

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 14th February 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

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

Also present: Mr. Des O'Brien, Director of Services
Ms. Catherine Halligan, Town Clerk
Mr. Sean O'Neill, Town Engineer
Mr. Michael Nicholson, Wicklow County Council
Ms. Moira Byrne, Wicklow County Council
Mr. Andrew Lawless, Wicklow County Council

1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Monthly Meeting dated 13th December 2005

It was proposed by Councillor Anne Egan and seconded by Councillor Brid Collins and unanimously agreed to confirm and adopt the minutes of the Monthly Meeting dated 13th December 2005.

2. Reports and Recommendations.

Burial Ground Report

The Town Clerk read out the following report.

In 2005 there was a total of 84 burials consisting of –

- 9 No. in section A
- 21 No. in section B
- 33 No. in section C
- 17 No. in section D
- 4 No. in section E

In 2006 to date there was a total of 14 burials –

- 2 No. in Section A.
- 12 No. in Section B

- 7 No. of above New graves
- 7 No. of above re-open of existing
- Grass cut on 6th June and 9th Feb.
- 2 No. Skips emptied and replaced 3 times each.
- 3 No. Headstones erected.

Councillor Pat Vance stated that the graveyard was looking much better.

Councillor Joe Behan asked about the graves that had sunk and he also stated that the graves that had been topped up should be included in the report. He added that the report should be a written report.

3. River Basin Advisory Committee

The Town Clerk informed the members that they are being asked to nominate a member to sit on this committee.

Councillor Anne Ferris proposed and Councillor Anne Egan seconded that Councillor John McManus be nominated onto this committee.

Councillor Pat Vance proposed and Councillor Brid Collins seconded that Councillor Deirdre De Burca be nominated onto this committee.

Councillor Anne Ferris stated that if Councillor McManus is unable to sit on this committee she will also nominate Councillor Deirdre De Burca.

4. Report on the proposed Recycling Centre.

The Cathaoirleach stated that she had asked for this report from Wicklow County Council. She stated that she does not think this centre will now be open in the short term so that is why it is being kept on the agenda.

The Town Clerk read the following report –

Report for Bray Town Council on progress towards provision of a Civic Amenity Centre.

- *Approval granted for change of use by Bray Town Council in December 2005*
- *Approval for funding of up to 75% of the capital cost of the project received from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government just before Christmas.*
- *Councillors in Wicklow County Council have adopted funding in the Budget to enable the centre to operate in 2006.*
- *Approval for the recruitment of 1 facility manager, 4 operatives and 2 clerical staff received from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in the third week of January. Advertisement seeking applications for the various positions in the media 1st and 2nd February. Closing date for applications 17th February.*

- *Discussions ongoing with the owners of the premises regarding the lease.*
- *Procurement of equipment necessary for operation of the centre underway.*

The members then raised the following points –

- Seems strange that negotiations are continuing with the owners of the site. Can more information be provided?
- Can we put a timescale on this? Is there an agreement in principle?
- Staff will not be employed until this is up and running.
- Amazed that the management of Wicklow County Council are all over the place with this. We deserve a lot more information than has been given in the report.
- Wicklow County Council is the Waste Authority. The County Manager should take responsibility.
- We are being given half-truths all the time.
- All documentation between the two parties should be distributed to the members also.
- This is a shambles from top management in Wicklow County Council. The County Manager needs to take responsibility.

Councillor Pat Vance proposed that the Council write to the County Manager and ask him to attend a meeting in March to discuss this issue. The Cathaoirleach and the rest of the members agreed with this proposal.

Councillor John Brady asked that the Pilot Recycling Scheme be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Town Manager informed the members that it is very easy to reach an agreement if you are willing to give everything the person wants, so Wicklow County Council are trying to negotiate because they are putting public money into private property owners. He also stated that the Proper Planning Process was proceeded with but negotiations are still ongoing. He also stated that advertisements have been placed to recruit staff.

The Town Clerk stated that the lease has not been signed yet and no formal agreement has been signed.

11. Update on the Boathouses and the Harbour Shed.

The Cathaoirleach proposed that the members move item 11 in place of item 5 as this is a priority item and an update is needed. The members agreed.

The Town Clerk stated that all legal documentation has been sent to the Law Agent. She also stated that she had received a valuation and that the members and officials can agree a rent between ourselves, depending on economic or social reasons.

The members raised the following points –

- The winter months are the time for work to be carried out so we must get a lease in place – at least a five-year lease.

- This has been going around in circles. As long as the Town Manager can give us a cast-iron guarantee I will be happy.
- We should have this finalised in a fortnight.
- No one around this table is opposed to this proposal but it must be done properly.
- Boxing Club – delays have an affect on this club applying for sporting grants etc. We must at least make sure they have a five-year lease.
- Can the option of the clubs being able to improve their facilities be included also?
- The Queen of Peace Youth Club is prepared to put in money, labour and time themselves. Six members of this club are here tonight.
- Bray Town Council must protect their own property.
- The option should be given to the club to relocate to the Harbour.
- Want draft lease drawn up for next March.

The Director of Services stated that leases are given all over the county to different clubs. He also stated that there are certain works to be carried out and any proposal would be reasonable.

5. To consider the Draft Scheme of Allocation Priorities for Affordable Housing

Councillor John McManus, Chairperson of the Municipal Policy Committee, stated that the draft scheme which was circulated to the members was a scheme which was thought to be reasonable by the Municipal Policy Committee.

The members raised the following points –

- We have not had any affordable housing in Bray under this current council. We must be very careful, offering all of these proposals and we do not even have any affordable housing.
- Points System – the further away you work from the house the less points you are entitled to, this is an anomaly in the scheme.
- Access to public transport should be taken into account.
- People involved in second relationships are being discriminated against. This needs to be addressed. There are a lot of cases where marriages are breaking up after 3 – 4 years with not a lot of equity on the house.
- Do we have shared ownership in Bray or is it run by Wicklow County Council?
- This issue should continually be put on the Special Housing and Planning agenda. We are driving the young people out of Bray. How many affordable houses do we have? The forms are very complicated.
- This scheme is geared towards the local people of Bray. People should be told of any implications of the scheme. Genuine cases of re-mortgaging should be considered. Scheme does not necessarily apply to Part 5.
- Bray Town Council can provide their own affordable houses.
- Has there been no planning application that has supplied houses under Part 5?
- Has there been any discussions with the developers regarding a buy out clause?

- Is it reasonable that some people who live along DART line get points? I would like some direction on this.
- Whenever there will be affordable housing coming up in Bray can we get notice on the agenda?

The Town Clerk stated that the Shared Ownership Scheme is operated by Wicklow County Council.

The Director of Services stated that under Part 5 no houses have been built, only apartments. He added that the developer is entitled to get the proper value of the land but it is very expensive. He stated that under the 1999 scheme, €60,000 was given from the department as a subsidy. He also stated that there is a buy out clause for developers and because of the cost per unit it is impossible for land to be affordable around Bray.

Councillor Anne Egan asked about the Rehills land and she also stated that she would hope to have a report on the Flood protection.

Councillor John McManus stated that there are some sites not suitable for affordable housing so we have to be careful.

Councillor John Brady asked if discussions have taken place regarding applications under Part 5 with the developers?

Councillor Anne Ferris proposed that we go ahead with this scheme and review it after one year and this was seconded by Councillor Caroline Burrell.

6. Progress report on the Swimming Pool

The Town Clerk informed the members of the current situation regarding the swimming pool and she stated that all plans and particulars of this development will be available for inspection from 1st February 2006 until the 1st March 2006 in Bray Town Council. She also informed the members that submissions can be made to the council before the 15th March 2006.

The members raised the following points –

- People with disabilities – will they be able to access the swimming pool?
- The Council put money into the renovation of the Presentation College pool instead of putting money in for a new pool.
- Hope this is on the agenda for the first meeting in March. This is at a very advanced stage now so we should keep it going.
- We want this immediately. It is now 2006 and the plan for this commenced in 2002.
- Is it true we might have to sell Rehills land to fund this?

The Town Manager stated that this must be on display for 4 weeks and the submissions may be received for another 2 weeks. He added that we have instructed the consultants to start designing the pool and the contracts should be in the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in June.

7. Disposal of Fee Simple Interest in the rear portion of lands at Atlas Print & Packaging Complex, off Lower Dargle Road, Bray

Councillor Anne Ferris proposed and Councillor Anne Egan seconded the disposal of Fee Simple Interest in the rear portion of lands at Atlas Print & Packaging Complex, off Lower Dargle Road, Bray.

Councillor Anne Ferris and Councillor John Byrne stated that the litter around this area is disgraceful. Councillor Anne Egan enquired about the number of social / affordable units at this location.

Councillor John Brady raised the issue of skips for the people of Bray and he also raised the issue of parking in the Superquinn Carpark.

8. Update on the 1.78 acres

The Town Clerk informed the members of the following –

Documentation was sent to 65 interested parties. Ten tenders were received and opened by the Cathaoirleach this morning (14th February 2006). These will now be evaluated and the members will be kept informed with recommendations regarding the proposals. The approval of the members will be required before any disposal can take place.

It should also be noted that a formal planning process will be needed for any development on this site.

The members raised the following points –

- How will this work – strictly on proposals or what? Would like more clarity on what criteria is being asked for.
- Will this be keeping with the area?
- Is this about money or good quality development? What benefit will there be for the community?
- The land behind this land is crucial – we must be very careful not to throw any obstacles in the way.
- Will be surprised if a proposal comes back that does not include a shopping centre. We reserve the right to disagree with a proposal if it is not suitable. The members will be the final arbitrators of the decision.
- Will there be a covenant put in to ensure a particular kind of development?
- Concerns if an interview process is set up on the basis of a number. Money offered should not be the only issue.
- People in that area have not had services in a long time – time to look at this. We need to rationale any decision. The views of the members should be conveyed to the interview board.
- Suggest a neighbourhood Shopping centre.
- We should be sending a clear message to the manager of Wicklow County Council that he is not getting any money from this sale. The money should be reinvested in the infrastructure of the town. Some landscaping needs to be carried out on the Southern Cross Road.

The Town Manager stated that we are after an advantageous deal. The officials and the members are of the same view. A brief will be given to the interview board, there are a number of items to be taken into account – the objectives of the Bray Development Plan, allowance for entry into the adjoining site and the best money also. I am aware that there is a great need for a shopping centre in this area of Bray. He also stated that the only way to make sure of an entrance to the adjoining site is by a restricted covenant.

13. Any Other Business

St Patrick's Day Festival

The Town Clerk stated that all the members were provided with a St. Patrick's Day Festival information pack by the Chamber of Commerce.

The members raised the following points –

- The Bray and District Chamber of Commerce propose to greatly expand this event.
- Would like to thank the Councillors who supported an increase in allocation for this in the budget.
- If there is any damage to the grass, are we covered by the Chamber of Commerce?
- This festival could be fantastic for tourism.
- Concerned about late night drinking and anti-social behaviour. Can this be moved from the Seafront for a change? Is it possible to have proper patrols on the Seafront if this goes ahead? Bray Head went on fire at the previous two festival occasions.
- Fire works display – the €10,000 would go a long way on other things such as the upkeep of the railings.
- To be fair we only adopted budget last month so the Chamber of Commerce could not do much till we had adopted the budget. It is up to us if we give the go ahead or not. The Chamber had very little time to prepare the proposal.
- It is for a reasonably short period – I think we should go ahead.
- Has the Chamber of Commerce applied to the Council for permission to have Funderland come to Bray?
- What will be given back to the town? Funderland should go through the Council, not the Chamber of Commerce for permission.
- Fireworks display – would like this as early as possible.
- Fireworks display in daylight hours is a waste of money.
- Parade was very successful last year. Chamber of Commerce has organised a number of good festivals.
- Bray could become known for its festivals. What is the route of the parade?
- Would be nice to link this with the Wicklow 400 celebrations.
- Voluntary effort going into this – for years there has been no parade and now the Chamber are running them – this deserves our support.
- Funfair south of the aquarium is in contravention of Seafront policy but is acceptable for a few days.
- Very happy this is not political – good proposal.

- MPC Meeting should deal with the timing of this next year so it is not left too late.
- Bandstand on Seafront – suggest that local Irish groups are allowed to use this and would also like to see a contribution from the Council.
- Can we appoint a liaison person from this Council to be on the committee?
- Does the Chamber of Commerce have the policy that was drawn up by us for the use of the Seafront?
- There should be a Litter Management Plan in place.
- We should get detailed accounts when an event is over and the costs and details of any other incomes.
- €20,000 – bond for reinstatement – is this sufficient?

Councillor Joe Behan stated that as the first citizen of Bray the Cathaoirleach is giving out a negative reaction to this, which is a voluntary effort from the Chamber of Commerce. He added that there is no favouritism for the Chamber from the members of the Council.

The Town Engineer stated that the officials will discuss these concerns with the organisers. He added that the main arguments will be concerning the machinery.

Councillor Brid Collins proposed and Councillor Anne Egan seconded that the members approve the proposal from the Bray and District Chamber of Commerce for the St. Patrick’s day parade.

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
TOWN CLERK

Dated: _____