

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber,  
Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:**

**Councillor Brid Collins, Cathaoirleach  
Councillor John Brady  
Councillor Caroline Burrell  
Councillor John Byrne  
Councillor Anne Egan  
Councillor David Grant  
Councillor Michael Lawlor  
Councillor John McManus  
Councillor Steve Matthews  
Councillor Ciaran O'Brien  
Councillor Pat Vance**

**Also present:**

**Ms. Christine Flood, Acting Director of Services  
Mr. David Forde, Acting Town Clerk  
Mr. Sean O'Neill, Town Engineer**

**Apologies:**

**Councillor Anne Ferris**

The Cathaoirleach Bríd Collins, opened the meeting by extending a Vote of Sympathy to the Town Manager, Des O'Brien and his family on the recent death of his mother, Joan O'Brien. She requested one minute's silence from the members.

At the end of the one minute's silence, she adjourned the meeting for five minutes as a mark of respect.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting dated 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2008.**

Councillor Ciaran O'Brien proposed confirmation of the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008 and Councillor Caroline Burrell seconded the proposal.

**2. Disposal of Fee Simple Interest of lands at Ballywaltrim (commonly referred to as the 1.78 acres), Bray (copy previously circulated)**

Councillor Caroline Burrell proposed Disposal of Fee Simple Interest of lands at Ballywaltrim (commonly referred to as the 1.78 acres), Bray and Councillor Anne Egan seconded the proposal.

The members raised the following points:

- Has it been resolved whom the funds are going to? Will it be half to Bray Town Council and half to Wicklow County Council?

The A/Director of Services, Ms. Christine Flood responded that the Town Manager recommended a 50/50 split between Bray Town Council and Wicklow County Council and the County Manager had accepted this. She added that she didn't know if this had been officially resolved as yet.

The members raised the following points:

- Can we keep this on the Agenda until confirmation of the way monies are to be split is received?
- This is an important issue for Bray and there is doubt as to if Bray Town Council or Wicklow County Council will hold ownership.
- I suggest that the two Cathaoirleach and the two managers meet to finalise this deal before the end of their tenures and get the best deal for Bray.

- [Cathaoirleach Bríd Collins] I totally agree with you. The A/Director of Services and myself will meet with Wicklow County Council and keep you informed.

### 3. To Discuss The Proposed Parking Bye-Laws 2008

The members had been circulated with a document in relation to the above. The Cathaoirleach reminded the members that no vote would be held this evening and that the decision lies with the members to make changes to the Parking Bye-Laws. She added that this was an opportunity for the members to make their views known before this goes to public consultation.

She thanked the Town Engineer, Sean O'Neill for his report and then stated that the A/Director of Services had a point of information in relation to an article published in the Wicklow News relating to the parking issue.

The A/Director of Services, Ms. Christine Flood then informed the members of a phone call received from the Wicklow News relating to an increase in the parking charge to €1.50. Ms. Flood told the Wicklow News that she was not prepared to comment on the matter in advance of the council meeting, as this is a reserved function and a matter for the members.

In the article, Ms. Flood was quoted as saying *"the purpose is to increase turnover and to increase the use of car parking facilities where available"*. Ms. Flood then clarified that she did not mean financial turnover, but meant turnover of cars. She added that it is better to have a higher on street car parking charge than is charged in the car parks.

The Cathaoirleach added that the objective is to relieve car parking spaces in the town centre, to give people shopping in Bray the opportunity to get a parking space.

The members thanked the Town Engineer for his report and raised the following points:

- Yes, we should go ahead and amend the bye-laws. There has been a lot of discussion over the past months.
- Our problems stem from the Florentine Centre. We have failed to provide parking in the town.
- The return of the Florentine Centre will not answer the problems. It will accommodate shoppers and people living there.
- This report does not go far enough to provide solutions.
- There has been talk of traders parking their cars all day. We should be looking at areas outside the town centre for employers and staff to park. We could have a designated permit at a reduced rate for them.
- We need to identify new spaces for parking e.g. the Civic Centre car park. This is open to the public on Saturday and Sunday – why not all week? Let the staff of Bray Town Council use a designated car park at the Carlisle Grounds or the Seafront.
- I am opposed to an increase from 50c to €1.50. This is a 200% increase and won't have the desired effect of freeing up spaces.
- When Deputy Joe Behan sat on this council, he referred to the whole parking situation as a cash cow. We collected €474,000 with on-street car parking last year. If the charges were to increase, this figure would increase to €1,500,000.
- If we are trying to raise revenue for the town, we should look again at the Castle Street car park. We own this car park. The Town Manager said he would review that car park. Superquinn charge €1 per hour. They raise €299,000 per year. I suggest we take control of this car park back. There is a substantial amount of money to be made.
- I didn't agree with Superquinn getting the car park at the time. I don't know if we can get it back, it's a long lease.
- It is proposed to extend the boundaries and charge €50 per annum for residents to park. We need to take control of car parking and not force more residents to pay to park in their own areas.
- Does Councillor Brady enjoy living in the town? He is always in the paper making negative comments.
- There are 200 spaces in the Civic Offices, of which Bray Town Council has 30-40 spaces for the workers. They are not hogging these spaces.

- Bray Town Council don't own those spaces in the Civic Centre. The Town Clerk fought long and hard to get this car park opened at the weekends. The other tenants had security issues.
- Do you want the seafront turned into a car park? We don't want the seafront as a permanent car park, we're already concerned with the situation.
- I don't agree with dumping the problems of the town on the beach. We need to have a good public transport service to the DART and then when this is in place, look at controlled parking in the area.
- We should charge for parking on the seafront, but not on Saturday or Sunday.
- We need to be very cautious regarding the seafront. If managed parking is only in certain areas, cars will move to non-managed areas and we don't want that.
- The shuttle service is a good idea, but not parking on the seafront.
- No town in Ireland is cheaper than Bray. 50c an hour is too little. I don't necessarily agree with a charge of €1.50 per hour, but we should increase it.
- 50c per hour in the town centre is far too cheap, people are feeding the metres.
- There are problems with on street parking because it's cheaper than the car parks.
- This is a report. No decision is being made tonight. There are no recommendations before us.
- We are reviewing the situation after ten years. This is long overdue. I'm sure the traders and people who visit and work in the town want this to happen. There is an urgent need for this review.
- When the Parking Scheme came into operation first, the idea was to free up spaces. To let people come into the town and do their business at a reasonable cost.
- This was discussed in 1997 and many objectives that were set out at the time have not been achieved. One of the objectives was to provide additional car parking spaces. We have in some instances cut back on spaces. Despite the growth in car numbers, we can see there hasn't been any vision in this issue.
- Some of us agreed to Pay Parking ten years ago. I will never forget that night in the Council Chamber – business people abused us that night, but in fact came back to us later to thank us.
- We should look at new areas for controlled parking in the town and whatever income we get from car parking should be ploughed back into areas where parking is taking place. I want a commitment and guarantee on this.
- Traffic management is a primary concern in the town. There are a limited number of spaces, with lots of different groups competing for them.
- The Town Council needs to look at acquiring land in the town centre. If we can say new parking facilities will be provided, people will accept parking fees.
- I don't expect not to pay for parking.
- Regarding Residential Disks, the law states what the charge should be and is very clear.
- No one expects to park their car outside where they work. We should look to providing new areas and charging. We don't expect something for nothing.
- I was up the town last week and called into the Civic Centre. 200 free parking spaces are provided, but only about 40 were used. This is about management.
- 1,500 cars per year are added to this town. This equates to 7km of road space for parking.
- Hundreds of commuters park on the seafront. Businesses are losing out. If you want to have lunch down the beach, there are no parking spaces. If you want to bring your children to play on the beach, there are no parking spaces.
- I don't believe people are too disgruntled to pay for a parking space, as long as it's there.
- Eight submissions were received from businesses in relation to Wyndham Park. They wanted to keep the spaces for their employees. I can't believe their customers don't come first.
- We need to promote private car parks. The Carlisle Grounds are not really used – people can park for free on the beach.
- I accept thrust of the whole report, it is the only way forward. We can't produce multi storey car parks. Management is the way forward.
- The community will benefit with better parking. Hopefully there will be less traffic.
- An upgrade of the bus service is absolutely essential. We need to provide an alternative to cars.
- We need a loop service like the IMP service. It would be good to see a local operator providing one.

- We need to encourage alternatives – the cycle lanes are a disgrace. They are not kept clean and no new ones have been put in place.
- [Councillor Steve Matthews] Can we factor in a waiver scheme for elderly people who don't own cars but depend on friend/relations to bring them shopping etc? €50 is a lot for them to pay for a Residential Disk.
- I welcome this report and agree that we should raise the fee. €1.50 is a bit expensive though.
- 50c an hour on the Strand Road is reasonable. The fee for Residential Disks is reasonable.
- I don't agree with the €50 fee for Residential Disks.
- [Councillor Caroline Burrell] I second the idea of a waiver for the elderly.
- Thank you for the figures relating to parking – what has the balance of €500,000 been paid on?
- The residents of Roslyn have a permanent problem with commuter parking. It is so bad that emergency service vehicles can't access it due to parking on the pavement.
- This is a good report. I accept the proposals.
- We need to discuss what is for the greater good. Some people won't be happy.
- We have to do this in a way that's fair and reasonable. We have to pitch our charges to what's available locally. You can park in Dundrum Town Centre, in a covered car park for three hours for €2. I don't think the charges around the centre of the town should be more than Dundrum.
- While it is a good thing that the council can generate money from this and put it back into the town, it is not the primary objective.
- An Annual Parking Disk is not a good idea. People who could afford it could leave their car in the centre of the town for a whole day. I don't agree with this.
- We need to come up with a concrete plan to go to public consultation soon.
- I agree with the report in broad principle but we need to be aware of the charging structure.
- It's ten years since this scheme was brought in first and there have been huge changes in car ownership since then. Some households have three, four or even five cars now.
- There are a lot of residences in the East Ward that are protected, so they can't knock into their gardens and park in there. There needs to be a policy on this, if residents want more than one permit.
- I have been asked as Cathaoirleach to give up my parking space in the Civic Offices. I don't have a space. I share with others. If I need to drop in to the Civic Offices, I telephone ahead to check.
- I ask the traders to use the Civic Centre car park at weekends.
- We have achieved a lot. People hate change. We are not doing this for ourselves we are doing it for shoppers.
- We don't want traders or employees parking in the centre of Bray, it's not fair to shoppers. We want to keep businesses alive.
- I welcome this report but it needs more work.

The A/Director of Services, Ms. Christine Flood informed the members of the following:

- Bray Town Council has fewer car parking spaces in the Civic Offices than staff who work there. Spaces in the Civic Centre are owned by various agencies and there are also spaces allocated to residents.
- Negotiations were held with the various agencies to enable the opening of the car park at weekends.
- The lease agreement is not with Superquinn, but another company. I will make enquiries regarding the lease.
- Regarding the figure of €500,000, money needs to be paid to the Holy Redeemer regarding the acquisition of their car park. Other monies go into Programme Group 2 – roads.
- A number of potential sites are under consideration, but I'd prefer not to give details at this time. There are three possibilities and we hope to have proposals before the end of the year. Land acquisition is a very long, drawn out process.
- Signage has been placed at the entrance to the Civic Centre car park at weekends to advertise the free parking.
- A survey of cars parked along the seafront was conducted by the Traffic Wardens some years ago and it was found that 60% of cars parked there were registered to addresses in Bray.

- The DTO have agreed to fund consultants to investigate the provision of a transport interchange. They will investigate the use of shuttle services, bicycles etc.
- The intention of the Annual Disk is that they are subject to the parking terms and conditions. For example, the owners of an Annual Disk will only be able to park in a 2 hour zone for 2 hours. The provision of an Annual Disk was suggested by businesses in Bray.

The Town Engineer, Mr. Sean O'Neill remarked:

- The focus on the members has been on the money aspect. There is no indication as to whether the proposed area is too big or too small. I take it by your silence that the members are happy with the strategy?
- We will keep two hour parking in the centre of the town and look at longer term parking in the east of the town.
- I have heard that Tesco are thinking of introducing restricted parking. Places like Charnwood and San Souci may be affected. We should possibly include these areas also.
- The Bye Laws are in effect from 8.30am – 6.30pm. You can change these times.
- We can control parking by money/fees charged.
- It costs €2,500 - €3,000 to make a surface level car park (ing space?). There is no incentive to provide off street car parking if you can park on street for 50c an hour.
- The incentive to park on the street at the moment is approximately 30 minutes cruising time. You must have spaces on the streets dearer than the car parks. If you can park for €2.50 a day outside the Carlisle Grounds, you won't pay €5 to park in there. They have provided an extra 150 spaces.
- Bray Town Council have acquired a site bordered by Florence Road, Eglinton Road and Quinsborough Road of approximately one acre, which provided approximately 150 parking spaces. The piece of ground that Bray Town Council own is irregularly shaped and Ballymore Properties own the balance of the land. The site is one hectare. Ballymore used their discretion in allowing Bray Town Council to use the land as a car park. When this area comes back into play, it won't improve the situation.
- It will probably be time to review these bye laws again, when the development north of the river takes place.
- I have no problem with stopping car parking on streets when we have car parks to put them in.
- I take from the silence of the members that the general strategy of the document is fine.

The members responded:

- I request that the Town Engineer add Seapoint Road onto this.
- We are extending the current zone. There are already problems in the current zone – will the problems be expanded?
- We will have to take on more Traffic Wardens.
- If anyone is going into the Florentine Centre to shop, hopefully they'll leave their cars there and shop in the rest of the town. Until that car park is in place, we can't develop the Herbert Road car park.
- When the multi-storey car park is built in the Herbert Road car park it will make a huge difference. We can't close this car park down to develop it until the Florentine is up and running.
- Where do we go from here to advance this? I'd prefer to make some decisions rather than let it drag out.
- I'd like to compliment the Traffic Wardens, their job is to free up traffic and manage it.

The A/Director of Services stated:

- I suggest to the members that this document goes on to public display. The statutory period is one month.
- We need to consult with the Garda Commissioner and the Superintendent.
- We will advertise this in the papers and make available to the public in our offices and online.
- We will come with feedback to one of the meetings in June.

The members responded:

- Are we caught in a process where a decision has to be made?
- If any aspect of this is changed, do we have to go back to public consultation?
- €1.50 per hour is too expensive. €1 per hour is reasonable. The increase from €10 - €50 on Residential Parking permits is too much. I suggest an increase to €20 per year.

The Town Engineer responded that public consultation was not needed on the proposed charges. Public consultation is only need to change the bye laws.

The A/Town Manager informed the members that Section 36 of the Road Traffic Act 1994 instructs that the members must consider the views of the public and Garda Commissioner. She further stated that the charges element of the parking bye laws can be changed without going to further consultation.

The members responded:

- If we go to public consultation with €1.50 per hour parking and €50 per year Residential Disks, people will not look at the overall strategy.
- If it is not necessary to go to public consultation with the charges, why do so? People will only concentrate on that. We can discuss charges later. We need to change the bye laws.
- We need to clarify the Annual Parking permit for €1,000. If people think they can buy a space in the centre of the town, there will be uproar.
- The public should have an indication of what the charges should be.
- I'm not in favour of these fees. We should put the management of the system out to public display.
- What about charging for parking on the seafront at weekends? This is a separate issue.

The Town Engineer informed the members that the charges are part of the byelaws. He stated that when altering charges as part of existing byelaws, there is no need to go to public consultation.

The A/Town Manager informed the members that the officials of Bray Town Council are proposing Draft Bye Laws and Car Park Bye Laws. She added that it is possibly prudent to include the charges, and will check the Act. If it is not deemed necessary to include the charges, they won't be.

The members remarked:

- If charges are to be included, this needs to come back to us at next month's meeting.
- Please keep people informed.
- Lets make a decision on this at the next meeting.
- We should look at charges in nearby councils to compare their pricing structure.
- Can we have a report on the Castle Street Car park next month?
- I don't think there should be Parking Meters on side roads, can you please review?

#### **4. To Receive Recommendations from the Community, Cultural, Social & Environmental MPC**

The Cathaoirleach Bríd Collins requested the permission of the members to extend the meeting, as she had requests for four items under Any Other Business. The members agreed to extending the meeting by 15 minutes.

The members raised the following points:

##### Litter Task Force

- I'm not happy with any of this. We have a litter task force on the Rejuvenation Committee. We shouldn't be doubling up on this.
- It is not fair to have meetings during normal working hours, some Councillors work full days.
- To be fair, the Rejuvenation committee is for the centre of the town. This is an important issue for the town – it is not litter free.

- I don't know if the officials will have time to work on this though.
- I welcome anything that will tackle litter in the town. We need to co-ordinate all task forces, e.g. Coastcare, An Taisce Spring Clean, Bray Lions club.
- There are benefits to setting up a litter task force.
- I am totally in favour of this. I have no problem with establishing task forces. The seafront is kept very well, I don't see why all of the town can't be kept to that standard.
- Bringing voluntary bodies into the task force is a great idea. Anything that will tackle litter in the town is a good thing.
- We don't have the tidiest town, I support this.
- [Councillor John McManus] I'm chair of the committee that presented these proposals and I stand over them.
- The idea of a task force came from the officials. I think it is a good idea to have one and we should agree to it.
- This is very necessary and I support it.
- [Cathaoirleach Bríd Collins] As part of the Town Rejuvenation Committee, Christine Flood, myself and others walk the Main Street. We will liaise with you.

#### Audited Accounts

- At the MPC meeting in December, we had David Forde and Mick Glynn in with their accounts and we were happy with them.
- Are we looking for audited accounts from everyone we give money to? These cost €1,5000 - €2,000. It is not fair that they should spend their money on this.
- The accounts should be given to the officials of Bray Town Council, not the members.
- David Forde was proposed to go onto the Summerfest Committee by John McManus' MPC to oversee things and is very happy with the way things are handled.
- I don't know if many people get more than €5,000. I know of one group who get funding every year of less than €5,000, but you never see them around the town. They are automatically put in for funding every year.
- We get great value from the grants. Audited accounts are very expensive. It is not fair that 30% of their grant goes to this.
- We give the County Wicklow Arts Centre a lot of funding and have never seen any accounts.
- We gave Loreto School €70,000 and we were never asked for audited accounts.
- I'm not aware of any problems in the groups that we give money to.
- [Councillor Steve Matthews] I presume the groups that receive grants have other sources of income. I don't see any problems with this – it is a clear process. I propose this recommendation.
- I am opposed to audited accounts, the town gets great value from voluntary groups. I don't think audited accounts are necessary.
- We need transparency and accountability. Bigger groups who are getting funding from various sources need accountability. It is the responsibility of the council to ensure that.
- I have always asked that there be accountability for any public funds awarded. I am not happy as a public representative that there is no accountability on any monies we give out. I will continue to ask for this until we get it.
- I don't think if audited accounts cost €1,500 we should ask for them.
- If people being awarded money are a small group and they present invoices, I would be happy with this.
- When we are considering a policy change, we should be presented with the rationale behind it.
- Local authorities support local initiatives. Many of these people give up their time freely for events in the town.
- This council is not the primary funder. Sponsorship is not only in monetary terms. I do not agree with this.
- We should have one block grant and invite proposals and allocate funding that way. Let people applying for funding this way present accounts. It will be an open and transparent system.
- There are a number of organisations that have been funded for the past 7 to 8 years in every estimates meeting.

- This relates to the use of Bray seafront by the St. Patrick's Day Festival and Summerfest. It had been suggested that Bray Town Council run these events. Bray Town Council don't have the capacity to do so.
- Public representatives have asked for audited accounts. We need accountability.
- I don't remember amounts greater than €5,000 being mentioned at the MPC.
- We need to look at provision of audited accounts by smaller entities.
- Yes, we should have accountability and transparency but I am not going to bully small people and voluntary groups into providing audited accounts. We don't want to scare them away. I am opposed to this.

#### Self Help Scheme

- Why do tenants need to replace internal doors? If this scheme is not being taken up, the money should go back into council coffers.
- I thought internal doors were the responsibility of the tenants?
- What kind of budget is this?
- [A/Town Clerk David Forde] It is in the region of €10,000 - €15,000.
- That won't go very far. I find it difficult to believe that we are giving grants to people to paint their houses.
- Our main objective as a local authority is to provide houses. The money should go back into our stock.
- I'm opposed to this, our function is to upgrade and improve our own houses.
- This is a good idea. Council houses should be kept to a minimum standard. People are fed up waiting for new windows etc – they are going out spending their own money doing up our own housing stock.
- This is mainly to help elderly people. The money does not roll over. If there are any other suggestions, I welcome them.
- I have no memory of internal doors etc being mentioned. The replacement of fascia boards, gutters etc. came up at the MPC.

The A/Town Manager informed the members:

- The role of the officials and councillors on the boards/committees are as watchdogs for those committees.
- Mr. David Forde is on two committees – St. Patrick's Day Festival and Summerfest. He was in fact, nominated onto these committees by this council.
- We are conscious of accountability.
- I am concerned regarding confidentiality issues. It should be clarified who these accounts are to be issued to.
- I am concerned about new applications for grants, it is possible that Bray may make a bid to hold the Fleadh next year. Some organisations might not have the capability to provide audited accounts.
- It might be appropriate for Bray Town Council to reserve the right to request accounts. Specifying audited accounts might act as a deterrent to voluntary groups.

The Cathaoirleach stated that she had sat on the board that awarded the Arts Grants and wondered if she would have to contact the recipients to request audited accounts. The A/Town Manager remarked that this was a good point and that the Council adopted the recommendations of the Arts Officer that the amounts awarded be increased. She stated that the recipients of these grants may not be in a position to provide audited accounts.

The members raised the following points:

- We are talking about relatively large organisations that are spending large amounts, some of which is public money. Whether they provide certified or audited accounts, as long as they can stand up to public scrutiny, that's fine.
- We have officials of Bray Town Council as watchdogs on these committees. I'm calling for support of certified accounts.
- This is getting out of hand. The target here is the St. Patrick's Day Festival and Summerfest. Bray Jazz Festival has gotten significant amounts of money – we should treat everyone the same.
- [Cathaoirleach Bríd Collins] I want to call a vote on certified accounts.

- I'm supporting certified accounts.
- What limit are we talking about?
- We got recommendations from the MPC and the Chair of the MPC says he doesn't remember them. What is going on here?
- Who will these accounts go to?

At this point the members pointed out to the Cathaoirleach that the agreed time to extend the meeting by had elapsed. The Cathaoirleach closed the meeting and stated that these recommendations will have to go back to the MPC.

Councillor John Byrne stated that he was very disappointed that he had requested an item under Any Other Business and he was not able to raise it due to the meeting running over.

**5. Reports and Recommendations**

Due to time constraints, Reports and Recommendations were not addressed at the meeting.

**6. Notices of Motion**

Due to time constraints, Notices of Motion were not addressed at the meeting.

**7. Correspondence**

Due to time constraints, Notices of Motion were not addressed at the meeting.

**8. Any Other Business**

Due to time constraints, Any Other Business was not addressed at the meeting.

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This concluded the meeting.

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

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

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