

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District
held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, The Avenue, Gorey
on Tuesday 18th July 2023, at 2:30pm**

Attendance:

In the Chair:

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

Officials:

Ms Liz Hore, Director of Services & District Director,
Mr Philip Knight, Municipal District Administrator,
Ms Joanne Kehoe, Senior Executive Engineer,
Mr Barry Hammel, Executive Engineer,
Ms Margaret Kelly, Clerical Officer,
Ms Paula Shortall, Senior Staff Officer, Housing,
Ms Caroline Creane, Senior Staff Officer, Housing,
Mr Sean Savage, Architectural Technician, Housing,
Mr Enda Brennan, Executive Engineer, Environment,
Mr Philip Mansfield, Executive Planner.

No. 1 Deputations

Cycling and Pedestrian Association

Focusing on accessibility for all in relation to road infrastructure in the area, An Cathaoirleach and the members thanked the group for their presentation and said it was the way forward.

Gorey Development Group

Focusing on Gorey Market House and utilising the community space within the centre of the town, An Cathaoirleach and the members thanked the group for their presentation and said that the structure was of historical importance and must be put back into use if it is not to deteriorate further. In response to a query raised by the members, Director of Service Ms L Hore said that Wexford County Council had not considered selling the building. She stated she would liaise with the Property Management Team and Heritage Officer to identify any remedial works required.

No. 2 Confirmation of Minutes & Matters Arising

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes:

On the proposal of Cllr, W Kavanagh, seconded by Cllr D Devereux the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Gorey-Kilmuckridge MD held on June 20th, 2023, were signed, and adopted.

On the proposal of Cllr, W Kavanagh, seconded by Cllr A Donohoe the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Gorey-Kilmuckridge MD held on June 20th, 2023, were signed, and adopted.

2.2 Matters Arising:

Cllr D Kenny referred to Cllr J Sullivan's objection to his presiding over the elections of Chair and Vice-Chair at the GKMD Annual Meeting which led to the District Administrator chairing the elections. Cllr Sullivan acknowledged that according to the provisions of the Local Government Act, Cllr Kenny should have chaired the election as outgoing Chair.

Cllr J Sullivan raised concerns over the wording of the Minutes of the June GKMD Statutory Meeting. He felt it implied that he was driving a false narrative. He further stated that several businesses he had visited had not been visited by the District Administrator and highlighted the number of formal objections raised against the proposed road closure notice. Cllr Sullivan concluded that Health & Safety issues had not been a factor at previous festival events.

Mr P Knight defended his previous remarks and was concerned that Cllr Sullivan was inferring that Mr Knight was misrepresenting his visits to businesses on the Main Street. Cllr Donohoe suggested that concerns should be addressed to the Festival Committee rather than the Municipal District. He further asked that the issue be put into perspective, and that only a section of the Main Street would be closed. He said in all only half a shopping day would be affected.

A short debate ensued relating to the proposed road closure with several members noting the contact they had with the retailers. The Health & Safety issues and the potential benefits from the road closure were mentioned. Ms L Hore concluded by stating that last year's festival was a great success, and that the festival was possibly a victim of its own success. Issues had been identified and flagged for Health & Safety reasons which had to be addressed. She noted that the Committee had listened to the concerns of the businesses that might be affected. However, the decision that was made had to be for the benefit of the town and the public. She said the festival was a positive step towards the promotion of Gorey as a destination town and encouraged people to work with the Committee.

Cllr D Devereux sought clarification on the €2m investment for Esmonde Street. Ms L Hore confirmed that the funding is in place and that plans will be re-drafted following consultation with interested parties. She added that the final decision regarding Esmonde Street will only be made with the approval of the GKMD Committee.

Cllr A Donohoe sought clarification on whether the St. Waleran's Access Road was going ahead. Ms L Hore said she would revert with an answer at the September Meeting.

Cllr A Donohoe again expressed his dismay that Gorey Capital Projects were only allocated €8m over the next three years, out of a countywide allocation of €207m. Cllr D Devereux agreed and felt it very difficult to remain positive when investment in the town is so lacking.

No. 3 Consideration of Reports, Recommendations & Presentations

3.1 LECP Presentation

Mr Niall Conway and Mr Liam Mannix of KPMG presented the core principles of the new LECP.

Cllr M Farrell noted the importance of lifelong learning, public transport and suggested a rebranding of “Ireland’s Ancient East”. Cllr F Ó’Súilleabháin proposed that local procurement be incorporated into the Economic Development strand.

Several members noted the importance of tourism to the local economy but were concerned that there was a lack of suitable accommodation to meet the demand. Mr Conway replied that the district had become a victim of its own success as a tourist destination. An Cathaoirleach, Cllr P Breen also noted the lack of campervan facilities in the area.

Ms L Hore stated there was a remit for planning; the focus would be on the marine now as Wexford has been designated coastal under new legislation. The meeting was advised that any other queries could be submitted to claudelclancy@wexfordcoco.ie.

3.2 Choice Based Letting Presentation

A brief presentation on the Choice Based Letting System available to housing applicants was given by Ms C Creane. Ms Creane explained that the System will run each week to update the housing applicants’ choices and that the Housing Officer will allocate as per the housing need of the applicant.

Ms Creane advised that dedicated tablets will be available in each library for people without access to the internet and where an applicant is unable to use the system, they will be contacted to establish what issues they may have.

Following the launch of the live system Ms Creane explained that the only way to be considered for a house will be to use the system and express an interest in a property. Once an expression of interest is submitted for a property, the applicant must take the allocation or be removed from the system for one year. All queries relating to the system can be submitted to CBL@wexfordcoco.ie.

Ms L Hore welcomed the System and said it will go a long way in relieving the current issues with refusals.

3.3 Housing

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr P Breen welcomed the advancement of the Monamolín development. Mr S Savage, Architectural Technician Housing Capital told the meeting that a Part 8 will be required for the development which will come before the members for approval. He added that an application for funding has been sent to the Department, that an agreement has been reached with Uisce Éireann to take over the plant and it is proposed to bundle this project with three others and offer the tender on a DBO basis.

On presentation of the Housing Report, the members raised queries with Ms P Shortall, Housing. *Ms Shortall subsequently provided a response to all queries in her email of 6th September (attached for ease of reference).*

Ms L Hore informed the meeting that WCC has secured €6.5m from URDF funding for derelict/empty houses. Cllr A Donohoe hoped that this funding will be distributed throughout the county more equitably than the Capital Fund. In response, Ms Hore informed the members that it will be allocated as per the number of houses in each area.

Cllr J Sullivan expressed concern that houses being considered under the Tenant in Situ Scheme were being excluded because of the floor area being too big. Cllr A Bolger commented that people are frustrated when tenants applying for this Scheme are refused because the house concerned is deemed as not meeting the tenants housing needs.

Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin suggested that the Chief Executive contact An Bord Pleanála to request they expedite the appointment of a new Inspector.

Cllr W Kavanagh suggested the use of mobile homes as a means of emergency accommodation. After a short discussion the Director stated that the Council was bound by legislation.

3.4 Environment

The Environment Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted and Mr E Brennan either responded to queries raised or agreed to revert with answers at the September Meeting:

- ✚ Update on Ballymoney Access Works
- ✚ Re-planting Beach Talks for Community Groups interested in Beach Restoration
- ✚ Removal of rubbish from roadside ditches prior to hedge-cutting
- ✚ Re-visit litter collection in Courtown during summer months
- ✚ Septic Grants for private dwellings
- ✚ Installation of Dog Poo Bins in coastal areas
- ✚ Prior notification to residents of emissions being discharged from the Ballyminaune Plant
- ✚ Unacceptable noise pollution for residents of Cluainín Estate.

At 5:30pm it was proposed by Cllr F Ó'Súilleabháin and seconded by Cllr A Bolger to continue the meeting. Cllr A Donohoe suggested that considering the length of today's Meeting that in future only one Deputation be accepted at a meeting.

3.5 Planning

The Planning Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted and Mr P Mansfield responded to any queries raised.

Cllr O Walsh asked if the Council could bring enforcement proceedings to ensure that a builder finishes a project. Mr Mansfield said he would investigate this matter and revert.

Cllr D Kenny complimented the Planning Department in reducing the wait time for Pre-Planning Meetings down to 39 days. Ms L Hore told the meeting that the Department has surpassed its targets and advised that a Working Group had been set up for this purpose and that it has worked well.

3.6 Roads

The Roads Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted. Ms J Kehoe provided relevant updates to the Committee including:

- ✚ Re-commencement of Surface Dressing, weather permitting.
- ✚ Works progressing at Courtown, with a Feasibility Study being carried out.

Ms Kehoe also responded to the following queries raised:

- ✚ 74 Main Street – a tree impeding the light into the property.
- ✚ Update on The Coach Road Roundabout & Green's Berry Farm Junction.
- ✚ Condition of Fort Road surface.
- ✚ Completion of works on the Colintaggart Road and traffic issues on Paul Funge Boulevard.
- ✚ Boley Bridge repairs.
- ✚ Speed limit issues to be submitted through the speedlimits@wexfordcoco.ie portal.

3.7 *Water Services*

The Water Services Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted and Mr B Hammel provided relevant updates to the Committee, including approval for a new reservoir for Camolin.

Mr Hammel informed the meeting that some of the District Engineers will be transferring over to Uisce Éireann on the 6th of September. Cllr F O' Súilleabháin thanked the Water Services Department for the service they have provided for the area and said it is another sad step towards privatisation.

3.8 *District Administrator's Report*

The District Administrator's Report, a copy of which had previously been circulated was noted and Mr P Knight provided relevant updates to the Committee, including the submission of grant funding for a new Community Centre in Riverchapel and the completion of Paving Works in Ballycanew.

In relation to the upcoming Market House Festival, Mr Knight informed the meeting that at least 75% of expenditure was with local businesses and expected the festival to draw a large crowd over the bank holiday weekend.

Mr Knight also noted the following upcoming events in the district:

- The Wexford Rose Tour to Gorey
- The Gap Arts Festival
- Culture Night
- Gorey Yellow Belly Comedy Festival

Director of Service Ms L Hore commented that it was a great programme of events for both locals and visitors.

Cllr A Bolger asked if there was a completion date for the playground at Courtown. Mr. Knight advised he would report back.

Cllr A Bolger asked that Ms Sandra Bryan, International Pool Tournament Winner be included in the Clubs being brought on the stage at the Market House Festival. Cllr Farrell suggested that this issue should be raised with the Women's Coalition and commented that it was outrageous that her achievement has not been recognised by the appropriate sporting body.

Cllr D Devereux expressed his congratulations to Cllr A Bolger on becoming the first barrister to come out of the Ballyoughter/Ballycanew Area.

Cllr M Farrell congratulated Blackwater on their Tidy Towns achievement. She also added that outside Gorey Civic Centre could receive some attention as it has become very dilapidated. Mr Knight said he will address this matter.

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

None.

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

None.

No. 6 Correspondence

None.

No. 7 AOB

Sympathies:

Members proposed a Vote of Sympathy to the family of the late Eleanor Kelly.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Daingnithe ar an _____ lá de _____ 2023

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