

## **MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING**

**HELD IN DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL**

**MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 @ 15.00pm**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Irene Winters, Cllr Shay Cullen, Cllr Gail Dunne, Cllr Mary Kavanagh, Cllr John Snell, Cllr Paul O'Brien

**In Attendance:** District Manager, Brian Gleeson  
District Engineer, Pat Clarke  
District Administrator, Georgina Franey  
Róisín Carroll, Assistant Staff Officer  
Wicklow People, Myles Buchanan

Cathaoirleach Irene Winters opened the meeting at 15.02 p.m.

### **ITEM 1**

#### **Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 25th September 2023.**

It was proposed by Councillor Gail Dunne, seconded by Councillor Paul O'Brien and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wicklow Municipal District Monthly Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

### **ITEM 2**

#### **Consideration: Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal Districts year ending 2023**

The report of the Chief Executive on the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal Districts of Wicklow County Council for the financial year ending 31st December 2024 had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting. The Draft Budgetary Plan had been prepared in accordance with Section 102 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 58 of the Local Government (LG) Reform Act 2014.

District Manager Brian Gleeson presented the Budgetary Plan to the members and advised that it is part of the Draft Local Authority Budget which goes for consideration at the Annual Budget Meeting scheduled for the 27th November.

The General Municipal Allocation for Wicklow Municipal District €265,000.00

### **MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS:**

- Members discussed the breakdown of figures.
- Members noted a significant difference between Arklow and Wicklow MD's roundabout sponsorship. It was suggested that expressions of interest be sought in relation to the scheme.

It was proposed by Cllr Shay Cullen and seconded by Cllr Paul O'Brien and unanimously agreed to adopt the Draft Budgetary Plan for Wicklow Municipal District.

### **ITEM 3**

#### **Update on the Discretionary Fund**

A report on the Discretionary fund expenditure for 2023 was issued to the Members prior to the meeting.

#### **MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS:**

- Cathaoirleach Irene Winters asked members to email the District Engineer and District Administrator their ideas of projects before the next meeting to ensure that the District Engineer can examine the feasibility of projects.
- The District Manager informed the Members that they may need to consider additional tendering costs (20-30% increase).
- Cllr. Paul O'Brien queried if the Christmas lights community groups and Wicklow Chamber of Commerce had received payment for the Christmas Lights – the District Administrator advised that these payments have been processed.
- Footpath to the rear of Veba - request to fill in the potholes/ upgrade footpath.
- Nuns Cross footpaths – the District Engineer advised that there is a possibility of NTA funding.
- Can projects be submitted under the Safe Route to Schools scheme – the District Engineer advised members to bring forward ideas and he will send them to the NTA.
- Members noted 5 no. projects were under budget.
- Was Kilmullen Traffic Calming project funded by discretionary or grant funding – the District Manager will examine and revert to the Members.

### **ITEM 5**

#### **District Engineers Report**

Updates were provided by District Engineer Pat Clarke as follows:

#### **Housing:**

##### **❖ Relets/Prelets**

- 5no. houses new relets handed to WMD for refurbishment works.
- 8no. houses being worked on, through WCC Housing Framework.
- 3no. houses returned to Housing Department for allocation.
- 3no. Fire Damaged Units. House and site clearance work has commenced.

##### **❖ Maintenance and operations**

- On-going repairs and maintenance being progressed as required on housing stock within the WMD.
- 1 DPG complete and 1 DPG underway.

## DTTAS Roads Programme:

### ❖ Drainage

- Generally works on verge drains, gullies and road crossings to outlets are currently ongoing throughout the MD.
- Works completed at Three Mile Water with additional road crossing to capture water on east side of the road.
- Works almost complete on R755 Wicklow Gap Road to install 450mm diameter pipes to both remove surface water from the road and increase the width of the road in an extremely narrow section. Verge inlet maintenance on Wicklow Gap complete.
- Works on verge drains have begun on Callowhill, installation of pipes may be required at certain locations depending on outfalls. Patching of road to follow.
- Installation of drainage pipes and gabions along the Ballyhara Road to repair undermining of road by stream.
- Programme for cleaning of gullies has started within the Wicklow MD. Drain surveys are being carried out on problem areas as required on an ongoing basis.
- Wicklow MD working closely with our WCC Uisce Eireann staff to deal with issues on the combined network.

### ❖ Restoration Maintenance

- The Countywide Restoration Maintenance started in the Wicklow MD on the 12th June, and it continued around the County, finishing up on the 9th August in WMD.
- Post works sweeping has been on completed works sites.

Below are list of works completed in 2023:

Location	Length of Works	Completed to Date
Ballymachara – Ballycullen, L5095	2.5km	Completed
Tomdarragh Lane	1.0km	Completed
Kilpoole- Maheramore R750	1.8km	Completed
Raheenmore, Blainroe Upper, L1102	2.0km	Completed
Carrigower- Easthill L1039	4.0km	Completed
Garryduff, L6068	8.0km	Completed
Wicklow Gap, Brockagh, R756	2.5km	Completed
Djouce – Sallys bridge, R755	2.5km	Completed
Annamoe- Laragh R755	1.0km	Completed
Magheramore- Three Mile Water	1.25km	Completed
Togher Beg/ Vartry	1.0km	Completed

### ❖ Local Improvement Schemes (LIS)

Wicklow received funding for two Local Improvement Schemes in Round 1 and an additional scheme in Round 2. The LIS in Croneybyrne is complete, the LIS in Laragh is ongoing and the final LIS in Carrigower to be completed by a contractor in mid-November.

## ❖ Restoration Improvement

Tenders on Restoration Improvement works received in June/July. Due to additional funding further works have been tendered. Works will include a variety of techniques depending on classification and condition of Road.

Working with various contractors in scheduling works into their programmes. Weather conditions have affected all contractors' programmes this season.

Advance works such as drainage and verge widening works has been completed on most RI Roads with a mixture of MD staff and sub contractors. RI project to date. Main list of RI projects below.

To note the main surfacing project, Slaughter Hill, in this year's Restoration Programme is now completed with involved extensive edge widening, drainage works, surfacing and road markings. Signage will be erected for as a final safety measure.

Below is a list of main works for 2023:

Location	Length of Works	Completed to Date
Raheenmore L1102	2.0Km	Completed
Kilbride L5659	2.3Km	Completed
Cloghoge R115	2.1Km	Completed
Carrigower Quarry L1039-38	0.100Km	Completed
Monalin- Kilmurry R765	1.0Km	Completed
Rathnew Old Village L5121	0.250Km	Completed
Abbey Street R750	0.150Km	Contractor appointed, delayed due to poor weather
Carrigower- Easthill L1039	0.400Km	Completed
Claramore L6586	1.2km	Contractor appointed, works programmed for first week in Nov.
Glenwood to Moneystown Hill L6088	2.3km	Completed
R772 Ashford (two sections)	1.3km	Works out for tender

## ❖ Safety Improvement Projects

- Improvement works carried out at Powers Avenue junction on R755, to improve sight-lines. Resurfacing to take place to improve surface and to improve vertical alignment.
- Vehicle Activated Signage installed in advance of Djouce Crossroads on the R755, for to warn drivers of crossroads (Discretionary project).
- Vehicle Activated Signage completed at Railway Bridge area of Glenealy on R752.
- Pedestrian Crossing to be installed at Mountainview in Newtownmountkennedy in the interest of safety for pedestrians.

- Drop kerb and tactile complete at school at Newtownmountkennedy school to provide accessibility to all.
- Upgrade of crossing point at St Laurence's school for safety reasons over mid-term break.
- Upgrade of Road markings on R755/ R756 between Wicklow Gap and Djouce.

#### ❖ **WCC Projects**

- Brittas Bay footpath; commencement date was pushed back to the end of the summer season due to the increased traffic volumes in this area. Hedge cutting of verge area completed, so survey works can be completed as part of design process.
- Bus stop shelters with real time information erected in Ashford at old Garda station and at GAA pitch. To supplement these stops a bike shelter was to be installed at GAA pitch but due to a gas main this shelter has been put on hold at the moment.
- Bike shelters erected at Glendalough Upper Car Park, Newtown Bus stop opposite the Town house pub, and at Rathnew Inbound Bus stop.
- Erection of Speed limit signs have commenced around the Wicklow MD some weeks ago, with a completion date within the next week for all signage.

### **Fáilte Ireland:**

#### ❖ **Abbey Grounds**

- Project continuing with Architect/ Structural Engineer and a Quantity surveyor working on tender package for the Coach House area at present, works to be put out to tender in coming weeks.
- Detailed designs still progressing for Amphitheatre seating and performance area.
- Fire certs and Disability Access drawings completed.
- Stripping back and cleaning of old stone bridge linking Abbey Street Car Park has been completed.
- Initial works on tree trimming and scrub removal has taken place to enhance the Abbey and the grounds itself. Material finishes being worked through at present on certain elements of the design.
- Connection agreements with Utility providers are being progressed also.
- A detailed archaeological survey of the existing ruins to be completed.

### **Community Recognition Fund/Outdoor Recreation:**

- Brittas Bay Blueway funding for accessibility works; works have commenced on upgrade to toilet facilities. The upgrade to also include a disabled toilet, improved water storage and improvement of security facilities.
- Details progressing on signage for Brittas Bay in conjunction with the Heritage Officer. Signage has been ordered but is awaiting final sign off from Structural Engineer.
- A proposal for outdoor gym equipment around Riverwalk/Murrough Area is being progressed at present, with a tender documentation to be published at end of October.
- Technical team working on tender package to upgrade Assembly hall facilities. Tender to be issued to contractors by mid-November. Works to clean up at back of building have been completed.
- Repairs to Handball alley to be progressed with specialist contractor through the Community Recognition Fund.

## **Town & Village Renewal:**

- Wicklow Town – South Quay connections to Main Street (Connectivity Project); stakeholder consultations are ongoing, with artist selection complete. Advance works such as cleaning buildings and plaster works have commenced and continue ahead of each element of work. Three Murals are now complete with a further three murals commencing during October and November. Decorative lighting (on lanes) and seating (at Scouts Hall) are currently being procured. Three ornate arches with lanterns are currently being fabricated for installation along the Doctor's Steps.
- Newtown - Streetscape Enhancement Project works have begun, with the cleaning down of buildings. Weather is not favourable at present for painting but Contractor will proceed on the next dry day.

### **❖ NTA Projects**

- Consultants still working on pedestrian and cycle improvement scheme, initial survey completed on the Marlton Rd and Rocky Rd, linking to Train Station on Station Road.

## **Additional MD projects:**

- Tenders awarded for all outstanding repairs at the Murrough playground and skate park and also for all repairs at the Newtownmountkennedy playground. Works are almost complete at the Murrough, except for painting. This has been delayed due to weather conditions.
- Applications submitted to ESB for power supplies to:
  - Laragh Pedestrian Crossing,
  - Moneystown Pedestrian Crossing,
  - Annamoe Pedestrian Crossing (part of Town and Village Scheme),
  - Annamoe additional Public lighting on bridge and street (part of Town and Village Scheme).

WCC have issued payments. Scheduling of ESB to energise equipment as soon as possible is being progressed.

- Road markings progressing around the MD, with yellow boxes being repainted in Wicklow town centre at certain locations.
- Murrough Masterplan being worked on at present, with concept drawings completed, internal meeting to be held next week, landscape architect required to detail up concept.

## **MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS**

- Members welcomed the Blueway and toilets in Brittas Bay.
- Brittas Bay Footpath- the District Engineer advised this is a NTA project and the MW cut back the hedges. He advised that a Part 8 will be required.
- Cllr. Gail Dunne enquired about the safety audit in relation to the One Way System. He raised concerns over the one way system at Church Hill causing backlogs for traffic entering the town. The District Engineer advised that the safety audit report in relation to the Main Street one way system should be ready in the coming weeks, while Church Hill will be reviewed separately as it is a standalone project.
- Concerns over potholes and surface water on Callow Hill and surface water on Ballyduff Hill.

- Ramps were not reinstalled at Convent Road and there is a safety concern especially for the school- the District Engineer will review.
- Concern was raised in relation to maintenance and the cost of same for walkways between housing estates (e.g. Brooklands and Springfield estates). The District Engineer advised the Members that they can make a formal submission to the Planning Authority in relation to walkways between estates. The District Manager added that he will relay this feedback to the Planning Section.
- What is the Council's policy in relation to trees- The District Engineer advised that trees on public spaces only are examined and assistance will be sought from an arborist to review.
- Church Hill one ramp with lack of signage- the District Engineer suggested this could be a discretionary project as it is "shovel ready".
- Speed limit signs for L113 are needed – the District Engineer advised that this is under Arklow MD's remit.
- Has the possibility of a pedestrian crossing at the Parochial Hall playschool been examined?
- Is it possible to have a bus shelter across from the Grand Hotel and on Hawkstown Road – the District Engineer stated that TII provide same and he will contact them to see if this is a possibility.
- Permanent toilets on the Seafront and Murrough are required.
- Is it possible to examine an urn or columbarium wall for Rathnew Cemetary. The District Engineer stated that he will raise the matter and the funding of same with the Environment Section.
- The Members thanked and congratulated the Wicklow Town Team and the MD staff on the success on the murals project, the public feedback was very positive. Cllr. John Snell commended David Porter for his work as Secretary of the Wicklow Town Team for 6 years and he welcomed the District Administrator, Georgina Franey who has taken up the role.
- Cllr. Shay Cullen requested a statement to go out to the public in regard to hedge cutting. He suggested using the IFA and farmers groups to extend the message. The District Engineer commented that it is the Landowners responsibility to cut hedges on privately owned land. WMD does not have the resources to carry out these works. The District Manager suggested a Wicklow People and farmers journal notice as well as speaking to people individually to inform them of their own responsibilities.
- The Members noted that the MD staff were prepared for Storm Babet. They thanked the outdoor crews for their hard work. It was requested that in future sandbags be provided at strategic locations for members of the public. It was noted that some locations are having reoccurring issues with flooding i.e. Bond Street and Strand Street with no defensive walls in place- the District Engineer informed members that he attends swat team meetings in advance of bad weather and he will talk to the flood team regarding Bond Street and will review flood walls with the environment section.
- Members discussed concerns over the coastal erosion as parts of the Murrough were washed away during Storm Babet. The District Engineer advised that the project is at a planning and design stage and works are being carried out under the East Coast Rail Infrastructure Project. The OPW are carrying out further works to the rear of the recycling centre. The District Engineer advised the Members that Wicklow MD are not managing this project and it is the responsibility of Irish Rail in conjunction with Wicklow County Council. Cllr. Irene Winters stated that an East Coast Erosion study was carried out in 2019 and no report was every received. The District Manager called appealed for members of the public not to use the old walking path.

## ITEM 6

### Correspondence:

The District Administrator advised that she had received an expression of interest for Twinning from Bagnacavallo in Italy. The Members suggested that this should go to the Protocol meeting. However, they added that it might be more prudent to continue working with the current twinned towns.

## ITEM 7

### Any Other Business:

- Cllr. Paul O'Brien requested that a letter be issued to Sergeant Pat Carroll of Ashford Garda Station to recognise his service and wish him well on his retirement.
- Cllr. Paul O'Brien suggested a civic reception for Wicklow Rowing Club following their recent success in the World Coastal Championships. Cathaoirleach Irene Winters suggested hosting a civic reception in May 2024.
- Cllr. Mary Kavanagh asked members to keep in mind land that could be used for allotments and community gardens.
- District Administrator, Georgina Franey reminded the Members that mobile numbers for the management team in Wicklow MD should not be shared. She advised Members to contact the District Engineer firstly and not the General Service Supervisors directly.

CATHAOIRLEACH IRENE WINTERS CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 16.40 p.m.

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

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_