

# MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING

## HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY BUILDINGS

**MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 @ 3.15 p.m.**

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

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

Cathaoirleach Paul O'Brien opened the meeting at 3.15 p.m.

On behalf of the elected members he welcomed new District Engineer, Pat Clarke and wished him every success in the role and said the members will provide him with any assistance they can.

He also welcomed Georgina Franey who is taking over the role of District Administrator from July and said the members looked forward to working with her. He paid tribute to Joan Sinnott for her trojan work.

He also welcomed Róisín Carroll to the administrative staff and wished her every success and happiness.

### **ITEM 1**

#### **Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

It was proposed by Cllr John Snell, seconded by Cllr Shay Cullen and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wicklow Municipal District Monthly Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

### **ITEM 2**

#### **Forward Planning Update**

Sorcha Walsh, Senior Planner, gave members an update on the County Development Plan as follows:

- County Development Plan (CDP) Adoption

- CDP Ministerial Direction
- CDP Judicial Review
- Residential Zoned Land Tax
- Planning and Development Bill
- Land Value Sharing and Urban Development Zones Bill

#### MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS

- LAP outdated
- De-zoning of sites
- Minister has final say, irrespective of local representatives
- Number of large industrial estates not at full capacity
- New Residential Zoned Land Tax – can landowners ask to be excluded
- Is voluntary de-zoning an option for people who don't wish to develop
- Many different plans in existence – causing confusion
- Housing Minister wants houses built not taking into consideration local areas, local representatives
- Staff shortage
- Planning constantly changing

The senior planner advised as follows:

- The important role of the elected members in review of the local area plans and said that consultation would take place with them during the process up to draft plan stage
- Residential Zoned Land Tax was introduced in the Finance Act 2021, payable to Revenue Commissioners from 2024. Maps were prepared and published 01.11.2022. Landowners could request de-zoning before 1<sup>st</sup> January, each request evaluated in accordance with department guidelines, i.e. should land be retained for the common good or is it not essential to fulfil the strategy. 75 submissions were received, report prepared on each.
- Objective of RZLT –
  - Zoning by elected representatives for common good and to stimulate land owners to develop or sell on to developers in order to increase housing supply and ensure regeneration of vacant land
  - Provision of housing in right locations - at present most is taking place on green field sites on the perimeter of town, potential for development of harbour/port, Murrough area
- There is need to look beyond zoning for housing at other areas such as retail, town centre, recreation and to identify what are economic assets.

#### **Local Area Plans**

Bernadette Harvey, Executive Planner, gave a presentation in relation to Local Area Plans as follows-

New Local Area Plans will be made for the following settlements:

- Wicklow Town – Rathnew
- Greystones – Delgany – Kilcoole
- Blessington
- Arklow and Environs
- Bray Municipal District (inc. Enniskerry & Kilmacanogue)

### **County Development Plan Strategic Principles**

<b>Healthy Placemaking</b>	The quality of place has an impact on all aspects of our lives. Placemaking focuses on the interaction between people and the natural and built environment, a sense of place and facilitating a high quality of life. The creation of attractive healthy places that support sustainable communities is a central objective of this Plan. Healthy placemaking involves creating places that facilitate a good quality of life and encourage healthier lifestyles.
<b>Climate Action</b>	Integrate climate change objectives into the County Development Plan to facilitate the sustainable growth of the County, enhance climate resilience and enable the transition to a low carbon, environmentally sustainable economy. The County Development Plan plays an important role in influencing a reduction in GHG emissions by guiding the sustainable growth of the County, encouraging more compact mixed-use development and greater use of sustainable transport options such as cycling, walking and public transport, restricting development in areas that are at risk of flooding and protecting the natural landscape and biodiversity.
<b>Economic Opportunity</b>	Encourage a sustained emphasis on creating and facilitating new employment opportunities to support self-sustaining settlements throughout the County and facilitate a high quality of life. In accordance with national and regional policy it is important that the Development Plan facilitates a better alignment between population growth and employment to create healthy and attractive places.

### **County Development Plan Strategic County Outcomes**

- SCO1** Sustainable Settlement Patterns & Compact Growth
- SCO2** Resilient Town & Village Centres – Regeneration & Renewal
- SCO3** Strong Rural Communities & Sustainable Rural Development
- SCO4** Sustainable Healthy Communities
- SCO5** Sustainable Mobility
- SCO6** Natural Heritage & Biodiversity
- SCO7** Climate Resilience & the Transition to a Low Carbon Economy
- SCO8** A Strong Economy

SCO9 Tourism

SCO10 Education & Skills

### Pre – Draft Stage

Research / data gathering / public consultation

- National / Regional / County Strategies
- Meeting with each Directorate, MD engineer, MD administrator
- Review any relevant CDP submissions
- Green Infrastructure assessment - research and mapping
- Built and natural heritage research and mapping
- Social Infrastructure Assessment
- Employment opportunities
- Regeneration opportunities, place-making opportunities
- Opportunity sites
- SEA / AA / SFRA (Consultants)
- Prepare pre-draft public consultation

Cathaoirleach Paul O’Brien thanked the planners. It was agreed to circulate the presentation to the members.

### Item 3

#### District Engineers Report

Updates provided by District Engineer, Pat Clarke:

#### Housing

- Relets/Prelets; 3 completed. 1 on site. 1 new relet received. 3 CPO house commenced.

#### DTTAS Roads Programme

##### ❖ Drainage

Drainage Programme agreed and approved. List circulated at April meeting. Generally works are verge drains, gullies and road crossings to outlets are currently ongoing.

##### ❖ Restoration Maintenance

Location	Length of Works
Ballymachara – Ballycullen, L5095	2.5km
Tomdarragh Lane	1.0km
Kilpoole- Magheramore R750	1.8km
Raheenmore, Blainroe Upper, L1102	2.0km
Carrigower- Easthill L1039	4.0km
Garryduff, L6068	5.0km

Wicklow Gap, Brockagh, R756	3.5km
Djouce – Sallys bridge, R755	2.6km

Preparation works have started on roads above in advance of the Surface Dressing programme starting mid-June.

❖ **Restoration Improvement**

Tenders on Restoration Improvement works due back by end on May. Works will include a variety of techniques depending on classification and condition of Road.

Advance works such as drainage and verge widening works to start on RI Roads as soon as possible with MD staff.

❖ **Winter Maintenance**

Winter Gritting (Regional Roads) has finished for the 2022/2023 season as of the end of April 2023. March and April were mostly mild, with 4 out of 5 no. call outs required for the Roundwood route.

❖ **CCSD**

Tender received for consultant for Coral grant funding for works from Large Scale Sport Infrastructure. WCC CCSD currently clarifying info.

❖ **Public Liability**

0 personal injury. 4 material damage.

❖ **WCC Projects**

- Roundwood footpath; Works are continuing in Roundwood road at L5061. Drainage and extruded kerb have been installed to date. Works to backfill footpath on-going. The junction with R764 at Knockfadda will be improved with new signage and line markings for safety reasons.
- Brittas Bay footpath; start date to be reviewed based on summer season and increase in traffic volumes in this area.
- DRCD Community Recognition Fund; Application made for projects in WMD. These were:
  1. Refurbishment of the Assembly Hall,
  2. Installation of accessible outdoor gym equipment at the Murrough,
  3. Improvements to the promenade linking the harbour and the Murrough.

Funding has now been confirmed by the Department for all the projects within the WMD

❖ **NTA Projects**

- Ballinahinch, Ashford footpath; wall facing completed. Works continuing on accommodation works. Concrete footpaths to be poured next week.

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

#### ❖ **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

- Brittas Bay Blueway funding for accessibility works. Tender docs for toilet building improvements and other works currently being assessed. Awaiting consultant input.

#### ❖ **Town & Village Renewal**

- 3 Umbrellas now installed and complete.
- Wicklow Town – South Quay connections to Main Street, (Connectivity Project) tender has been evaluated and the successful tender notified. Stakeholder consultations ongoing.

#### ❖ **Fáilte Ireland**

- Abbey Grounds; Re-design of certain items of the project continuing with Architect/Engineers. Detailed designs are being progressed for Coach House building, Amphitheatre seating and performance area.

#### ❖ **Additional MD projects**

- Playground specific sand delivered and spread for The Murrough playground. All outstanding repairs at the Murrough playground currently being tendered.
- Contractor for ‘Historic Monument Lighting in Wicklow Town’ has installed further lights at the Black castle and at the Wicklow Church of Ireland site’s. Once certification is complete, the ESB will be contacted to complete the power supply connections.
- Public lighting columns to be completed with the installation of LED heads within the next few weeks at the Black Castle steps.
- 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).

#### MEMBERS OBSERVATIONS

- Repairs required to playgrounds
- New footpath at Brittas Bay  
There was agreement that works should be deferred until the autumn, that commencing works at the start of summer would have a negative impact on tourism and locals alike.  
Members sought re-assurance that funding was ring fenced for the project and would still be available in September. District Manager confirmed it would be.

A query was raised regarding the possibility of starting the footpath at McDaniels, which would also be beneficial to local school etc.

- New bus route and stops welcomed, especially stop at Primary Care Centre  
Concern was expressed regarding the location of some of the stops
  - stop at Aldi – possibly too near junction
  - set-down area at Castle Street junction – blocking sight linesDistrict Engineer advised that a meeting with the NTA would be arranged
- Concern expressed regarding junction at Flannerys shop – very difficult for motorists to exit
- Members happy with progress at Abbey Grounds
- Complaints received regarding sequencing of pedestrian lights at Marlton Road junction, not safe for visually impaired
- New ramp at Montessori School, Ballyguile Road –  
The Cathaoirleach advised that residents are happy with the ramp and feel safer now when exiting their driveways.  
Some members expressed concern regarding height of the ramp, complaints received regarding damage to cars and queried if there is a standard specification for ramps.
- Other ramps require re-painting
- Funding for Ball Alley – possibly include on next agenda  
District Manager advised that an engineering survey and costing would be carried out and members could consider discretionary funding rather than wait for another funding scheme.
- Public lighting at Leg of Mutton – hope to have sorted quickly
- Concern of residents regarding poor condition of roads, problem of dust at Rosanna Close, Woodview & Ballinalea arising from works on the new housing development – homes and lives being impacted. Developers to be contacted and advised that roads should be power hosed daily – involve planning enforcement
- Community Recognition Fund  
This funding is allocated for projects in communities that are hosting significant numbers of people from Ukraine and International Protection applicants.

Funding was welcomed for three projects

- Upgrade of the Assembly Hall - €340,000 allocated  
Works to include refurbishment of meeting rooms, kitchen and toilets, new heating system and painting

Members said that at present there is a lack of facilities in the town and it will make a huge difference for the community to have a modern facility for all to use – community and voluntary organisations and sports clubs

- Installation of accessible outdoor gym equipment at the Murrough
- Improvements to the promenade linking the harbour and the Murrough

A breakdown/timescale was sought in respect of each project – District Engineer to provide

- Update sought on LIS schemes

- Members commended the provision of a new footpath at Ballinahinch, Ashford – residents now have a safe corridor to the village, example of how the NTA can make a difference
- Ramps - some ramps too severe, should be standard design ramp for contractors to install
- Disappointment regarding lack of progress on footpath at Merrymeeting Hill despite the fact it was sanctioned by all members – necessary for access to football pitches, schools etc.
- Dip in road (R772) beside pedestrian access to Hazelbrook housing estate since pipes were laid – reports of cars being damaged
- Overlay, road markings required in Rathnew Village in the area of the grotto
- Possibility of installing a pedestrian crossing between The Bridge Tavern and Bridge Street Books to facilitate people going to the beach
- Re-instatement of cycle lanes at Dunbur Road
- No road markings on road to The Beehive – lining contractor to be engaged
- Part 8 for Pump Track at The Murrough – call for Leader funding
- Lighting at Black Castle – query if assessment done by Biodiversity or Heritage Officer for effect on bat population  
The District Engineer advised that the lights are low wattage in order not to impact on the environment. He said he would follow up the matter with the Heritage Officer
- Upgrade required to fence at river
- Request for assessment of costs for provision of mats for wheelchair access to beach

#### **ITEM 4**

##### **2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works**

District Manager, Brian Gleeson, circulated the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works.

Under Section 103A of the Local Government Act 2001, a schedule of proposed works to be carried out during the financial year in each municipal district must be prepared having regard to funding provided in the local authority revenue budget. The Schedule of Municipal District Works to be considered by the Municipal District members and adopted by resolution.

Members welcomed the Roads allocation and said there was a definite deterioration in the condition of some rural roads

It was proposed by Councillor Paul O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Gail Dunne and unanimously resolved that the 2023 Schedule of Municipal District Works be approved.

#### **ITEM 5**

##### **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.



**ITEM 6**

**Any Other Business**

The members paid tribute to Joan Sinnott and Georgina Franey and all involved in preparing for the civic reception taking place after the meeting to honour twelve individuals/teams who had excelled in sporting events.

CATHAOIRLEACH PAUL O'BRIEN CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 16.55 P.M.

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

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

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