

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in the Blessington Civic Offices, Blessington on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 at 10.30am**

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

**In Attendance:** Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager (Via Zoom)  
Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer  
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator  
Ms. Aideen Russell, Assistant Staff Officer  
Ms. Caroline Fox, Administrative Officer, Community, Cultural & Social Development

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Mullen, opened the January meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District.

**Votes of Sympathy**

The members expressed votes of sympathy to all families who have recently lost loved ones, those mentioned were –

Belfast-based playwright Jo Egan, who died on the 24th December, 2022 (tragically) following an accident close to Baltinglass. (Cllr. Timmins)

Jamie Boud, formerly of Blessington, aged 21, who sadly passed on the 16th January 2023. (Cllr. O’Neill)

Michael Melia of Blessington, who sadly passed on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023. (Cllr. Glennon)

A minutes silence was observed.

## **1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

### Amendments

- In Attendance: Mr. Michael Flynn, ~~Senior Executive Engineer~~ should have read *Senior Engineer*.

Cllr. Cronin proposed the minutes of the December meeting and Cllr. Blake seconded them

## **2. Matters Arising**

### **OPW Site Survey**

Cllr. Timmins commented on the request for clarification, at the previous Municipal District Meeting, of the wording “zoned for employment” of lands in Baltinglass. Clarification was received that the lands were zoned as proposed and it is now clear from the legend attached to the map that this zoning does include the narrative Sports Centre which would include the option of a Sports Campus.

Cllr. O’Neill asked if there was any update from the OPW regarding the Lands at Dunlavin and he was informed by Ms. Kilkenny that no new information had been received.

A lengthy discussion followed and it is the general consensus of the Members that the lack of information coming from the OPW is not acceptable and is creating misinformation throughout the district regarding the provision of the modular homes. All agreed that clear, transparent communication is paramount moving forward.

Ms. Kilkenny assured the Members that as soon as the information is received by the Chief Executive of WCC it will be forwarded on to them.

Cllr. Timmins proposed that Baltinglass Municipal District write to the OPW outlining that the site selection process was flawed from the beginning. This motion was seconded by Cllr. Cronin. Cllr Timmins advised that he would contact the District Administrator with the proposed contents of the letter after which Mr Culle would be then draft and sent the letter to the Department.

### **Speed Limit Review**

Cllr. Blake reminded the Members that the final draft of the bye-laws will be issued in advance of the full council meeting in February and that any amendments should be submitted ASAP. He also reiterated the importance of the amendment to the speed limit on the Coolboy Road.

### **New Community Centre in Blessington**

Cllr. O'Neill requested that he be given an update at the next meeting regarding the opening of a new Community Centre in Blessington, he would like to know the location and owner of the premises being put forward and all details regarding funding applied for and granted for this project.

### **3. Blessington Greenway**

Ms Fox was welcomed to the Chamber and gave an update on the planning submission which still sits with An Bord Pleanála. Sadly no report has been received and there is no indication of when that will be.

Ms Fox stated that the main objective of attending the meeting was to establish a Blessington Greenway Working Group and fix a date for the first meeting. This was agreed by all Members and the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 was confirmed. The meeting will be held online at 8pm. It was agreed that all are welcome to join the Working Group and should be encouraged to participate in all stages of the process.

All Members welcomed the news that the website will be ready in February allowing members of the public to see photos and drone footage of the proposed route. Detailed maps will also be available.

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

Mr. Cullen advised that there was no further update on the RRDF Project or the further funding of same.

Works on the Town Park have commenced, some of which will need to be closed off to the public for health and safety reasons. The entire Baltinglass crew, 6-7 employees will be working solely on this project for the coming weeks.

The members thanked Mr. Graham for getting this project started and all agreed that he should aim to make the Park Project happen this year.

### **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:**

- Members welcomed the good news regarding The Bus Stop on the N81 and all thanked Mr. Byrne for all his work regarding same. Cllr. Glennon expressed his thanks to Deputy Stephen Matthews for his help and continued support.
- Members voiced their concerns regarding faulty street lighting. They requested that Mr. Graham continues to put pressure on the appropriate companies / departments to get repairs done ASAP and Mr. Byrne agreed to investigate the terms and conditions of the agreements in place regarding Street Lighting to see if there is anything that can be done to improve the service being provided.
- Cllr. Glennon requested that the Engineer looks at the resurfacing of the street in Hollywood.
- Cllr. Cronin requested that the broken traffic lights in Dunlavin be repaired.
- Cllr. Mullin requested that extra funding be found for the footpaths from Shillelagh to the Soccer Pitch before the summer.

### **6. Members Discretionary spending 2022 & 2023**

It was agreed by all that “wish lists” would be sent to both Engineers by email, as early in the year as possible, requesting works they would like to be carried out, allowing paper work, scheduling of projects etc. to take place in good time.

### **7. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence received.

### **9. Any other business**

- Mr. Cullen informed the Members that the CCTV in Blessington is almost complete and further details of an official launch of same will follow in due course.

- The official launch of the Sheep Dog Trials to be held in September 2023 will take place in February.
- Mr. Cullen advised the meeting that the friendship pact between Castle Maggiore and Blessington will be signed on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The Representatives attending are Cllr. Timmins, Cllr. Glennon and Mr. Cullen.
- Mr. Cullen informed the Members that there are two different awards schemes running at present and that application forms are available online or from the MD offices etc.:
  1. Community awards - small scale or once-off funding to support the groups' activities i.e. running costs Maximum grant of €500 - closing date for applications 4.00 p.m. on Friday 24th February 2023.
  2. Community Enhancement/supports grants - running costs for example energy costs/bills (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or other non-pay operating costs for example rental/lease costs, insurance bills. Groups will also be able to use the funding to carry out necessary repairs and improvements to their facilities, purchase equipment for example tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies and training equipment etc. Date 4.00 p.m. on Friday 31st March 2023.
- Mr. Cullen asked that the Members contact him in the coming weeks with nominees for the Baltinglass MD Achievement Awards.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

The next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting will be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

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

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

CATHAOIRLEACH

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

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

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