mr. Graham that it would not affect the Dutchman's. They also advised that the cleanest way to access the lands needed for the walkway is to CPO the lands.
- Cllr. Glennon enquired how long the CPO process takes.
  - The members were advised that the statutory time scale of the CPO process is eighteen months and that a detailed design has to be approved to commence a CPO.
- A discussion was held regarding the importance of this walkway as it is causing a huge issue for all the Elected Members.

- Mr. Byrne also requested that The Members use any political influence they can to assist with extra funding needed to carry on with further works on the RRDF once this phase is complete.
  - All agreed to do anything they can. Cllr. Timmins said that if The Members are to request further funding it is imperative we get started on the works that funding is already approved for.

## **5. 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)**

- Cllr. Timmins asked Mr. Byrne to explain the meaning of Gateway 1 & 2.
  - Mr. Byrne explained that Gateway 1 means the project is in the program and Gateway 2 is the process, planning /part 8 etc.
- Cllr. O'Neill expressed his frustration with TII.
  - Mr. Byrne stated that he understood completely but that the TII have to approve the works and their process for doing same has to be adhered to.

### **Members Comments and Observations (national roads)**

- Cllr. Mullen thanked Mr. Graham for the works carried out on the footpath in Shillelagh and for commencing the footpath works in Tinahely which he understands will carry on into the New Year. He asked Mr. Byrne and Mr. Graham had they received any feedback on the Active Travel applications.
  - Mr. Graham said he had not received any feedback. And stated that Active Travel applications were not successful in the countryside areas as they had limited public transport facilities.
    - A discussion was held and all agreed that there should be a separate rural element to the Active Travel application process. The Members asked should we be doing more as an MD to fight for this funding to ensure we are receiving an equal portion of funding granted in Co. Wicklow.
- Cllr. Cronin said that she has received numerous complaints about the condition of Colbinstown Bridge. The District Engineer said that he would raise this issue with the Wicklow County council bridge engineer
- Cllr. Blake enquired about road repair works on the stretch of road from Mulinacuff to Seskin and asked if they would be completed by next year. The District Engineer advised that he has planned for the work to be carried out next year.

- Cllr. O'Neill enquired about the R758 and advised that he had received complaints regarding the lack of chippings on the road.
  - Mr. Byrne advised Cllr. O'Neill that the patch of road being referred to looked worse than it actually was. That it was one of the only regional roads done in top black but will see about adding chippings.
- Cllr. O'Neill asked if Baltinglass MD had the power to change speed limits.
  - Mr. Byrne advised Cllr O'Neill that the MD does have the power to change speed limits but that there are guidelines that must be followed.

## 6. Correspondence

Mr. Cullen informed The Members that a request was made at the full council meeting for €1,000.00 of discretionary funding from each MD to be paid to the Wicklow Disability Strategy.

- It was proposed by Cllr. Glennon, seconded by Cllr. Cronin and unanimously agreed to honour the request.

Cllr. Timmins informed The Members that he had received an invitation from Castel Maggiore to an event being held in Italy from the 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024. He will forward same to all The Members and Mr. Cullen. Cllr. Timmins asked that this be added to the agenda, for discussion, at the next MD meeting.

Mr. Cullen advised he received correspondence from the group formerly known as Baltinglass Town Renewal Group (BTRG) members. In their correspondence they outlined their frustration at the current lack of progress on the development and maintenance of Baltinglass Courthouse

Mr. Cullen advised The Members that he was in discussions earlier today regarding The Courthouse and reverting to the original plan to repair and do cosmetic works on same. CCSD were currently seeking quotations on costs for works to be carried out.

It was agreed to keep this issue as a regular item on the agenda and to continually raise the it with senior management.

Mr. Cullen received a request by Lakeshore Striders for funding towards repair works needed for their running track.

- It was discussed and agreed that Mr. Cullen reply to Lakeshore Striders asking for clarification of the works to be carried out and to advise them that they might be more successful applying under Community Enhancement Grant or similar.

Mr. Cullen also received a request for funding from a voluntary Mother and Babies group held in Stratford Lodge.

- Again, Mr. Cullen was asked to reply to this group advising them on grants which are available to them.

## 7. Any Other Business

A discussion took place regarding maintenance work and the general upkeep of Kilranelagh graveyard, it has recently fallen into bad repair and become overgrown.

Mr Cullen advised that he is in regular contact the local the Kilranelagh graveyard committee and is assisting them with their proposed heritage project.

He also advised that they have recently met Wicklow County Council Heritage Officer, Deirdre Burns and Wicklow County Council Architect, Yvonne Whitty and that there is a plan in place to apply for heritage funding for works in the graveyard

The members said they fully support the proposed project and asked to kept updated on the progress and advised that they may be willing to allocate some discretionary funding to the project in the future

Cllr. Mullen enquired if we had received an update on the public lighting situation and was advised by Mr. Graham that there was a live tender out at present regarding same.

Cllr. O'Neill said that he has been approached by numerous people with concerns regarding Notices to Quit received for accommodation which is allegedly to be used to house refugees and asylum seekers.

- Cllr. Mullen expressed his concerns of false information being spread.
- Cllr. Timmins stated that this is a huge topic which needed an open debate and asked Mr. Cullen to add it to the agenda for the next meeting.

## 8. Date of next meeting

The next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting will be held on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_