

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District
held in Blackwater Community Centre, Blackwater, Enniscorthy
on Tuesday, 16th May 2023, at 2:30pm**

Attendance:

In the Chair:

Cllr Donal Kenny, Cathaoirleach,
Cllr Andrew Bolger,
Cllr Pip Breen,
Cllr Diarmuid Devereux, Leas-Chathaoirleach,
Cllr Anthony Donohoe,
Cllr Willie Kavanagh,
Cllr Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin,
Cllr Joe Sullivan,
Cllr Oliver Walsh,

Officials:

Ms Elizabeth Hore, Director of Services & District Director,
Mr Philip Knight, Municipal District Administrator,
Ms Joanne Kehoe, Senior Executive Engineer,
Mr Barry Hammel, Executive Engineer,
Ms Liz Stanley, Senior Staff Officer,
Ms Debbie Stanley, Assistant Staff Officer,
Mr Michael Sweeney, Administrative Officer, Economic Development,
Mr Eoghan Nolan, Assistant Planner,
Ms Rachael Jordan, Administrative Officer, Housing,
Ms Caroline Creane, Senior Staff Officer, Housing,

Apologies:

Cllr Mary Farrell,
Mr Gerry Forde, Senior Engineer, Environment.

At the commencement of the meeting a resolution was passed to hold this meeting in Blackwater Community Centre, proposed by Cllr O Walsh, seconded by Cllr A Donohoe as agreed at a former Municipal District Council Meeting.

Cllr J Sullivan queried the status of the Meeting and its compliance with the Standing Orders, Item No. 6 "*Place of Meeting and Address of Principal Offices*". He felt no statutory decision could be made which requires a vote and that any such decision made could be open to challenge.

Mr P Knight informed the Committee that he had raised this issue with the County Secretary who advised the meeting could proceed provided there was agreement amongst the members. District Director Ms L Hore concurred with this and stated that advice had been provided that the intention of holding a meeting in Blackwater as discussed at a previous Municipal District Meeting, complied with Standing Orders once a resolution was passed at the beginning of the meeting.

Ms Hore advised that legislation in relation to a Section 183 Notice requires approval at Full Council. She noted the Section 183 Item Agenda for this Meeting was listed for discussion at district level to facilitate input by the elected members for recommendation to the Full Council.

It was agreed to defer the Section 183 until 4:00pm, proposed by Cllr A Bolger, seconded by Cllr A Donohoe.

No. 1 Deputation

1.1 Deputation from Scoil Naomh Bríde, Blackwater:

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr D Kenny welcomed representatives from the Board of Management, Parent's Association & Staff of Scoil Naomh Bríde, Blackwater to the Meeting.

Representatives outlined their concerns for the safety of children arriving and departing from the National School in Blackwater, highlighting the issue of continuous footpaths, no cycle paths and no safe crossing point which results in children walking through the bus parking area or through the petrol station forecourt to access the school. The deputation also highlighted insufficient parking spaces outside the school gate, insufficient space for cars to turn safely and cars parking on both sides of a narrow road.

Representatives called on the Council to conduct a full assessment to establish what safety measures can be put in place to keep children safe.

Suggested solutions offered by the deputation included the acquisition by the Council of an adjacent property to provide a car parking area for buses, a manned pedestrian crossing, footpaths & cycle lanes, improved signage, clear road marking and reduced traffic speed.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr D Kenny acknowledged the concerns of the deputation and thanked Blackwater National School representatives for attending the Meeting.

1.2 Deputation from Blackwater Tidy Towns:

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr D Kenny welcomed Mr Doug Taylor of Blackwater Tidy Towns to the Meeting.

Mr Taylor sought assistance from the Council for some large-scale projects which the Tidy Town Group were unable to progress, some of which included road resurfacing within the village, white lining on the main road & junctions, continuous footpaths throughout the village, footpath repairs outside the Community Centre, bridge repairs, a footpath extending to Kilmuckridge and Ballyconnigar Beach and village signage to be refreshed.

Cllr O Walsh commended the Blackwater Tidy Towns Group for their outstanding work throughout the village which has led to increased points in the National Tidy Towns Competition each year.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr D Kenny thanked Mr Taylor for his presentation and commended the Group's work to date.

No. 2 Confirmation of Minutes & Matters Arising

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr P Breen, seconded by Cllr O Walsh the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Gorey-Kilmuckridge MD held on April 18th, 2023, were signed, and adopted.

2.2 Matters Arising:

It was agreed to deal with Matters Arising under each relevant Report.

No. 3 Consideration of Reports, Recommendations & Presentations

3.1 Planning

The Planning Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted. Mr E Nolan responded to queries raised by the members and agreed to forward details of the policy in relation to log cabins.

3.2 Housing

The Housing Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted. Ms C Creane provided relevant updates to the Committee and responded to any queries raised.

Cllr A Bolger sought an update on the St. Josephs and St. Walerans developments to which Ms Creane agreed to report back on. Cllr Bolger also enquired when the Ramsfort Affordable Housing tender will be granted. Ms Creane advised applications are currently being assessed.

Cllr P Breen sought an update on the current position with the Monamolín Housing Projects. Ms Creane again agreed to report back on these developments.

Cllr D Devereux asked for a timeline when adequate housing will be available for refugees and asylum seekers who are currently being temporarily housed in tourist accommodation. Ms Creane advised the Ukraine Response Unit deal with such matters.

Cllr J Sullivan again expressed his disappointment with the lack of progress with the Tober Mhuire development. Ms. Creane confirmed that the Council is currently working with the developer.

3.3 Water Services

The Water Services Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted. Mr B Hammel responded to queries raised by the members. Cllr A Donohoe enquired about the current position with the upgrading of Treatment Plants in small, rural villages. Mr Hammel agreed to report back at the next District Meeting.

Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin requested that the District Administrator write to Uisce Éireann expressing the members frustration at their delayed response to queries when raised.

3.4 Environment

The Environment Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted.

Cllr D Devereux expressed his disappointment with the Chief Executive and Environment SPC, who having promised to install a paint tin disposal facility in North Wexford, have not delivered. Cllr Devereux added that Wicklow County Council have now agreed to accommodate with the disposal of empty paint tins from the district.

Cllr J Sullivan sought an update on the compost factory at Ballyminaun to which Mr P Knight agreed to report back on.

3.5 Roads

The Roads Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted. Ms J Kehoe responded to queries raised by the members including:

- ✚ Overgrowth obstructing signage and visibility at crossroads throughout the district,
- ✚ Clean-up of footpaths & kerbing on Main Street & Esmonde Street and refurbishment of litter bins throughout the town,
- ✚ Safety concerns at Ramstown/Paul Funge Boulevard Junction,
- ✚ Road Markings in Monageer.

Ms Kehoe also responded to issues raised by deputations earlier in the Meeting. Ms Kehoe suggested that Blackwater National School apply for the Active Travel Safe Routes to School Programme through the NTA and said road surfacing and marking within the village will be completed by the Council in due course. She noted that the Council could address the issue with the footpath outside Blackwater Community Centre and that the footpath extension towards Kilmuckridge could be looked at under the Active Travel Scheme.

3.6 Additional Departmental Reports

The Community Development, Library Services and Wexford Fire Services Reports, copies of which had previously been circulated were noted.

3.7 District Administrator's Report

The District Administrator's Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted.

Cllr A Bolger referred to the General Municipal Allocation and said he did not want an underspend recorded in Town Twinning. Mr P Knight suggested amalgamating the Twinning Allocation with the Tourism Allocation, to which Ms L Hore added, funds can be re-allocated at the member's request.

No. 4 Prescribed Business by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District Members

4.1 Section 183 – Transfer of Lands at Ballinatrav Lower, Courtown, Gorey:

District Director, Ms L Hore outlined the Section 183 details as in the Memo to the members in consideration of disposing of two plots of land at Ballinatrav Lower, Courtown, Gorey. The first, 1.65-acre site (Folios WX16279F) currently being used as a public car park by WCC is

to be transferred to TYOL Bayview LTD for the purpose of a hotel, of a scale to be agreed by Wexford County Council. The second 117m² site which was used as part of an access lane separating the now demolished Bayview and Ounavarra hotels to be transferred to TYOL Bayview LTD to facilitate construction of mixed-use development.

The disposal of both sites is subject to the developer lodging associated planning applications within 12 months of the passing of this resolution. Both parties are agreeable in principle to the proposed exchange of these two sites for an 0.85-acre site (Folios WX56565F) of the developer's lands at Ballinatray Lower, Courtown, Gorey on which Wexford County Council intends to develop this site as a public amenity and public parking area.

Ms L Hore recommended consideration of the Section 183 for several reasons:

- ✚ €25m investment for Courtown providing significant conference & business opportunity,
- ✚ Shortage of 500 beds in accommodation supply in County Wexford,
- ✚ Development will be subject to normal planning permission,
- ✚ Supports the plan for a marina.

Some members had reservations and felt they had insufficient information to make a recommendation:

- ✚ absence of a Feasibility Study,
- ✚ absence of the market valuation of both sites,
- ✚ whether there will be a financial transfer on this transaction,
- ✚ Lack of clarity of the 117m² second site,
- ✚ 'First refusal' on the 1.65-acre site and why the Council must buy it back after 12 months and why there is no 'first refusal' on the 117m² site,
- ✚ where the Coastguard Office will be accommodated.

Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin felt the long-term focus should be to return the Taravie & Courtown Hotels to tourism and to build a modest boutique-style hotel on the footprint of the former Bayview Hotel Site.

Ms L Hore acknowledged that the members want to ensure all procedures are being followed and to safeguard any concerns the necessary conditions have been put in place following legal advice. She confirmed there will be no financial transfer on this transaction, that it will be a direct transfer of land for land and that independent valuations were completed on both sites. Ms Hore said she would be available to clarify any queries from the members before the June Full Council Meeting Section 183 Notice.

Following this discussion, the Section 183 – Transfer of Lands at Ballinatray Lower, Courtown, Gorey was recommended to go to the June Full Council, proposed by Cllr O Walsh, seconded by Cllr A Donohoe.

A counter proposal was received from Cllr F Ó’Súilleabháin to defer any recommendation to the June GKMD Meeting, seconded by Cllr A Bolger.

Cllr F Ó’Súilleabháin’s counter proposal was put to a vote:

Cllr Donal Kenny	Against
Cllr Andrew Bolger	For
Cllr Pip Breen	Against
Cllr Diarmuid Devereux	For
Cllr Anthony Donohoe	Against
Cllr Willie Kavanagh	Against
Cllr Fionntán Ó’Súilleabháin	For
Cllr Joe Sullivan	For
Cllr Oliver Walsh	Against
For	4 Votes
Against	5 Votes

Cllr F Ó’Súilleabháin’s counter proposal was defeated and the Section 183 – Transfer of Lands at Ballinatray Lower, Courtown, Gorey proceeds to the June Full Council Meeting for decision.

4.2 Proposal for Expenditure of LPT & Member’s Discretionary GMA Allocations for 2023:

Mr P Knight outlined the two Kilmuckridge Projects proposed to receive funding under the GMA Local Property Tax (LPT) Allocation and Member’s Discretionary Allocation for 2023, as circulated to the members, proposed by Cllr D Devereux, seconded by Cllr A Donohoe.

No. 5 Notice of Motion from Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District

None.

No. 6 Correspondence

None.

No. 7 AOB

Cllr A Donohoe referred to the Councils proposed spend of approx. €208m on major projects over the period 2023-2025, €11m of which is the proposed capital spend for the Gorey Kilmuckridge District. Cllr Donohoe expressed his concern over such a small percentage of spend for one-third the size of the county and asked how this non-proportionality of allocation can be addressed. He also requested that the cost of Esmonde Lane Works be included under the Esmonde Street Public Realm Improvement Works, a project which has

already been scaled back. Ms L Hore agreed to bring back both Cllr Donohoe's concerns to the management team.

Cllr D Devereux noted the Gorey-Courtown Footpath was not listed as a Special Project under the 3-Year Capital Programme 2023-2025, a project which remains undelivered.

Cllrs requested a full breakdown of Gorey District Park expenditure.

Cllr D Devereux expressed his disappointment with the announced closing of the Gorey Visitor Centre at the end of this month and re-iterated that Wexford County Council had no input into County Wexford Chamber's decision to do so.

Sympathies

Members proposed a Vote of Sympathy to the families of those recently bereaved, the late Jack Morris, Dolores Doyle, and Andrzej Marek Winnicki.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Daingnithe ar an _____ lá de _____ 2023

**Cathaoirleach,
Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District**