

**Minutes of the Budget Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Councillor John Ryan, Cathaoirleach  
Councillor John Brady  
Councillor John Byrne  
Councillor Eugene Finnegan  
Councillor Mick Glynn  
Councillor David Grant  
Councillor Ronan McManus  
Councillor Rossa Murray  
Councillor Ciaran O'Brien  
Councillor Tracy O'Brien  
Councillor Pat Vance  
Councillor Sarah Wray

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

**Apologies:** Ms. Triona Irving, Administrative Officer

**1. To consider the Local Authority Budget for the Financial Year Ending 31st December 2009**

Division A – Housing & Building

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€2,085,138	Estimated Income	€3,077,463
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The members raised the following points:

- Last years budget included funds for a windows and doors scheme. Will this be included?
- Have any applications been made for insulation grants?
- The proposal to decrease the maintenance of Local Authority housing to €764,070 is a massive decrease from last years €813,700.
- Well done on moving the members of the travelling community from Jameson's Corner to Silverbridge. It is now our responsibility to provide them with proper housing.
- Homeless grants – who do these grants go to? Is it voluntary bodies etc?
- Insurance premium of 10% - is this secured?
- Will there be a provision for estate maintenance?
- Can a tracking system be put in place regarding complaints for housing repairs?
- Is there any help for people who may be looking for extensions? Can we offer them a subsidy in rent for example?
- Homeless Officer – we really need to push to get this position filled.

The Town Manager, Des O'Brien informed the members of the following:

- Insulation grants – we did receive a grant but we still need to carry out the Building Energy Ratings.
- The cuts in maintenance have largely been down to staff cutbacks but Bray Town Council's response to housing maintenance has been excellent.
- We have a very good system of tracking repairs on houses.
- Insurance – the Irish Public Bodies informed us of this. 10 years ago Bray was considered a black spot for public liability claims but now it has one of the lowest and this is thanks in large to our Roads Technician.
- Housing extensions – not aware of any schemes but will ask the Housing Administrative Officer to contact you.
- Homeless officer issue is totally up to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. We would prefer to have a homeless officer.

### Division B – Road Transport & Safety

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€3,012,808	Estimated Income	€1,682,747
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The members raised the following points:

- We have no proposed allocation for winter maintenance.
- Disappointing we don't have a gritter. This is not sustainable.
- What is the position regarding public lighting?
- Traffic calming – when will any works be carried out?
- Public lighting – there should be savings here but the process needs to work.
- Roads team need to look at the roads around Bray that have been damaged over the period of bad weather and given priority.
- Section 85 agreement – this needs to be discussed in depth when it is up for review.
- Parking income – do these figures reflect any proposed changes for the new year IE Q.B.C etc

The Town Engineer, Sean O'Neill informed the members of the following:

- Road Gritting – the reason we do not have a gritter anymore is that it needed a roadworthiness test every year and this was not economical for us. It was decided that it would be better not having a gritter for this reason. We are looking into the possibility of purchasing a trailer type gritter, which would not require a roadworthiness certificate.
- Winter gritting – this money would come from the normal road maintenance budget.
- Traffic calming – not sure if we will get all of the proposals in for this year.
- Section 85 agreement – if we remove this Wicklow County Council will still be doing the same job anyway.

### Division C – Water Services

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€2,149,432	Estimated Income	€1,239,875
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The members raised the following points:

- Giltspur Reservoir – is the Town Engineer happy with the storage tanks for the provision of water?
- Fire hydrants – welcome €30,000 for fire hydrants around town. Was the mapping of the hydrants completed?
- Water meters – do we install water meters when repairing footpaths?
- Leak Detection Unit – leakages are the lowest in the country. This is a great performance.
- Welcome the fact that there are no increases in water charges.

The Town Engineer, Sean O'Neill informed the members of the following:

- Giltspur Reservoir – storage has increased regarding the time available. Usage has dropped in Bray and this is due to the leakage response time.
- Fire hydrants – we did carry out a survey and have also mapped them. We have marked out the most problematic hydrants.

The Town Manager, Des O'Brien informed the members of the following:

- Giltspur Reservoir – storage has increased regarding the time available. Usage has dropped in Bray and this is due to the leakage response time.

### Division D – Development Management

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€649,964	Estimated Income	€213,037
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The members raised the following points:

- Taking in charge of unfinished estates – need to make a big effort with this.
- Derelict sites – action we are taking regarding this needs to be complimented.

- Town twinning – usually give a small amount towards the Begles twinning. There are a lot of young people involved in this.
- RAPID – excellent work being done by the RAPID co-ordinator.
- Public Convenience – there is an absence of public conveniences in the town.
- Refurbishment of toilets on Seafront – can these be operating by summer but if not do not carry out works on them during the summer months.

The Town Engineer, Sean O'Neill informed the members of the following:

- Economic Development – we need to put some money aside for this.
- Seafront Toilets – we are building up a fund for this. We are not sure how much it will cost though. The work will not be done before the summer.
- Public Convenience – the previous one wasn't used that often.

The Town Manager, Des O'Brien informed the members of the following:

- Unfinished estates – the previous Town Engineer, Mr. Peter Phelan has said that he could take a look at the taking in charge of estates.
- Derelict Sites – our aim is to get people into shape. We consider it a failure if we don't get money from derelict sites.
- Town twinning – the same amount will go towards the Begles twinning as last year.

The Town Clerk, Christine Flood informed the members of the following:

- Enterprise Centre – we have been in discussions with Enterprise Ireland. This needs to be clearly shown that it is a community initiative and it would show that we are counter productive if we were there to offer funding.

#### Division E – Environmental Services

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€1,408,312	Estimated Income	€651,162
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The members raised the following points:

- Waivers – can we look into the possibility of introducing a new system for elderly people? Maybe something like smaller bins on wheels or introduce the use of smart cards etc.
- Litter management – we need to put pressure on people to be litter conscious.
- Litter warden service – why has this been proposed to be cut back to €65,000? This is an essential service.
- Litterbins - €18,000 was allocated last year and only €9,000 was spent. Surely we could have spent the whole lot because there is a need.
- Good to see that the recycling is staying in Fassaroe.
- Street Cleaning – there is a cut back of €50,000; how will we maintain the level of cleaning?
- Have we any proposals to tackle chewing gum on footpaths?
- Special Area Amenity Order – would the €9,000 include any help towards Coastcare? If not can we?

The Town Engineer, Sean O'Neill informed the members of the following:

- The street cleaning budget has been reduced as we have changed the method of our disposal to compacting, which costs us less.

#### Division F – Recreation & Amenity

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€1,594,426	Estimated Income	€171,763
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The members raised the following points:

- Seafront – we were promised to have renovated seatbacks. Everything else is superb on the Seafront so the final completion would be the completion of these seatbacks.
- Access on the seafront is an issue for some people so a boardwalk may be needed.

- Ballywaltrim & Giltspur Heights playgrounds have been out of service for a while – will money be invested into these?
- Who is responsible for the dredging of the harbour?
- Burial grounds – there are people who are mowing the grass around some graves and it is showing up the work we are carrying out. Not sure if we are getting value for money.
- We have a serious issue regarding capacity in Springfield cemetery. What are Bray Town Councils intentions?
- Bray Jazz Festival – this is under threat and would like to propose an increase in allocation of €4,000 to €10,000.
- We have no allocation of funding for the Harbour. We do not charge mooring fees etc.

The Town Engineer, Sean O'Neill informed the members of the following:

- Burial grounds – the budget has not been changed. Our own staff cut the grass here now and this year the frequency of mowing will be reduced. Want a report on the graveyard.
- Playgrounds – the general life expectancy of playgrounds in Bray is approximately 5 years. The money will be spent on the two in most need of repair.
- Seafront seatbacks – we will get prices as soon as we can to complete this. We will look into the boardwalk progress also.

#### Division G – Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€334,842	Estimated Income	€211,826
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The members raised the following points:

- Loose horses – there was an allocation of €1,000 last year and none of this was spent. Why?
- CCTV – is there an upkeep / maintenance cost included in this budget?
- Signal Arts Group have requested a one off payment of €10,000. Will this be possible?

The Town Clerk, Christine Flood informed the members of the following:

- Signal Arts request – this was discussed at the protocol meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009 and it was stated that their request would be discussed at the Budget meeting. They are free to apply for annual funding also.
- Stray horses – we did take action regarding this issue and it is something we will be addressing in the coming year.

The Town Manager, Des O'Brien informed the members of the following:

- CCTV – mobile cameras are hired in as needed around the recycling areas and will be used as necessary.

#### Division H – Miscellaneous Services

The members were advised of the following estimated expenditure and income under this Division.

Estimated Expenditure	€1,043,981	Estimated Income	€313,696
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The members raised the following points:

- Christmas lights – it would be a blow for all of the work done by various people in the town if the funding was cut for this. Disappointed at the contribution that the traders make in the town.
- Community Employment (C.E) Scheme – very disappointed that management decided to cut this. We shouldn't be trying to farm out responsibility for this.
- Administration of Rates – a lot of charity shops are questionable in the town. We need to look into this.
- Conferences – these are essential as they provide education and training to councillors who need to learn quickly about certain aspects of Local Government, especially new members.

The Town Clerk, Christine Flood informed the members of the following:

- C.E. Scheme – Cuala Developments was set up as a company. Under good government it is important to be set up as a company. The employees of the C.E. scheme are technically

employed by Bray Town Council and this is why it is important that they are employed by the agency with which they interact.

The Finance Administrative Officer, David Forde informed the members of the following:

- Charity shops – it is up to the valuation office to decide if they are genuine.
- Waiver Scheme – we will look at this scheme.

The Town Manager, Des O'Brien informed the members of the following:

- Conferences – it is very important to have balanced management and to have councillors attend, as it is a great way for them to educate themselves on the workings of local government.
- The Jazz Festival, Airshow etc are all matters for the members to decide.
- Graffiti removal scheme – when this scheme was introduced graffiti went out of control in the town.

**2. By Resolution, To Adopt Such Local Authority Budget, With Or Without Amendment, And To Determine, In Accordance With Such Budget, As Adopted, The General Annual Rate On Valuation To Be Levied For The Several Purposes Specified In Such Budget**

After a short interval, the changes to the Budget were agreed and presented as follows to the members.

- Extra €5,000 to be allocated towards Christmas lights in Bray.
- Extra €3,000 to be allocated towards the Bray Airshow.
- Extra €5,000 to be allocated towards graffiti removal.
- €12,000 to be allocated towards the Arts Act funding, with €10,000 of this fund for Signal Arts subject to conditions.
- €20,000 towards Economic Development and Jobs for Bray.
- Gritter for Bray to be provided from a funding loan.
- Seatbacks for the Seafront to be provided from levies.
- Victorian Shelter to be refurbished from levies.

Reductions will apply to the following:

- Representatives allowance to be reduced by €3,000.
- Rates refunds to be reduced by €10,000
- Remaining €17,000 to be reduced at the Managers discretion.

Councillor Ciaran O'Brien proposed the Draft Budget with the amendments above and Councillor John Brady seconded the proposal.

The members voted on the above in the following way:

	For	Against
Councillor John Brady	✓	
Councillor John Byrne	✓	
Councillor Eugene Finnegan	✓	
Councillor Mick Glynn	✓	
Councillor David Grant	✓	
Councillor Ronan McManus	✓	
Councillor Rossa Murray	✓	
Councillor Ciaran O'Brien	✓	
Councillor Tracy O'Brien	✓	
Councillor John Ryan	✓	
Councillor Pat Vance	✓	
Councillor Sarah Wray	✓	
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>

The members thanked Mr. Forde and his team in the Finance Department for the Draft Budget and acknowledged the level of work that went into it during a very difficult time.

The Cathaoirleach John Ryan thanked the members for putting aside any party politics and putting the interests of Bray to the forefront of their discussions.

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This concluded the meeting.

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

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

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