

MINUTES OF MARCH MONTHLY MEETING OF GREYSTONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT HELD IN THE CIVIC OFFICES, MILL ROAD, GREYSTONES, CO. WICKLOW ON TUESDAY 26TH MARCH 2024 AT 7.30 P.M.

Present: Councillor S. Stokes, Cathaoirleach
Councillors M. Barry, T. Fortune, D. Mitchell, L. Scott & G. Walsh

Also Present: Mr. M. Nicholson, Greystones Municipal District Manager
Mr. R. O'Hanlon, Greystones Municipal District Engineer
Ms. T. Kearns, Greystones Municipal District Administrator
Ms. K. Coughlan, Greystones Municipal District

At the outset, The Cathaoirleach, Councillor S. Stokes, congratulated Deputy Simon Harris on his election as leader of the Fine Gael party and his imminent appointment as Taoiseach and he suggested that a letter of congratulations be sent to him. This was seconded by Councillor T. Fortune and agreed.

Councillor D. Mitchell proposed and supported by Councillor L. Scott, that standing orders be suspended to allow for discussion on the recently introduced S605 of the Planning and Development Bill presently going through the Oireachtas and calling for it to be cancelled as it would allow developments to get planning permission even if population targets were exceeded. It was agreed to discuss this matter after item 6 on the agenda.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

A copy of the draft minutes of the February meeting had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting.

Councillor M. Barry requested that the sentence "Councillor Barry suggested that Irish Rail be requested to run DART or diesel trains on sections of the rail line not affected by works on particular weekends" be inserted before the last sentence on item two of correspondence in the minutes and this was agreed.

Councillor L. Scott requested that the word 'Gaelscoil' be replaced with the word 'school' in the last sentence of paragraph two under the Suspension of Standing Orders item in the minutes and that the words 'with a Gaelscoil mentioned by one member' be included at the end of that sentence. This was agreed.

It was then proposed by Councillor G. Walsh seconded by Councillor D. Mitchell and agreed that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 27th February, 2024, as amended, be confirmed and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

2. 2024 ESTATE DEVELOPMENT FUNDING SCHEME

A report outlining details of the applications received and the criteria used for allocating grants under the 2024 Estate Development Funding Scheme had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting, together with a list of the proposed grants for each qualifying estate.

The District Administrator informed the members that the money was allocated relative to the number of social houses in each estate, excluding HAP or RAS properties. She stated that the scheme would be reviewed going forward as the number of estates applying had increased and some estates only had a small number of social houses.

Members stated that these grants recognised the work done by Residents Associations and agreed that the grants as recommended be approved.

3. REPORT FROM DISTRICT ENGINEER

A report from the District Engineer had been circulated to the members in advance of the meeting and he answered any queries from the members in relation to same.

In relation to the Cliff Walk, the District Engineer stated that discussions were ongoing with the four land-owners to try to get the walk re-opened as soon as possible and the District Manager stated that a CPO was being prepared as a back-up in case the discussions did not go to plan. He pointed out that the original path had eroded away and a new path would need to be provided. He pointed out that there were serious erosion problems on the Bray side of the walk too that had to be dealt with.

The District Engineer stated that work was continuing on the proposed Boules facility at Burnaby Park to be provided under the Community Recognition Scheme and he stated that this would be different to the bowling facility already there. He pointed out that road markings in the area would be re-instated when staff/ resources allowed and he informed the members that new solar-powered bins for the district were on order. He pointed out that improvement works on the Sea Road in Kilcoole would be part of the Pathfinder project and he stated that there was an ESB fault on the public lights at the Black Walk that was delaying their repair. He pointed out that he was still awaiting a quote for the public lighting at the Pigs Hollow and that he would look at having the chess table in Burnaby Park cleaned. He informed the members that there was an ongoing issue with equipment at the south beach playground and any repairs could only be carried out in-house as there was no funding provided for replacement of equipment that had a limited lifespan.

Members thanked the District Engineer for works carried out in the district but were critical of the delays in getting the Chapel Road scheme finalized as it was ongoing for many years. They also spoke about the need to get the Cliff Walk re-opened as soon as possible as it was a very important tourist attraction.

4. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Motion in the name of Councillor D. Mitchell:

"The Breeches in Newcastle should be monitored and cleared by the Council using the methodology and funding agreed with the OPW to reduce the likelihood of flooding."

This motion was seconded by Councillor G. Walsh.

Councillor D. Mitchell enquired about who was responsible for the Breeches and what was to be done there. He pointed out that the owner of the nearby airfield had carried out works to prevent flooding in the past but was no longer doing so and that drainage works had been carried out by landowners. He pointed out that water was coming in to the Breeches at high tide and regularly flooded the public areas.

Councillor T. Fortune stated that he was very familiar with the issues at this location and he pointed out that part of the problem was that four separate authorities – the Uplands Council, Irish Rail, Wicklow County Council and the Office of Public Works – had an interest in this but none of them took overall responsibility.

He stated that this was a huge concern for local householders too.

Following further discussion it was agreed to request that a copy of the OPW report be circulated to the members.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

1. The District Administrator reminded the members that the closing date for nominations for the 2024 Greystones People of the Year Awards was Thursday 28th March 2024. She stated that the Awards Dinner would be held in Greystones Golf Club on Thursday 25th April 2024.
2. The District Administrator informed the members that the winners of the various categories in the 2024 St. Patrick's Day Parade would be presented with their trophies on Wednesday 27th March 2024 in the Civic Offices
3. The District Administrator informed the members of a request from Councillor T. Fortune for funding up to the sum of €3,000 towards the cost of organising the annual Irish / Goa Community Festival event. Following discussion it was agreed to seek details of the Committee's income and expenditure for the festival and to agree funding up to €3,000 as required.
4. The District Administrator referred to a recent request from the town of Bagnacavallo in Italy to twin with Greystones, a copy of which had been circulated to the members. Following discussion it was agreed to hold off on any further twinning arrangements until such time as Wicklow County Council adopted its new twinning policy.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. In response to a query from Councillor L. Scott, the District Engineer stated that work was progressing through the Arts Office on the preparation of the Part 8 process for the provision of an Outdoor Artistic Space at La Touche Road car park.
2. Councillor L. Scott referred to a recent motion requesting that representatives from the Wicklow County Council Housing Section attend a meeting of GMD to discuss the issues at the Farrankelly Close housing estate. She requested again that representatives be asked to attend.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Councillor D. Mitchell expressed concern about the recently introduced S605 of the Planning and Development Bill currently going through the Houses of the Oireachtas. He called for this to be cancelled as it would allow developments to get planning permission even if the population targets for towns were exceeded. He pointed out that this would be relevant to the Greystones district mentioning the Cairn site at Blacklion as an example and he stated that if this was passed it would lead to more development in the area without any extra infrastructure or amenities.

This was supported by Councillor L. Scott who stated that it would contravene the democratically agreed County Development Plan for the area. She too requested that a letter be sent to the Minister and she pointed out that the 2028 population targets for the area had already been exceeded.

Following discussion it was agreed that a letter be sent to the Minister requesting that the proposed amendments to the Planning and Development Bill be dropped and that the letter be copied to Deputy Stephen Matthews.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING.

SIGNED: Stephen Stokes CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: J Keon DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

DATED THIS: 30TH DAY OF APRIL 2024