

Report: 13th Sept 2021 – Blessington Forum Zoom Meeting

The meeting was opened and chaired by Carmel Cashin at 7:30pm.

Apologies: Charlie Brophy, Eamonn Kelly, Marian McNally, Noel Nolan, Joe Hanly, Catherine Manzor, Noreen Keegan Kavanagh, Mick Duggan and Andra Coogan Johnson

The meeting was opened with a moments silence for Forum Member Brian Kane who had passed away during the summer. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h'anam dílis.

Correspondence

- Two Applications were made for T&VR.
- Submission made to the County Development Plan
- Letter received advising of the removal of cash services at AIB

Planning & Developments

- 4 Main Applications at the moment.
 - o Windlynn Application [new] – School and Housing on Kilmalum Rd
 - o Cairn Homes – Granted permission for housing on Inner Relief Rd
 - o Old Rectory – Development is close to being completed.
 - o Glenveigh – Site near St.Marys School is up for sale once more.
- Burgage Castle – No new updates.
- Works ongoing in the Blessington Square for a new pedestrian area.
- Peter Eustace confirmed West Wicklow House would sponsor either a new bin in the area if needed or else support the addition of a water pump to the Downshire Monument.

Action: Liam to contact Cairn Homes to see that the fencing around the pond area of the site on the inner relief road is reinstated.

Action: Liam to contact WCC on power supplies in the square.

BLUC

- Event Planning continues.
 - Fundraising from businesses continues, with thanks to businesses who have contributed.
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Environment

- Allotments Group – No updates on procuring a long term site from WCC.
- The Tidy Towns group continues to be active: Online Submission and judging for 2021, the group have purchased and installed a Pollytunnel on a site outside of the town, and several new planters have been added to enhance the public realm.

Social Inclusion(& Access Group)

- Disabled and Age Friendly Parking for the town is being discussed with WCC.
- Traffic Lights sequencing and times have been changed to allow for a longer time period to cross the road.
- Substance Abuse webinar with Kevin Fahy JLO for Baltinglass District is scheduled for the coming weeks. This webinar will give attendees insights into what to look for etc... and how to recognise issues that children may be facing.
- LEO are running a number of courses at the moment, including Women in Business and Greenway Business Supports.
- Women's Shed are running an Upcycling Course, thanks to McGreals for their support.
- Natasha organised for a number of positive mental health signs to be erected in Blessington on the approach roads, and the window art in the tourist office has been updated to reflect a similar message of support on mental health.

Safe Talk Project

- Niamh Cruden from the Regional Suicide Prevention group, along with Jeff O'Toole presented to the membership on the Safe Talk Project.
 - Rolled out in Athy (KE) and Blessington (WW)
 - Based on a success of an initiative in Jobstown by Jeff O'Toole, which had a high number of suicides. It is based on engagement with community leaders and early intervention. HSE saw the success and are now rolling it out.
 - Involves ½ day training on Safe Talk to deliver the skills to spot people at risk, how to intervene, keep them safe and access the appropriate supports.
 - Forum to facilitate and advise who could be good to receive the training. Programme is currently paused (Covid19) but hopeful to resume late October.
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A.O.B.

- Blessington Day Care working with the HSE on re-opening the facility.
- TFI Local Link is now active, and the times are linked to the Sallins train timetable. The 65 bus route remains the same, pending activity on the Bus Connects implementation.
- ½ Way to St.Patricks Festival organised for September.
- Pedestrian Safety Group established in recent weeks, to highlight some of the issues with the road network around the town, and lack of safe crossing points.

The meeting ended at 9.00pm and our next meeting will take place on October 11th at 7.30pm via zoom.
