

**Minutes of Special Housing and Planning Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30 p.m.**

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

**Apologies:** Councillor David Grant

**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

At the commencement of the meeting the Cathaoirleach proposed that the Bray Town Council Standing Orders be suspended at 9.30p.m to discuss various requests from members in committee. The members agreed to this.

**1. To discuss the possibility of a full-time Fire Service for Bray with the Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Jim Dunphy.**

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The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. Jim Dunphy to the meeting and stated that the members may discuss any issues they have and then Mr. Dunphy will answer anything that needs to be addressed at the end.

The members raised the following points –

- Welcome Mr. Dunphy to the meeting and welcome this item on the agenda. The issue of a full-time fire service needs to be addressed.
- Compliment the staff in the Fire Department. Have our Fire department the necessary equipment to deal with fires in high rise buildings such as 7/8 storeys.
- Is there a structural problem in the Oldcourt Estate?
- Look to Minister Dick Roche to allocate funding for this.
- Does the Chief Fire Officer think the Fire Service in Bray could cater for a major incident such as the Stardust Fire tragedy?
- Is there a fire operational plan in Bray and how often is this reviewed? Is this not supposed to be shown to the Local Authority every year?
- Does the Chief Fire Officer think Bray Town Council should be doing more to promote fire safety?
- What is the average call-out time for the fire brigade in Bray?
- What are the reasons we do not have a full time Fire Service?

- What level should the population be at to have a full time Fire Service?
- No County Council in Ireland has a full time fire service.
- Tragedies will happen even if we have a full time service.
- This is a matter for the Government and local representatives, not just down to the Chief Fire Officer. If members provided the funding we would have a full time service.
- Maybe implement a regional Fire Service – South Dublin, North Wicklow and Bray etc. This would probably be more realistic and this was set out in the Sparks Report.
- Population increase does not mean there will be more fires.
- Has there been any difference in trends since the smoking ban came in? Are there more house fires because people are staying at home drinking?
- We also need to be accurate about what the causes of fires are in Bray.
- Appalled that some councillors agreed to cut €20,000 from the Fire Safety Audit in the Budget 2006.
- What would the criteria be to get a full time Fire Service on a regional basis?
- Is the Chief Fire Officer aware of any lesser standards in relation to fire safety in Council housing?
- How is a decision made to decide if an area needs a full time Fire Service?
- What would the Chief Fire Officer say to people who are very critical of the current Fire Service?
- Education – could the Fire Service do more?
- The number of house fires has gone up by 35%.
- A prevention Strategy should be implemented in our estates.
- No lives have been lost in private estates. Is there a link?
- Has the Chief Fire Officer any concerns regarding fire hydrants?
- Is there an Emergency Plan in place for County Wicklow and are there reviews annually and can it be reviewed by members of the public?

Mr. Jim Dunphy responded as follows –

- Feasibility Study – County Manager has given an undertaken that a study will be carried out in the next few months. This will involve looking at other towns around Ireland and how they operate their fire services.
- Criteria – we do not have standards of fire cover in Ireland. There is a risk based approach to the standard of fire cover.
- Risk assessment – we look at risks in housing estates when they are being built.
- Emergency Plan – this was put before Wicklow County Council in 1998 and should be available from Wicklow County Council on request. It is not reviewed on an annual basis.
- 50% of all fire fatalities happen before the fire brigade is even called and this statistic is from Britain.
- The Fire Service do go out and educate people about fire safety but we do it with the limited resources we have.
- Smoking ban – not enough research carried out to see trends that are emerging in this country. According to the National Safety Council there is a downward trend in the number of house fires.
- Fire Hydrants – increased number of inspections are being carried out and we are liaising with the Town Council.
- Response times – average call out time is 7 minutes. It is certainly not 30 minutes as has been stated.

- Oldcourt Houses – I have no reason to believe that these houses or any other council housing has lower standards of fire safety than privately built dwellings. The impending audit will address this issue though.
- Funding – A full time service would cost substantially more than the cost of running a part-time service. Maybe worthwhile looking at a sprinkler system.
- We do inspect buildings and especially licensed buildings. High rise buildings are dealt with at the Fire Safety Certificate stage.

The Cathaoirleach then thanked Mr. Dunphy for attending the meeting and stated that a lot of issues were raised and the discussion had been a useful exchange.

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2005.**

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The members raised the following points –

- Have we received a forensic report for the fire in Oldcourt?
- Have we got any reports on the traffic management for St. Andrews?
- When will yellow lines be put in on Vevay Crescent and the yellow box at Kilbride Grove?
- Can we have an update on Ellerslie House?

**Taxi Ranks**

The Town Clerk stated that no forensic report had been received yet and we are still awaiting the report of the Chief Superintendent regarding the location of the taxi ranks.

The Cathaoirleach stated that a report for traffic management for St. Andrews should be given at the next Special Housing and Planning meeting in March.

The Town Engineer stated that he is not aware if yellow lines have been put in on Vevay Crescent. He also stated that it was agreed to have a meeting regarding Ellerslie House.

Councillor Anne Ferris stated that she would be happy to meet with the Town Engineer on site.

Councillor Joe Behan stated that the problems are known already. He then asked if the Town Engineer could go out and inspect the location and then come back with a proposal for the next meeting in March.

The Director of Services advised the members that yellow lines / boxes have to go through a Garda process, but that the matter should be proceeded with. He also stated that we are short a Senior Executive Engineer since last July and that the number of meetings that the Town Engineer attends is endless.

It was then proposed by Councillor Bríd Collins and seconded by Councillor Caroline Burrell and unanimously agreed to confirm and adopt the minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006.

### **3. Reports and Recommendations**

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The Town Clerk informed the members that an advertisement would be in the local newspaper tomorrow regarding the Waiver Scheme. She reminded the members of the County Wicklow Tourism conference in the Marriot Hotel in Druids Glen.

Councillor Pat Vance stated that, in negotiation with Greenstar, Bray Town Council should look at the possibility of carrying a small bin waiver scheme. Maybe to start as a Pilot scheme. Councillor John Brady stated that other waste operators should be asked to tender.

Councillor Anne Ferris asked for a report regarding the Town Rejuvenation Committee. She stated that she is a member of this committee and she has never received notification of when meetings are being held. She stated that under Bray Town Council's standing orders it is up to the Cathaoirleach of the relevant meeting to organise the agenda and make sure it is sent to the relevant members. She added that these can be witnessed on page 14 of the standing orders under numbers 78, 80 and 83.

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

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The members raised the following points –

#### **Cedar Court**

- Cedar Court – congratulate staff on picking name.
- Naming this estate – thought this was going to be done through tenant participation? The name should also be in Irish.
- Section at the end of this site is vacant. Do we own this or can we purchase it as there is the possibility of a few houses going in to the space.
- Road markings need to be put in around this area as soon as possible.
- A tenant was transferred into this new development but left their existing house in very bad condition.

#### **James Everett Park**

- Scheme going well – contractors on site at 8 o' clock each morning.

#### **Richmond Hill**

- Richmond Hill – works are going very well here.
- An ESB cable was found under site – will this cause delays? Why was it only found now? Were site-maps not inspected?

#### **Land Banks**

- Site at Rockbrae House – has this been looked upon as a potential site for housing?
- CPO – Kilbride Lane – what is the current situation

#### **Fire-Safety Audit**

- What houses are going to be inspected?
- Welcome appointment of Fire-Safety auditors. How are the houses going to be inspected, how many and how will these be picked. Will private houses be inspected?

## Miscellaneous

- Estate Development Officer – well done to the Estate Development Officer on his housing report, not in the job that long but he is doing a tremendous job.
- Planned Maintenance – delighted gas boilers are to be inspected – what percentage will be inspected this year?
- RTE Programme – programme being filmed in a couple of estates around Bray. Yesterday they set fire to a car for this programme but they never informed anyone about it so people thought this was anti-social behaviour. Who authorised this?
- Wolfe Tone Square East – a letter was sent to people who live here stating they must comply with getting pipes inspected for a sewage problem. Two of these houses are Council houses and only recently had similar work carried out. Why did they receive these letters?
- Some Councillors were informed about the RTE programme. They are providing a lot of local employment.
- Giltspur Heights – there are some flower beds up here that can be removed to provide for parking bays. Can the Town Engineer look at this?
- Housing allocations – a person was told she could not take the key until she signed the tenancy agreement – when she saw the house it was in a bad state so she decided not to take the house but then she was told that she will have to wait at least another year to get another house. Can something be done so people can view house before they sign anything?
- Housing list showing points system was extremely helpful.
- What is the current situation regarding CCTV at Ballywaltrim Playground?
- What is happening with the Bray Wheelers Building?
- Open Space in Hazelwood – grass never grows between houses number 6 and 32.
- Central Heating – welcome this. Can updates be put on forthcoming agenda's and can elderly tenants be facilitated first?
- Hollybrook Site – congratulations to Wicklow County Council officials for cleaning this site up.
- Welcome the section in the housing report on Fire hydrants – it could be more detailed though.
- Overall plan needs to be done for Palermo area in relation to traffic. Important that we look at this area particularly with the development of the Golf Club lands.
- When did we last acquire land? A site was recently sold in Little Bray and this should have been investigated for housing. There are no sites left in Bray and those that remain are too expensive. Probably only two estates in Bray where a house could be purchased under €300,000. The Minister is saying that Local Authorities are not building the number of starts allocated.
- Public housing at Upper Dargle Road supported by the Green Party Councillors.
- Council Estate – sign of the times, the amount of car-parking required.
- Joyriding in Oldcourt Estate, damaged wall etc, should be reinstated.
- Dumping on green at 121 Oldcourt Avenue.
- What is the position regarding refurbishment work on Silverbridge Halting Site?

The administrative Officer informed the members of the following –

- Estates must be named in advance because of the installation of services. We had pre – tenancy meetings and the tenants were very happy with the name.
- Gas Boilers – have to go out to tender and we will see how many we can do then.

- Land Bank – verbal sanction given by Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for the CPO land at Kilbride Lane.
- Rockbrae House – this would be expensive land to acquire.
- RTE Programme – officials not informed about this but will look into it.
- Viewing houses before people decide to take them – we do not have the staff to do this, but we do give general information.
- Usually the Clerk of Works would meet tenants on the day of moving in and go through the house with them and if works are required these are carried out. It is our policy to inspect houses before people transfer out of them.
- Single people are not discriminated against in scheme of letting priorities.
- Letter was sent to all residents in Wolfe Tone Square East regarding the sewage problem.
- Fire Safety Audit – It is our suggestion that the draw takes place to chose the houses, broken down by construction type with a maximum of fifty houses to take place at the next Estate Management Committee meeting. The public houses will be first and we will see what the outcome is from that before we decide to move onto the private houses.
- Silverbridge Halting Site – following the recent clean up, assurances were given that a refurbishment programme would commence within three months.
- The plan for Silverbridge is a four-year programme. After the clean-up it was stated that minor refurbishment work would take place. The travellers on site have to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement and they are well aware of the commitment given.

**5. To consider Planning Matters.**

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**Planning Register Reference 05/307**

**The construction of a dormer bungalow at rear garden of ‘The Bungalow’, No. 9 Glenlucan Court, Bray. Access to the proposed dwelling will be through cul-de-sac road in Glenlucan Estate including entrance and ancillary works.**

Councillor Anne Ferris stated that she is opposed to this application.

**Planning Register Reference 06/02**

**Change of use from residential to office usage and for road frontage alterations to provide car parking for the building. Software Services, 4 Milton Terrace, Seapoint Road, Bray.**

Councillor Anne Ferris supported this application. Councillor Ciaran O’Brien also supported this application but stated that this was a dangerous stretch of road.

**Fairyhill Legal Costs**

Councillor John Brady sought information regarding the legal costs over the Fairyhill issue.

**Planning Register Reference 05/189**

**Proposed external signage to the Castle Street elevation and the re-cladding of the existing free standing sign to the Castle Street boundary. All of the above at Fasfit, Castle Street, Bray.**

Councillor John Brady sought information on when a decision will be made regarding this. What is the situation regarding Further Information Requested and the amount of social / affordable housing on this site.

Councillor Brid Collins asked is this the kind of development we need in the town? She supported this application.

Councillor John McManus stated that he is amazed that the Florentine Centre has gone out for further information and was this to extend the time?

Councillor McManus expressed concern about the staffing levels in the Planning Department in Bray Town Council and that the staff are not up to scratch on large planning applications. He added that because we do not have the proper resources we will have to decline some applications, which will then be sent to An Bord Pleanala who will then probably grant permission. This will be very hard on the current staff.

**Planning Register Reference 03/32 - 2 storey crèche - Ballywaltrim Grove, Killarney Road, Bray**

Councillor John Brady also stated that there is a development on the Killarney Road taking place where the developers have demolished a crèche. He then asked what is the current position with this?

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**Planning Register Reference 05/299**

**For development consisting of change of use of an existing nursing home to 4 individual private houses (dwellings). Works involve the reinstatement of cast iron downpipes, garden walls to the rear and painting to elevations. One external opening is proposed to the rear at lower ground level. The buildings form part of a terrace which is a protected structure. No's 5 – 8 Florence Tce, Florence Road, Bray.**

Councillor Ciaran O'Brien stated that this could be a very good development and he welcomed it.

**Planning Register Reference 05/292**

**The construction of 5 no. two – storey holiday homes to the rear of an existing protected dwelling with the insertion of 5 no. parking spaces to the side of the site with associated landscaping and site works at Seanchara, Strand Road, Bray.**

Councillor Ciaran O'Brien stated that he is opposed to this as it would leave problems for the future.

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**Planning Register Reference 05/153**

**The demolition of Ballywaltrim Grove house and its outbuildings/garages, the construction of 72 no. dwelling units consisting of 39 no. two bed apartments and 33 no. three bed duplex apartments in 5 no. three-storey buildings, 102 no. surface level car parking spaces, vehicular access is proposed from Killarney Road via the internal access road at Saran Wood, plus landscaping and ancillary site development works all on a 1.47 hectares site. Ballywaltrim Grove, Killarney Road, Bray.**

Councillor Brid Collins stated she was delighted that this application was refused.

**Planning Register Reference 06/05**

**Proposed external signage to the Castle Street Elevation and the re-cladding of the existing free standing sign to the Castle Street Boundary.**

Councillor Brid Collins supported this application.

**Planning Register Reference 05/308**

**Erection of new 2 storey building, comprising of 2 no. apartments to side garden of existing dwelling. Riverdale, Herbert Road, Bray.**

Councillor Brid Collins supported this application stating that this green area is used for anti-social behaviour.

**Planning Register Reference 05/295**

**Change of use from Doctor Surgery to office to the hall floor level and from domestic to office to the upper floors along with the essential repairs including rewiring, heating and plumbing, 2 Eglinton Road, Bray.**

Councillor Brid Collins stated she would like to welcome this application and said that great planning and thought went into this application.

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**Planning Register Reference 05/300**

**12 no. duplex residential units with underground parking, Ballywaltrim House, Killarney Road, Bray.**

**Planning Register Reference 05/302**

**The demolition of existing single storey bungalow and for the construction of 4 no. 4 bedroom period style dwelling houses with provision of off street parking (two per house), site entrance gate, landscaping, and ancillary works, Glendale, Old Connaught Avenue, Bray.**

Councillor Caroline Burrell stated that she was pleased that both of these applications were refused.

**Planning Register Reference 06/01**

**Alterations to existing planning permission by construction of a 3 bedroom dormer bungalow residence including revisions to existing site entrance on a site to the rear. 30 A Oldcourt Park, Soldiers Road, Bray.**

Councillor Caroline Burrell asked if this application was in keeping with the area?

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The Administrative Officer responded to the members with the following –

**Planning Register Reference - 03/32**

- Wicklow County Council has been dealing with this. Work has ceased after a letter was sent out.

**Planning Register Reference – 05/189**

- Pre - planning discussions have taken place regarding social / affordable housing, which is 20% of the floor area. Guidelines from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to this issue sets out what they will be paid for. This is due on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

The Director of Services informed the members of the following -

- Florentine Centre – we never sought further information for this application to buy time. He also stated that the Environmental Impact Statement had been submitted and he outlined a number of issues of concern. He also stated that two of the were not up to scratch, as it would have taken away from the listed buildings, and the developers did not come back with what the council had requested.
- The Senior Executive Engineer used to handle planning issues but we are now short of this engineer and the Town Engineer has been looking after this area. We are giving our full resources to this.

**Any other Business**

Councillor Joe Behan asked what the situation is with the out-of-hours doctor service. He also asked is there any resurfacing works planned for the Killarney Lane in Bray.

Councillor Pat Vance asked if a review could be carried out in Wyndham Park regarding the ten-hour parking. There is a lot of anti-social behaviour happening in Ardmore Park. He asked if Bray Town Council could ask the Gardai to be vigilant regarding this.

The Town Clerk informed the members that she has been in contact with Dr. Leah Egan regarding this and we should be hearing back from her this week.

Councillor John Brady asked that the litter problem in Bray be placed on the agenda for next weeks meeting.

This then concluded the meeting.

**Signed:**

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**CATHAOIRLEACH**

**Signed:**

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**TOWN CLERK**

**Dated:**

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