

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in Blessington Civic Offices on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 10.30am**

**Present:** Cathaoirleach Avril Cronin  
Councillor Patsy Glennon  
Councillor Gerry O'Neill  
Councillor Peter Stapleton  
Councillor Jason Mulhall  
Councillor Pat Mahon

**In Attendance:** Ms. Theresa O' Brien, District Manager  
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator  
Mr. Patrick Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer  
Ms. Christina Brophy, Clerical Officer  
  
Ms. Ann Marie Butler, Clerical Officer via Zoom  
Mr. Patrick Burke, Clerical Officer via Zoom  
Ms. Catherine Byrne, Assistant Staff Officer via Zoom

Cathaoirleach Avril Cronin opened the meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District and welcomed all present.

**Votes of Sympathy**

Cllr. O' Neill expressed his sympathy to the family of Helen Keirse (nee Dunne), Blessington Co. Wicklow, who passed away peacefully on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

Cllr. O' Neill also expressed a vote of sympathy to the family of Margaret Doyle (nee Travers), Stratford on Slaney, who passed away suddenly on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

Cllr. Cronin asked to be associated with this.

May they rest in peace. A minutes silence was observed.

**1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026.**

It was proposed by Cllr. O' Neill, seconded by Cllr. Glennon and unanimously agreed by all members to confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026.

Cllr. O' Neill proposed to add an item to the agenda regarding recent damage to the roads as a result of Storm Chandra. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Stapleton and unanimously agreed by all.

The Cathaoirleach agreed to discuss this issue before the roads reports were delivered.

## **2. Matters Arising**

Cllr. Stapleton requested clarification regarding the speed ramp at St. Aidan's School, as discussed at the previous meeting. He queried whether the contractor or the school would be responsible for installing the ramp and whether a timeline was available. Mr. Graham informed the meeting that the ramp will be relocated and replaced in a different location. He advised that a timeline is not yet available.

Cllr. Stapleton also queried if it would be possible to invite the Team responsible for the Bank of Ireland Building in Carnew to the next meeting. Mr. Liam Cullen will arrange this.

Cllr. O' Neill mentioned that Baltyboys Graveyard is in a critical state with no space left and he feels a report needs to be carried out as to the future of the graveyard. Ms. Theresa O' Brien will follow this up. Cllr. O' Neill also queried if there was a further update on the issue of the lack of Heating in the library and he also raised concerns about access to the library as the lifts are currently not working. Ms. O' Brien informed the members that she has been advised that the issue with the heating is now fixed and it is back working.

Cllr. Mulhall shared his concerns about the 65 bus route and its operator's reputation stating that he would like to see a proposed draft timetable of their routes. These concerns were shared by all the councillors present, with the Cathaoirleach adding that the 132 bus route has also proved unreliable. It was agreed by all the members that Mr. Cullen write to the NTA to request a meeting to discuss these matters.

Cllr. Mulhall requested an update regarding possible road closures by Cairn Development Company, noting that a road at Dunnes Stores is due to close tomorrow. He expressed concern about the potential impact on the school. Mr. Byrne explained that the road closure at Dunnes Stores involves a private road and therefore the Council is not directly involved. However, as a courtesy, Cairn Development Company informed the Council of their plans. The road is expected to be closed for approximately 2–3 weeks to facilitate further works. The Development Company has stated that trucks will be cleaned upon exiting the site.

Mr. Byrne informed the members that the link road will have to close soon for a period of time as the roundabout near Sorrell Wood park needs to be removed and rebuilt in order to be brought up to proper design standards. Mr. Byrne stated that Cairn have said they will wait until the summer to do these works so as to minimise the impact on motorists noting that the schools will be closed at that time.

Mr. Byrne further updated the members on the northern section of the Inner Relief Road and advised that it is estimated to be completed in November 2026.

Cllr. O' Neill asked if there was any update on the review of a call for sites in the area. The officials had no update on this matter

Mr. Liam Cullen advised the members that he wrote to the Minister of Transport in relation to the N81 and is awaiting a response.

### **3. Baltinglass and Blessington RRDF projects.**

Mr. Cullen informed the members that he has no further update from the last meeting regarding Blessington. However, in relation to Baltinglass, Mr. Marc Devereux has completed a design audit, which has been submitted to the Department for review.

Cllr. Mulhall stated that members require clarity regarding the redirection of funding that had originally been awarded for RRDF in Blessington. Cllr. Glennon agreed, adding that he believes it may be appropriate to invite the Chief Executive and Mr. Marc Devereux to attend a future meeting, as further explanation is required. He expressed concern that the Baltinglass project has been ongoing for an extended period and that Blessington now appears to be encountering similar delays. Cathaoirleach Cronin concurred, stating that there appears to be a lack of interest, motivation, and respect for West Wicklow. She clarified that her comments were not intended as a criticism of the Municipal District staff; however, she noted that this is the third project in West Wicklow that has not progressed as expected.

Ms. O'Brien stated that the issues raised are not due to a lack of effort within the Municipal District. She acknowledged the work undertaken by Mr. Cullen in seeking to obtain up-to-date information in advance of the meetings.

In summary, Mr. Cullen will write to the Chief Executive and Mr. Devereux to convey the members' request for clarification.

- **Storm Chandra**

Cllr. O' Neill asked the members to consider requesting extra funding for roads as the conditions of some of the roads after storm Chandra are appalling. He suggested that the Cathaoirleach and the other Baltinglass MD members to bring these issues before the full council meeting.

Mr. Graham informed the members that significant structural damage has occurred to the roads. Assessments have been completed and the issues identified include pavement failures, collapsed embankments, collapsed drains, and quagmire formations, among other problems. Mr. Graham went on to say that the South of the District has been severely affected with some roads completely washed away noting that up to 10 to 12 roads were closed during Chandra. It is estimated that over 26 km of road in the district are affected and Mr Graham shared pictures of same, he pointed out that the financial cost of road repairs in the District will exceed €5 million. Mr. Graham commented that in his 28 years in

the position, he has never witnessed destruction of this magnitude, he implored the members to seek extra funding.

Cathaoirleach Cronin queried if there was any update on emergency funding.

Mr. Byrne replied that the Senior Engineer has no update on the funding request. He added that this is a very serious issue and will have long-term effects, as it will cut into other funding streams. Mr. Byrne suggested that additional funding be sought for drainage works and other preventative measures, followed by the necessary repairs. He further stated that consideration should be given, going forward, to prosecuting landowners who discharge water onto a public road as it states in section 70 of the roads act that you can accept water from a public road but you cannot discharge onto a public road.

Cllr. Mahon agreed, stating that issues relating to discharge and drainage should be addressed and that those responsible must be held to account as the pictures are frightening.

Cllr. Mulhall stated that there were already issues with water flow in the southern part of the District prior to the storm damage.

Cllr. Stapleton stated that the bulk of the funding should be focussed on the south of the county and queried whether it is realistic to pursue prosecutions of landowners who discharge water onto roads, he suggested that the Council should try adopt a more proactive approach in engaging with landowners.

Cllr. Glennon noted that significant damage has occurred throughout the District and not solely in the southern area.

Cllr. O' Neill thanked both engineers and again urged the members to work on this as Baltinglass Municipal District has 40% of the roads in Wicklow County and this should be reflected in the funding streams.

Cathaoirleach Cronin proposed seeking a suspension of Standing Orders at the full meeting scheduled for Monday next to allow for discussion. This proposal was seconded by Cllr. O'Neill and was unanimously agreed by all members.

Ms. O'Brien thanked Cllr. O'Neill for bringing the item to the agenda. She also expressed her appreciation and acknowledged the engineers and their staff for the extensive work carried out in response to the storm.

Councillor Gerry O'Neill (Left meeting at 11:41am)

#### **4. To consider Roads Reports (national and non- national roads)**

Both Engineers presented the Roads reports to the members. Mr. Byrne provided an update on correspondence with the ESB regarding Knockieran Bridge. It is envisaged that this will be a long-term project, with 2029 proposed as a possible commencement date for the works.

In the interim, a design is to be prepared to facilitate resurfacing of the bridge, however, this will be subject to approval by the ESB.

### **Members Comments and Observations**

Cllr. Glennon asked if there has been any further progress on a Park and Ride at Hollywood.

Cllr. Mahon queried whether a ramp could be installed before the traffic lights after Aldi in Blessington, noting that he has received complaints regarding speeding around that corner. Mr. Byrne confirmed that he will examine the available options.

### **5. Request from Ras Tailteann for Funding.**

Mr. Cullen informed the Members that he had received correspondence from Ras Tailteann seeking funding of approximately €5,000 and enquired whether this could be considered under the Discretionary Fund. Ms. O'Brien added that this matter had been raised at a recent management meeting, and that this District had been approached as the race finishes here, which could make it commercially beneficial to the local community. Cllr. Stapleton questioned if this should be looked after by the LA fund and not Discretionary as the roads are his priority at the moment.

Cllr. Glennon stated he is happy to give €1000, Cllr. Mahon, Cllr. Mulhall and Cllr. Cronin also agreed to contribute €1000 from their discretionary. It was proposed by Cllr. Glennon to support the groups request for funding to a maximum of €5000, to be allocated from Members discretionary funding less what is offered by the Economic Development fund. Mr Cullen would also seek further funding for the event from Wicklow County Council Economic Development and Tourism sections, this proposal was seconded by Cllr. Mahon and agreed by all members present.

### **6. Correspondence**

Mr. Cullen made the members aware that he received correspondence from Deputy Timmins to seek a reduction in the speed at Hollywood cross from 80km to 60km. Mr. Byrne stated that TII are the Arbitrator of National roads, the council can make the proposal but ultimately it is a decision for TII whether they accept.

Cllr. Mulhall asked Mr. Graham if it would be possible for the St. Patricks Day committee in Carnew to borrow cones and barriers for the parade. Mr. Graham replied that these items are not loaned out to groups, they would need to provide their own cones and barriers for such events.

### **7. Any other Business**

Cllr. Stapleton asked if the Playground in Carnew will be reopened by the summer. Mr. Graham said that is highly unlikely as the park needs resurfacing which will cost approx. €75 thousand while the yearly budget for parks is only €25 thousand. Mr. Byrne suggested the members seek more funding for this area. Cllr. Mulhall stated that he has reports of people still entering the park though broken fencing. Ms. O'Brien stated that the playground may need to be relocated from its current site.

Cllr. Mulhall requested an update on the Bike Trail signage in Baltinglass, and Mr. Graham replied that he is currently reviewing the file.

Cllr. Mulhall also enquired about the public lighting in Coolafancy, to which Mr. Graham responded that the application has been submitted to the ESB.

In addition, Cllr. Mulhall sought an update on the proposed footpaths in Coolboy. Mr. Graham advised that these plans have been deferred slightly, as road damage works are currently taking precedence.

Cllr. Mahon enquired if there was an update on the overhanging tree onto a footpath in Rathdangan. Mr. Graham said this would need to be inspected again and a section 70 will have to come from the roads section.

Cllr. Mulhall asked if there is a timeline available for the section 38 in Carnew. Mr. Graham replied that there is no update as of yet.

Cllr. Mulhall also asked if there is a Timeline available for the ORIS funding at Russborough. Ms. O' Brien stated that there were permissions/rights of way requested and it was all sent back in for review.

#### **8. Date and venue of next meeting.**

The date of the next meeting will be Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 10:30am in Blessington Civic Offices.

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

Signed: Avril Cronin  
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: [Signature]  
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026