

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber,  
Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:**

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

**Also present:**

**Mr. Des O'Brien, Director of Services  
Ms. Christine Flood, Town Clerk  
Mr. Sean O'Neill, Town Engineer  
Ms. Nichola McLaughlin, Senior Development Manager,  
Natural Power  
Ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council  
Mr. Brian Deegan, MERC  
Ms. Louise Scully, MERC**

Before the meeting started, the Cathaoirleach Ciaran O'Brien raised the matter of the incident, which occurred in the Council Chamber after the previous weeks' meeting. He informed all present that this had been discussed at the Protocol Committee meeting. The members are subject to Standing Orders and also a Code of Conduct. He stated that he considered this harassment abusive to Councillors and that Councillors should not be subject to this. He informed the members of his intention to write to the member of the public involved and inform him that he is also subject to the rules and regulations of the Council. He added that he would ask for an apology and inform the recipient that this letter is a warning. Should a similar incident arise, the recipient of the letter will be asked to leave the Council Chamber. He finished by stating he had the full support of the Protocol Committee on this matter.

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of the Monthly Meeting dated 9th December 2008**

Councillor Caroline Burrell proposed confirmation of the minutes of the Monthly Meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and Councillor Anne Egan seconded the proposal.

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of the Special Housing and Planning Meeting dated 6th January 2009**

Councillor Anne Egan proposed confirmation of the minutes of the Special Housing & Planning Meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and Councillor Bríd Collins seconded the proposal.

**3. Confirmation of Minutes of the Budget Meeting dated 13th January 2009**

Councillor Anne Ferris proposed confirmation of the minutes of the Budget Meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and Councillor John Byrne seconded the proposal.

#### 4. To Receive A Presentation Regarding the Codling Wind Park Extension

Ms. Nichola McLaughlin, Senior Development Manager, Offshore, Natural Power thanked the members for allowing her to present to the Council.

She informed the members of the following:

- The purpose of this presentation is to introduce you to the project. A total of 220 turbines are already proposed. The developers have made the decision to look for an extension to this number.
- There are two companies involved with this project – Fred Olsen Renewables and Treasury Holdings.
- The proposal is for a total of 420 turbines. Both projects will merge and will look like one project. This will be a phased development and entail a long term construction project.
- The wind turbines will produce between 1.9 to 3.2 TWh of clean electricity per year. This will help us meet our Kyoto Protocol targets.
- The turbines will be located between 13km and 20km off shore.
- We have undertaken various surveys including site surveys, marine life, bird life, visual assessment and shipping and navigation to ensure that the turbines do not interfere with any of these.
- The investment value of this project is €1.8 billion to €4 billion.
- There will be phased construction over 3-7 years. If we add this to the Codling Wind Park construction timeline, the timeline will be circa 14 years.
- There will be up to 200 skilled and non-skilled workers employed for the construction phase.
- We envisage having 15-25 local staff during operation plus up to additional 70 during planned summer maintenance works

The members thanked Ms. McLaughlin for her presentation and raised the following points:

- The policy of the Green Party is to have green power. Will this scheme connect into Britain, France etc and will we have nuclear power?
- We already have interconnectivity with Britain, effectively we are already using nuclear energy.
- I welcome developments in renewable energy – this will put us on course to being semi self sufficient.
- We have to look for alternative energy.
- I welcome the progression of wind parks. What distance will these be from Bray?
- You mentioned local staff – will these be local to the county or will it be people from Dublin?
- Aveva have developed new wind turbines in Germany – can you give us your opinion on them?
- I am surprised that we are talking about these turbines – they are 160 metres high.
- There are new turbines out now which are more efficient and are smaller.
- In layman's terms, how many houses would it power?
- You mentioned long term maintenance, what is the project life term?
- Will there be a tourist/education centre in the town?
- How will interconnection work?
- Can you give us details of bird migration patterns?
- The Codling Bank is the spawning ground for endangered white fish – can you give us your thoughts?
- The residents were not happy that we used the Codling Bank to provide shingle for the beach anti erosion scheme.
- It has to be said, these turbines are not the prettiest looking things. Arklow got planning permission for a huge wind farm, but it's not complete.
- How successful is the Arklow scheme? Will Bray be bigger or the same size?
- This will have a major impact on the environment and will change the landscape of Bray. Will the noise of the turbines be heard on shore?
- What are the proposals for decommissioning these turbines when the lifetime of them has ended? I would like to see them dismantled and removed and not become derelict.
- When the cables come to shore, what happens then?
- Difficulties will arise when the connections come onshore and voltage is involved.
- Who will fund this? Money and timing is very important. How confident are you on completing the project in time?
- The carbon footprint of producing and transporting these will be high.

- What is the scale of the site?
- What harbour will be used?

Ms. Nichola McLaughlin, informed the members of the following:

- There is one interconnector proposed. We have made an application to get on the grid. European rules state that you can't own and operate an interconnector.
- Europe is pushing a drive for interconnectors. At present, Norway is doing one down to Ireland, the UK and France.
- I take on board the point regarding nuclear energy, but I can't comment on it.
- Jobs provided will need to be local, as we will need to have someone on demand. There could be callouts during the night requiring the turbines being reset etc. There will have to be an operations site close to the site of the turbines. We anticipate that there will also be outside experts. The manufacturers will maintain the turbines for the first five years.
- I don't know much about the new turbines. They are in the early stages of development. There is a new two bladed machine, but the blades will never turn in sync with other turbines. They are suitable for off-shore wind farms.
- The turbines will be located in excess of 29kms from Bray Head.
- The turbines will power 706,000 houses and we would also export power to Europe.
- The lifetime of the project is 20 years. I can't give you figures for long term maintenance.
- The idea of an education centre is a great one. This has been done in Devon in the UK for a land based wind farm and is still attracting visitors.
- Regarding the EIS, we have done extensive studies around the site. The surveys were conducted over two years and we have spent €2 million on this. The studies indicate there are no migration patterns through the wind park. Prior and during construction, continuous assessment will be done. There are very few birds at the site and any birds that are on the site are low flying and would be below the level of the blades. The EIS has a report on the birds that will answer your queries.
- The cod spawning grounds are very far north and most fishing in the area is for whelk. This is being done via pots and no trawling is taking place.
- We have found that turbines enhance the area after a long time. We don't anticipate any sediment will be carried away during construction.
- Arklow has permission for 200 turbines. The Codling Wind Farm will have a total of 420 turbines and is further off shore.
- You won't have noise off site as they are too far away. You might hear noise during construction if the wind is in the right direction.
- We have decommissioning proposals. The Codling Wind Park has a 100 year lease and we have signed up to decommission these turbines. We have undertaken to have the turbines not working for the least number of days possible to effect repairs in the event of them breaking down and the sea being too rough to get a team out to them.
- The cables will be coming to shore North of Bray and North of Kilcoole and Greystones. It is up to the ESB what happens when they come on shore. We will apply for planning permission for this. It is up to the ESB where the connection meets up with the grid. At the moment we are looking at connecting to the Carrickmines substation.
- The developers have to provide funding and they will go to the banks to raise funding.
- Regarding the beach replenishment works, our studies have indicated that the Codling Bank has regenerated. We have the original EIS and our own EIS shows this. This bank is very stable and hasn't moved in the past 200 years. It is ideal for a wind farm.
- The look of the turbines is a very personal thing – I can't change your opinion. They will be very far off shore and it is possible you won't see them as they are coloured to tone in with the skyline.
- Arklow has 7 turbines in use – this was a demonstration project by GE who supplied the turbines.
- The original site is 50kms<sup>2</sup> and the proposed extension is 72kms<sup>2</sup>, but we won't use all that. It will roughly be 100kms<sup>2</sup>.
- We will need a large port like Dublin or Belfast for the larger parts. For the smaller pieces of machinery, we could possibly use Wicklow.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms. McLaughlin for her presentation and requested that the members be kept updated on progress in this matter. Councillor Collins remarked that she was delighted

that the Codling Bank had regenerated, as there had been a lot of opposition to using this site to source gravel for the beach works.

## **5. To Receive A Presentation Regarding Mapping Of The Urban Habitats of Bray**

Ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council thanked the members for the opportunity to present and introduced Ms. Louise Scully and Mr. Brian Deegan from MERC, who had conducted a survey of Bray in 2008. This information had not been gathered previously and a lot of urban sites were also included. She hoped that the information provided would be of use to Local Authorities.

Ms. Louise Scully informed the members of the following:

- This project was carried out in July and August of 2008.
- The urban habitat mapping that was carried out in relation to Bray was for sites of biodiversity.
- Most environmental legislation concentrates on rural sites. The legal obligation is on protection and monitoring of designated sites. We have no information on non-designated sites.
- We looked at aerial imagery for Bray and consulted the Heritage Officer. We identified green sites of interest. Each site was examined, the habitat was recorded and the site boundaries were mapped.
- In total, 28 sites were identified and 14 sites were identified in detail. The aerial imagery was from 2005 and some of the sites identified turned out to be football pitches, or are no longer there due to development.
- Bray Head is considered a site of national importance.
- We have identified 5 sites of high biodiversity value and local importance, 7 sites of moderate biodiversity value and local importance and 1 site of low biodiversity value but of local importance.
- We have identified Site 4 (the coastal cliffs to the north of Bray town) as a high amenity area. It has two different types of habitat – marine and grassland and has a high local amenity value. It is species rich but has an unfavourable conservation rating. Our recommendation is that invasive species are controlled and coastal erosion is guarded against.
- There is a serious problem in Bray town with Japanese knotweed. We need to control non native species.
- The recommendations for areas of moderate/low biodiversity value are not expensive and quite simple to implement.
- Threats to areas of biodiversity are: the spread of non-native species, dumping, scrub encroachment, burning, herbicide application, erosion, over grazing and over maintenance. An example of over maintenance would be town parks. They are very well managed and maintained. A suggestion is to plant native trees and have wild flower meadows with signage, explaining why a wild flower meadow is in place.
- We have found that local management is more effective than national management.

The members thanked Ms. Scully for her presentation and raised the following points:

- As a member of the Heritage Forum, I am keen to see this happen. We have a lot of sites of value in the town.
- It's a shame that the boundary of the report was not extended to include Kilruddery and Fassaroe as this could then feed into the Local Area Plan. This could also feed into the next Parks Plan and part feed into the Litter Task Force.
- A lot of people would like to see community gardens in Bray. It doesn't necessarily mean vegetable allotments, a wildflower meadow could be considered a community garden.
- I ask that we again look at a Neighbourhood Scheme, particularly in areas where trees have been burned down.
- The 'engaging local businesses' paragraph is very interesting, they may not know what they have.
- The level of dumping is alarming. This is an issue for the Litter Task Force to address.
- Site 4 is in fact, the old municipal dump and is in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area. Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council are putting a scheme in place to ensure that there will be no more erosion.

- Bray Head was given SAAO status. There needs to be clearly defined pathways to stop soil erosion. Horse riding is causing problems on Bray Head.
- What legal and regulatory basis is there for going forward, apart from the Planning Act and litter laws?
- How can Bray Town Council define an area as 'local interest' and how can we ask owners to maintain them?
- How long does a non-native species have to be here, before it becomes native?
- Did you look at greenways to link the sites of biological diversity?
- How is Japanese knotweed controlled?
- Has there been much growth in hogweed? We had an epidemic a few years ago.

Ms. Louise Scully responded:

- We did not survey Kilruddery as we were not granted access. We picked up a lot of details from the aerial photographs, but it wasn't appropriate to include it in the study .
- Community Gardens are highly important as is signage at them.
- I fully agree with your remarks about Neighbourhood, it has been very successful.
- Intel in Leixlip is a good example of engaging local businesses. A portion of the Liffey flows through their site and they are looking at ways of enhancing biodiversity. It is a good case study.
- Ragwort is a problem all over the country – it is due to a grazing management problem, as livestock will keep away from it.
- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government can designate areas of National Importance/Special Amenity. It is a long process and involves public consultation. The DoE is the statutory authority for designating land in this manner.
- A species is considered native if they are here since the last Pleistocene period and there is fossil evidence of them. Non native species have the ability to out compete native species and we end up losing them. Rhododendrons are a case in point, they have destroyed large parts of the west.
- A biodiversity corridor can only link to a similar biodiversity area. We couldn't find too many linkages as the habitats are too different from each other.
- I was not familiar with Bray before undertaking the survey. We did note a lot of hogweed.
- Japanese knotweed is the subject of a research project funded by the EPA. It has been found that it can regenerate from a stem that is less than 6mm. To eradicate this, it has to be done in a very controlled manner.

The Cathaoirleach Ciaran O'Brien thanked Ms. Scully for her presentation and informed her that a management committee for Bray Head had been set up and that Bray Town Council voted in favour of the making of Tree Preservation Orders at the previous weeks' meeting.

## **6. To Discuss Estate Management Issues At Ballywaltrim Heights**

The Cathaoirleach opened the discussion by informing the members that a number of residents of Ballywaltrim Heights had asked the Council to address this matter.

The members raised the following points:

- Members of Wicklow County Council and Bray Town Council met with residents of Ballywaltrim Heights and Glenethorn. The residents feel they get bad service from Wicklow County Council. There are a number of issues up there and they asked us to help.
- They have asked us to set up an Estate Forum. The similar schemes in Oldcourt and Fassaroe have been very successful.
- They want our help, there is a lot of anti-social behaviour. A meeting was held in Wicklow County Council and the Town Manager was very positive and agreed to help. This is a reasonable request by the residents.
- There are serious problems in the area, some of which are being actively dealt with by An Garda Síochána. The residents feel isolated. These two estates are in the charge of Wicklow County Council. The Estate Development Officer in Wicklow County Council is being made part time. All of the estates won't get the same attention they did at this time last year.
- Ballywaltrim Heights is no different from other Local Authority houses. There is a small minority causing problems for the majority. We are a sister authority of Wicklow County

Council, why can't our Manager sit down with Wicklow County Council and agree to take these estates in charge? Obviously there should be some compensation.

- The key is for Bray Town Council to work a deal with Wicklow County Council to take over.
- The same people are causing the problems, they need to be dealt with severely.
- Wicklow County Council has failed the residents and we have failed as representatives on Wicklow County Council. The majority of people want to get on with their lives.
- We had a meeting in January with the Town Manager and he was very proactive. An arrangement needs to come in whereby Bray Town Council take over these estates. A financial agreement needs to be made also.
- We should look at setting up an estate management committee. If there are more activities, people will buy into it. I ask that we progress the taking in charge.
- A meeting was held 10-12 years ago in the community centre about issues arising in the estate and the same issues are arising again.
- I mentioned at a previous meeting that RAPID funding is not being drawn down – this money could go to enhancing the estate.
- It is important that the Manager come back to us regarding coming to an arrangement about taking in charge. It is also important that Wicklow County Council and Bray Town Council are given a directive to support this estate.
- We have a wealth of experience in dealing with these issues. It is important that we have a forum with a view to setting up an Estate Management Committee. There were major problems in Fassaroe before the Estate Management Committee was set up. There was a recent report commissioned to find out how satisfied people were with the area they lived in. Residents of Fassaroe are happier than other areas of the town.
- Ballywaltrim Heights, Ballywaltrim Cottages and Glenthorn are out of the loop. We should facilitate the setting up of a forum.

The Town Clerk, Christine Flood informed the members of the following:

- Bray Town Council, within the resources available to us, is very willing to set up a forum and Estate Management Committee.
- Bray Town Council can't take over the running of the estate for legal reasons.
- There is quite strict application of tenancy agreements in Bray, which the majority of tenants respect. The tenancy agreements are regarded as very fair, as long as rules are applied to everyone.
- Legally, we can't enforce the tenancy agreements Wicklow County Council hold with their tenants.
- We will put the residents in touch with the other [estate management] groups and support them.
- We are willing to work with Wicklow County Council and RAPID.
- I will investigate the matter of Bray Town Council taking over this estate and examine the financial implications involved.

The Cathaoirleach added that a forum will be set up, based on the Fassaroe model.

#### **7. Disposal of Fee Simple Interest of Lands at James Everett Park to Allow For Vehicular Access & Right of Way For A Proposed Dwelling**

It was proposed by Councillor Bríd Collins and seconded by Councillor John Byrne to proceed with the disposal of Fee Simple Interest in lands at James Everett Park, Bray, in accordance with Statutory Notice.

#### **8. Reports and Recommendations**

There was no Reports & Recommendations arising.

## 9. Notices of Motion

### 358. Notice of Motion in the Name of Councillor John Brady (06/01/2009)

*That this Council would install a right turning lane for traffic turning onto the Church Road from the Killarney Road. This would alleviate tailbacks in the area during peak hours.*

#### Report

It is recognised that this junction has substantial traffic capacity constraints. A major junction upgrade was recommended in the Faber Maunsell Bray Public Transport Study that would include the provision of a right turn lane onto Church Road. Land acquisition and substantial engineering work would be required to carry out this work. It is proposed that the council should proceed to a detailed design for the junction once plans for a QBN on the Killarney Road are sufficiently advanced.

The members raised the following points:

- I welcome this report. I believe that most people would agree that this is one of the biggest bottlenecks in Bray.
- People travelling to work or bringing their children to school are facing difficulties.
- The persons from the QBC who presented to the members before Christmas had also indicated that this was a problem area.
- I believe Bray Town Council own the land in question. We should move to a detailed planning stage as soon as possible. I ask that we do this.

### 359. Notice of Motion in the Name of Councillor John Brady (06/01/2009)

*That this Council would ensure that once a Motion has been agreed at Council level that it would be implemented in full in the shortest time frame possible.*

#### Report

We have a policy of implementing decisions as soon as possible subject to financial and staff resources and any statutory procedures that have to be carried out.

The members raised the following points:

- I appreciate that the majority of motions, once adopted are acted upon but some motions have not been acted upon. Deputy Joe Behan put down a motion to have the traffic calming on Sidmonton Road removed and this has not happened.
- There are also issues of yellow boxes not being painted.
- I ask that Notices of Motion be followed up as soon as possible.
- If resolutions are passed, they are subject to finding finance to implement them. I wouldn't like to give the impression to people that just because a resolution was passed they would be implemented.
- We get a Programme of Works given to us regularly. We know works are subject to finance. They have to be included in the estimates.
- We could put many Notices of Motion down, but it is best to deal with the officials.
- Some resolutions are aspirational and are put down purely for political reasons. It is true that Deputy Behan was passionate about the ramps. Passing resolutions in an uninformed way not the best way to do things.
- Notices of Motion are an Agenda item. They are not there for members to make political capital. When a Notice of Motion is adopted, it becomes the policy of the council.
- A lot of Notices of Motion are not passed as such, no vote is taken.

## 10. Correspondence

### Letter From Bray & District Chamber

The Town Clerk informed the members of a letter received from Bray Chamber regarding parking on Strand Road.

The letter stated that numerous items of correspondence had been received from traders and members regarding this issue and stated that '*since paid parking was introduced in the centre*

*section of the Strand Road, it has had the effect of moving commuter traffic to both of the non-paid locations.....This has had a detrimental effect to the parking facility and to the traders at the south end of the promenade....We would therefore urge you to consider introducing paid/controlled parking for the entire length of the Promenade.....these changes have also brought commuter parking to the residential areas of Meath Road, Convent Road etc. We would suggest introducing no parking except for residents from 8am – 10am each morning.*

The Cathaoirleach proposed putting this matter onto the Agenda for the March meeting, in order to enable full discussion.

**11. Any Other Business**

Swan River Works

Councillor Caroline Burrell informed the members that residents of Wheatfield had contacted her to make her aware of plans widen the Swan River and remove trees and shrubs. She stated that the residents wanted the trees replaced, to be informed of any plans by letter and to be kept up to date regarding any works planned.

The Town Engineer informed the members that nothing was finalised as yet. A survey had been carried out but more information was required in order to make a decision. There is an issue with the stream and its' carrying capacity. It will need to be deepened and widened at some point in the future. A decision will need to be made sooner rather than later in the interest of best practice under the Wildlife Act.

Councillor John Brady requested reports on the palisade fence at Glen na Smol and Wheatfield and the reinstatement of the road in Wolfe Tone Square West.

Ballywaltrim Library

Councillor John Brady raised the issue of the curtailment of Ballywaltrim Library's hours and asked for an exact breakdown of the County Demand to see how much of this figure goes towards paying for the library service. He added that it was unfair that one of Bray's libraries has to bear the brunt of the cuts in the Budget of Wicklow County Council.

The Cathaoirleach responded that he will look into the matter of the County Demand but added that as the decision had already been made he was unsure what Bray Town Council could do to reverse it.

Flash Flooding in Bray on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Councillor John Byrne informed the members that he had been approached by residents of Mountainview Drive and Glen na Smol asking what steps Bray Town Council are taking to prevent flooding in the event of a reoccurrence of serious weather. He stated that many homes in the area were destroyed as a result of this flooding and if there are engineering solutions to prevent flooding, they should be carried out. Councillor Michael Lawlor stated that this is the intention of the Town Engineer regarding the works in Wheatfield. Councillor Pat Vance stated that a full report was needed and Councillor John Brady asked that the report also include Schering Plough and that the item be placed on the Agenda for the meeting the following month.

\* \* \* \*

This concluded the meeting.

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

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

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