

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Municipal District of Baltinglass held in Blessington Civic Offices on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 at 10.30am**

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

**In Attendance:** Ms. Theresa O'Brien, Baltinglass District Manager  
Mr. Pat Byrne, Senior Executive Engineer  
Mr. Dermot Graham, Executive Engineer  
Mr. Liam Cullen, District Administrator  
Ms. Christina Brophy, Clerical Officer

Cathaoirleach Patsy Glennon opened the meeting of Baltinglass Municipal District and welcomed all present.

Votes of Sympathy

Cllr. Stapleton expressed a vote of sympathy to former Baltinglass Municipal District Councillor Mr. Vincent Blake and his family on the sad passing of his mother Anne Blake, nee Keogh, Mullinacuffe, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow who passed away in her 105<sup>th</sup> year.

Cllr. Stapleton also expressed a vote of sympathy for Pope Francis who died on Easter Monday, April 21, 2025, at the age of 88.

All Councillors asked to be associated with these votes of sympathy.

A minutes silence was observed.

**1. To confirm and sign minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025.**

It was proposed by Cllr. Cronin, seconded by Cllr. Stapleton and unanimously agreed by all members to confirm and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Municipal District of Baltinglass dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

## **2. Matters Arising**

Cllr. O' Neill asked has there been an update yet from the ESB regarding state of repair of the surface on Knockieran Bridge. Mr. Cullen replied that he has not had a response back from them since he sent a letter requesting a meeting with an ESB engineer a couple of months ago, Ms. O' Brien added that she also has tried to follow up on this request via email and by phone but has not gotten a response back either.

## **3. Update information on IPASS centres in Baltinglass MD.**

A letter was circulated to the members outlining the number of IPASS residents in Wicklow.

### Members Comments and Observations

Cllr. O' Neill said the report is very poor as he was hoping for a more statistical comprehensive report.

Cllr. O' Neill proposed to ask Mr. Mark Devereaux to attend the next meeting to give a full update, this was seconded by Cllr. Stapleton.

## **4. Update on Baltinglass and Blessington RRDF Projects.**

### Baltinglass

Mr. Cullen informed the members that negotiations are still ongoing with Arup for Baltinglass public realm RRDF project.

Mr. Graham made the members aware that the recently installed playground in Baltinglass is now open to the public and the facility is receiving great feedback, lots of planting for biodiversity was done also. Construction of the new 3 x 3 basketball court starts in the coming weeks.

Cllr. Mahon queried what is holding up the progress in Baltinglass public realm. Ms. O' Brien and Mr. Cullen said that they fully understand the members frustrations with the delays in the project. They said they will continue to highlight the views of the members as well as the views of the public

Mr. Byrne informed the members that a new Senior Executive Engineer has been appointed to the Town Regeneration team and will be commencing in that position in the coming weeks, this person will have responsibility to oversee projects such as Baltinglass and Blessington RRDF, Mr. Byrne is hopeful this will help push both projects on.

### Blessington

Mr. Cullen advised the members that the tender for Market Square in Blessington went out on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April and is currently being assessed while the draft plan for the HSE building is being reviewed and assessed and amendments will be made accordingly. Cllr. O' Neill said he disagrees with money being spent needlessly on consultants.

Cllr O'Neill said he does not want to see any loss of parking slots in the square and he feels that if there is a loss of parking it could be very detrimental to businesses. Mr. Byrne replied that the RRDF funding allocated to Blessington is for WCC to come up with a plan and would

then then be presented to the members before going to part 8 for their approval. Cllr. Mulhall said he would like to see the proposed plans before making a final decision, he would like the square to be more pedestrian friendly. Cllr. Glennon said he is open minded regarding any future town square development, he will await the plans before deciding on what he considers the best option, stating that a compromise may be the best solution. Ms. O' Brien stated that money available can only be spent on consultancy and this funding was received from Town Centre First Funding. Mr. Byrne again re-iterated it is only a plan at the moment, when it does go to part 8 the public and the elected officials will have their chance to vote on it.

## **5. To Consider Roads Reports (National and Non-National Roads)**

Mr. Byrne and Mr. Graham presented the National and Non-National Roads reports.

### Members Comments and Observations

Cllr. O' Neill said he is delighted to see the Hollywood Bus stop project making progress as it has been ongoing for close to 11 years.

Cllr. Mulhall informed Mr. Byrne that there is a Hydrant on the N81 outside the Downshire Hotel that is in very poor condition and is a hazard. Mr. Byrne replied that this issue that should be directed to Irish Water.

Cllr. Mahon thanked and commended the engineers for the upgrade works at the Lockstown Junction. He also asked if safety management measures could be implemented at the Vallemount junction that meets the N81, if possible could rumble strips or ramps be fitted. Mr. Byrne responded that ramps are not generally installed in a rural area but could perhaps look into installing pre warning signage.

Cllr. O' Neill asked when the next stage of upgrade works on the Knocknadruice road would be commence. Mr. Byrne replied that this is on next year's list of works.

Cllr. Mulhall asked for an update on what is happening at the N81 road outside Blessington Lakes Garden Centre. Mr. Byrne advised that this road has been identified as a high accident location so currently they are analysing different options to reduce this risk.

Cllr. Stapleton asked Mr. Graham for an update in relation to RI schemes. Mr. Graham replied that he will be working on these for the next few weeks and looking at options to group a some roads together with a view to getting them completed in a more expedient manner. Cllr. Stapleton also asked if there is any update on the proposed work at Kennys Corner in Carnew.

Cllr. Glennon queried in relation to Kiltegan village when will the works recommence. Mr. Graham said the General Operatives were re-directed to other areas but will be back in Kiltegan in the next few weeks.

## **6. To consider and allocate the Baltinglass Estate Development Grants**

A spreadsheet was circulated to the members prior to the meeting proposing the allocation of Baltinglass Municipal District estate development funding to the various resident committees that applied, amount ten thousand euro

### Members Comments and Observations

Cllr. O' Neill stated that the proposed amount for Westpark Residents association was too low, he said he is aware of how much work the residents of Westpark do and he did not think the amount was a fair representation of this. Mr. Cullen replied that the proposed, amount is based on the total number of council houses in the estate. Nonetheless, Cllr. O' Neill would like to allocate more to them.

An extra €100 was added to Westpark's allocation which was sourced by reducing the allocation to other committees .

The revised allocation was then proposed by Cllr. Stapleton and seconded by Cllr. Cronin and unanimously agreed by all present

### **7. To consider and allocate the Baltinglass Festival Grants.**

A spreadsheet was circulated to the members prior to the meeting proposing the allocation of Baltinglass Municipal District festival funding to the various festival organising committees that applied,

### Members Comments and Observations

Cllr. Stapleton asked Ballinglen festival be added to this list and proposed €500 to be allocated to them.

Mr Cullen suggested that rather than reducing the allocated amounts from other groups, that five hundred be allocated to Ballinglen festival from the Baltinglass Economic Development Fund.

Allocation of €500 to Ballinglen festival committee was proposed by Cllr. Stapleton and seconded by Cllr. Cronin and agreed by all present.

Allocation of Baltinglass festival funding as per attached spreadsheet was proposed by Cllr. Stapleton and seconded by Cllr. Cronin and agreed by all present.

### **8. Correspondence**

Mr. Cullen informed the members that Mr. Paul Tyrell, Historian with the History Society in Blessington has requested funding to create booklets etc to help promote Blessington, envisioning that promoting local history will in turn generate economic growth.

The History society has priced the cost of this at €1,500 and they are asking the members if they could donate €750 toward the cost. Cllr. Glennon suggests €500 to be given from the Baltinglass MD Economic and Development Promotion fund.

This was proposed by Cllr. Mulhall and seconded by Cllr. Cronin.

### **9. Any other Business**

Ms. O' Brien reminded the members that the Tourism Workshop will take place on the 29th April in Tulfarris followed by a tour of Russborough.

Mr. Cullen advised the members that as a mark of respect to recent passing of Pope Francis the Irish flag was lowered to half mast. Following on from this and as a matter of protocol all other flags were taken down as they could not fly higher than the Irish flag. Cllr O' Neill asked would the Palestinian flag be going back up. Mr. Cullen said yes it would be going back up.

Cllr. O' Neill asked if a meeting can be arranged with Dublin Bus/Bus Eireann before the new school term arrives to discuss ongoing issues with the timetables etc. Cllr. Mulhall concurred with this and asked if it would be possible to also invite someone from the school department. Mr. Cullen said he will write to Bus Eireann to request a meeting.

Mr. Cullen advised the members that the official opening of Baltinglass Park will take place on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May at 3:30pm.

Mr. Cullen also informed all the members that the date for the Cathaoirleachs Achievement Awards will take place in Tulfarris on Friday June 6<sup>th</sup> 2025.

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

The date of the next meeting will be Monday May 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am in Stratford.

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

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

CATHAOIRLEACH

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

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: 26/05/2025