

BALTINGLASS & DISTRICT FORUM

Meeting Minutes
Thursday 4th February 2010

1. Attendance: Noel Lyons, Mai Quaid, Phyllis Flanagan, Ann Patterson, John Vernon, Ken Browne, Orla O'Sullivan, Fran Quaid, Pat Byrne, Mary Vernon, Paul McGowan, Chris Murray, Paul Gorry, Cait Clerkin, Anne Leigh, Michael Cogan and Marie McCormack.

2. Apologies: Assumpta O'Neill, William Paterson, Liam McGabhann

3. Introduction

The Chairperson welcomed and thanked all the members attending.

4. The Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th November having been distributed were accepted as read.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Correspondence

The Minister acknowledged receipt of our letter in respect of the carnival location.

Mr. Billy Timmins replied on 15th Jan. on the same subject.

An e-mail was received during January from Veronique and Christian Guillaud of Fleurieu-sur-Saone, France regarding the possibility of twinning our two communities and expressing an interest in Irish Culture and way of life.

It was proposed that an investigation be conducted to establish if a protocol exists governing the twinning process and how we should correctly proceed.

7. New member

Gerorda Stamps was appointed to membership of the Forum as a representative of Ardglass Estate, proposed by Paul Gorry and seconded by Anne Leigh.

8. Financial Report

The Treasurer reported a balance of €94.57 currently, notwithstanding some outstanding ticket monies and printing costs.

9. Community Garda

The Chairperson welcomed Garda Bernard Cloney, our local community representative from An Gardai Siochana and invited him to address the meeting to explain his role.

Garda Cloney gave a brief resume of his activities and plans for the local area. He is actively meeting with numerous local groups and associations and particularly with 5th and 6th class level students giving talks on Traffic Safety, Drugs, Neighbour Watch and other related subjects. He is available to any association who need direction or assistance with these problems.

He gave particular emphasis to the setting up of neighbour watch schemes as they gave a direct contact link from the often isolated community to the Gardai. This enabled a more rapid transfer of up-to-date information on any criminal or suspicious activity in the area. In particular he would like to see schemes implemented in Allendale and Ardglass.

He gave permission to include his access numbers in future issues of newsletters or Parish Directories.

The Chairperson thanked Bernard for his contribution and invited him to attend, when available, any future meetings of the Forum.

The subject of **noise pollution** was raised in connection with one of our local pubs. The practice of having loud music piped to the street until a very late hour is at the very least causing a public nuisance.

The lack of discipline in the on-street parking is still causing inconvenience to local residents and shoppers and should be addressed. Where parking areas are clearly marked, i.e. in Weaver Square, the situation has improved considerably.

The practice of **riding unlit bicycles on the pavements** and through motor traffic must be stopped before serious injury is caused either to the cyclists themselves or pedestrians.

The subject of the "Wild West" scenario which occurs in and around Weaver Square regularly with the Boy Racers was also mentioned.

In response it was stated that a Gardai camera car which will be arriving in the area shortly may help to solve the problem.

On a related topic Frances Creighton of the Wicklow Partnership in conjunction with Active Retirement are arranging a public meeting in March where representatives of the local emergency services will be invited to give an address on their specific field.

10. Election of Sub-committees

The following personnel were appointed to the various sub-committees for 2010.

Fund-raising:	Mai Quaid Marie McCormack Orla O'Sullivan P.R. Phyllis Flanagan Noel Lyons	Roads:	Paul McGowan Michael Cogan John Vernon Ken Browne Andrew Pender Paul Gorry
Social:	Cait Clerkin Phyllis Flanagan Mary Vernon Cathy O'Toole Anne Leigh (Chairperson) Ann Patterson Ann-Marie O'Shea Pat Byrne		

As there inevitably would be some overlapping in the activities of the Fund-raising and Social sub-committees it is envisaged that they would work jointly where necessary.

It was further decided that any individual could be approached to carry out specific tasks without being a member of any particular sub-committee.

11. Recommendations from the AGM

Increasing Memberships

One of the primary recommendations from the AGM concerned the need to increase the membership and the representative nature of the Forum. To this end it is recommended that we approach as many local residents associations as possible and persuade them to send a delegate. We should also write to the lapsed members from the various clubs and associations and ask them to resume attendance themselves or appoint an alternate member.

Newsletter

The production of the newsletter will be restricted to two issues this year and it was requested that any contributions be submitted as early as possible.

Website

An increase in the range of information on our website was recommended and any submissions from members for inclusion should be proofed and approved by the committee before forwarding to Chris Murray.

John Dore who attended the AGM with Andrew Pender and was accepted as a member should be asked to liaise with Chris on expanding the website functionality.

12. Bus Eireann

Paul Gorry introduced Isault Kelly and companion Orla from Ardglass in relation to the on-going problems with the inadequate service provided by Bus Eireann. As users of the service they were able to substantiate the shortcomings from personal experience. Paul had already written at length to David Sadler in customer service and the reply seemed to show that although B.E. paid lip-service to the notion of providing a socially inclusive service to rural communities they are no longer able to support non-economic routes. Paul has drafted another letter to Ms Georgina Kerslake of customer Services and this will be sent with some amendment.

It was further suggested that we should prepare a questionnaire for distribution to the regular users of the West Wicklow services and then demand a meeting with the powers that be to get the service we are entitled to. If we don't fight for this they will just ride roughshod over the community needs. This meeting when organised should be attended by our local representatives.

13. Any Other Business

Country Markets are re-opening again on 13th February.

Fair Trade fortnight is from 22nd February to 2nd March and they hope they can depend on the Forum members and their associations for their support.

The Cultural Group have announced that they will not be staging the Patrick's Day Parade this year due to financial constraints. After discussion the Forum decided that they might consider running one in 2011 but not this year.

The Secretary was asked to advise Mr David Irwin that the premises under discussion will not now be required for the Swap Shop.

At the AGM in Laragh Mai Quaid was elected to membership of the Wicklow Community Forum.

The Secretary is requested to write to WCC with regard to the state of the pavements and roads. These do not appear to have received any attention since the gritting and flooding of the last six weeks.

The dangerous state of the building owned by the Wade family in Mill Street also to be brought to their attention and a request to send a representative to our next meeting.

14. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Forum will take place on 4th March 2010 at 8.00 p.m. in the Parish Centre.