

MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING

HELD IN DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL

Monday 26th February 2024 at 15.00pm

Present: Cllr Irene Winters, Cllr Shay Cullen, Cllr Gail Dunne, Cllr Mary Kavanagh, Cllr John Snell, Cllr Paul O'Brien

In Attendance: District Manager, Brian Gleeson
District Engineer, Pat Clarke
District Administrator, Georgina Franey
Assistant Staff Officer, Róisín Carroll
Myles Buchanan, Wicklow People

Cathaoirleach Irene Winters opened the meeting at 15.21 p.m.

ITEM 1

Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 22nd of January 2024

It was proposed by Councillor John Snell, seconded by Councillor Paul O'Brien and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wicklow Municipal District Monthly Meeting held on 22nd January 2024.

ITEM 2

Presentation from Mick Higgins and William Hourie of the South East Coast Alliance regarding Brittas Bay

A compressive presentation was made to the members.

Major concerns were raised over the rapid rate of erosion taking place at the south-end of Brittas Bay beach since turbines were installed in 2004. The rate of erosion at this location is exceptional when compared to other beaches in the vicinity which has continued northwards up the beach every year.

Notable events mentioned included:

- If the exceptional erosion continues at current rates the sand dune system will be eradicated.
- Armoured rock placed at the bottom of the turbines.
- Since 2007, all official assessments of the conservation status of Irish 'sandbanks slightly covered by seawater at all times' confirm that construction of wind developments on these banks will result in habitat degradation and increase risk of costal erosion.
- Dumping at sea licence was granted in 2007. The permit master had to liaise with Arklow Harbour Master prior to the commencement and during the dumping activities.

SECPA campaigners believe the effect of wind turbines on tidal flow is a leading cause of the problems. Other possible causes were mentioned including complex coastal changes, deflection of tidal current by the construction of piers and jetties etc. into the sea.

WCC are requested to:

- Provide funding to local community groups for climate action through the community action fund.
- Engage experts to establish the cause of the targeted erosion.
- Contact the Harbour Master to establish if the build-up of sand, referred to in the dumping at sea application was removed in accordance with the conditions set out in the licence.
- Provide warning signs to advise visitors by the possible collapse of the sand dunes which are not stable and considered dangerous.

MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS

- District Manager Brian Gleeson, advised WCC recently received approval for a Coastal Erosion Risk Management study with funding of €121,500 provided by OPW. This will be managed and led by the Environment Section in Wicklow County Council. He also stated that there is no evidence yet to conclude that turbines are the cause of these issues.
- Cllr Shay Cullen commented Brittas Bay is paramount importance not just to WMD but the whole county, he further commented that something must be causing the problem.
- Cllr Mary Kavanagh suggested that SECPA liaise with WCC Climate Committee as they have great knowledge and provide funding of an amount up to €100,000, delivered in three separate strands. She commented that it might help in a way of research and Mark Costello the climate action coordinator in WCC has great knowledge.
- Cllr John Snell commented WCC should follow up with the dumping at sea licence and also signage should be erected on health and safety grounds.
- Cllr Paul O'Brien commented that the south end of the beach is in Arklow Municipal District's area but added that it affects everyone. He stated that it's not just the washing away of sand dunes, Brittas Bay was always a sandy beach but it has now become stoney at the south end.
- Cllr Gail Dunne commented that there was talk of ploughing but this is a long process that involves getting a licence.

ITEM 3

District Engineers Report

Housing:

❖ Relets/Prelets

- 5no. houses relets handed to WMD for refurbishment works. (Preparing Tenders)
- 6no. houses being worked on, through WCC Housing Framework.
- 1no. houses returned to Housing Department for allocation.
- 2no. houses on hold (tenancy considerations by Housing Department).

❖ Maintenance and operations

- On-going repairs and maintenance being progressed as required on housing stock within the WMD.
- 1 DPG outstanding, contractor appointed and waiting for start date

DTTAS Roads Programme:

DTTAS Allocations for 2024 Projects have now been released to Roads. Projects on the Restoration Improvement and Maintenance Programme will be reviewed over the coming weeks.

❖ **Drainage**

- General works on verge drains, drainage inlets, gullies and road crossings to outlets are ongoing throughout the MD.
- Edge channel Drainage Works completed on R772 in advance of surfacing the Glanbia section.
- Programme for cleaning of gullies continuing within the Wicklow MD. Drain surveys are still being carried out on problem areas as required.
- Drainage works on the R772, at the Milltown lane junction and to be completed in coming weeks. Substantial drainage inlet works completed along Milltown lane and adjoining roads completed in last few weeks. A review of the drainage network is ongoing also.
- Drainage works at Knockrobbin completed which was causing severe damage to the road. Surfacing works to be completed when weather is suitable.
- Drainage works have been completed on R750 at entrance to Brittas Bay North car park.
- Substantial verge and footpath cleaning have been completed along the footpath to the Newtown GAA pitch.

❖ **Restoration Improvement**

Below is a list of main works submitted for 2023, all projects completed, plus the additional section at Ballybeg, Rathnew.

Location	Length of Works	Completed to Date
Raheenmore L1102	2.0Km	Completed
Kilbride L5659	2.3Km	Completed
Cloghoge R115	2.1Km	Completed
Carrigower Quarry L1039-38	0.100Km	Completed
Monalin- Kilmurry R765	1.0Km	Completed
Rathnew Old Village L5121	0.250Km	Completed
Abbey Street R750	0.150Km	Completed
Carrigower- Easthill L1039	0.400Km	Completed
Claramore L6586	1.2km	Completed
Glenwood to Moneystown Hill L6088	2.3km	Completed
R772 Ashford (two sections)	1.3km	Completed, installations of bollards to provide pedestrian access from the

		roundabout to Ashford have been completed within the WCC section.
R752/R772 Bally beg	300m	Completed, plus a section of footpath was surfaced that was in poor condition

❖ Safety Projects

- Pedestrian Crossing civil works is finished at Mountain View in Newtown. Installation of belisha beacon poles are completed. ESB connection required to energise crossing. Lowering of wall has been completed to increase visibility at this junction.
- Upgrade of crossing point at St Laurence's school is complete, ramp surfacing completed at school. Barriers have been installed at crossing point.
- Upgrade of Road markings on R755/ R756 between Wicklow Gap and Djouce has started, approx. 14km of centre line completed plus 4km of edge markings, further lining to be completed when weather is dry. Chevron signage and delineator posts to be installed on the Wicklow Gap.
- Periodic School Signage has been installed at certain locations in the WMD. Roundwood National School and Nuns Cross.

❖ WCC Projects

- Works required to stabilise the steps and retaining wall area at Parnell bridge is complete. New safety railings to be installed as soon as they are manufactured.
- New section of Parnell bridge parapet installed in Jan. LED strip lighting installed along parapet earlier this week. New anti-slip surface to be installed on bridge deck in Q2 when weather is suitable.
- Duck feeder was installed and commissioned in Jan.

Fáilte Ireland:

❖ Abbey Grounds;

- Project continuing with Architect/ Structural Engineer and a Quantity surveyor working on tender package for the Coach House area at present. Tender package to be advertised by mid Feb.
- Detailed designs still progressing for Amphitheatre seating and performance area.
- Fire certs and Disability Access drawings have been submitted on the BCMS and are now approved
- Material finishes being worked through at present on certain elements of the design.
- Connection agreements with Utility providers are being progressed.
- A detailed archaeological survey of the existing ruins has started, with drawing to be completed by end of Feb.
- Site compound for construction works has been started. Erection of temporary site fencing has been installed around areas of interest on site, as per National Monuments requirements.

- Design works on new entrance for parochial house are being progressed, with site works to start as soon as ground conditions improve.

Community Recognition Fund/Outdoor Recreation:

- Brittas Bay Blueway funding for accessibility works; works have commenced on upgrade to toilet facilities. The upgrade includes a disabled toilet, improved water storage and improvement of security facilities. – Tank has now being installed, increasing the storage capacity to 26,000 litres. Disability access ramp and new showers currently being installed to finish out works.
- A proposal for outdoor gym equipment around Riverwalk/Murrough Area is being progressed at present, tender documentation to be published in coming weeks.
- A Tender package for the refurbishment of the Assembly Hall facility was prepared before Christmas. Four tender submissions were received and reviewed in early February. The tender has now been awarded to the winning contractor based on being the most economical advantageous tender.
Works are due to start on Monday 4th of March, with a completion date of June 2024. Works will include the upgrade of electrical and heating systems, refurbishment of existing toilets and kitchen facilities, creating of a meeting room space upstairs to create a multi - functional building for different user groups, plus other aesthetic improvements throughout the building.

Town & Village Renewal:

- Wicklow Town – South Quay connections to Main Street (Connectivity Project); Seating (at Scouts Hall) have been installed. Three ornate arches with lanterns are currently being fabricated for installation along the Doctor’s Steps. – 7 murals now complete. Installation of Fabricated ship to town hall gable complete. Installation of Heron sculpture at scouts den complete. ‘Mini’ murals around the town still ongoing. Lighting along mall and Market square elements to be completed by end of March.
- Newtown - Streetscape Enhancement Project works are complete.
New bins (mixture of compactor and larger big belly bins) have been installed in response to complaints on litter issues. Additional street furniture such as benches, bollards and planters have been erected to further enhance the appearance of Newtown. WMD is working with the Newtown Forum on finalising locations.

NTA Projects:

- Consultants still working on pedestrian and cycle improvement scheme, initial survey completed on the Marlton Rd and Rocky Rd, linking to Train Station on Station Road.

Additional MD projects:

- WCC have issued payments for the following connections. WMD has received MPRN’s to progress completion:
 - Laragh Pedestrian Crossing,
 - Moneystown Pedestrian Crossing,

Scheduling of ESB to energise this equipment is being progressed.

- Road markings progressing around the MD, lining at Killiskey cross roads has been carried completed, with road markings completed in some estates such as Rose hill and the

entrance to Springfield in Wicklow town. Disabled parking bays around the town have also been refreshed at certain locations.

- New ramps to be installed on the approach to the Greenhills/Convent Road Junction next week, in the interest of safety.
- Ramp to be installed on the Dunbur Road to reduce vehicle speeds in this area, with the re location of the pedestrian crossing at the Dunbur park junction to follow up in the coming weeks.
- Murrough Masterplan being worked on at present, with concept drawings completed, landscape architect required to detail up concept. Identification of existing services underway at present. Services have now been identified and tender documents are being finalised - expected to issue by end of February.
- Cliff walk signage installed, all documentation and proof of works has been sent back to Sports Ireland for review. Some small scale additional drainage measures have been completed here in Feb in response to previous poor weather conditions.
- Rowing Club toilets – Survey to be completed by an access management contractor by end of January, to enable public toilets to be restored at harbour area. Refurbishment works to toilets to be costed in coming weeks once survey works complete.
- Tender issued to contractors for tree surgeon work around the district, removal of hazardous trees, stumps etc. Most of this has now been completed. Arborist is reviewing further list of trees this week with a report expected back in due course.
- Surfacing works at Fishers Junction was completed last week by the Developer under the supervision of the MD staff. Paving to the footpath areas will be completed in the next week which improves the street scape to the entrance to Newtown. WMD have installed benches and planters to this area to enhance it even further.

MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS

- Hillview Estate- Is it possible to do a clean-up? District Engineer advised he is in talks with Theresa O'Brien and Sean Keane from the Housing Section and will keep the members posted.
- Brittas Bay footpath any update on timeframe- District Engineer advised that this project is with the Roads NTA team and will have to go through a Part 8.
- Laragh GAA club want to erect a fence between Beechwood estate.
- Dunbur Road pedestrian crossing to be put placed as close as possible to original spot.
- Timeframe for Mountain View pedestrian crossing- District Engineer advised that we are waiting on ESB to connect.
- Dominic's Road/ Summerhill can ramps be installed?
- R772 Ballinabarney Road, there is a huge dip in the road, can this be rectified- District Engineer advised he will follow up as work needs to be carried out at night and temperatures of the road are too low at the moment.
- Hedge cutting- Blackhill/ Rocky Road side hedge needs to be cut before 1st of March- District Engineer advised member's letters had been sent out to landowners.
- Murrough Master Plan- important to bring back to the Elected Members to discuss before going to the public.
- Rathnew to Glenealy footpath- Is there any ducting for public lighting?
- Annamoe to Laragh footpath- was an application ever made?
- Ballybeg to Glenealy, when driving over manhole covers there is a huge rattle- District Engineer advised the manholes are not sinking that the lids need to be replaced.
- AIB carpark requires resurfacing? District Engineer advised some pothole's had been repaired but he will have a further look at the carpark.
- The path on the Murrough- can some kind of hardcore be applied?
- Signage either side of Ballinahinch bends, speed coming towards bends.

- Dip in road outside Dominos in Rathnew needs attention.
- Street lights in Laragh are out.
- Accident on Greenhill road, ensure road is clean. District Engineer advised the speed limit is well within restrictions and noted drivers need to be more aware of the conditions.
- Update on Church Hill reversing the one way system- District Engineer advised he will revert back at a later date.

ITEM 4

Correspondence

None.

ITEM 5

Any Other Business

Leinster Fleadh 2024:

The District Manager Brian Gleeson confirmed that Wicklow County Council is willing to match the allocation provided by the Wicklow Municipal District discretionary fund. He proposed that €15,000 is provided from the 2024 Wicklow Municipal District Discretionary Fund and then the balance will be covered by the County Council.

It was proposed by Cllr John Snell proposed and seconded by Cllr Gail Dunne that €15,000 be provided to Wicklow CCÉ (Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann) regarding the Leinster Fleadh 2024.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 16.46 pm

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Date: _____