

Signal

BLESSINGTON AND DISTRICT FORUM

Minutes of Meeting held at St. Mary's National School, Blessington on Monday 12 May 2014 at 8.00 p.m.

Present: List of members as per attached

Apologies: List of apologies as per attached

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 March 2014 were proposed by John Coogan, seconded by Tommy Brady and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Brian Schweppes wished to have his objections noted to the facilitating by the Forum on 10 April 2014 of a Meet the Candidates Event.

Community Mobilisation

As mentioned at the last Forum meeting, community youth worker Eddie D'Arcy has had a number of meetings locally in regard to Blessington becoming a safe and healthy community for young people to grow up in. The final meeting on this round of meetings for Eddie D'Arcy was to speak at tonight's Forum meeting.

Eddie D'Arcy outlined the background to various surveys which show the need for communities to either acquiesce in the present situation or take some proactive measures.

A European Survey of Irish Schools over the past two years on a self reporting basis, shows that 50% of 15-16 year olds report using alcohol monthly. This is particularly worrying in the context that Irish teenagers drink one third more than Europeans in any event and also worrying is the fact that in the last survey the percentage for girls was 52% as opposed to 48% for boys. Teenagers also report that they find it very easy to access alcohol.

In another survey the Irish Government is tracking 12,000 young people and have been doing so from age 9 and they are now at 13. At present 15% are self reporting that they have tried alcohol.

The Gardai report that in 94% of 5,000 cases involving young people alcohol was a factor.

The question to the community is whether or not the community are interested in a community response or not.

Eddie D'Arcy presented a paper to members setting out the aims, objectives, actions and challenges associated with making Blessington a safe and healthy community for young people and thus reduce opportunities for and pressures on young people to become involved in early alcohol and drug taking behaviour.

One of the key aims would be to promote a healthy lifestyle among young people in our community.

One of the objectives would be to delay the use of alcohol among young people and also raise awareness among young people and their parents of the issues arising from early alcohol and/or illegal drug use. Support would be needed from a specific cohort of parents taking a lead role in ensuring that their children did not participate in early alcohol abuse.

The actions involve developing an agreed approach to alcohol/drugs education from sixth class to sixth year. Children/students need to be aware that involvement in alcohol/drugs may lead to criminal sanctions and thus deny access in later years to US and other overseas countries and even to some training/university courses.

It was noted that there would also be challenges principally ensuring a buy-in from the community, agencies, schools and the Gardai for a sustained period of twelve months.

Members thanked Eddie D'Arcy for him having taken the time to spell this out to members. Matters were left on the basis that members will again discuss this at the June 2014 Forum meeting.

2014 Hillbilly Tractor Run

James McDonald, Noel Foster and Ben D'Alton joined the meeting to advise details of the Hillbilly Tractor Run due through the streets on 29 June. The beneficiaries this year will include Baltinglass Hospital, Lacken Community Centre, Lacken School Parents Committee and the Blessington Community College Parents Council. Forum members will be assisting as usual, similar to other years.

Tidy Towns.

Jason Mulhall advised of where matters presently stand and upcoming actions. Judging will be from the 1st week in June to mid-July and members were asked to assist in every way possible over the coming weeks.

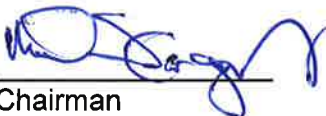
The meeting discussed the Old Library and at September it was agreed that we should make a decision as to whether to continue with holding this building or have it removed.

The Community Awards night was agreed and fixed for Friday 26 September. There will be two additional awards in the Tidy Towns category, one being in respect of best presented pub/restaurant and the second for best presented business.

Jason Mulhall also advised that Qualitas have undertaken to maintain the roundabouts at Dunnes Stores and at Deerpark and it is hoped that John Kelly Motors will be involved in maintaining the roundabout at John Kelly Motors.

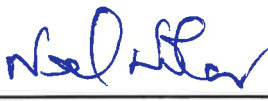
Noreen Keegan Kavanagh advised that a fence has been erected at Blessington Abbey but that there is still a lot of rubbish about. This will be taken up with Councillor Ruttle.

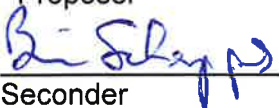
This completed the business of the meeting



Chairman
9 June 2014

Date



Proposer


Seconder

12/5/14

1	Seamus
2	Balfe Seamus
3	Brady Tommy
4	Brennan John
5	Cashin Carmel
6	Cashin Nuala
7	Conlon Pat
8	Coogan John
9	Curran Michael
10	Daly Brian
11	NOEL MURPHY
12	Doyle Michael
13	Duggan Michael
14	Egar David
15	Fay Liam
16	Gilheany Fintan
17	Hamilton Gilmer
18	Hanlon Frank
19	Hanly Joe
20	Haughian Nuala
21	Kane Brian
22	Keegan Kavanagh Noreen
23	Magee Hugo
24	McGillycuddy Tom
25	McGrath Patricia
26	McGreal Killian
27	McMahon Lorcan
28	McNabb Roisin
29	Moroney Anita
30	Mulhall Jason
31	Murphy Fr. Tim 045,865442
32	Murphy Mary Lorna
33	Nolan Noel
34	O hAilín Ruaidhrí
35	O'Neill Gerry
36	Phibbs Patsy
37	Pidgeon Pat
38	Ryall Sally Ann
39	Sargent Michael
40	Schweppe Brian
	Ward Deirdre
	Arada Laven Conlon

Signature	
	Seamus Balfe
	J. Brady
	Apologies
	Pat Conlon
	12/5/14
	Apologies
	Michael Duff
	Michael Duff
	Apologies
	Apologies
	Joe Hanly
	Nuala Haughian
	APOLOGIES
	Noreen Keegan Kane
	Apologies
	Apologies
	Apologies
	Ana Moroney
	Jason Mulhall
	Fr. Tim
	M. L. Murphy
	Noel Nolan
	Apologies
	Apologies
	Michael Sargent
	Apologies
	Apologies
	Apologies