

**Minutes of the New Ross Municipal District Monthly Meeting
held on Wednesday 18th October 2023 in the Tholsel, Quay St., New Ross**

Presiding: Councillor Anthony Connick

In Attendance: Councillor John Fleming
Councillor Michael Sheehan
Councillor Michael Whelan
Councillor Pat Barden
Cllr Bridin Murphy

Officials Present:

Alan Fitzhenry – District Manager
Eamonn Hore - District Director
Padraig Lyng – Senior Executive Engineer
David Murphy - Acting Executive Engineer
Martina Donoghue – AO Housing
Ger Walsh – SO NRMD
Michelle Duffin – ASO NRMD
Melissa Goff – SSO Environment
Linda Lacey – Acting Director of Finance

Others Present: David Looby New Ross Standard
Gary Nolan & John Daly Greenlink
Gavin Campbell and Sarah Keating USI

Standing orders were suspended to allow a presentation by Greenlink, a presentation on the Duncannon Fort Masterplan and the Draft Budgetary Report 2024.

This was proposed by Cllr Fleming and seconded by Cllr Whelan.

Presentation on Greenlink

A presentation was given by Gary Nolan and John Daly and they responded to questions from the Members.

The Members were informed that as of September 2023, 113 Wexford people were employed on the project.

In relation to queries re works, the Members were informed that it was expected that works would be completed by Christmas and reinstatement would be completed by March, in conjunction with Wexford County Council. Communication on the works would be by advertisement 3 times daily on South East Radio.

Presentation on Duncannon Fort Masterplan

A presentation was given by Gavin Campbell and Sarah Keating USI and they responded to questions from the Members.

It was proposed by Cllr Whelan and seconded by Cllr Sheehan, that the launch of the plan should take place in November in Duncannon, in order to get the community behind the plan.

Thanks were extended to Sharon Ryan – New Ross Municipal District, Catherine McLoughlin – Heritage Officer Wexford County Council, Wexford County Council Engineers and all who had worked on the project so far.

3.0.3 Draft Budgetary Plan 2024

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Lynda Lacey, Acting Director of Finance, who presented the Draft Budgetary Plan 2024.

The adoption of the plan was proposed by Cllr Sheehan and seconded by Cllr Fleming and agreed by all.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for their attendance and presentation.

Congratulations

Cllr Murphy congratulated Rathgarogue Community on their recent Musical evening and suggested inviting them in to give a presentation on their grant application.

Cllr Fleming congratulated Sean Lyng on winning gold in doubles and singles at the European racquetball championships in Germany and he also congratulated Duffrey Rovers on winning the Under 13 division 2 football championships.

Cllr Whelan congratulated John Whelan on his fourth time winning the World Ploughing Championships in Latvia.

Congratulations were extended to all the Tidy Towns groups in the district on their scores and to the Staff and Service Users in Cumas on their funding allocation.

Cllr Barden asked to be associated with all congratulations.

Cllr Connick, Cathaoirleach offered commiserations to Tadgh Furlong and the Irish Rugby Team and congratulated them on their performance in the World Rugby

Tournament. He congratulated his fellow New Ross Tidy Town Team Members on their increase of 15 points on the 2022 score and also congratulated all the other Tidy Towns groups in the district. He offered congratulations to the Eugene O Neill Festival organisers and wished them success on continuing building the relationship with their counterparts in Danville.

Sympathies

Cllr Connick and Cllr Sheehan sympathised with New Ross Municipal District Staff Member Sharon Ryan on the death of her uncle, Patrick Ryan.

Condolences were offered to the family of Una Long, Haughton Place, New Ross by Cllr Sheehan.

Cllr Fleming and Cllr Murphy sympathised with the family of Mary Deacon, Clonroche.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

1.1 Monthly Meeting –

The 13th September 2023 Minutes were proposed as presented by Councillor Barden and seconded by Cllr Murphy.

Matters Arising

N/A

An extension of meeting time was proposed by An Cathaoirleach Cllr Connick and seconded by Cllr Sheehan.

2.0 Consideration of Reports and Recommendations.

2.1 District Managers Report

The District Manager delivered his report and responded to queries raised by the Members.

Town and Village Renewal 2023.

Expressions of Interest were sought by the Economic Development Section for the 2023 Town & Village Renewal Scheme and a countywide shortlist has now been prepared for the Department of Rural & Community Development which includes Rathgarogue and Cushinstown Community Development Groups. Congratulations were extended to them on making the list and commiserations to the applicants who didn't make it this time.

Emigrant Park Official Opening

The District Manager announced that Minister for Rural & Community Development Heather Humphreys TD, has confirmed she will attend the official opening ceremony of the newly built Emigrant Park, New Ross on Thursday 26th October at 12 noon and will cut the ribbon along with the Cathaoirligh of Wexford County Council and NRMD, Oireachtas members & Councillors. Both the Canadian Ambassador to Ireland and the Irish Ambassador to Canada will be in attendance on the day.

Joint Meeting with Callan-Thomastown MD

It was proposed and agreed by the Members that a joint meeting would be held on 8th November at 12 noon in the Tholsel chamber. The Members requested that the new Chief Executive of Kilkenny County Council be invited to the meeting.

Tidy Towns Success

New Ross Tidy Towns received a bronze medal in the 2023 competition, the highest place ever achieved by the town and in particular, the report commented on the marked improvements in the streetscapes, public spaces, green spaces and landscaping. The District Manager congratulated the Elected Members for financial support and the committee and volunteers, town crew and supporters on the excellent result. He advised that an event would be organised to mark the occasion towards the end of this year and also congratulated all the other places in the district for their efforts and results.

PROJECTS

CCTV

The Members were informed that the CCTV scheme pack, approved by the Garda Commissioners Office, is still with Garda HQ and that they are now requesting updated vetting for the file from some of the officials involved which will take a number of weeks and possibly months to conclude. Once received, the project can progress to issuing the CCTV tender. The GP Section of the council is overseeing the tender process and work has already begun on the requirements for civil and electrical

elements. It is planned for advance ground works to start as soon as the final approved pack has returned from the Gardai.

Brennan's Lane/Shambles

The District Manager advised that the project team are currently pushing hard for final drawings & documents to be sent back from Avanti Architects. Once received and approved by the Council, Avanti will advertise the tender to secure a contractor.

Duncannon Fort Masterplan

As presented to the meeting, Urban Scale Interventions (USI) and their multi-disciplinary team have completed their work on the masterplan and the District Manager thanked everyone who worked on, or contributed to, the extensive project. The Masterplan will now be uploaded online for public access and copies will be available. Next steps are to engage with Failte Ireland on this document and to explore funding options generally.

Duncannon Fort Works

The Members were informed that Colm Moriarty (licenced archaeologist) has been appointed to carry out archaeological services for the Duncannon Fort works. He had applied for Section 14 Ministerial consent (under the National Monuments Act) and consent was confirmed earlier in the week and site investigations will take place, before works commence in early 2024. A pre-planning application has also been submitted by the project team, as required.

Sweeney's Garden Centre

The District Manager informed the Members that work has been intensifying behind the scenes in recent months between the district office and the Property Section of Wexford County Council, to progress the situation at Sweeney's Garden Centre. The clean up works started already and hopefully a new Garden Centre will be in operation at the site by Christmas.

Advance Factory

No further update to report since last meeting. In negotiations.

Motorhome Park

Following the screening report, a survey of the Motorhome Park site has been completed by Davidson Hickey Surveying Consultants and drawings were received. Work continue on detailed design. Part VIII documents will be prepared, with a plan to bring it before the Members before the end of 2023.

Pedestrianisation

The Members were advised that the Town Centre First Plan has now been completed and that the planned pedestrianisation of Quay Street and how best to develop this, would be informed by the TCF plan. Funding will be sought under Town Centre First / RRDF also.

New Ross Skate Park

Fehily Timoney the consultants appointed to prepare Part VIII reports and screening for the proposed Skate Park at Rosbercon, have been instructed and have started work. Special Projects are managing this process. Once complete, these plans will be presented to the Municipal District for approval. Funding will then need to be sought to realise the project.

Sensory Garden

The Members were informed that NRMD were delighted to secure €30,000 in funding earlier this year, under the Community Recognition Fund to develop a Sensory Garden in Pearse Park. A project team was established in the district and has been busy working away on the project. It is expected to update the Members of plans and progress at the next meeting.

Pearse Park Works & Green Flags Achieved

The parks were recently visited by the Green Flag judges and the flags have been maintained for Pearse & Library Parks. The District Manager congratulated the outdoor crew members in conjunction with the District Office staff for this excellent result.

In addition, supported by Sports Capital funding & the Elected Members, works on the tennis court and athletics area are substantially complete with line painting on the court to be done. Resurfacing of the memorial garden path has also been completed.

A new submission has been made in the latest call for Sports Capital Funding, to resurface the MUGA area, increase public lighting and add a teenage friendly space amongst other items, in Pearse Park.

Cllr Murphy congratulated the Community Sports Hub of which she is a member of the team, on their work.

EVENTS

Eugene O'Neill & New Ross Piano Festival.

On behalf of the District, the District Manager sent huge congratulations to the organisers of both the Eugene O'Neill Festival and the New Ross Piano Festival. He said that the final events of the Autumn Festival Series, saw large crowds and brought business and visitors to the town and district.

As part of the Eugene O'Neill Festival, "One Festival, Two Countries", the Mayor of Danville, California, Robert Storer, along with his fellow Council member Newell Arnerich, were welcomed to New Ross, strengthening our Friendship City relationship.

A cast of professional actors, members of the Board of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, and Society President Katie Johnson and in total over 30 visitors from California and the wider US, visited New Ross for a week, in addition to large crowds in the theatre each night.

All these Festivals are supported by Wexford County Council and New Ross Municipal District and the organisers are grateful to the Elected Members of New Ross Municipal District for their continued support.

Cllr Whelan was delighted to see almost 40 people from the festival in Ballycullane over the festival weekend at a skittles tournament, which was a way of building relationships with the visitors from California. Cllr Murphy congratulated the festival on the large audiences it attracted to the events and the Director noted that it was the most successful year yet with a large number of visitors.

Nollaig New Ross 2023

The Christmas Team, with Reps from NRMD, the Chamber of Commerce, St Michaels Theatre, Dunbrody Visitor Centre and Visit New Ross, have met to discuss the 2023 Christmas campaign for New Ross Town.

The Christmas lights "Switch On", takes place on Saturday 18th November and signals the start of Christmas 2023. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr Connick, accompanied by Santa Claus, will turn on the lights along with others. There will be the Santa parade from the old fire station to the Tholsel as well as musical entertainment on the day and the Rathnure Characters will be on hand to meet the children as well.

Following the success of the first "Sensory Santy" experience last year, the district is again working with the Dreambig Foundation for the light switch on day and this year, the Sensory Santy will be starting earlier to facilitate even more children than last year. Dreambig will be advertising and organising the bookings, which must be booked in advance.

As always and with the support of the Elected Members, the district will invest heavily this year in the Christmas campaign and there will be further information on the Christmas campaign at the November meeting.

The District Manager asked everyone to support New Ross and District again this year and come and enjoy the festive season and the buzz in New Ross Town.

Councillor Connick expressed concern at the number of lights which were out in the town and was advised by the Director that a new lighting plan is being developed for the quay, which is an area which accounts for many of the outages.

2.1a Special Projects

The report was submitted to the Members. Cllr Sheehan asked for an update on Docks hotel in John St and the District Manager advised that he would revert. He also requested that a Greenway Officer be appointed and the District Manager advised that for now, that Jill Kelleher remained the contact but that when a permanent officer was appointed, that he would inform the Members.

2.2. Roads Report

The Roads Engineer delivered his report and responded to queries from the Members.

The Members were informed that further safe schools applications could not be made until the outstanding ones are completed. The Engineer advised that he would revert with an update on Adamstown.

Cllr Murphy brought the Engineers attention to surface water on the road from Ballymackessy to Clonroche and he advised that he would speak to the Roads Dept but the Director advised that it was 'run off' from land.

An Cathaorileach congratulated Martin Connick who was a member of the roads crew for 42 years, on his retirement and he welcomed Paul Cassin and Eamonn Doherty to the crew.

2.3. Housing Report.

The Housing report was delivered by the Administrative Officer, Housing who responded to queries from the Members.

Cllr Sheehan requested that an explanation of the rent calculation be given to the tenant when the next rent review takes place and the AO agreed to look at it for the next time.

The Members enquired as to when all houses would be going on the Choice Based Letting system. They were advised that casual vacancies in New Ross were going on CBL but that no big numbers were expected to deliver in New Ross in the near future.

Cllr Fleming inquired as to the number of pets allowed under a Local Authority tenancy and was advised that two domestic pets only, are permitted. He advised that he would email the AO with details of an issue in relation to a new tenancy.

2.4 Planning Report

The Executive Planner made her report available to the Members.

2.5 Planning Grants

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.6 Planning Refusals

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.7 Libraries Archives & Arts Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

Cllr Sheehan proposed writing to the Minister for the replacement of the library building in New Ross.

2.8 Community Development Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.9 Environment Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.10 Fire Services Report

The content of the report was noted by the Members.

2.11 Members Query System

The content of the report was noted by the Members

3.0 Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Municipal District Members

3.0.1 Section 183- Landscape, New Ross, Co. Wexford Y34Y029.
This was proposed by Cllr Sheehan and seconded by Cllr Fleming.

3.0.2 Section 183- Arnestown, New Ross, Co. Wexford.
This was proposed by Cllr Sheehan and seconded by Cllr Fleming.

3.0.3 Draft Budgetary Plan - Report 2024

Presented and proposed, seconded and agreed by all, earlier in the meeting.

4.0 Other Business

4.1 Presentation by Greenlink
(Presented earlier in the meeting)

4.2 Presentation by USI

(Presented earlier in the meeting)

5.0 Notice of Motion/s –

N/A

6.0 Correspondence

6.0.1 Kennedy Summer School correspondence

6.0.2 Hook Tourism Event Report

7.0 AOB

Cllr Barden requested information on the current residents of Cedar Lodge in Carrigbyrne and was advised to contact Amanda Byrne on it.

THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

Signed _____
Cathaoirleach

Date _____