

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at 7.30 p.m.**

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**Present:** Councillor Déirdre De Búrca, Cathaoirleach  
Councillor Anne Egan  
Councillor John Brady  
Councillor John Byrne  
Councillor Caroline Burrell  
Councillor Brid Collins  
Councillor Anne Ferris  
Councillor David Grant  
Councillor John McManus  
Councillor Ciaran O'Brien  
Councillor Pat Vance

**Also present:** Mr. Des O'Brien, Director of Services  
Ms. Catherine Halligan, Town Clerk  
Mr. David Forde, Finance Administrative Officer  
Mr. Sean O'Neill, Town Engineer

**Apologies:** Councillor Joe Behan

Councillor Caroline Burrell asked the Cathaoirleach if the standing orders could be suspended at the end of the meeting to discuss the topic of Genetically Modified Organisms in Ireland. She stated that this is already in as a Green Party motion but it is now at a stage where it requires the members urgent support.

After some discussion on this matter and on the outstanding Notices of Motion, the members agreed to suspend the standing orders at 9.50pm to discuss this matter.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Monthly Meeting dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006.**

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It was proposed by Councillor John Byrne and seconded by Councillor Caroline Burrell and unanimously agreed to confirm and adopt the minutes of the Monthly Meeting dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

**2. Reports and Recommendations.**

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The Town Clerk stated that there are no reports and recommendations.

Councillor John Brady stated that he had requested a report a while ago on the condition of the Boghall Road and that he still had not received anything.

The Town Engineer stated that he had written to Wicklow County Council about this issue and he was still awaiting a response.

**3. To note the report of the Local Government Auditor regarding the Annual Financial Statement of Bray Town Council for the financial year ending 31/12/04.**

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The Auditors report was circulated to the members and the following points were raised –

- Council should have internal audit person.
- There are some areas that need attention. There is a decline in the percentage collection in rates. Commercial water rates also falling.
- Would also like an explanation on the €2.7 million extra in income. Expenditure is 2 million more than estimate.
- Overpayment to pensioners – can we have an explanation on what happened? This is gross negligence on part of the Council. Will the Council try to get the money back from these pensioners? These pensioners budget for every penny.
- Is the manager going to put in controls as requested by the auditor?
- It is very justifiable to have an internal audit. This council received a miserable increase of 5% from the Minister and a County Demand rise of 12%. This was the lowest increase in Ireland from the Minister. Increase in rates of 4.5 %. Rate collection reflects lack of business in the last number of years in the town.

The Town Manager stated the following –

- Collection rate was down because of the changeover of collectors – this improved in 2005 and again this year.
- Pensioners mistake - this was not discovered by the auditor, it was discovered by staff internally and brought to the auditors attention straight away. The less glare on the book we have to follow through the book on this matter.
- Wicklow County Council is supposed to supply Bray Town Council with an internal auditor, although we do have a county checker.
- Over expenditure – the figures in the Budget are only estimates. It is very difficult to predict these things.
- Generally the auditor was quite happy but any recommendations made will be implemented.

**4. To consider the outstanding amounts due to Bray Town Council and the Management Financial Report.**

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The Town Clerk informed the members that the newly formed Finance Committee met this afternoon. She informed the meeting that the terms of reference for this committee are: -

- To ensure that budgetary control is exercised – that is spending is within the adopted budget for the year.
- Have the option of making recommendations regarding the finances of the Council to the full members of the Council.

- To consider our financial relationship with Wicklow County Council.
- To offer advice to the executive of the Council.
- Two meetings to be held a year – one in April and the other in September. This issue to be reviewed.
- Councillor Joe Behan is the chair of this committee.
- The next meeting had been arranged for the 7<sup>th</sup> September at 4pm.

Mr. David Forde informed the members of the following –

- Over expenditure in Housing maintenance – this is due to the high expenditure on re-lets. Hope to get some money from Department.
- Group 5 – 39.6% spent to date – this was miscoded as it should read 33%.
- Land Use planning – 46% spent due to the number of planning enforcements.
- Bray Esplanade - €38,000 – capital transfers.

The members raised the following points –

- In programme group 3 – accruals are €421,000 –what is this based on?
- In programme group 4 – there is €1,500,000 – what are these based on? Need more clarification.
- Wicklow County Council – Regional Roads – monies outstanding for five years– they should be cleared. Should be looking at measures to collect this money.
- Have there been any instances where money has been under spent?
- There are 5 Wicklow County Councillors on Bray Town Council – these members should be fighting Bray’s corner and trying to get the money owed to us. Should withhold payment of County Demand.
- Are Bray Town Council trying to get money that is owed to us from Wicklow County Council?
- Hope things will be clearer at the budget meeting in September.
- Wicklow County Council will now spend money on Southern Cross Road.

Mr. David Forde informed the members of the following –

- Some bills are based on the year’s accruals.
- We are in contact with Wicklow County Council constantly about outstanding monies. We have held back some of the County Demand.
- Difficult to predict under spends.

**5. To consider the Bray Town Appointed Stands Draft Bye-Laws 2006.**

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Draft Bye – Laws were circulated to the members for Bray Town appointed stands.

The Members raised the following points:

- St. Kevin’s Square – disappointed that a taxi rank will not be put here.
- There is a need for a Taxi Rank in the Vevay area.

- We should be making the stand on the Seafront a full – time stand, particularly in the Summer time.
- It is very important that we monitor the taxi ranks.
- When will this come into force if we agree to adopt it?
- Pay credit to Dominic Gillan who put a lot of work into this project. Anything we can do to get people to use public transport is positive.
- We need to put the ranks in place soon as possible as large volumes of traffic are congesting our town.
- There isn't a huge demand for taxis on the seafront during the day.
- If we do make a change to this it will have to go out for public consultation.
- Can we have one bay for 24 hours a day and the other ones at certain times? Three bays are a lot for the day - time. Can we re-visit this next year?
- Can the public park in these bays outside of hours?
- A lot of elderly people would opt for the bus as opposed to a taxi.
- How many parking bays would we be losing?
- Can see both points of view. Can we change to the 24 - hour proposal, monitor it over the summer and then review same.

Can we have one space for 24 hours, depending on the weather, as three ranks are a lot and then revisit this next year?

Councillor Anne Egan proposed that the members adopt the Strand Road, 24 hour parking recommendation. Councillor Caroline Burrell seconded this. Other members were not in agreement with this.

The Town Engineer raised the following points –

- It will be operated on a limited time operation –during the day the space would be available for public for free.
- There are currently six spaces – in the event of either of these proposals being passed the spaces will be reduced to three.
- I would suggest you adopt the part time ranks and then review it again in one year.
- The Gardai were not happy with the first location on Strand Road so that is the reason it was relocated on the Seafront.
- Not in agreement with this proposal as for most of the year the rank will not be used and we would be losing three to four spaces.

Councillor Anne Egan then withdrew her proposal. After some further discussion, Councillor Anne Ferris proposed and Councillor Caroline Burrell seconded that the alternative schedules 1(A) and 2 (A) for the permanent appointed stands of the 24-hour taxi ranks be adopted.

## **6. Update on the Boathouses and the Harbour Shed.**

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The Town Clerk informed the members that the Law Agent has sent a lease used for another sporting club and has raised a number of issues that we are currently addressing. It is hoped to have a draft lease for the consideration of the members shortly.

She also informed the members that a meeting took place on Monday last with representatives from St. Fergal's Boxing Club. The name of their engineer or competent person who can sign off that any works carried out is to be submitted to the Council. They have already sent in a list of works to be carried out and it is hoped to have a draft lease prepared soon.

The Cathaoirleach stated that she would like to thank the Town Clerk and the Town Engineer for trying to accommodate these groups.

**7. To discuss litter issues in Bray.**

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The Town Clerk read out the following report –

Litter report

*Bray Town Council has a significant proportion of its resources dedicated to the removal of litter.*

*An amount of €578,000 (exclusive of supervisory and administrative costs) has been allocated in the 2006 budget for the removal of litter and waste. Bray Town Council employs one full time litter warden and three traffic/litter wardens. The traffic /litter wardens actually spend the majority of their time on parking duties. In addition to the above a proportion of the time of the Seafront maintenance staff and the parks department staff involves litter removal.*

*At present there are six people employed whose virtual full time occupation is to sweep the streets.*

*A suction sweeper (plus a general operative) covers the majority of the town on a three week rota with Fassaroe being swept weekly. A truck with two employees is also engaged in emptying bins and collecting from the street sweepers. The service includes work at the weekends.*

*Part of the seafront maintenance crews duties include litter picking and two extra staff are engaged at this location for the summer months.*

*There is a considerable problem with illegal dumping in Bray. A large proportion of this is generated by the deposition of household refuse. Each bag of refuse located is sifted through to find ID and evidence of the source. However there is a diminishing return on this activity as the perpetrators have become selective in the rubbish they dispose of in this manner.*

*At present up to half a truck - load of rubbish on average is collected each working day.*

*In spite of the scale of the cleansing operation in Bray it is not keeping pace with the litter problem and a fundamental review is underway. For instance the Main Street is constantly swept.*

*The real focus should be more on the prevention of littering and not on its removal.*

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The members raised the following points –

- We have a responsibility in playing a major role in litter prevention in Bray. A litter task force should be considered.
- We should work in tandem with community groups around the town. The Lions Club held a very successful clean – up recently.
- Proper enforcement needs to be implemented.
- There is a rodent problem in the Town – they have been seen in children’s playgrounds and this is very dangerous, especially with children around. Only a small sum put in the Budget to deal with rodents.
- It is people in the town who do the littering so we need to look at educating people.
- Sponsorship of bins should be investigated.
- The litter warden is not going out to meet people.
- Litter Task force set up – a lot of initiatives undertaken. Should be included at Municipal Policy Committee level because the Chamber of Commerce is on the committee.
- Congratulations to the caretakers on the Seafront for their efforts.
- Litter pickers – they sometimes bypass parked cars when litter might be underneath the cars. More attention could be given to detail.
- Prevention should be main focus point here – if there is no enforcement people will litter. Name and shame policy would be welcome.
- Bray is swept at 8am every morning and by 2pm it is just as dirty as before it was swept. We have to start thinking about employing people to carry out litter enforcement because the problem is increasing.
- Fish and Chip shops along the Seafront have a lot to answer for as a lot of wrapping is from their shops.
- What hours do the sweepers work at weekends?
- Public houses and betting shop owners should be asked to sweep outside their premises. No calls returned by the Litter Warden.
- What would it cost to have a suction sweeper in Fassaroe compared to a full-time contractor?
- Education is the key in the home and in the school to litter prevention. Need to vacuum the Main Street and remove the gum.
- Naylor’s Cove on the Seafront – this is a disgrace and needs to be cleaned.
- Litter is one of the biggest issues that Councillors are asked about in Bray.
- When you look at the number of litter fines issued last year it is not good enough – once every second day.
- Litter problem not unique in Bray – Litter League set up around the Country.
- Bags are seen by people driving around the town. This problem needs to be addressed in a more comprehensive way. Litter Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- I do not believe that rubbish bags are sifted through to find culprits.
- Posters and black flags up all over town and this is in contravention of Section 19 of the Litter Pollution Act. This is subject to a fine of €1,900 – littering the town.
- These posters and flags were put up to commemorate the anniversary of Bobby Sands and the hunger strikers of 1981.

- Bins are full at 4pm on Saturday afternoon.
- Vast growth in packaging – need for incentive to reduce amount of packaging and potential litter.
- Since waste charges have increased there is growth in the number of people getting rid of rubbish.
- Need to come forward with a plan for the next Budget.
- Litter is not just the Council’s problem – we will all have to pull together to solve this problem.
- No one sees the Litter Warden.

The Town Engineer informed the members of the following –

- A number of staff sweep the street and then someone else drops litter on it, this is soul destroying.
- Education is what is needed. Prevention should be the cure to the problem.
- Litter bins – not a big fan of this idea as these attract rubbish. We should be encouraging people to bring litter home.
- We have noticed that some businesses in the town are being over generous with wrapping goods especially from take-away outlets which is later found littered the street.
- If you see the Seafront on a Sunday morning it shows how good a job the caretakers are doing particularly when it is so clean the rest of the week.
- One of the Traffic Wardens acts as the Litter Warden when the Litter Warden is on leave.

The Town Clerk informed the members that Bray is a pilot town for what is called a ‘Gum Busting Task Force’. She stated that this is just starting off at the moment but is working with people from Wrigley’s to try and prevent chewing gum being littered on the street.

The members raised the following points –

- Can we leave this to the two chairs of the MPC’s to decide what MPC should deal with looking at the litter problem in Bray?

A further discussion took place regarding the setting up of a sub-committee and working with officials of the Council. The involvement of the Municipal Policy Committee was also discussed and which Municipal Policy Committee should deal with the litter problem. The Town Rejuvenation Committee was also raised as may be this was the more appropriate committee to tackle the dilemma.

Councillor David Grant then proposed that we review the Litter Management Plan at this table and this was agreed.

**8. Update on the Recycling Centre.**

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The Town Clerk informed the members the equipment is in place and the centre is ready for opening but that the staff are not in place yet and that every effort was being made to have the centre open as soon as possible.

The members raised the following points –

- Disappointed staff are not yet in place – is there going to be anymore problems?
- There are training issues – these could take months and could be quite a big operation.
- Will take a lot of training to train a supervisor.
- Have the officials of Council sat down with residents and if so what concerns were raised?
- Welcome fact that this is almost here. It is very important to do this right rather than do it quickly.
- Public need to be told what they can recycle and when it will be open. They need all this information before the centre opens.
- Disappointed with the vague date given for the opening. This keeps on being delayed. Will be calling on the Director of Services of Environment to expedite this as soon as possible.
- The Cathaoirleach stated that the first dates given were Christmas and the New Year and that that she knew that the centre would not open until after her time in the chair.

**9. To consider the recommendations of the Arts Officer for the Arts Act Funding Awards 2006.**

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The recommendations of the Arts Officer for the Arts Act Funding awards 2006 was proposed by Councillor Pat Vance and seconded by Councillor David Grant.

**10. To Discuss Parking at Carlisle Grounds.**

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A letter from Bray Wanderers requesting the permission of Bray Town Council to develop an area of land at the Carlisle grounds as a commercial car park was circulated to the members.

The Town Clerk advised members that she had consulted the Law Agent and that this is a most complex piece of legislation and that the advice of senior counsel should be sought.

The members raised the following points –

- It is very important that the security of the previous lease is maintained.
- Can we get Senior Counsels advice on this matter as quickly as possible?
- Best if we had this lease for the long term.
- There should be some payback to local clubs around Bray. The whole town could benefit from this.
- We need to look at previous experiences such as Failte Park.
- The prime objective is to look after the interests of the town.
- Would like to see more information from Bray Wanderers – is this a viable option?
- Would like to see a business plan for this. Who are we dealing with?
- Is there going to be any financial rewards for the Council if this goes ahead?

- There is a thin line between getting money and distributing it back out among local clubs.
- Can the Town Clerk write to Bray Wanderers asking them to provide a business plan?
- Pat Devlin's contribution over the years should be acknowledged and best wishes to the new manager.

## **11. To Discuss Parking at the Seafront.**

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The following report was circulated to the members:-

### **Parking at Bray Seafront**

*A public consultation process for the introduction of paid parking on the Seafront was completed in March 2004. The situation was monitored for the following seven weeks and the matter was discussed by the Members at the Monthly Meeting dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2004. The Members decided at that meeting not to implement paid parking on the Seafront at this stage, but that the matter should be revisited.*

*The executive are bringing this matter again to the attention of the Members regarding the implementation of the bye-laws operating on Bray Seafront (three hour parking without charge).*

*The parking problem here is in enforcing the bye-laws. There have been unsuccessful prosecutions in the courts as they do not accept proofs of breach of these bye-laws presented by the traffic wardens regarding the duration of parking stay. Essentially the traffic warden witnesses a parking stay on a certain vehicle and three hours later he witnesses the same vehicle in the same location. This evidence (i.e. the traffic wardens account) is not accepted as proof of breach of the bye-laws. As the person may have moved their vehicle and returned to the exact same space again.*

*From a traffic management point of view there is no merit in the traffic wardens continuing to patrol this area. The current bye-laws have proven to be dysfunctional and unenforceable.*

*Our experience of traffic management since February 1997 would reaffirm our confirmation that the only practical enforcement method of parking management along Bray Seafront would be the introduction of a paid parking scheme.*

The members raised the following points –

- Have to provide people with an alternative and until we get a traffic plan for the town, opposed to this.
- Need to have an integrated type of system.
- Main concerns – holding of spaces by DART users. This could be enforced by introducing paid parking along the Seafront.
- Opposed to this – you need to provide people with an alternative to park for DART. The Carlisle Grounds parking proposal may solve this problem.
- Dublin Bus – we need to get them on board also. We need an integrated system.
- We need a proper plan – at the moment there is no means to enforce this.

- CIE have not provided car parking over the years, sold off site – opportunity for multi-story car park.
- There are a considerable amount of cars on the Seafront that are of no benefit to Bray.
- If we have free parking on the Seafront the Bray Wanderers venture will not benefit.
- Should people be encouraged to use public transport.
- Link LUAS to DART.
- Extension of cash cow – trying to get more money in.
- People have to park somewhere, no alternative parking.
- Business people conduct business on the seafront, should be careful not to drive people out of business.
- Iarnrod Eireann has a duty to play here – all they have shown to the people of Bray is contempt. A Park and Ride facility would be a good idea.
- We should enforce the Bye-Laws or get rid of them.

**G.M.O Notice**

Councillor Burrell outlined the position regarding G.M.O., this is the first time that trials will be held out in the open and that the E.P.A decided that the trials should go ahead. This is a serious issue for Irish farmers. There was a short discussion on this matter and Councillor Caroline Burrell then proposed that that Bray Town Council calls for an immediate all-Ireland ban on Monsanto's GT73 Rape Seeds and to declare that Bray becomes a GMO-free Zone. This was seconded by Councillor Ciaran O'Brien.

**18. Any Other Business**

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Councillor Caroline Burrell asked if the refurbishment of the Silverbridge Halting Site could be highlighted as there are problems there that need to be fixed.

Councillor John Brady asked if letters were ever sent to the IDA and Enterprise Ireland asking them to attend a meeting about the closure of AO Smiths and the relocation of Dell Ltd.

The Town Clerk stated she has no recollection of this but a letter will be sent.

This concluded the meeting.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CATHAOIRLEACH**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOWN CLERK**

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_