

Minutes of Special Housing and Planning Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 13th June 2006.

Present: Councillor Anne Egan, Cathaoirleach
Councillor Joe Behan
Councillor John Brady
Councillor Caroline Burrell
Councillor John Byrne
Councillor Bríd Collins
Councillor Déirdre de Búrca
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. Sean O'Neill, Town Engineer
Ms. Joan Kavanagh, Housing Officer

Vote of Sympathy

The Cathaoirleach proposed a vote of sympathy for the late Charles J. Haughey and then she asked the members to join her in a minutes silence.

Councillor David Grant thanked the Cathaoirleach and he then stated that Mr. Haughey was a strong character who gave a lot to Irish politics and Irish life.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting dated 9th May, 2006.

It was proposed by Councillor John McManus, seconded by Councillor Joe Behan and unanimously agreed to confirm and adopt the minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting dated 9th May 2006.

2. Reports and Recommendations.

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

3. To consider the Housing Progress Report .

The members raised the following points: –

Taking in Charge of Estates

- This is a priority issue as there are a number of estates that are still waiting to be taken in charge by the Council including Deepdales, Giltspur Brook and the Headlands. The matter of signage and grass cutting is important.
- What is the procedure for this?

Silverbridge Halting Site

- Would urge Councillors to push for the refurbishment of the halting site.
- No dumping has taken place here recently.
- Very successful meeting held recently.

Fire Safety Audit

- Disappointed that the Interim Report was not given out before now.
- 36 houses have been inspected so far in Oldcourt, when will the remaining 14 be done? How long will this process take?
- Would propose that when the final report is produced that the consultants would come to a meeting and discuss it.
- When will the final report be available?
- Concerned about contradictions in the report.
- Very concerned at the serious contraventions of fire regulations in 24 out of 36 houses surveyed. Residents need to be informed of this. A lot of problems appear to be similar.
- Residents are concerned about gaps and holes in party walls.
- Need a full-time Fire Service in Bray.
- Consultants should give a presentation to the Members.
- Difficult to do a survey if you cannot get access to houses.
- Need a policy in place if the tenant is to rectify the problems themselves as this could lead to disaster.
- We should write to all residents and outline how important this survey is.
- Should look at how these problems will be addressed.
- How many estates built around the same time, as Oldcourt would pass the current fire regulations?
- All houses were not surveyed – was this as a result of a cut in funding?
- Why were some intrusive works carried out on some houses and not all of them?
- Presentation from contractor would be useful when report is completed.

Oldcourt Resource Centre

Works listed in the interim report need to be carried out on the Resource Centre.

- This is a serious issue as the centre is used by adults and children on a daily basis.

Fire Hydrants

- All Fire Hydrants need to be inspected urgently as this is a step forward in saving lives.
- This has been going on for six months and yet only 174 fire hydrants have been inspected to date, this is a very low figure.
- Who is inspecting the fire hydrants?

- Welcome the update on the fire hydrants and would hope that progress continues.
- Is there a temporary member of staff reviewing these?
- Would like to see this on the agenda every month.
- Full time fire service needed to have a good reliable service.

Planned Maintenance of Gas Boilers

- What areas have been selected for this?
- These should be maintained regularly and not every two or three years.

Ballywaltrim Heights

- Welcome the new footpaths.
- There are a lot of blocks lying loose at the retaining wall at the back of the shop.
- Who is responsible for the remedial works – is it Wicklow County Council or Bray Town Council?

Fassaroe

- Why are Bray Town Council dragging their heels on the remedial works? Possibility that funding may be lost.

Giltspur Heights

- Surveyor said attics could be converted.
- Selling point of the scheme was that conversions would be cost effective.
- People do not want to leave their houses and the Council should facilitate them and allow residents to convert their attics.
- Unfair that residents cannot get access. An estimate of €7,000 was quoted to remove flowerbeds. What is the current situation?

Affordable Housing

- Affordable housing needs to be on the agenda each month to ensure progress.
- Do not feel that this Council is proactively seeking land for affordable and social housing.
- C.P.O. Kilbride Lane – What is the current position.

Kilbride Grove

- One off houses were approved by the Members in Kilbride Grove and on the Upper Dargle Road site. Why have these not been progressed?
- Would like to see the vacant house at 26 Kilbride Grove occupied as soon as possible as neighbours have expressed concern?

Central Heating

- The central heating programme in Oldcourt – has this started?
- If tenants put in their own heating system are they entitled to compensation from the Council?

- Would like to see a full report on this for the next meeting.

Ashlawn Court

- Welcome the remedial works at Ashlawn Court. Would like to see certain cases viewed more sympathetically.
- Congratulate the Manager for proceeding with the pilot scheme of using the direct labour force from Wicklow County Council.

Miscellaneous

- Thought that the problem with the Disabled Persons Grant reports was sorted however, its falling back again.
- There is a problem at St. Colmcille's Terrace a resident who is illegally selling cars. Would like officials to investigate this.
- When will the works at Cedar Court be completed fully?
- Is the waste ground in front of the Boghall Road Depot owned by the Council? If so, what are the Council going to do with it.
- Wish to thank Council officials and repairmen for the works carried out on Ardee Street.
- Would like to see surveys completed on certain estates in the town.
- What progress has been made on the self-help Scheme?
- Welcome the increase on the limit for house purchases.

The Town Engineer informed the members of the following:-

Fire Safety Audit

- 45 or 46 houses have been inspected. One consultant was on sick leave and no house had been inspected in two weeks.
- Individual Reports will be given when completed.
- Each report is a draft report.
- Do not feel that rushing the consultants is a good idea as we want a proper inspection carried out.
- Not expecting a full report in the next few weeks.
- Trying to assess the level of work which needs to be done but we are unsure what the consultants are recommending at this point.
- Four premises including the Resource Centre needed immediate attention and are being dealt with.

The Town Manager stated that he did not expect any difficulty with getting money from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

The Housing Officer informed the Members of the following:-

- Welcomed Councillor Caroline Burrell's comments regarding the no dumping at Silverbridge Halting Site.

- No specific houses have been chosen for the planned maintenance of gas boilers. The houses which have older boilers installed will be given preference. The gas boilers will be inspected every two years.
- Wicklow County Council are responsible for the remedial works in Ballywaltrim Heights.
- We are actively investigating the possibility of attic conversions in Giltspur Heights.
- Regular meetings are held with Occupational Therapists to discuss the applications for the Disabled Persons Grant. However, they also have a problem with manpower.
- A contractor is starting the central heating programme in Oldcourt next week.
- If a Council tenant puts in their own heating – they are not entitled to any compensation unless they have received approval under the self-help scheme.
- The wasteland at the Boghall Road Depot is currently being examined.
- The self-help has already been advertised and the closing date for receipt of applications was Friday 9th June.
- A report regarding affordable housing will be prepared for next months meeting.

The Town Engineer informed the members of the following:–

Fire Hydrants

- These are being inspected by normal Council staff. This was delayed due to staff on sick leave after Christmas, however the level of staff is now at a rate where ongoing testing can continue.
- 175 fire hydrants have been completed to date.
- Temporary staff members were employed during the summer to plot the fire hydrants on maps and highlight hydrants in need of repair.

The Town Engineer also confirmed:-

- The Upper Dargle Road site was split because of difficulty with the entrance.
- Contract documents for four houses at St Rita’s have been sent to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for approval.
- A temporary staff member is examining the taking in charge of estates this week.

4. To consider Planning Matters. *****

Planning Register Reference 06/112
56 Newcourt Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Anne Ferris supported this application.

Planning Register Reference 06/121
Coláiste Raithin, Florence Road at the junction with Eglinton Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Anne Ferris and Councillor Brid Collins both supported this application.

Planning Register Reference 06/90 -
Stationhouse Property Company Ltd, Roslyn, Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Pat Vance stated that this application is totally inappropriate for the area and the residents are not happy about it.

**Planning Register Reference 06/98 –
TBP Group Holdings Ltd, Mazars Place, Salthill, Galway.**

Councillor Pat Vance stated that this application is also totally inappropriate for the area and the residents are not happy about it.

**Planning Register Reference 05/189
The Florentine Centre, Bray - site bounded by Main Street, Eglinton Road, Florence Road and Quinsborough Road.**

Councillor Pat Vance stated that this development is vital to the town and a decision needs to be made by An Bord Pleanala very soon. He suggested that we write to An Bord Pleanala and ask them to expedite this decision.

Councillor Caroline Burrell supported Councillor Vance in that a decision needs to be made. She then stated that if a decision is not made soon then the Council should take back our land and develop it as a car park. The hoarding around the Florentine Centre is an eyesore.

Councillor Brid Collins confirmed that she would not like to see a car park on this site as retail is needed in the Town Centre.

**Planning Register Reference 06/85
Ballywaltrim House, Ballywaltrim Lane, off Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.**

Councillor Caroline Burrell welcomed the fact that this application was refused permission as it was not in keeping with the area.

**Planning Register Reference 06/73
Woodleigh, Giltspur Lane, Bray, Co. Wicklow**

Councillor Caroline Burrell stated that she was disappointed that this application was granted. Two applications with different descriptions were given to Wicklow County Council and Bray Town Council – she felt both planning authorities should have liased with each other regarding this.

**Planning Register Reference 06/122
Mandalay, Violet Hill, Herbert Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.**

Councillor Caroline Burrell welcomed the fact that this application included solar panels. The applicant looked for exemptions for solar panels but there are no set guidelines for these panels, the velux windows guidelines are used for this purpose.

Planning Register Reference 06/131
4 The Cottages, Boghall Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Caroline Burrell stated that this application needs to be in keeping with the area.

Planning Register Reference 06/44
Suntec Developments, Granite Lodge, Drumcree and Lyndhurst, Herbert Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Joe Behan stated that all Councillors voiced objections to this application. He queried the request for further information and as to why this request was made.

He also stated that he would call for a complete review of the Bray Development Plan 2005-2011 if this application is granted to ensure that this does not happen again. Town Centre developments to be of high density not developments 3 to 4 miles out of town. He mentioned that it was also agreed to map open spaces in all estates in Bray, this will help ensure that developers do not build on open spaces and questioned when this will be done.

Councillor John Byrne confirmed that he would not support this application.

Councillor John McManus stated that when the members were discussing the Development Plan it was felt that increasing densities was a good idea. Particularly near transport hubs, this was a general policy decision, progressive and a good thing. However, they were assured that where there were high density developments they would be of high quality design and acceptable standard. Councillor McManus went on to say that he does not think the Council have the resources to ensure that the applications are accessed thoroughly enough and to ensure that increased densities are acceptable to the people of Bray.

Councillor Anne Egan confirmed that she was concerned about the request for further information.

Planning Register Reference 06/117
The Fun Palace, No. 3 Marlborough Terrace and part of No. 2 Ocean Villas, Strand Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Brid Collins and Councillor John Byrne supported this application.

Planning Register Reference 05/116 and 05/117
Pizarro Developments Ltd, Bray Golf Club Lands, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Councillor Deirdre de Burca stated that the people of Bray welcomed this application however, she expressed concern about permission being granted for this before An Bord Pleanála had made their decision on the Flood Defence Study.

Councillor John Brady stated that he had requested a copy of the pre-planning meeting from the Planning Department however, he was told that they had disappeared. It is very serious that only one copy of these minutes was kept.

Councillor McManus stated that over thirty conditions have to be agreed with the planning authority and suggested that the application was done in a hurry with not enough resources and insufficient detail and expertise to deal with the application. He also stated that the Flood Protection Scheme must be designed and in place before any development would go ahead. It would be regrettable that we would now bank from the densities in the Development Plan. In the event of this strategy being adopted how would what position would developers who purchased under the current Development Plan be in if the land was rezoned. Would compensation be payable?

Councillor McManus queries that if the strategy regarding densities was adopted what position would the landowner and developers be in under the basis of the existing Development Plan in terms of compensation.

**Planning Register Reference 06/114
No. 17 James Connolly Square, Bray, Co. Wicklow.**

Councillor John Byrne stated that he wishes to support this application.

**Planning Register Reference 06/120 -
Balerotta Properties Ltd, T.O'Reilly Electrical Premises, Western Corner of the
junction of Beechwood Close and Boghall Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.**

Councillor John Byrne stated that the access to this should be from Beechwood and not the Boghall Road. Proper signage should be put in place and the shutters should be tastefully done.

The Town Manager replied as follows:-

- Land down zoned - There will be no compensation paid to landowners or developers. Different situation if planning permission is granted.
- The Council will be writing to An Bord Pleanala expressing their feelings.
- It is premature to return the Florentine site back to a car park. We have a reasonable amount of time to put a package together.
- There were 3 objections to the Florentine application.
- In relation to planning application 06/73 – both Bray Town Council and Wicklow County Council sought further information. We have to work within the law.
- Solar Panels are either exempt or not.
- Will try to map the open spaces this year however there is a lack of resources to do this.
- The Development Plan is very descriptive and we took a new in relation to the Golf Club application. No work will go ahead without the Flood Protection Scheme.
- The pre-planning report for the Golf Club lands was not done in shorthand – it was in long hand by the planner and the planning staff confirmed that they did not have another copy however, there is no camera on the planning counter so we have to trust the public. Planning staff have clear recollection of the report on the file. The first that we knew of the missing report was when the planning department received a phone call from a journalist in West Belfast.

5. To discuss Naylor's Cove.

The Members raised the following points:-

- Naylor's Cove was once a jewel in the crown however it had now become an eyesore and a haven for anti-social behaviour as regular drinking and drugs parties take place here.
- Development Continuation Scheme should be looked at.
- Plans need to be put forward under the S.A.A.O. for Bray Head and the Bray Development Plan 2005-2011.
- Visited the site at both high and low tide and would agree that the matter needs urgent attention.
- At low tide the former wall of the swimming baths has worn away and the steel reinforcements are razor sharp – this could cause serious injuries.
- Litter and graffiti is disgraceful. Propose that the Council would get it cleaned up. The graffiti is in different languages and this reflects the cultural changes in the town.
- A motion for signage had been put forward in April 2005 by the Green Party members.
- Ongoing maintenance plan for this area is needed.
- This location is out of view and this encourages anti-social behaviour.
- The current staff who are working on the Seafront Enhancement Scheme are very slow. Will it be completed for the Bray Summerfest?
- Much greater priorities on Bray Seafront e.g. seating, disabled access to the beach.
- Any derelict building attracts young people and drinkers
- An amenity asset is under justified.

The Town Engineer replied with the following:-

- Have not yet inspected Naylor's Cove.
- The entrance had been blocked off and signage was put in place. This must have been removed.
- Constantly in contact with the contractor who is looking after the Seafront Enhancement Scheme. Would hope to have this completed by the end of June.

5. Update on the Recycling Centre.

The Town Clerk informed the Members that the Recycling Centre will open tomorrow, Wednesday 13th of June at 11.00 a.m. This is happening due to the fact that nearly all staff are in place including some staff for the summer period. The centre will take nearly all recyclable goods with the exception of Waste Electrical goods – this is subject to separate registration with the EPA and Wicklow County Council have not yet made the required application. The official opening is scheduled for Friday 16th June.

Councillor David Grant stated that due to the funeral of former Taoiseach, Mr Charles Haughey the official opening would be postponed.

Councillor De.Burca expressed her disappointment that the centre was opening when she was not in the chair.

Councillor Brid Collins asked would the mobile recycling units be continuing.

The Town Clerk stated that the one in St Peters would continue for the next few months. The one in St Fergals would be taken out of service soon.

Councillor John Brady expressed his disappointed at the postponement of the official opening.

6. Any Other Business.

Bray Summerfest

The Town Clerk circulated a letter from the Bray Summerfest, which set out the events and locations of the forthcoming festival.

The Members raised the following points:-

- Very cautious about events on Bray Seafront as the works are not yet completed.
- Welcome the events in the Peoples Park as it spreads the festival away from the Seafront.
- Councillor de Burca’s name was mentioned in the letter however she had asked the organising to contact Councillor Ciaran O’Brien instead, who represented this area.
- Disappointed that the letter was received so close to the event – would like more notice.
- Support Bray Summerfest, always good fun and entertainment.
- Disappointed that this did not come before the M.P.C.

Lifeboats

The Town Clerk read out correspondence from the R.N.L.I. regarding them holding a “Duck Derby Race” on 15th July 2006 at the Dargle Bridge and also having a collection box for members of the public.

It was proposed by Councillor Anne Ferris and seconded by Councillor David Grant that the R.N.L.I. would be given permission to hold a “Duck Derby Race” on 15th July 2006 at the Dargle Bridge and also having a collection box for members of the public. It was also proposed that approval be given to the various events contained in the programme for this years Bray Summerfest.

This concluded the meeting.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
TOWN CLERK

Dated: _____