

## **BLESSINGTON AND DISTRICT FORUM**

### **Minutes of Meeting Held in at St Mary's National School, Blessington on Monday 9 April 2018 at 7.30 pm**

**Present:** List of members as per the attached

**Apologies:** List of apologies as per the attached

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 March 2018 having been previously distributed were reviewed and proposed by Charlie Brophy seconded by Carmel Cashin, and signed by the Chairman.

#### **Welcome to new members.**

The Chairman extended a warm welcome on behalf of members of the Forum to new members Peter Deaton and Michelle Hurley.

#### **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

- Andra Coogan Johnston advised that a meeting with Disability Ireland has been scheduled for tomorrow Tuesday 10 April and a report will be presented at the next meeting of the Forum.
- In addition to Frank Hanlon's comments concerning snow conditions at the last meeting, it was noted that Noel Murphy had also raised the possibility of a snow plough being available locally for these conditions.

#### **St Patricks Day Parade.**

Following the success of the St Patricks Day Parade members raised the following as points that could be borne in mind for next years parade.

- Include a band/piper.
- Request a road closure.
- Notify local residents well in advance.
- Review street entertainment and whether it is viable.
- Need more community floats.

Members expressed their appreciation to all who took part and particularly the dance groups on such a cold and breezy morning.

#### **CCTV Update.**

Members were thanked for forwarding comments to the Secretary in advance of the last meeting with consultants on Tuesday 20 March. Members were advised that these comments have been taken on board by the consultants and there will be further details in the coming months.

### **Town Team.**

Members were advised that the Town Team is now in place with John Horan as Chairman and Jason Mulhall as Vice Chairman and that the next meeting of the Town Team will be in the local County Council offices on 1 May 2018.

### **Tidy Towns.**

Jason Mulhall advised that bad weather over the past few months have hampered efforts to get going, however, Tidy Town volunteers are now out and about on Sunday mornings at 9.00am and on Thursday evenings at 7.00pm.

Members were advised of the following

- Tuesday 10 April 2018 Anita Moroney speaking on ECFM re election posters.
- Saturday 14 April 2018 Community Bee Monitoring Workshop
- Wednesday 18 April 2018 Recycling Workshop.
- Sunday 13, 20 or 27 May Community Clean Up Day.

The Secretary will be circulating to members details on the foregoing.

### **Community Awards.**

Carmel Cashin briefed members on the last meeting of the Blessington & District Forum Community Awards Committee where the items discussed were

- Do we need an award.
- Which awards are still viable.
- How are they currently judged.
- How are people nominated.
- To have a solo awards system not in conjunction with Tidy Towns.

Carmel advised that discussions are continuing but that the following are being considered.

- Judging panel review.
- Award for outstanding contribution to the community throughout current year.
- New award Carer of the Year.
- Discontinue a Sports Award.

Carmel advised that clear and definitive timelines for the 2018 awards will be agreed and that discussions are also ongoing on the event night itself.

The subcommittee will be meeting again over the coming weeks and further updates will be available at the May/June Forum meetings for members to then consider and review.

### **N81 Road Upgrade.**

Representatives from Brittas (John Moriarty), Hollywood (Richard Burke) and Dunlavin (Jimmy Whittle) joined the meeting for this discussion.

Peter Deaton and Carmel Cashin and Eamon Kelly opened the meeting on the Forum side. Eamon Kelly advised that some members have already met Stephen Donnelly on the issue but it is not clear that any action has followed on from that meeting.

The visiting representatives made the following points.

- Volume based statistics need to be collated
- Contact needs to be made with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Automobile Association and the RSA.
- These developments usually cost €1m per mile.
- It would be interesting to check local issues which arose on the Gort to Tuam bypass.
- It would seem that all documentation has been prepared in regard to the preferred route and Kildare County Council were the project leaders.
- There was consensus that there is huge traffic congestion at certain times of the day.
- Pollution in the town environs due to traffic dust is a concern.
- We need to establish the current status, what is pending, what is the timeline and also agree on what does the community want.
- Concerns that there is no TD representing West Wicklow
- Concerns on CPO regarding 5 properties in Brittas & 10 houses within 100feet
- In certain locations in Brittas the road network will be above the height of housing
- Other issues in Brittas are more immediate concerns, namely the lack of sewerage and public water supplies.
- Consider raising objections to housing on safety concerns around the road network capacity if it is not upgraded.
- Concerns expressed regarding the air quality in Blessington, suggestions to seek data from the EPA


In conclusion it was agreed to set up a working group comprising the representatives from Hollywood, Dunlavin, Ballymore Eustace, Brittas and Baltinglass and that that group be joined by Joe Hanly and Charlie Brophy from the Forum.

### **Other Matters.**

- The Chairman advised that Jim Corley & Paul Tyrell would be giving a talk in the Coimin Centre on Thursday 19 April 2018 at 8.00pm on Dame Ninette de Valois.
- Joe Hanly asked if the Forum could establish from Wicklow County Council what contingency arrangements are in hand to mobilise equipment during bad weather such as the recent snow conditions.
- Fr Richard advised that there would be a talk on data protection in the Coimin Centre on Thursday 26 April.
- Members were advised that there is a Heritage Walk on Saturday 21 April 2018 at 11.30am with Aidan Cruise.
- The Chairman advised that Mick McLoughlin has been appointed Treasurer of the new management committee at the Theatre.

The Chairman thanked all Forum members who had travelled earlier in the evening to the 5.30pm civic reception in County Buildings in Wicklow Town to mark our success in the Bank of Ireland Enterprise Towns Event in November. All agreed that it was an excellent event and helped establish and enhance communications between the Forum and Wicklow County Council. Members were advised that the success will be marked by signage which will now appear on all four entrances to the town over the coming weeks.

This concluded the business of the meeting, the next meeting being fixed for Monday 11 May 2018.

Signed:   
Chairman

Proposed Charlie Brophy

Seconded Pat Conboy