

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Bray Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bray on Tuesday 21st June 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Joe Behan,
Councillor Steven Matthews
Councillor Oliver O'Brien
Councillor Michael O'Connor
Councillor Brendan Thornhill
Councillor Pat Vance

Also present: Mr. Des O'Brien, Director of Services
Mr. David Forde, District Administrator
Mr. Liam Bourke, District Engineer
Ms. Triona Irving, Administrative Officer

Absent

Apologies: Councillor Christopher Fox
Councillor John Ryan

A Vote of Sympathy was extended to the families of victims in Orlando and also to the family of George Murphy who recently passed away. A minute's silence was observed, as a mark of respect.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Annual General Meeting Dated 9th June 2015

Councillor Joe Behan proposed confirmation of the minutes of 9th June 2015 and Councillor Steven Matthews seconded the proposal.

The members extended their congratulations to Deputy Brady and wish him the best of luck for the future

Before the election of the Cathaoirleach for 2016-2017 the outgoing Cathaoirleach Councillor Thornhill made the following speech.

I am delighted that the people of Bray gave me the opportunity to represent the town and thank the Council officials for their help and support. I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors. I appreciated the input from both members and officials in discussing issues. Councillors are the custodians of the town.

The year went quickly and was shrouded in controversy, tragedy but also had its uplifting moments. Books of condolence were signed and support was shown and given.

During the year the Council received presentations from a number of groups. I was involved in numerous projects such as the renaming of the Dargle Bridge to the Fran O'Toole Bridge. Two civic receptions were held one for Bray Meals on Wheels who were celebrating their 50th anniversary and for Gary O'Toole to commemorate his gold medal win at the University Games 25 years ago and his many other achievements.

I welcome the work that will happen at Murphy's land building 28 houses. This is long overdue, the housing issue in Wicklow is a big talking point and this could be the start of addressing this problem.

There was controversy over the closing of the hostel at Brighton Terrace, this was a difficult situation but I feel that everything was done to facilitate everyone concerned.

Another controversy was the Barracuda site on the seafront, I felt that questions were answered in relation to this issue.

Other projects such as the Florentine Centre are back on the drawing board. This is important as Bray moves to have its centre revived. Work is nearly complete on the River Dargle Flood Protection Scheme. The boardwalk on the Dargle will be a welcome development. The seafront is being upgraded with a cycle lane which is nearly complete.

I visited many schools and resource centre during the year, my aim was to meet as many organisations as possible. I hope to meet more of them in the coming three years. These organisations serve the town well. I would like to thank the Gardai for their co-operation during the year. I was delighted to be involved in Ceoltas Ceoltoirí Bray. They put Bray on the map with their performances during the 2016 celebrations.

I wish my successor well and I look forward to working with the new Cathaoirleach. Go raibh mile maith agaibhse.

2. Election of Cathaoirleach

Councillor Thornhill proposed Councillor Stephen Matthews as Cathaoirleach for the period July 2016 to June 2017 and Councillor O'Brien seconded the proposal

The District Administrator then deemed Councillor Matthews to be elected as Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District for the term 2016-2017 as there was no other candidate.

The incoming Cathaoirleach, Councillor Matthews and made the following speech

It is an honour and a privilege to be elected and thank you for your support and giving me this opportunity. I want to work with all the members not just for the next 12 months but for the whole tenure of this Council to further important work in the District. I want to be fair with everyone throughout the year. Thanks to my family for all their support.

I previously served on the Town Council for 18 months and am very much aware of the difference between the Municipal District and the Town Council. This abolition of Town Councils was bad for the town and public representatives. It has had a negative impact on the staff, we have lost resources and autonomy. We have the largest populated District and generate the most income from property tax, parking and housing. My objective is to pull us together as a District and to give us some direction. Any gains we make are going to serve future Councils.

The River Dargle Flood Defence Scheme is near completion and the boardwalk will be a fantastic amenity area.

Housing is a critical issue it is a crisis, we need to put pressure on the Department to provide funding. The Director of Services for Housing is looking at sites for Bray, we need to be ready, top of the queue with the Department.

The Florentine Centre is the key to the economic uplift of Bray, everyone involved is committed to ensure that this will happen this time.

It is critical that we get the Development Plan, which is a 6 year framework plan right. We want the message to go out that we have a coherent plan in place. This will identify lands for housing, community and employment.

I have been talking to An Taisce in relation to applying for the Blue Flag for Bray next year. We could get it; there are small budget items to be addressed in the seafront area.

The Sugarloaf Way walk linking the cliff walk to Kilmacanogue will boost tourism. Hill walking as a pastime is really big. I will continue to support Bray Tidy Towns and Bray Coastcare and also important festivals such as Bray Jazz and Bray Summerfest.

The members raised the following points;

- Congratulations on your election and I commend your work plan. I would also like to congratulate Councillor Thornhill on his year.
- I am sure you will do a great job, you have great experience in planning.
- To be elected is a great honour and I hope you will enjoy the year.
- I agree with your programme, the abolition of the Town Council has been a disaster for the town.
- One item omitted from the programme, can we look at the provision of top class sporting facilities in the town? The population has grown and there is a strain on the sporting facilities we have to meet the needs of the community.

- You will bring a freshness to the job.
- Councillor Thornhill brought decency to the chair last year.

3. Election of Leas Cathaoirleach

The incoming Cathaoirleach, Councillor Matthews then proceeded to call for nominations for the position of Leas Cathaoirleach for the coming year.

Councillor Vance proposed Councillor Fox as Leas Cathaoirleach and Councillor Behan seconded the proposal.

The District Administrator then deemed Councillor Fox to be elected as Leas Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District for the term 2016-2017 as there was no other candidate.

4. To approve Schedule of Meetings for July 2016 to June 2017

The Cathaoirleach proposed that the Annual General Meeting be held after the Wicklow County Council Annual General Meeting.

This was agreed

Councillor Behan proposed and Councillor Thornhill seconded that the schedule of meetings for July 2016 to June 2017 be approved.

5. Any other Business

The District Administrator informed the members that there was no other business.

This concluded the meeting.

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Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____