

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District  
held remotely on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021, at 2:30pm from the Council Chamber,  
Offices of the Municipal District, Civic Square, Gorey, Co. Wexford**

**Attendance (In Chamber):**

In the Chair: Cllr Joe Sullivan, Cathaoirleach,

Officials: Ms Liz Stanley, A/District Manager,  
Ms Joanne Kehoe, Senior Executive Engineer,  
Ms Debbie Stanley, Assistant Staff Officer,

**Attendance (Microsoft Teams):**

Councillors: Cllr Andrew Bolger,  
Cllr Pip Breen,  
Cllr Diarmuid Devereux,  
Cllr Anthony Donohoe,  
Cllr Mary Farrell,  
Cllr Willie Kavanagh  
Cllr Donal Kenny,  
Cllr Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin,  
Cllr Oliver Walsh,

Officials: Ms Annette Dupuy, Healthy County Co-Ordinator,  
Ms Michele Bridges-Carley, Administrative Officer,  
Ms Helen Frayne, Senior Staff Officer,  
Mr George Colfer, Executive Engineer,  
Mr Philip Knight, Senior Staff Officer,  
Ms Niamh Lennon, Executive Planner,  
Mr Niall Sheehan, Assistant Planner,  
Mr Neil Hughes, Baker Tilly,  
Mr Barry Hammel, Executive Engineer.

**Vote of Sympathy**

Members extended their sympathies to the families of recently bereaved, Pat Doran (Carnew), Susanna O'Dowd (Clologue), Paddy Fitzgerald (Craanford), Tom O'Donoghue, (Ballygarrett) and Stan Bereta (Kilmuckridge).

**Offer of Congratulations**

Cllr D Devereux paid tribute to the hard work of the District Manager in preparing Gorey for the re-opening of retail and members complimented the high standard of signage and outdoor seating areas in the town.

**No. 1 Confirmation of Minutes & Matters Arising**

*1.1 Confirmation of Minutes:*

On the proposal of Cllr P Breen, seconded by Cllr D Kenny the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District held on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were signed and adopted.

## **1.2 Matters Arising:**

Matters Arising were dealt with during the Meeting.

## **No. 2 Consideration of Reports & Recommendations**

### **2.1 Healthy Wexford Presentation**

Ms A Dupuy outlined the work of Healthy Wexford and spoke about how the focus had been on staying as connected and active as much as possible during the pandemic. Ms Dupuy explained how the Council is hoping to introduce smoke/vape free areas in Wexford by replicating the “*Not Around Us*” Initiative. She also explained how Healthy Wexford is raising awareness of its existing health & wellbeing activities with visible branding. Members were asked to think of existing and new projects or areas that could be improved. The Chairman agreed to come back to Ms Dupuy with a list of locations and thanked her for her presentation.

### **2.2 Housing**

Members noted the Housing Report. Cllr M Farrell expressed concerns over the shortage of 1 and 2 bed units. Ms H Frayne acknowledged the shortage of such units but advised the Council would be looking for developers to include these smaller units going forward. She added that the proposed Wexford Street development was currently under review where smaller units may be included.

Cllr W Kavanagh enquired about Choice Based Letting and Ms M Bridges-Carley confirmed the Scheme would be coming on board in August.

Cllr D Kenny raised concerns about flooding at Hunter’s Hill and asked what provisions were being made if serious flooding should occur again. Ms Frayne advised that only 3 units were owned by the Council and the Clerk of Works had visited the site and was satisfied with the level of safety. She added that the Council units were on the opposite side to the lane which had been liable to flood and that those close to the lane were all privately owned.

### **2.3 Environment**

#### ***Cahore Traffic Management Plans***

Members received a presentation on Traffic Management Plans for Cahore. Mr G Colfer explained that funding had been received to allow for the installation of a slipway barrier at Cahore Pier which will be mobile activated, lockable and accompanied by a CCTV System.

Mr Colfer informed the Committee that a height barrier would also be installed at the car park, lines extended along both sides of the road up to the pier to deter people from parking and that the Plan would see the enforcement of double yellow lines all the way up to the Cahore Inshore Rescue Station.

Cllr F Ó’Súilleabháin asked about damage to the slipway to which Mr Colfer replied following an inspection of the slipway the concrete had been found to be broken up. He added that a funding application for repairs had been unsuccessful but reassured members that the Council would continue to monitor the slipway.

Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin asked that the provision of toilets be made on a more permanent basis to which Mr Colfer advised that the Environment Section was looking at a long-term solution for the temporary toilets.

Cllr M Farrell felt the height barrier at the carpark would cause issues for campervans and with their imminent arrival to the District this summer, suitable services must be made available for them. Cllr D Devereux added that having a site for campervans in Cahore was not going to meet demand as there was nowhere to empty wastewater tanks. He added that key tourist parking lots need to be looked at with the idea of setting up temporary measures. Mr Colfer informed the Committee that the Council was looking at various sites for campervans with a view to having them up and running shortly.

#### *Access Works to Ballinamona Beach*

Mr Colfer explained that the existing concrete steps are causing access issues to Ballinamona Beach at high tide and that it is proposed to construct a new pathway from the top of the existing access with works commencing next week. Cllr J Sullivan also highlighted beach access issues with Kilpatrick, Kilmichael & Clone and suggested that applications be made for future funding.

Cllr F O'Súilleabháin expressed his concerns over the dangerous usage of jet skis in Courtown and asked about them being banned. Mr Colfer advised that jet skis can launch from harbours and slipways but are not allowed to operate in beach areas. He added that he would investigate the issue in Courtown.

Cllr J Sullivan asked about progress with the Ahare River Survey and Mr Colfer advised that following the completion of the surveys of the land and river Consultants are now preparing a Report to be brought before the members next month.

Members noted the Environment Report which had been circulated prior to the Meeting. Mr P Knight informed the Committee that Beach Bye-laws are on public display until the 8<sup>th</sup> June and that he will prepare a response for the next District Meeting. Regarding the recent pollution of the Ounavarra River, Mr Knight advised that rainwater has flushed the oil through the river, but it will continue to be monitored as a precautionary measure.

## **2.4 Planning**

Members noted the Planning Report. Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin sought an update on the taking-in-charge of Carrig Vale, Kilanerin and Ms Lennon advised that work is progressing and should be brought to a District Meeting by the year end.

Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin also sought an update on derelict sites in Eire Street and Hollyfort. Ms Lennon advised that 8 Eire Street has been approved for CPO and will be progressed by the Property Department. Regarding the Hollyfort Site, Ms Lennon advised that the owners had been instructed to carry out a list of works and she agreed to refer back to the Committee on this matter.

Cllr D Kenny asked how long before any progress would be seen on the Garden City CPO. Ms Lennon advised that the Property Section was progressing with the CPO and she would check out the timeframe.

Cllr D Devereux asked about the old Tara Hall site in Courtown. He said a wall was to be built following the demolition of the hall but to date only fencing has been erected and asked for further action to visually improve the site for the summer season. Ms Lennon advised that she was unaware of any plans for this site but would follow up along with all other queries raised.

Cllr M Farrell sought an update on the taking-in-charge of Rosemount Gardens, Ballymurn and Ms Lennon agreed to follow up.

## **2.5 Roads**

Members noted the Roads Report and Ms J Kehoe responded to queries raised, including:

- ❖ Emergency Funding for Rural Roads in the District;
- ❖ Damage to the Ballyoughter to Clough Road;
- ❖ Remediation Safety Works at The Monument;
- ❖ Completion of the Gorey-Courtown Footpath;
- ❖ Cleaning of Kilmuckridge-Morriscastle Footpath;
- ❖ Local Improvement Scheme Announcement.

Ms Kehoe also agreed to follow up on the following queries raised:

- ❖ Flooding opposite 48 Charlotte Grove, Gorey;
- ❖ Relocation of Bus Stops from Main Street to near Gorey Hospital;
- ❖ Treatment for Mare's-Tail Weed;
- ❖ Boundary Wall of Greenwood Avenue LA Housing Estate, Kilmuckridge;
- ❖ Flooding at Ballina Upper;
- ❖ Flooding preventing access to Killala Graveyard.

## **2.6 Courtown Adventure & Leisure Centre**

Mr Neil Hughes of Baker Tilly, appointed as Liquidators on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020, outlined plans for Gorey Courtown Forest Park and Courtown Waterworld. Mr Hughes explained that 50 parties had expressed interest in the property with 15 separate tours accommodated for interested investors. A total of six proposals were offered and meetings were arranged with the Council & parties involved with the final decision resting with the Liquidators. Mr Hughes informed the Committee that a further €120,000 was borrowed to keep the lights on and the pool working, and two staff members were kept on for general maintenance and health & safety issues on site. He added that JLL, hospitality & leisure experts were appointed to assist and advise on the transition. Mr Hughes explained that the Department had approved transition of ownership and said the potential operators are successful entrepreneurs who were recently involved in a successful crafts, food and beverage business who have put together a business plan and a team who will be looking to recruit a General Manager along with 30-40 staff.

Mr Hughes advised that a substantial seven-figure investment is being made available and that the plans guarantee continued access to local community groups and schools. He added that the potential operators are aware that the support of the community is essential going forward and that they want to engage with them immediately.

Mr Hughes said that they would be looking to progress with Phase 1 of Plans which will involve immediate maintenance & painting, staff training, a new IT System for bookings and a new Café to ensure that the pool and gym opens within eight weeks. Phase 2 of Plans would involve the re-opening of the Adventure Centre in 2022, the establishment of a Kids Club, Fitness Classes, Personal Training, Open Water Swimming & Swimming Classes, formation of Courtown Tennis Club, re-open the Gravity Adventure Centre and the introduction of a Golf Simulator attraction.

Mr Hughes concluded by saying he would have no hesitation in recommending this Consortium as the preferred investor as they have taken-into-account the strong protections of the woodlands in their vision and asked that the members consider this when making their decision.

Cathaoirleach Cllr J Sullivan thanked Mr Hughes for his presentation and informed the Committee that further discussion would take place when the Motion is brought forward later in the Meeting.

### **2.7 Additional Departmental Reports**

Members noted the Community Development, Library Services and Wexford Fire Services Reports.

### **2.8 District Manager's Report**

Ms L Stanley provided members with an update on the following projects in the District:

Courtown TVRS 2018: Following a site visit Ms Stanley advised that an alteration was made to the original TVRS application to divert funds to railing repairs which the Department approved. It is hoped works will commence in June.

TVRS Accelerated Schemes 2020: Ms Stanley provided an update on improvement works taking place in the District in response to the challenges of Covid-19. She advised that works were near completion on the three outdoor seating areas on Main Street and McCurtain Street and that she is working with other businesses in the town and surrounding villages with a view to approving additional tables and chairs on footpaths. Ms Stanley also welcomed the new murals in Market Square and the wall of Gorey Little Theatre. The Committee was also informed that businesses who applied for funding under the GKMD Shopfront Improvement Scheme 2020 have until the 7<sup>th</sup> June to complete all outstanding improvement works.

Courtown-Riverchapel TVRS 2020: Ms Stanley advised that procurement on this project should be complete by the end of the summer.

Cllr D Devereux called on the Council to assist with costs associated with the running of Camolin playground particularly high insurance costs. Ms L Stanley advised that she would follow-up with the Community Section with a view to having it taken under the Council's insurance.

### **2.9 Water Services**

Members noted the Water Services Report and Mr B Hammel responded to queries raised.

### **No. 3 Prescribed Business by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District Members**

#### *3.1 Proposed Taking-in-Charge – Dún Creagh, Fort Road, Gorey*

On the proposal of Cllr A Donohoe, seconded by Cllr A Bolger it was agreed to take Dún Creagh, Fort Road, Gorey, in charge in accordance with S.11 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) and S.180 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

#### *3.2 GKMD Residents Association Grant Scheme 2021*

The Chairman advised that a Residents Association Grant Application had been received from Clonattin Residents Association and on the proposal of Cllr D Devereux, seconded by Cllr J Sullivan, it was agreed to provide a grant of €500 to the Group.

### **No. 4 Notice of Motion**

**Consider Motion submitted by An Cathaoirleach Cllr Joe Sullivan, Cllr Andrew Bolger, Cllr Diarmuid Devereux, Cllr Donal Kenny & Cllr Fiontán Ó'Súilleabháin**

*We, the members of Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District wish to call on Wexford County Council to take into public ownership, Forest Park Leisure Complex and the adjoining 40 acres of protected Woodland for the use and enjoyment of our local community and visitors to the area for the future.*

A discussion took place following Mr Neil Hughes earlier presentation on the Courtown Adventure & Leisure Centre. Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin questioned the liquidation process and the lack of consultation with the community and local councillors, a view re-iterated by Cllr J Sullivan and Cllr D Devereux. Cllr A Bolger felt the woods should be in public ownership and Cllr D Kenny expressed concern about insurance claims and premiums. Cllr P Breen, Cllr W Kavanagh & Cllr O Walsh welcomed the plan outlined by Mr Hughes. Cllr D Devereux's biggest concern was the protection of the woods to which both Cllr A Donohoe and Cllr M Farrell instanced that only changes can occur in the Local Area Plan which the members have full control over of the future of the woods in relation to zoning.

Ms A Byrne insisted that Wexford County Council had done everything in their power to support the running and operation of the pool and when that didn't have the effect it should have, the Board put the Centre into liquidation. She added that Baker Tilly have now successfully secured an investor with a very significant offering, the future protection of the woods is absolutely guaranteed by zoning, access is guaranteed by Section 38 and there are also the various environmental protections. Ms Byrne reiterated what the Chief Executive had already said, how the Council was not in a position to buy the woods or pool and would need to seek funding from the Department to do so having turned down a private investor. She also indicated that future running costs would come from the Municipal District Budget and therefore threaten the completion of other projects. Ms Byrne felt the only option was to run with this private entity's proposal.

Cathaoirleach Cllr J Sullivan thanked everybody for their contributions and acknowledged respect for all points of view.

Following a vote, the Motion was carried by 6 votes to 4 with Cllrs Bolger, Devereux, Donohoe, Kenny, Ó'Súilleabháin & Sullivan in favour and Cllrs Breen, Farrell, Kavanagh & Walsh against.

## **No. 5 Correspondence**

5.1 Acknowledgement from the Minister of State for Postal Services re: Withdrawal of Transformation Payment to Postmasters;

5.2 Correspondence to the Minister for Transport re: Emergency Funding required for Rural Roads in the District;

The Correspondence outlined above was noted by the members.

## **No. 6 AOB**

It was agreed to hold the Annual General Meeting of the Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District at 1:00pm on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> June.

Members and Officials paid tribute to Cathaoirleach Cllr J Sullivan for his hard work and dedication in the chair over the last 18 months and in what was a particularly challenging time during the pandemic.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Daingnithe ar an \_\_\_\_\_ lá de \_\_\_\_\_ 2021

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**Pip Breen,  
Cathaoirleach,  
Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District**