

Report: 10th January 2022 – Blessington Forum Zoom Meeting

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

The report of the December meeting was proposed by Madge Tyrell and seconded by Noel Nolan.

Apologies: Dónal McCormack, Anita Moroney, Andrea Coogon-Johnson, Eamonn Kelly and Mick Duggan

Condolences

- Condolences were offered to the families of Shane O'Neill, Tom Tyrrell and Maurice O'Sullivan. It was noted that Shane O'Neill had worked closely with the BDF on the Blessington Greenway Phase1.

Correspondence

- RRDF Funding ~1 million funding allocation, but limited information at this time, the secretary to seek further information from Christine Flood and Susan Nicholls

Castel Maggiore – Twinning Request

- M.Doyle presented an update to the membership on the current status and the plans moving forward. It was noted that the feedback during the MD Meeting and afterwards was extremely positive, and most of the elected reps looked forward to working with and supporting the BDF in this project, and wished us well. The large number of support letters from local community groups and supporting documentation was presented to the District Administrator for filing as part of the twinning programme. It was noted for clarification purposes, that Mr.Enzo Farinelli facilitated the conversations and made the necessary introductions between BDF and CM in the early part of the process, It was further confirmed that CM had directly approached Mr. Farinella and Blessington with the request to consider twinning with them.
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Coimin Centre

- Opened on Wednesday and Fridays but still some limitations, hoping to further expand in the coming weeks / months.

Planning, Environment and Public Realm

- The Tidy Towns AGM will be held on February 7th
- Part 8 Application for Burgage Housing was discussed, and members were asked to consider making application to support the local residents, agreed that the details of the application would be forwarded to interested parties (N.Nolan, M.Doyle and L. Fay)
- Burgage Castle works remain stalled with the ESB
- BDF to make a request to WCC to address dereliction in the town, and the details to be sent to the Town Team (John Horan) and the District Manager (Breege Kilkenny). It was agreed that in the coming weeks M.Sargent, C.Cashin and J.Mulhall would walk the town and identify buildings in need of action.
- Water Treatment, notification was received that works were starting, and the upgrade would cater for a population increase of ~4,000 persons.
- Concerns raised that there were still no power at the Monument for the lights, fountain etc.. and agreed to follow up with the District Engineer (Pat Byrne).
- Members advised that works are imminent on the age friendly and disabled parking bays, the EV bays should also be added at the same time. The Age Friendly bays will be the first in Wicklow.
- Members expressed concerns about the large amount of illegal signage that was starting to appear in and around Blessington. It was agreed this was an issue for WCC to resolve these issues but that the BDF and BTT and individual members could highlight problems directly to WCC for investigation.

Fundraising

- A new fundraising group is to be established, the remit of the group will be to fundraise for all projects as a whole, and not any one project in particular. This group will consist of Liam, Frank, Catherine, Sue and Natasha.
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Christmas Lights

- Members of the Executive took the opportunity in early January and did a walk of the Main St. to examine the existing lights, and determine what needed to be replaced, what needed to be added and what needed to be upgraded.
- In a number of cases the existing lights have been water damaged and will need to be replaced. It was agreed to look at string lights instead of the existing type. It was also agreed to look at options to further enhance the lights at the Southern end of the town and then works towards the Northern end over a couple of years. All agreed that changes were needed to improve the overall appearance.
- The chair confirmed that WCC have agreed to provide power to the 4 Stone Tree and M.Sargent will contact Hudsons to organise funding of the lights, it was also agreed that the Dentists have an agreement in place to light the tree to the left of the 4 Stone Tree and that M.Sargent would coordinate this also.
- It was agreed that the BDF will also contact WCC to seek greater supports and input into the Christmas Lights, similar to what is done for the larger towns on the East Coast. It was clear that in some of these locations WCC were funding and erecting the lights, and members agreed that Blessington should be seeking similar. Others are being funded through their town teams and maybe this is the direction that needs to be taken in Blessington.

AOB

- C.Keogh advised members that the winners for the Christmas draw had been contacted in all but one case, and were delighted with their prizes.
- BDF to consider into the future what to do with storage for fixed assets.

The meeting ended at 9.00pm, and members were advised that our next meeting will take place on February 14th at 7.30pm with the venue to be determined in line with government guidelines.
