

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in Blessington Civic Offices on 26th June 2023 at 10.30am

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

In Attendance: Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator
Ms. Aileen Russell, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies: Ms. Breege Kilkenny, District Manager
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer

Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP),

Ms. Deirdre Whitfield via Zoom

Cllr. O’Neill was excused from the meeting at 12:05pm

Cathaoirleach Edward Timmins opened the June meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District and welcomed all present. He asked The Members to be mindful of the time during the meeting as some had to be in County Buildings at 2pm for SPC meetings.

1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 22nd May 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cronin, seconded by Cllr. Mullen and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 22nd May 2023.

2. Matters Arising – None.

3. Update on the Local Economic & Community Plan (Via Zoom)

Ms. Deirdre Whitfield joined the meeting via zoom to give a presentation / explanation on the Final Draft of the LECP, a 6 year plan, split into two parts. The first being the LECP 2023 – 2029 Framework Document which was distributed to all The Members prior to the meeting. Sadly the zoom connection wasn't working properly and the communication between The Chamber and Ms. Whitfield was quite poor for the Q&A session. It was agreed by all that there was a large amount of detail within the document which needed to be discussed and a date was set to meet with Ms. Whitfield to discuss it further. The date agreed was 24th July 2023, time to be confirmed.

4. Update on Baltinglass RRDF

Mr. Byrne distributed a document showing changes to the plan, now divided into three sections and a breakdown of the difference in materials to be used for the footpaths, kerbing etc. Mr. Byrne informed The Members that Mr. Flynn is on board in conjunction with Mr. Cullen in pushing all parties to keep progressing the project. Mr. Byrne is hopeful that the tender will be ready around the 21st of July 2023 and plans to be on site in November. The works are expected to last nine to ten months to complete.

Questions & Answers

- Cllr. Timmins asked is there any way the dates can be brought forward.
 - Mr. Byrne said that everything is being done to ensure the project is being progressed as fast as possible.
- Cllr. O'Neill expressed his concerns with the new material being proposed for the path and felt that if Wicklow Granite cannot be used for paving due to cost, that it be used in smaller elements in the project.
 - All agreed that this could be looked at.
- Cllr. Glennon said that if it takes until July 21st to get the tender right, so be it. He agreed that he would like to see one or two pieces of Wicklow Granite used in the project but believes we should drive the project on as best we can within budget.
- Cllr. Cronin thanked Mr. Byrne, Mr. Cullen and Mr. Flynn for all their hard work on the RRDF to date, saying it was great to see the project progressing.
- Cllr. O'Neill raised concerns about how Blessington RRDF funding is due to be spent. Mr. Cullen advised that the funding will be spent as per applied for and granted under the RRDF Scheme.
- Cllr. Timmins brought up the subject of the Courthouse and was informed by Mr. Cullen that he was in contact with Mr. Brendan Martin, Chief Librarian, and will be discussing getting the Courthouse work done in conjunction with the RRDF.

5. To consider Roads Reports (national and non-national roads)

The District Engineer 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:

- Cllr. Glennon thanked Mr. Byrne for all the work to date and requested that the Park and Ride be kept on the front burner. He said that the new N81 was shelved but that it needs to be a priority and not forgotten. Cllr. Glennon enquired about the reduced speed limit at Hearn's Cross and was informed by Mr. Byrne that the speed limit had been reduced since June 2023, but that we are awaiting delivery of signage.
- Cllr. O'Neill thanked Mr. Byrne for his report and asked him about the Cairn Homes Housing Development off the Inner Relief Road. Mr. Byrne informed him that discussions are ongoing between WCC and the Developers.
- Cllr. Cronin enquired about finding extra funding for getting white lining done once the roads resurfacing maintenance was completed. He was informed by Mr. Byrne that he will review all required white lining, however white lines will not be done on roads 5.5m or less.
- Cllr. Timmins was informed that one of the damaged signs at the Sally Gap had been replaced. Cllr. Timmins had requested the new signs at previous meetings.

6. To consider and adopt Baltinglass MD Festival Funding allocation for 2023.

Mr. Cullen informed The Members that the district had received an increase of €6,000.00 in funding this year. The district now has a total of €20,000.00 to be allocated for festivals and Christmas lighting. Mr. Cullen recommended that €13,000.00 be allocated for Christmas Lighting and €7,000.00 for Festival Funding. A spreadsheet of the monies sought and funding allocations had been circulated to The Members prior to the meeting for their perusal. The Members discussed the details on the spreadsheet and agreed to increase two of the amounts by €500.00. The names of the two applicants which were increased were Music Under the Mountains Festival and Coollattin Canadian Connection (7 week festival of events).

It was proposed by Cllr. Glennon, seconded by Cllr. Mullen and unanimously agreed by all Councillors present to adopt The Baltinglass Municipal District Festival Funding allocation for 2023.

- Cllr. Timmins recommended that proper procedures are adhered to at all times with regards to allocations of public funding.

7. Correspondence

- Mr. Cullen advised that correspondence was received from The Department of Defence requesting that they take under their control a number of roads in the Glen of Imaal area. These roads are currently in a bad state of repair due to the constant use of heavy army vehicles. A discussion took place regarding this matter and the Members unanimously agreed that the roads should remain in Wicklow County Council's charge. The Members recommended that Wicklow County Council contact the Department of Defence and strongly request that they make a sizeable contribution to the cost of repairs as most of the damage has been caused by the use of their vehicles.
- Correspondence was received from Castel Maggiore Municipal District advising that they intend visiting Blessington between the 18th & 22nd July, 2023.

9. Any other business - None

10. Date of next meeting

The next Baltinglass Municipal District meeting will be held on the 24th June 2023.

There being no other business, Cllr. Timmins, concluded the meeting.

Signed: _____

CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____