

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in Hollywood Community Centre, Hollywood on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021, at 11.00 am**

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

**In Attendance:** Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer  
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator  
Ms. Andrea Connolly, Assistant Staff Officer  
Mr. Colm Lavery, Director of Services, TWES

**Apologies:** Mr. Pat Byrne, District Engineer

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cronin opened the June ordinary meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District.

**Vote of Sympathy**

Cllr. Blake proposed a vote of sympathy to the Whitty family, Preban, Tinahely on the passing of Jim Whitty and extended sympathies to Gemma Whitty, Wicklow County Council. He also conveyed sympathies on behalf of Wicklow County Council to the people of the southern German city of Würzburg following a knife attack in which three girls lost their lives. Cllr. Glennon proposed a vote of sympathy to Pat Byrne and family on the passing of his uncle Jack Byrne and Cllr. O'Neill extended sympathies to Martin Keogh, GSS Blessington, on the recent passing of his sister Una Broe. All members wished to be associated with these votes of sympathy and condolences were conveyed to all the families.

- 1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**

Cllr. Blake proposed the confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and this was seconded by Cllr. Glennon.

**2. To receive an update on the priority list for Irish Water's Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme.**

Mr. Colm Lavery, Director of Services, joined the meeting via Zoom to update members on Irish Water's Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme 2020 to 2024. He advised members that correspondence had been received from Irish Water advising that €2.8 million was being made available to Wicklow County Council for the upgrade of water and waste water treatment plants in small towns and villages in order to support prospective growth. He continued that Irish Water have indicated that the waste water treatment plant in Aughrim project will go ahead at an estimated cost of three quarters of a million euro with more projects over the next year to be announced. He stated that Irish Water will have the final say on what projects will progress but they will include Tinahely, Rathdrum, Laragh and Dunlavin and it is hoped it will be announced in due course which projects will be funded. He added that the waste water treatment plant in Tinahely is a priority and will push this with Irish Water. Cllr. Mullen raised concerns that development in the Tinahely area has stopped due to water issues and stated that the upgrade of the waste water treatment plant needs to be prioritised. He noted that assurance had been given from Irish Water that both Tinahely and Dunlavin were top of the list for upgrades. He queried the timeframe on when other projects will be announced. Mr. Lavery advised that both Dunlavin and Tinahely are still a priority with Irish Water and stated that work has been ongoing trying to find an alternative source of water for the Dunlavin area although unsuccessful so far. Currently Irish Water are working on a connection to the Dublin water supply at Ballymore and to link Dunlavin by way of construction of a pipe. It is hoped this will be up and running by 2023. He added that Irish Water have prioritised the Aughrim plant as it is currently running over capacity and with planned construction of over 200 houses in the Aughrim area this will increase demand. The Tinahely plant is currently still operating under capacity and Mr. Lavery advised members that he expects the Tinahely upgrade to be the next project announced. Cllr. Blake queried if Irish Water could bundle the remaining projects together in order to entice once contractor to complete the works rather than get separate contracts for each project. He also queried if the

water plant in Shillelagh was on the list of planned projects. Mr. Lavery advised that Irish Water make the decision on how contracts are awarded and procured. He added that he would make the suggestion of bundling projects together as one contract at the next meeting but ultimately Irish Water would make that decision. He added that Shillelagh is listed at number seven on the priority list from Irish Water and other projects may also be brought forward. Cllr. Timmins noted that there has been no investment on water or sewerage plants in Stratford for a number of years and queried if this was a possibility. Mr. Lavery stated that money has been allocated for 2020 to 2024 and this funding will continue to deal with priorities but that this investment will not deal with every issue across the county and it is hoped that a subsequent programme will be put in place after 2024. Cllr. Cronin noted that she had been advised in January of this year that an announcement would be made at the end of June on the water issue in Dunlavin and expressed her disappointment that no announcement has been made so far. She queried if a representative from Irish Water could attend a future meeting to discuss the concerns raised and Mr. Lavery replied that he would make the request to Irish Water. Cllr. Blake thanked Mr. Lavery for his presentation and asked him to take on board his suggestion of bundling projects together to speed up the procurement process. Ms. Kilkenny, District Manager, advised members that a written report from TWES will be available for the next meeting in July.

**3. To receive an update on the proposed section 85 Agreement with Dublin City Council for the provision of Social Housing at Burgage More, Blessington, via a Public Private Partnership and also an update on the AHB units at Dunlavin.**

Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator, updated members on the proposed section 85 Agreement with Dublin City Council for the provision of social housing through a PPP bundle. He advised that the current layout of 106 units on the site at Burgage More in Blessington will be constructed and managed by a private company for twenty five years after which they will revert to Wicklow County Council. He added that there will be four local authorities involved and Dublin City Council will act as the lead local authority as this scheme will be a single contract. A section 85 agreement will be proposed at the next full WCC meeting to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> July and the part 8 proposal to be discussed at the next Baltinglass MD meeting in July. Ms. Kilkenny advised members that this was prior notice of the section 85 agreement with Dublin City Council which would be proposed at the next

WCC meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July for voting on. She added that this is a similar scheme to the Convent lands in Wicklow and Dublin City Council have taken the lead on this although Wicklow County Council will have full nomination rights. Cllr. Timmins queried which company would be constructing and managing the units and Ms. Kilkenny replied that it was an approved housing body. Cllr. O'Neill stated that these 32 acres of land were bought by Wicklow County Council at a cost of €11 million euro and this site was aimed at providing amenities in the area and can't just be given away to four local authorities. Ms. Kilkenny advised that the only reason there are four local authorities involved is because it is a group scheme and added that bundling a number of schemes together result in houses being built faster. She advised that part of the 32 acre site is zoned for housing and there is a separate master plan in place for the provision of amenities. She reassured members that all decisions will be made by Wicklow County Council and advised them to take a look at Convent grounds scheme in Wicklow which is also a bundle scheme. Cllr. Timmins raised concerns that this is council owned land being given to a housing body and that tenants can only buy after twenty five years. He queried if some kind of mechanism can be put in place to rectify this. Cllr. Cronin stated that members were not being given the opportunity to discuss this proposal and asked if it could be deferred. Cllr. Timmins stated it was unsatisfactory members would have to vote on this on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July and both Cllrs. Mullen and O'Neill agreed that this matter should be explained fully beforehand. Ms. Kilkenny advised that deferring this vote would delay this project until September and recommended a meeting with Declan Marnane to update members. Cllr. Glennon queried if Wicklow County Council will look after allocations and Ms. Kilkenny gave her assurance they would.

District Administrator, Liam Cullen, updated members on the housing scheme in Dunlavin and advised that this is a turnkey scheme purchased by Circle Housing and although subject to considerable delays due to water issues, which have now been resolved, a completion date of mid July is now expected. Cllr. Cronin welcomed this update and commented it was great news for tenants to get a move in date.

#### **4. To consider and adopt the Baltinglass Municipal District 2021 Schedule of Works.**

The Baltinglass Municipal District 2021 Schedule of Works had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting for their perusal. This motion was proposed by Cllr. Glennon

and seconded by Cllr. Mullen. Cllr. Timmins raised concerns that some items had been allocated lower budgets than other districts particularly Economic Development and Promotion and voiced his concerns that this could hamper development in west Wicklow.

## **5. Matters arising.**

Cllr. O'Neill raised concerns about the removal of the national flag from outside council buildings to make room for other flags. He commented that he had no issue with any flags but he does have an issue with the removal of the national flag and wants reassurance that this will not happen again. Cllr. Cronin advised that this issue had been discussed at the full council meeting in Wicklow and the explanation given that there were not enough flag poles. Cllr. O'Neill commented that the nation flag should not have been removed. Cllr. Glennon fully supported this comment and noted the national flag should have priority. Cllr. Mullen agreed and stated that there are protocols in relation to the flying of the national flag and suggested these should be sent to each district office.

## **6. Correspondence.**

Mr. Liam Cullen, advised members that an application had been received from Noah Donohue's family proposing a memorial tree be planted in the park in Shillelagh. Noah Donohue went missing from his home in Belfast on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020 and following a countywide search his body was found six days later on 27<sup>th</sup> June. Noah's grandfather has connections to Shillelagh. Cllr. Glennon proposed this motion with unanimous support from all members and Cllr. O'Neill seconded this.

Following a request from members at the May meeting for an update on correspondence to the Minister for Transport the District Administrator confirmed that an acknowledgement letter had been received from the Department of Transport but no confirmation on a request for a meeting. Cllr. O'Neill stated that this was not good enough as huge improvements were still needed on the N81. He suggested the development of a cycle lane in and out of the county which would improve safety and encourage tourism. Cllr. Timmins proposed replying to the Department of Transport requesting a response and Cllr. Cronin suggested a

letter from the full council rather than just the District may carry more weight. Cllr. Glennon proposed writing to the Minister again requesting an immediate response and added that the N81 is an issue that affects this side of the county. He agreed with Cllr. Timmins suggestion to respond to the Departments reply requesting again a meeting with the Minister for Transport.

Mr. Cullen advised members that funding had been received from the NTA Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Measures scheme for Market Square, Blessington of €95,000 and Tinahely Square of €14,000. Quotations are currently being sought from contractors for these works to include paving, planting and lighting.

#### **7. To consider Roads Reports (national and non-national roads).**

Both the non national roads report and the N81 progress report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Cllr. Mullen asked for an update on improvements on Kelly's Hill, Tinahely. Mr. Graham, Executive Engineer, advised that he is currently working on tender documents with a proposal to install a speed ramp on Kelly's Hill. Cllr. Glennon noted some concerns had been raised by Hollywood Tidy Towns recently and asked if these could be addressed. He also queried when the Safety Improvement works would commence on the Wicklow Gap road. Mr. Graham replied that no date has been confirmed yet but it is hoped works will commence during the summer months.

#### **8. Any other business.**

There being no other business the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Cronin, concluded the meeting.

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

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

