

**Minutes of Special Housing and Planning Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2005 at 7.30 p.m.**

\*\*\*\*\*

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

**Apologies:** Councillor John Byrne  
Councillor Anne Ferris

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

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Deirdre De Burca opened the meeting and welcomed the Councillors back after the summer break.

### **Recycling Centre for Bray**

The Cathaoirleach then proceeded to introduce the Director of Services for the Environment of Wicklow County Council, Mr. Michael Nicholson and the Senior Executive Engineer of Wicklow County Council, Mr. Andrew Lawless who were here to update the members of the position regarding the recycling centre for Bray.

Mr. Michael Nicholson informed the members that they have been trying for a long time to secure a site for a recycling centre for Bray. In the past they very nearly had certain sites but lost out in the final stages for different reasons. The TR O'Reilly site on Beechwood Close was looked at for a permanent base but it was not available for purchase and because of the dire need for a recycling centre we were allowed to negotiate for rental property. Mr. Nicholson stated that this is only a temporary solution for the next three years and that the Council is looking for a more permanent solution. He also stated that he is confident this site would be open by November and that this centre will operate like the ones in Wicklow and Arklow; ie – dry recyclable etc so as not to create rodent or odour problems. The centre would be open for fifty-two hours a week, open on a Saturday and one late night opening and that a CCTV camera will be installed. He informed the members that the Government has allocated €1 million, which is to go towards the purchase of equipment for the centre, not for the rent.

A general discussion followed where the members raised the following points:

- Welcome officials and the news that Bray is to get a recycling centre, as this was a top priority in Bray, second biggest issue in the last election.
- Will the centre take same materials as Wicklow County Council?
- Would urge the Council to get to work on this as soon as possible.
- Recognise that having a Minister from the town has greatly benefit Bray.
- This is only an interim solution and traffic will be a major problem, particularly at peak times.
- Will there be shredding at this centre and will we continue with the mobile units?
- Would urge the officials to engage with the locals to iron out any problems / worries they might have regarding this.
- Would think there are going to be planning problems but this is good news.
- This is the worst possible site because of the proximity to the Boghall Road.
- What about the A.P.C building. There is space around this, which would be much more adequate.
- We should be looking for a much larger site, similar to the Civic Amenity Centre.
- Do not know if Bring Centres are a long - term solution – doorstep collections are much more efficient.
- Priority to get site opened before Christmas, planning issue should be dealt with as quickly as possible.

The Cathaoirleach sought the approval of the members to authorise our officials to contact developers and property owners as a “Planning Authority” to ask what their plans are for their properties and to have explanatory discussions, so that we could have a state of the art Civic Amenity Centre.

Councillor John McManus stated that this is the responsibility of Wicklow County Council as the Waste Authority.

Councillor Brid Collins asked about a site that was being considered on Albert Avenue and the Senior Executive Engineer confirmed that this site was not proceeded with because of traffic problems etc and the site was zoned for tourist related activities.

Michael Nicholson told the members that he does not accept that this is the worst possible site chosen. He stated that he would like to remind the members that this is an interim solution and that Wicklow County Council has been working closely with Des O’Brien, Town Manager and Catherine Halligan, Town Clerk in trying to find a site. He also stated that it would be the Councils intention to drop the mobile collection as was done in Arklow and Wicklow once this new centre is in operation.

He concluded by thanking the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Deirdre De Burca, Councillor Joe Behan, the Town Clerk, the Town Manager and all the members who have all worked so hard trying to find a site for the centre.

The Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. Andrew Lawless also informed the members that the site on the Albert Avenue was not chosen because of expected traffic problems and parking restrictions.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting dated 5<sup>th</sup> July 2005.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Councillor Pat Vance stated that before the minutes were proposed and seconded he would like them to be amended, as it did not record that the Cathaoirleach rejected the voice of the officials and the members.

Councillor Caroline Burrell stated that where it says “the Green Party sanctioned flyers to be given out on the Seafront...”, she would like this taken out as it is not true or else to put in the Green Party’s response to this.

Councillor Ciaran O’Brien stated that he would like the line “05/103 – new shop fronts to Units 6 & 8, Meath Road, Bray” deleted as there is enforcement proceedings taking place on these.

Councillor John McManus told the members that the minutes are broadly accurate and that the members should not be nit - picking as there will not be any work done at the meeting then.

Councillor John Brady stated that he brought up the issue of St. Fergal’s Boxing Club at the previous meeting and this was not recorded in the minutes and there was no further discussion about the proposal / amendments to the proposals for the disposal of the Boathouses and the Harbour Shed.

Councillor Brid Collins told the members that they agreed that names would not be taken unless it was a proposal.

The Cathaoirleach, Councillor Deirdre De Burca stated that councillors who make proposals should be recorded. She also stated that the members should try not to amend any minutes unless they are inaccurate.

Councillor John McManus then suggested that in the future the members take the minutes at the end of the meeting.

The adoption of the minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2005 was then proposed by Councillor Anne Egan and seconded by Councillor Bríd Collins, taking note of Councillor John Brady’s reservations.

**2. Reports and Recommendations**

\*\*\*\*\*

**IBAL Report**

The Town Clerk circulated a copy of the recent IBAL report on litter in the Town.

**5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Wicklow/Bray/Wurzburg**

The Town Clerk reminded the members of the civic reception to mark the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wicklow / Bray / Wurzburg twinning.

### **Fire Safety Audit at Oldcourt**

The Town Clerk informed the members that an advertisement for consultants to carry out the fire safety audit at Oldcourt was placed in newspapers on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2005. She stated that four interested parties requested tender documents and following this only one company tendered. She told the members that the interview was held on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2005 in the Civic Offices and the interview board did not qualify the candidate. She then stated that Bray Town Council will now commence a selective tendering process for consultants for the Fire Safety Audit at Oldcourt.

### **Water Disruption**

The Town Clerk advised the members of a disruption in the water supply to Bray Town next week due to upgrading works on the Roundwood Reservoir.

The Town Engineer stated that all areas with a direct feed from Dublin will be affected and at some point Bray Town Council will have to turn off the water to save for fire-fighting capacity. He stated that people can survive for two days with careful planning using the water tanks in their attics. He also stated that the water will be off from 9am on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September to noon on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September.

The members raised the following points:

#### **Fire Safety Audit**

- Why was the company who applied for the Fire Audit turned down?
- Fire hydrant was too far down in Glenthorn. It was a miracle that no one was in the house. This is a serious flaw and we need answers. Need a proper maintenance programme for hydrants throughout the town.
- Noticed that an operative from the Council is using road paint to paint these hydrants. Is this standard?
- Smoke Alarms and Carbon Dioxide alarms – can these be installed in houses?
- The two houses in Oldcourt need to be left as they are, until a fire safety audit is carried out.
- Can you tell us who made up the interview board? Would like to see the report of the board.
- Why were some Councillors unable to gain access to these houses while Councillor John Brady gained access?
- The company who did not get the Fire Audit tender were called Fire Ox International. They seemed to be a very qualified and competent company, qualified architect and has huge experience in Local Authority Housing work. The Cathaoirleach then quoted passages from a letter received from Mr. Thomas English in relation to the brief that was prepared for the Fire Safety Audit. The Cathaoirleach also queried why Fire Ox International were not qualified.

#### **Water Disruption**

- Residents do not always hear the PA system on the truck that informs people of water stoppages and information about the water tankers. Can this truck go into each estate road instead of just doing the outskirts?
- There is quite a large number of nursing homes etc who are dependent on water. These should be notified directly.

The Town Engineer outlined that the normal methodology of selecting is to put together a brief and a scope for the work, then anyone who has responded to the advert are given the brief. Four firms responded to the advertisement and only one responded to the brief. An interview board was then set up consisting of a retired County Engineer, Chief Fire Officer from Dublin City Council and a Fire Safety Officer from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The board ultimately decided that the candidate was not an acceptable company, after interviewing them, to carry out the fire safety audit.

The Town Manager then stated that the board marked this company on experience, qualifications and suitability and that they were an independent board. He stated that the Council will now have to go back and maybe urge other possible candidates to apply for the job and Bray Town Council will again possibly use the same board.

The members raised the following points:

- The members need to know why this group was not chosen.
- We need to get on with this and maybe look at another contractor.
- It is unfair to the company that the Cathaoirleach named them.
- We should get some advice from other County Councils.
- There is a major question of confidence and fear on the estate. Whoever does get the fire audit should get the residents involved also.
- Council should be more transparent with this issue.
- Who are the principals of the Fire Ox International?
- Should not discuss in open forum why this company was not suitable.

The Town Manager stated that the Council officials did not give Councillor John Brady access to the houses. He also stated that it is uncalled for to ask an interview board why they turned the applicant down. He added that if we were to do this then Bray Town Council would have great difficulty in finding people to sit on future boards.

The Town Engineer stated that Bray Town Council has not started inspecting fire hydrants yet but the two hydrants in the Oldcourt estate were not satisfactory and are currently being rectified. He stated that the Council will continue to do this but it will not happen in a week and this will be reflected in the Budget for 2006 as would the cost of installing smoke and carbon dioxide alarms in the houses. He also stated that the fire - brigade has no problem with road paint on hydrants and if they ever did they would use a mallet to help the top off.

The members then asked for an update on this issue at the Special Housing and Planning Meeting in October.

### **3. To consider the Housing Progress Report**

\*\*\*\*\*

The September Housing Progress Report was circulated to the members with the Agenda. The members raised the following points:

- The street - lights in Ballywaltrim estate are broken. Can they be fixed and who is in charge of this matter in the Council?

- Welcome the Ard Na Greine playground funding. There is a lot of lessons to be learned from the Fassaroe playground. The piece of art work in Ard Na Greine should be removed also.
- When are houses going to be allocated on the basis of the points system? Can applicants be told where they are on the list?
- Can Bray Town Council look into the possibility of being able to give affordable and social housing to the people of Bray?
- Complaints from people who want to sell their houses / re-mortgage – difficulty in getting consent to sale from the Council – totally unreasonable.
- Who is responsible for the inspection of houses in the private rented section?
- Would like an update on the Emergency Call Out Service – how many calls etc.
- Immediate work is required on the footpaths in Ballywaltrim.
- When will the works in the Wolfe Tone Square area be completed?
- Would like to pay tribute to outgoing Estate Development Officer and also welcome the new EDO.
- Have any drawings been done up for the James Everett Park works?
- What will happen with the shop in Richmond Hill Development because a lot of people do not want the shop at this location? Is there any possibility we could incorporate the shop on Bray Wheelers site?
- What is the situation with St. Peters Road?
- Would like an update on the waiver scheme.
- Has the traveller's caravan on the halting site been moved yet?

The Housing Administrative Officer informed the members of the following:

- All houses are now allocated using a point system.
- The Council try to ensure that people are not putting themselves in difficulty in that no more than 35% of their weekly income goes to repay a mortgage. This sometimes can create problems in dealing with consent to sale applications.
- Affordable Housing – the Municipal Policy Committee will be drawing up a policy at the next meeting regarding this.
- House purchases – we will continue to look at houses on the market and are confident we will meet our allocation.
- Complaints will be passed onto the new Estate Development Officer.
- Richmond Hill – we have taken possession of the site and a warrant for possession will have to be exhausted. No response has been received from the person running the shop.
- James Everett Park – assured that the developers will commence work this week.
- Waiver scheme – most people have collected their bags. Not aware of any problem with the scheme.
- Illegal caravan will be dealt with as we have been in contact with the Gardaí.
- Private Rented Dwellings – we have no designated person looking after private rented houses but this will come under the RAS Scheme.

Councillor Pat Vance asked the officials why the Council are assessing people who has gone through assessments from other financial institutions for the affordable and social housing? He stated that there is a bureaucracy in the council and it is not helpful. It is far too rigorous.

The Town Engineer stated that we are getting work done in phases in Wolfe Tone and will be finished before the end of the year.

The footpaths in Ballywaltrim Heights will not be dealt with this year.

Councillor David Grant proposed and Councillor John Brady seconded that the central heating scheme should proceed and that the housing maintenance budget could be over expedited.

At this stage of the meeting the Cathaoirleach proposed and Councillor Joe Behan seconded that the members extend the meeting till 10.30 p.m. The members did not agree to this.

**6. To discuss car-parking in Vevay Crescent**

\*\*\*\*\*

It was proposed by Councillor Pat Vance and seconded by Councillor David Grant to commence the Statutory Process to extinguish the Right of Way and Abandonment of the Road (part thereof) in Vevay Crescent.

**4. To consider Planning Matters**

\*\*\*\*\*

**05/196 - Gaelscoil Ui Cheadaigh** – Councillor Joe Behan said that he is anxious that all school facilities are up to proper standards. He informed the meeting that the development as applied for will have serious effects for people living in the Darley Cottages and that some sort of meeting should be held and that the concerns of the residents should be taken on board. He added that a resolution is needed on this. Councillor Behan also stated that last June he asked the Town Clerk and the Town Engineer to come back with a response regarding Knocknagow Lane and he still has not received anything.

**05/196 - Gaelscoil Ui Cheadaigh** – Councillor Pat Vance said that recently he had met with the principle of this school and she told him that she will probably be organising a meeting next week.

**05/196 - Gaelscoil Ui Cheadaigh** – Councillor Bríd Collins supported a moderate extension but certainly not a two-storey extension as this would be very intrusive. She also stated that she does not think the square footage left in the car park is up to health and safety standards.

**05/196 - Gaelscoil Ui Cheadaigh** – Councillor John Brady said that this school approached this council on numerous occasions about lands around Bray and got very little help. The education needs of Bray have not been met and this is how Scoil Ui Cheadaigh is in this position. He added that massive delays in this could put the project back years.

**05/196 - Gaelscoil Ui Cheadaigh** – Councillor David Grant stated that both Councillor Collins and himself had spent a lot of time and did a lot of work to ensure that Scoil Ui Cheadaigh got a premises for their primary school.

**05/153 – The Demolition of Ballywaltrim Grove House and its outbuildings / garages.** - Councillor Bríd Collins stated that she would beg the engineers to refuse this application as we cannot allow a house to be knocked down and seventy-three apartments to be built.

**05/153 – The Demolition of Ballywaltrim Grove House and its outbuildings / garages** - Councillor Caroline Burrell stated that she would like to see the council putting on pressure with regard to Ballywaltrim Grove House.

**05/195 – New dwelling at 10 Railway Tce, Strand Road** - Councillor Ciaran O’Brien stated that this application had been rejected on two previous occasions and also by An Bord Pleannala.

**05/211 – Alterations to a protected structure, No 7 Alexandra Tce** - Councillor O’Brien also stated that he would not consider this application acceptable.

**05/189 – Florentine Properties Ltd** – Councillor Brady said he is glad to see this application coming in as the people of Bray have been eleven years waiting. He asked what discussions have taken place with regard to Part VIII.

Councillor O’Brien stated that the market value of this is around €21 million and that the current application is very similar to the first application that went in. He stated that this needs a mix of leisure, office and major car parking controlled by the Council. He added that he would not be in favour of this as it is not commercially viable and that the reality is that Ballymore Properties Ltd will not develop this site until there is a solid agreement with major retailers. The Traffic Management Study is ongoing at present.

Councillor John McManus stated that the centre of this town is dying and that Ballymore Properties are developing this site and not by proxy anymore and that one has to assume that they are serious. He added that maybe there is a case for a public car - park on this site to generate some revenue for the Council. He finally requested that the sign hoarding outside this site be taken down as it states that it will open in August 2005.

Councillor Brid Collins stated that she would fully support this application.

**05/116 & 05/117 – Golf Club Lands Development** - Councillor John McManus then stated that he asked for the file on the Golf Club Lands as there are major problems regarding flooding, open space, mix of retail and residential and also traffic issues. He stated that the Council should send out a message of the overall view of how the manager sees how this can be advanced and how this application could be reduced.

**05/181 – ALDI Stores Ltd** - Councillor David Grant stated that this application should be refused and that discounted food stores would not be permitted. He also asked if planning permission was needed for an off-licence. Councillor Grant also enquired regarding the unauthorised development on the Meath Road.

**05/205 – Carlton Clinic – Single Storey Staff Canteen** – Councillor Brid Collins supported this application.

**05/206 – Mary McGarry – 2 storey granny flat**– Councillor Brid Collins supported this application.

Councillor Pat Vance stated that he thought that the Council would be given funding for works on the Florence Road equivalent to that spent on the Quinsboro Road. He expressed concern regarding underground wiring, the amount of disruption and the new footpaths.

The Administrative Officer stated that she hopes to have another meeting in the next few weeks regarding the Part VII on the Florentine Centre. She stated that she did not think that the off-licence needs to apply for planning permission.

The matter of the unauthorised development on the Meath Road will be in the courts in November.

The Town Engineer stated that he would deal with Knocknagow Lane and prepare a report.

The Town Manager said he could not talk about the detail of the Golf Club Planning Application but that he could discuss the process. He stated that the Planning Application is being examined at present and that the application did not comply with the Development Plan and that a letter would be sent to the developers and the objectors setting out the position of the Planning Authority.

The Cathaoirleach suggested that the Golf Club Development be put separately on the next agenda.

## **15. Correspondence**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Greenstar**

The Town Clerk circulated correspondence received from Greenstar.

### **Minister Dick Roche to attend meeting**

The Town Clerk stated that the Minister has now confirmed that he will attend next weeks Monthly meeting on 13th September, 2005 at 7.30pm.

### **S.W.A.P Group**

A request had been received from the S.W.A.P group requesting that a deputation come to a meeting of the Council. This was proposed by Councillor Anne Egan and seconded by Councillor Bríd Collins.

### **Meetings in the Town Hall**

The Town Clerk also informed the members that she had received two requests from Councillor Burrell requesting the use of the Town Hall for meetings with the Tourism group and the S.I.M. Group. The members agreed to this.

This concluded the meeting.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CATHAOIRLEACH**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**TOWN CLERK**

**Dated:**

\_\_\_\_\_