



**Wicklow County Council
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD IN THE PRESBYTERIAN HALL, DUBLIN
ROAD, ARKLOW ON WEDNESDAY 13th October 2021**

Present: Cllr. Miriam Murphy, Cathaoirleach
Cllr. Tommy Annesley
Cllr. Sylvester Bourke
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald
Cllr. Pat Kennedy
Cllr. Peir Leonard

Officials Present: Ms. Helena Dennehy, A/District Manager
Ms. Claire Lawless, District Administrator
Ms. Avril Hill, District Engineer
Mr. Rob Mulhall, Exec. Engineer
Ms. Christine Flood, SEO
Mr. Marc Devereux, Senior Engineer
Mr. Tony Quirke, Exec. Engineer

Ms. Sinéad Boddy, ASO

Press : Ms. E Dodd, WP, Mr. R Clune WP

Public: None

Cllr Murphy welcomed all to the meeting – great to be back meeting in person and hopefully it is a sign that we are returning to normality. E Dodd introduced the new reporter for the WP – Richard Clune.

Item 1: Votes of Sympathy.

The Members expressed votes of sympathy to all families who have recently lost loved ones. The members offered condolences to the families of the following –

Des Tansey, Lena Crean, Coleen O Toole, Tammy O Brien, Andy Burke, Charlie McAdams, Brendan Hyland, Michael McHugh

A minutes silence was observed.

Item 2 : Confirmation of Minutes from Ordinary Meeting held on the 8th September 2021.

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Ordinary Meeting held on the 8th September 2021 were proposed by Cllr Bourke and seconded by Cllr Kennedy.

Item 3 : Matters Arising.

Cllr Bourke stated that the request for dog poo bins was not recorded and asked that the request for installation of bins along the Beech Road is noted, particularly around the bridge area. Cllr Murphy confirmed that she has spoken to the engineer about that.

Item 4 : To receive an update on the URDF Arklow Harbour and Pottery Museum project.

A presentation was given to the members by Christine Flood SEO and Marc Devereux SE.

The background to the establishment of The Maritime Business Development Group was outlined and the objectives for the development of our marine infrastructure were highlighted showing the link with the Local Economic and Community Plan, RSES and the Mid East Regional Enterprise Plan. With the development of offshore wind it is now more than ever important to be in a position to maximise opportunities.

The Climate Action Plan commits to increasing our offshore wind capacity to 3.5GW as part of our overall plan to reach at least 70% renewable energy by 2030. 7 Offshore Projects have been designated Relevant Projects by the government and are in line to receive a valid grid connection offer.

There are 7 Projects proposed off the coast of Wicklow - Dublin Array RWE (2 projects Bray and Kish Banks) Relevant Project, Codling Wind Park (2 projects, Codling I and Codling II) Relevant Project, Cailleach off Bray Head, Shelmalere South of Arklow and The Arklow Bank Wind Park. The Arklow Bank Wind Park and the Codling Wind Park are at advanced stages of planning.

The history of Arklow's long connection with the sea was presented including previous major employers in the town/port. The economic fortune of Arklow and importance of the port has declined significantly over the last 40 years. The harbour/port areas are significant underutilised assets. The area requires a comprehensive plan to address the physical, economic, environmental and social regeneration of the area and redefine the role of the waterfront.

Offshore Wind Energy projects are preparing to submit planning applications when the Marine Area Planning Bill 2021, is enacted. Each project will have a potential value of between €1 and €2 billion bringing employment with each phase.

There are fantastic opportunities for County Wicklow to develop as a Centre of Excellence for Offshore wind energy through development of its harbours, enterprise space and through development of its education and training offering including re-skilling of certain sectors.

Arklow Quays regeneration will involve the preparation of detailed survey and analysis of the entire area and the development of a masterplan for the area. A clear implementation plan for the delivery of the elements of the masterplan, including funding sources will be set out and will include capital investment with the proposal for the acquisition of land to develop, in partnership with others, a hub for the maritime sector, for off shore wind, aquaculture, fisheries, other marine food sectors. Also proposed is the development of a National Maritime Centre of Excellence, providing space and supports for marine and maritime based start-ups and the development of a pottery museum close to the harbour area.

The renewal plan has the potential to transform Arklow, with enhanced connectivity between the Quays and the town centre, a strong focus on Arklow's maritime and industrial heritage, high quality employment opportunities and high quality, higher density town centre living, close to all amenities and services.

Implementation of the plan will maximise opportunities presented by other projects - Arklow WWTP, Arklow Flood Scheme, the selection of Arklow by SSE as its Operations and Maintenance base for Offshore Wind, Development by Echelon Data Centres and SSE of joint 220kV substation in Arklow.

Compatibility National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) - The proposals are compatible with the following NSOs: NSO 1, NSO 4, NSO 5, NSO 7, NSO 8, NSO 9.

Cllr Annesley asked for clarification on where the Pottery Museum application now fits? Was a URDF application and now with Harbour Project? Christine Flood replied that the REDZ funding received was for the design phase and not for capital expenditure. Funding streams are being applied for using these designs and unfortunately none have been successful to date but WCC will continue to apply and consider that the project would fare better as part of a bigger public realm project when applying for URDF funding.

Cllr Leonard supported Cllr Annesley's comments and suggested that for the short term an online museum could be developed. C Flood agreed and said that LEADER funding may be a good fit here. The physical museum should be multi-faceted – performance space, catalyst for artisans in the area and an interactive space – all complementing each other.

Discussion continued relating to the plan and the strategic harbour site.

M Devereux stated that the drawings presented are only artist impressions and no decision has been made about locations for proposed buildings. All proposals need to be complementary to the town and connected to the town.

Cllr Murphy commented that it is great to see a plan being developed for the area – it has been ignored for so long and hopes that with each application the plan will be upgraded. Cllr Leonard said that more commentary on the need for sheltered water space is required and while the social need is being met the potential to open up water space should not be ignored – the small harbour entrance needs to be reanalysed for future users of the harbour – investigate now. M Devereux agreed and stated that the use of the harbour would define the options for plans. Cllr Leonard pushed for more harbour rather than dock and creation of more marine protected areas, huge potential here. M Devereux re-iterated that the plan will come first and modifications after. Cllr Fitzgerald said that it is urgent that WCC gets the plan in place. Cllr Murphy said that communication is key and that knowledge is sought from people of the area. Cllr Kennedy said that the site is great and the future of Arklow could be huge on it – commercial, tourism and leisure along the Avoca River – South Wicklow is starved of tourism opportunities. Conversation needs to happen looking at the strategic pointers – would make a huge difference. Cllr Bourke complimented the great vision and encouraged talking to other wind farm companies. Cllr Annesley asked that other stakeholders are considered – KWETB.

C Flood stated that WCC are satisfied with the application contrary to what has been rumoured and assured the members that the application puts the best foot forward.

Cllr Leonard queried if the application was more receptive to commercial elements, M Devereux said that the application centred on “enhancement of the town” so all elements are integrated. He also confirmed that the plans for the fishing huts are going ahead as agreed. WCC has also considered developments in similar towns to Arklow – Wick and John O’Groats in Scotland for example.

H Dennehy A/DM stressed the importance of including the fishing community and that the project should not be at the cost of existing businesses. A formal working group was suggested and the development plan would remain on the agenda for future meetings.

Item 5 : To receive an update on the URDF Arklow Parade Ground project.

T Quirke EE gave a presentation to the members updating them on progress with the Parade Ground Project.

David Walsh Civil Engineering was awarded Arklow Parade Ground Contract.

Phase 1 includes, drainage, ducting and utilities and works for this phase will continue to December 2021. Traffic management through this phase narrows the road and a stop go system will be in place as required. St. Marys Rd will be closed for a period. Site mobilisation commenced Monday 13th September.

Structural survey of external facades of buildings has been undertaken as well as setting out designed underground services and tracing of existing services. While excavating for gully connections encountered an existing stone culvert which was investigated.

The one way system will provide a consistent traffic management approach for the duration of the works. This will allow traffic to move freely through the town. Local traffic in particular will utilise the localised diversions that are available. The works will need to be carried out in a number of locations simultaneously along Main Street to allow for continuity / progression of the works in an efficient manner. A one way system will best serve this approach and the overall programme completion target of May 2022 before the busy summer period.

The alternative use of a shuttle system (i.e. a combination of Stop and Go and Traffic Lights) was examined and would be less suitable.

Pedestrian management and maintaining pedestrian safety will be a key feature of the project and implementing a one way traffic system will minimise the potential interaction for pedestrian being required to cross the carriageway. A one way system will assist the free movement of Emergency Services through the main street.

Contractor will liaise with bus companies on proposed one way system and bus stop locations and also with waste collection companies.

Auto track exercise carried out for Bridge St/ Lower Main St and Main St/Laffin's Lane, junctions are possible for 13m long bus. Perhaps look at temporary measures at Bridge St/Upper Main St to facilitate movement.

HGV's would be encouraged not to use lower main street diversion route. The contractor would initially make an inventory of the key businesses affected on the route and inform them of the alternative routes. In addition information VMS boards would be erected on bridge street in advance of the one way system been implemented highlighting the closure on main street for westbound traffic. A VMS board could be placed on the M11 southbound at Junction 20 directing the HGV's to Junction 21.

Cllr Fitzgerald asked for clarification on the status of the one way system, T Quirke EE confirmed that the system in place is only for the duration of the works. The problems that could be encountered by buses/longer vehicles, was discussed and options considered. T Quirke EE confirmed that the contractor has specific working hours for each day and countered that the one way system would assist the emergency services when concerns were raised. Cllr Annesley voiced concern at the number of projects underway – Back St. T Quirke EE stated that the traffic management system would be in place until the 4th January at least. Cllr Kennedy thanked Tony and said that getting the information out every couple of weeks would reap rewards – Cllr Murphy said that the Town Team facebook page would be ideal for getting the updates out to the public.

The members suggested that the businesses are contacted regularly – T Quirke EE confirmed that the contractors have been in touch with businesses affected.

Item 6 : To receive a report from the Housing Section on Fabric Upgrade Works and Housing Repairs.

The report was circulated. Cllr Kennedy expressed his shock at the number of houses that are not up to standard and asked that more investment was made in existing housing stock – Houses are being upgraded after tenants pass away and then re-let, too late for the vulnerable elderly tenants. The members need to request that a set percentage of the rent collected is invested in upgrading existing properties that are below standard and not heat efficient. Cllr Murphy agreed and that regardless of the age of tenants, the standard of WCC stock is disgraceful. Proposal should be put to WCC.

The members raised issues around funding for upgrades and questioned where money was being spent and the lack of tradesmen to carry out works. Cllr Annesley confirmed that questions would be brought to the SPC and the proposal to ring-fence 10% of AMD rent collected for AMD properties.

H Dennehy A/DM confirmed that apprenticeships will be coming to WCC.

Item 7 : District Engineers Report.

Roads Programme

Work has commenced on the 2021 Roads Programme.

Regional Roads

<i>Road No.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Proposed Works</i>	<i>Status</i>
R754	Redcross Main St.	Resurfacing & line marking	Delayed IW Scheme from Redcross to Barndarrig will impact on this – re-surfacing in Redcross to be put back to 2022
R752	Aughrim	Resurfacing & line marking	To be completed before November

Local Roads

<i>Road No.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Proposed Works</i>	<i>Status</i>
L-6124 & L-6125	Ballyteige, Rathdrum	Resurfacing, surface dressing & line marking	Line marking to be completed. Tender awarded.
L-2180	Beech Road, Avoca	Resurfacing, surface dressing & line marking	Line marking to be completed. Tender awarded.
L-2900	Emoclew Road, Arklow	Resurfacing, reconstruction of existing ramps & line marking	Will take place during mid-term.
L-6204	Tocher Hill, Killavaney	Resurfacing, surface dressing	Completed.

Safety Improvement Works

Proposed Scheme	Status
R747 – Woodenbridge to Aughrim – Safety Barriers	Completed
R752 at Avoca – Safety Barriers	Completed
R747 - Arklow and Woodenbridge – LED warning signs	Tender awarded
R752 Rathdrum & Laragh – LED Warning signs	Tender awarded
Ballycoog National School	Tender awarded
Bearnacle National School	Finalising design
Carysfort National School	Finalising design

Arklow MD has been advised that the LED warning signs are in stock so we will be liaising with the supplier to get these installed in the coming weeks.

Former National Roads

Proposed Scheme	Status
Wexford Road Arklow – Rehabilitation Project	To be completed before November (from Parade Ground to Carysfort)

Footpath Schemes

1. Rathdrum 90% complete – Design has been completed. Awaiting start date from contractor. We have requested an update from Eir with regard to the removal of the stay cable.
2. R747 Vale Rd – Finished on Merck side. Waiting on contractor to review kerb on Ballyraine side

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Redcross: Works are progressing on site. AMD have been consulting with residents on the works.

Local Improvement Scheme

Two Local improvement schemes have been completed so far in 2021.

Knockanree, Avoca – 220m of road

Kilahurler, Arklow – 630m of road

Round 2 for the District –

Clonerkin, Rathdrum

Ballykillageer, Arklow

Currently awaiting a start on those schemes.

Community Involvement Scheme

Kilahurler, Arklow - Drainage works complete, contractor to surface.

Applications made for three schemes for 2022-

Kimacoo Avoca

Nursery Way Aughrim

Three Wells Aughrim

Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund

We have received funding for 2 schemes in the district

Arklow - €65,000 – Response has generally been positive. We have received some comments from businesses on the street and we have made arrangements for a drop-off/pick-up space (10 mins) to be included. Will be implemented as soon as signage is erected.

We are working with the parking section to ensure disabled space and loading bays are being used correctly.

Rathdrum - €50,000 – Complement the resurfacing and relining works to the main street and the square. Feedback has generally been positive and traffic situation has improved.

NTA Schemes

The 2021 allocations for Arklow have been confirmed as follows. Projects are being led by NTA team in WCC with input from AMD.

Project Code	Project Name	Description
WCC/11/0004	Arklow – Woodenbridge - Shillelagh	Greenway project. Currently compiling the Planning Application.
WCC/20/0003	Arklow Transport Study	Baseline assessment is currently underway, next stage will be stakeholder engagement.
WCC/21/0007	Dublin Road to Wexford Road	Tender documents are being prepared for appointment of consultant.
WCC/21/0009	Arklow Main St to Train Station	
WCC/21/0013	Lower Main Street, Tinahask Road & Dock Road to South Quay	
WCC/21/0024	R747 Vale Road	NNR crew are working on this at present.
	Rathdrum	Completed.

Wheelchair accessible bus stop

Works commenced on site on 6th September and are progressing well. Works should be completed by 22nd October.

Housing Construction

Delany Park Phase 2

The site consists of 47 houses, structurally all houses are completed with doors & windows in place, all external ongoing, first fix M&E started, IW & ESB not connected to date, revised finishing programme indicates end of April 2022.

Avondale Phase 2

The site consists of 20 houses. Successful contractor Cleary Doyle now appointed for this project. Currently at contractors final design sign off stage anticipated start on site September 2021 with a completion date anticipated for September 2022.

Sheehan Court (Old Fire Station)

The project consists of a terrace of 7 no., 2bed houses, and is now fully approved by the DHLGH. The project has commenced on site, foundations poured and rising blockwork commenced, the completion date is expected to be in July 2022.

ClIr Fitzgerald asked when the line marking in Arklow would start – A Hill DE confirmed that the contract was to be awarded. ClIr Kennedy requested an update on the pedestrian lights on the Vale Rd – R Mulhall EE confirmed that this was with ESB Networks.

ClIr Annesley raised concerns about keeping the Main St planters clean – short on manpower to maintain the area.

ClIr Kennedy expressed thanks to AMD staff for the planters in Rathdrum – all appreciative now that they can drive freely up and down the street – Ambulance crew especially. A lot of thought went into the plan. ClIr Bourke added that the Primary Care Car Park would help the situation.

Item 8 : To receive an update on the Columbarium Wall

C Lawless DA confirmed that €10,000 has been set aside to date for the installation of a columbarium wall in St. Gabriel's Cemetery, Arklow. Also confirmed that the operation and maintenance plan has not yet been established for the proposed columbarium wall in BMD.

Item 9 : Notices of Motions

Meeting concluded.

Item 10 : Correspondence

Meeting concluded.

Item 11 : A.O.B

Meeting concluded.

Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 10th November 2021.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District.

Signed: _____

Ms. Claire Lawless, District Administrator, Arklow Municipal District