

BLESSINGTON AND DISTRICT FORUM

Minutes of Meeting held at St. Mary's National School, Blessington on Monday, 12 December 2011 at 8.00 p.m.

Present: As per attached list.

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 14 November 2011, were proposed by Peter Nolan and seconded by Brian Schweppe. The Chairman welcomed all members to the meeting.

The meeting dealt with the following issues: -

1. Lake Walks

An update regarding the Blessington to Russborough walk was to hand from John Horan. John, in his report, referred to Rutland Water and the fact that that facility receives over one million visitors a year, has 50 full-time staff and a walk of 36 miles.

Gilmer Hamilton thanked John Horan for his dedication and asked that we express our appreciation to him for keeping us up to date.

2. Meeting with Aldi

Pat Conlan reported that Oak Drive Residents' group have received a contribution of €1,000 from Aldi. Pat Conlan also reported that signs and road markings at Oak Drive have now been completed. The meeting of the Forum with Aldi is due shortly, with Pat Pidgeon to update on this.

Questions were raised in regard to the junction at Aldi and the turning left to Aldi from Main Street.

3. Winter weather response

Gilmer Hamilton attended at the Council recently regarding a response to any snowfall. Gilmer reported:

- An agreement was reached to cover insurance on farm machinery
- Farmers are prepared to clear the snow if needed.
- The Council stated that it would leave salt at various locations on Main Street for businesses to access as required.

4. Anti-social behaviour

The meeting agreed that an invitation be extended to the Community Garda to attend the Forum meeting in February.

5. Crooksling Hospital

Gerry O'Neill updated the meeting on the position to date. Gerry O'Neill noted that, last Monday, a delegation from Crooksling met the Minister for Health. The delegation pointed out that there are five units in Crooksling and over 170 staff. The group asked the Minister to put funds into two units that

need to be refurbished and that this would help take 50 patients from long-term care in hospitals. The Minister offered a reprieve of three months on closure while a full analysis is carried out.

Gerry O'Neill also advised that there would be a rally on Sunday, 18 December, from Aldi to the main square.

6. Christmas lights

The meeting noted that the lights have now been erected on Main Street and thanks were passed to Forum members Seamus Balfe and Mick Duggan and to Fergal Donoghue in respect of the scissors lift and to helpers Christopher Reid, Barry Hamilton and Paul Carey. Thanks were also expressed to Paul Porter for presenting a Christmas tree which is now outside the Credit Union.

The Chairman reported that outgoings to date have comprised insurance €349 and €1,130 in respect of erecting the lights. The Chairman reported that contributions to date have been received from 11 businesses, amounting to €1,025.

7. Theatre

Pat Winters updated members on Theatre developments. Pat Winters advised that the grant application, including erection of a sign, is on hold at present with the Department. It was noted that the pantomime will be held on 16/17 January 2012, while February brings Lambert Puppet Theatre and Brendan Grace will come in March.

8. Road safety

Ariadne Laurenns-Conlan tabled a proposed letter to the Council regarding road safety which had been circulated to the meeting. There was a long discussion on the draft and other points raised included a speed limit on the road from The Lamb to Manor Kilbride, bollards at Roadstone to be lit, Road Safety Plan 2010 – 2018 to be implemented and speed limits to be enforced by local Gardaí. Other points raised included sign at Charles Camping to be fixed, speed cameras in the Main Street more often, proper signage approaching Glending Estate, signs to yield to pedestrians at Burgage, speed limits and lines to be introduced at roundabouts and the footpath at Kilmalum Road.

The letter to go to the NRA was agreed, along with an invitation to attend a Forum meeting to discuss.

It was also suggested that a letter go to local schools in respect of revisiting the Safe Cross Code.

9. A.O.B.

- Catherine Keogh mentioned that the library is to close on a Monday from now on. It was suggested the Forum send a letter to the Council.
- Carmel Cashin advised that there are no sandbags at Glending Estate. Gilmer Hamilton agreed to liaise with the Council and have this rectified.
- A committee is to be set up to review a Blessington Person of the Year Award scheme.
- Wicklow County Council require to be contacted in regard to ongoing difficulties in the extension to Kilbride graveyard.
- A letter is to go to the Council in regard to re-introducing a three-day week at the Tax Office.
- Pat Conlan pointed out that Rural Transport have secured funding for 2012.
- It was noted that there is a broken lamp-stand outside The Downshire which needs to be repaired.
- Strategic groups will try and meet before the next meeting.

This concluded the business of the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 9 January 2012.