



**Wicklow County Council  
Chomhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin**

**ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON THE ZOOM PLATFORM ON THE**

**9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2022**

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

**Officials Present:** Ms. Helena Dennehy, A/District Manager  
Ms. Claire Lawless, District Administrator  
Ms. Avril Hill, District Engineer  
Ms. Helena Fallon, SE Housing  
Ms. Gillian Power, SEE Housing  
Ms. Theresa O'Brien, SEO Housing  
Ms. Sinéad Boddy, ASO

**Press :** Ms. Amanda Leeson WP

**Public:** None

**Item 1 : Votes of Sympathy.**

The members expressed votes of sympathy to all families who have recently lost loved ones, there have been a number of deaths over the last few weeks and a few known to all are –

Sean Fitzgerald, Martin Kavanagh, Agnes O'Brien, William Mates, Marie Browne, Margaret New, Ann Clare, Florence Myler.

A minutes silence was observed.

**Item 2 : Confirmation of Minutes from Ordinary Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

The Minutes of the Arklow Municipal District Ordinary Meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were proposed by Cllr Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr Bourke.

### **Item 3 : Matters Arising.**

Cllr Leonard confirmed that the Notice of Motion previously submitted on behalf of the Gaffney family has been reviewed and amended and is with the Law Agent for review – should be on the agenda for the next plenary meeting.

Claire Lawless DA stated that future meetings will follow the order of business as set out in the standing orders – a copy will be sent to all members.

### **Item 4 : Consideration of Reports and Recommendations.**

*To consider report In accordance with the provisions of PART XI, section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended and substituted) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2000 (as amended and substituted) for proposed 4 No. Group Housing Units at Avondale Heights, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow. (Report attached)*

The Members received a copy of the CE report on the proposed development and Helena Fallon SE shared a presentation on the development with the members in attendance. All submissions were noted and questions invited.

Cllr Murphy asked why 4 bed units were proposed – Helena Fallon SE replied that the families to be housed require this number of rooms.

Cllr Leonard expressed concern that some of the windows are overlooking and enquired if the finish for the grounds was to be grass or hard surface – trees could be planted elsewhere on the site and a half hedge half wall considered for the boundary depending on maintenance issues.

Helena Fallon SE confirmed that some of the items raised can be adapted in the detailed design phase of the project. The tenants do not want a lot of grass and expressed a preference for hard surface / gravel. It is intended to keep as many existing trees on the regional roadside – no appetite there to plant more trees on site. The walls fit well with existing boundaries along that road and are an asset to the area.

Cllr Bourke asked the team to keep in mind the issue of flooding at the entrance to the estate and to be aware of this when finishing off this phase.

Cllr Fitzgerald supported the proposal to close off the Kilcarra site once the residents moved – to be done as quickly as possible once all are housed.

Cllr Kennedy welcomed the Avondale Heights development and mentioned the excellent quality and finish of the build – boundary walls blend in – wonderful job done on both phases. Cllr Kennedy commented that the RDA have made a submission regarding the proposal and feels they would be best placed to know what's going on in the area and what is needed in relation car parking and green spaces. There needs to be some open space on that side of town and they are right, area would bring people together. Not opposed to the housing proposal just would be concerned with the location chosen – very tight.

Helena Fallon SE countered that the area is zoned for housing and not green space – there are a lot of towns with smaller areas and suggested that the site is already close enough to existing green

areas. Landscaping will be taken into account at the detailed design phase and bear in mind that the wishes of the tenants have been considered.

Cllr Annesley acknowledged the concerns of the RDA and noted that volume of traffic will increase and advised housing to proceed with caution. Also commented that the site layout does not look cluttered and a good job has been done.

Cllr Leonard asked that a condition be added to ensure that the Kilcarra site is planted as soon as possible. Helena Fallon SE confirmed that this could certainly be looked at and suggested absorbing the site back into the forest. Cllr Annesley suggested infilling the site and strengthening the road there – FRS waste could be used as infill – get rid of the dangerous bend in the road. Referred to a previous Notice of Motion and Cllr Murphy asked that this be sent on the District Manager for review.

The report was proposed by Cllr Leonard and seconded by Cllr Fitzgerald – the members voted and the report was passed with 5 votes for and 1 abstention.

#### **Item 5 : Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting.**

##### ***To discuss the Estate Development Grant Scheme for 2022.***

The estate grants have been advertised and the closing date for receipt of applications is the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 - €8200 for grants this year. Claire Lawless DA confirmed that the amount is increased and that the demand is also increasing.

##### ***District Engineers Report***

The programme of works for 2022 will be finalised once AMD have confirmation of funding received.

#### **Roads Programme**

##### **Regional Roads**

Resurfacing and line marking on R753 Aughrim to Ballinaclash provisionally confirmed to start week ending 11<sup>th</sup> February

##### **Footpath Schemes**

Rathdrum – Works are completed and retaining wall is installed. There is a small section where an Eir stay cable has to be moved. AMD are waiting on a reply from Eir. R747 Vale Rd – Extruded kerb will be replaced and then footpath will be completed.

##### **Local Improvement Scheme**

2 Schemes completed in January in Rathdrum and Arklow.

##### **Community Involvement Scheme**

Applications made for three schemes for 2022.

##### **Fáilte Ireland Outdoor Dining Area**

AMD are waiting on a licence from National Monuments Service for test trenches. AMD are currently preparing an application to the Community Monuments Fund to secure funding to restore the cemetery wall that has been exposed. Works would include some rebuilding, repointing and remove the concrete blocks in the windows to open up the space. Applications are due in at the end of the month.

## **NTA Schemes**

The 2022 allocations for Arklow have been confirmed as follows. Projects are being led by NTA team in WCC with input from AMD.

<b>Project Code</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
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. AMD met with Consultant and NTA to discuss and walk site.
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/21/0023	Safe Routes to Schools Programme	St. Johns NS SS Michael & Peters NS
WCC/22	Arklow South Cycle & Pedestrian Improvements	Cycle & Pedestrian facilities from Knockmore Roundabout towards Kish
WCC/22	Fernhill to Marian Villas Link	Footpath with Public lighting
WCC/22	Glenart Pedestrian Link	Pedestrian link between Woodlands and Glenart Drive

## **Bike Shelters**

The NTA team have received funding to provide covered bike shelters. Bike shelters are proposed for the following locations;

Arklow	St. Mary's Car Park (Main Street) Castle Park Car Park Castle Park – outside SS Michael's & Peter's NS South Beach, North Car Park Seaview Avenue, near the Leisure Centre
Rathdrum	The Square Memorial Park
Barndarrig	Northbound Bus Stop

### **St. Peter's Place, Playground**

Fencing has recently been installed around the playground in St. Peter's Place. We now have a seat, 2 bins and lock-up box (similar to the one at the skate park) with litter pickers and bags.

### **Roundabout at Carysfort**

A beehive by local business Irish Fairy Castles has been installed on the roundabout.

### **Housing Construction**

#### **Delany Park Phase 2**

The site consists of 47 houses, structurally all houses are completed with doors & windows in place, all external on-going, first fix M&E started, IW & ESB not connected to date. Revised programme indicates a finishing date of April 2022. Contractor delivered 37 units in December 2021 and remaining 10 end of February.

#### **Avondale Phase 2**

Construction work is continuing on the development of 20 new homes. The erection of timber kits and roof trusses continues without only 2 blocks left to complete. Progress is continuing on the blockwork outer leafs and the installation of windows and doors is due to commence mid-February.

#### **Sheehan Court (Old Fire Station)**

The project consists of a terrace of 7 no., 2bed houses, and is now fully approved by the DHLGH. Structurally building closed up, doors windows brickwork and first fixing all in place, the completion date is expected to be in July 2022.

### **Comments :**

Cllr Murphy welcomed the installation of bike stands and asked that the team keep Avoca, Redcross and Aughrim in mind for some. Avril Hill DE confirmed that funding was not there at the moment and will continue to try and source more funding for these initiatives.

Cllr Leonard congratulated the team on the funding allocation. She asked that the signage on the roundabout where the beehive has been installed could be lowered – obscuring the view of the beehive. Avril Hill replied that the signs are at a required standard height. Cllr Leonard also asked that the DE pass on to the relevant person an issue about the condition of the entrance to Delany Park – road is always dirty and a tarmacked entrance would help – drains are getting clogged.

Cllr Fitzgerald welcomed the footpath works for Marian Villas and asked that AMD follow up on getting the public lighting on the Vale Road connected – fees have been paid months ago. Avril Hill DE said she would follow up on this.

Cllr Bourke complimented the DE on the comprehensive report and asked for input, if available, to the Decarbonisation for Arklow project – anything she could do would be great. Avril Hill DE confirmed that AMD would help implementation where possible.

The three CIS schemes were confirmed.

Helena Dennehy A/DM confirmed that WCC is putting pressure on to get the public lights connected – Cllr Fitzgerald acknowledged that the PL team is doing a great job, just frustrated that the fee has been paid months ago and the work is still not done.

Cllr Kennedy commented on the drop in funding for roads – Helena Dennehy A/DM confirmed that the roads allocation for WCC has not been received yet - only NTA and TII allocations in to date. Cllr Kennedy asked if there was a start date for the works at Saville’s Cross – Avril Hill DE said she would find out.

***To discuss the spending of Festival Funding for 2022.***

The allocation for festival funding this year is €18,500 – It was agreed that committees organising St. Patricks Day parades could be invited to apply for funding for the moment.

***To discuss Discretionary Budget for 2022***

The members received a document outlining the budget proposals.

Cllr Leonard queried the process for allocating the discretionary budget – Cllr Kennedy said that the proposed list would be reviewed and then agreed. Cllr Leonard stated that the proposals seemed to be mostly for Arklow – should be shared equally across the district, how do we ensure that this happens. She also commented that the proposal for €5000 on a lighting assessment for the Wexford Rd would be better spent on actual lights. Avril Hill DE confirmed that the public lighting on the Wexford Road has been deemed adequate and the report is available to support this and that is why an assessment was suggested rather than an installation. Cllr Murphy agreed that another assessment would be a waste of funding.

The members discussed all proposals and Helena Dennehy A/DM re-iterated that the members should prioritise what is already on the list. Cllr Leonard asked if it needed to be agreed today and Claire Lawless DA confirmed that the budget needs to be agreed for the next meeting. Cllr Murphy asked the members to refine the list and come back to the DE by the end of next week – all agreed with this proposal.

**Item 6 : Notice of Motions.**

In the name of Cllr. Peir Leonard - *“That AMD set up a committee to start a local produce/farmers market in Arklow Town Centre for the summer of 2022 and request WCC to put in place the necessary supports and resources to help facilitate this”*. (Received on 8th January 2022)

The Notice of Motion was seconded by Cllr Annesley. Claire Lawless DA confirmed that AMD are not in a position to facilitate this and the proposal has been submitted to WCC. Helena Dennehy A/DM advised the members that designating any casual trading area could take at least 6-8 months to process. Cllr Leonard asked if a letter of support could issue from AMD – Cllr Bourke stated that the right to hold markets may already exist and documentary evidence could be found. Local producers can sell own produce without the licence. The need for establishing trading areas was further discussed.

In the name of Cllr Peir Leonard - *“That in the interest of equality and fairness the AMD councillors vote on a new system to be put in place for future elected representatives to share the Chair of the MD similar to the system widely used such as in Greystones MD where the chair is picked by lotto with the last year being split between the two remaining elected representatives”*. (Received on 8th January 2022)

The NoM was seconded by Cllr Annesley. Cllr Leonard added that this method would be straightforward for the members, 6 for 5 annual terms, no one should feel they are on the outside. Cllr Fitzgerald questioned the statement for GMD and also stated that this was not usual order of business. Cllr Murphy asked if this was to be decided by the members or is there a set protocol. Helena Dennehy A/DM stated that this is an item could be dealt with at the AGM – that is the process – can split over five years and this is decided at the first meeting of the 5 year term.

Cllr Annesley stated that it leaves a sour taste when someone is left out and does not want animosity between members – glad it is up for discussion. Cllr Bourke supported the democratic vote process and all have learned the hard way – by building bridges and forming relationships the position is earned and that is the way business is done. Cllr Kennedy stated that Cllr Fitzgerald and Cllr Bourke have outlined the process and it is agreed at the beginning of the AGM. Cllr Leonard agreed to disagree – all are elected and being a minority should not exclude any member. This should change for the future when anyone is brave enough to go forward for election. This is something the Chair can steer and would create a better environment and better for health of all in general. This should not take from the competitive element but the minority vote should be considered. Cllr Kennedy asked for referral to the Standing Orders – Claire Lawless DA said it would be checked.

All agreed for this to be further discussed at the next meeting.

#### **Item 7 : Correspondence**

No correspondence received.

#### **Item 8 : Any Other Business**

Cllr Fitzgerald raised the issue of shortage of parking on Main St – will the planters be moved to facilitate parking? Avril Hill DE agreed to review this.

Cllr Kennedy asked if an update on access to the North Beach had been circulated – Avril Hill DE confirmed that an email had been sent and suggested that the members check their spam folders.

Cllr Bourke asked that AMD arrange for the removal of a dead animal from the Vale Road.

The members discussed the current works on the Parade Ground Upgrade and suggested further Rates waiver for affected businesses and if parking areas could be extended for the duration of the works. Cllr Murphy confirmed that all issues raised would go to the team and admitted that it was going better than expected – if any updates are received they can be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting concluded.

**Minutes confirmed at the Arklow Municipal District Council Meeting held on Wednesday the 09<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

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

**Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District.**

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

**Ms. Claire Lawless, District Administrator, Arklow Municipal District**