

## **BLESSINGTON AND DISTRICT FORUM**

### **Minutes of Meeting Held in at St Mary's National School, Blessington on Monday 11 September 2017 at 8.00 pm**

**Present:** List of members as per the attached  
**Apologies:** List of apologies as per the attached

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 June 2017 were proposed by Michael Duggan and seconded by Charlie Brophy and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting dealt with the following matters.

#### **Blessington Greenway.**

An update from John Horan advised "since the unanimous passing by the elected Councillors of the Part 8 planning approval for the completion of the Greenway I have had meetings with some people with "site specific" concerns. This was done at the request of the Council officials and was as envisaged in the resolution passed by the Councillors. Subject to the outcome of such discussions – and the provision of grant funding which is still being sought – the Council will prepare final detailed designed versions of drawings for the route before going to tender."

#### **Tidy Towns.**

With both Jason Mulhall and Anita Moroney away a detailed update on Tidy Towns activities will be given at the October meeting. It was noted however, that the National Tidy Towns results will be available on Monday 25 September.

Members were also asked if they could be available for a tidy up from 16 September to 24 September in advance of the Enterprise Town Event on 25 September, requests will issue individually to members.

#### **Community Secretary.**

The Chairman reported that following discussions involving the Chairman and Brian Kane on behalf of the Forum, arrangements have been concluded to have the services of a CE person to act as Community Secretary. Thanks were expressed to David Egar, Paddy Cooke and Reverend Leonard Ruddock on their making available a room at St Kevin's Hall where the new Community Secretary will have an office from Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 2.00pm. A detailed job description has been agreed and the services of the

Community Secretary will be available to the Forum, Tramway Theatre, Tidy Towns, The Old Library, the Greenway and Church of Ireland.

Thanks were expressed to Brian Kane who on behalf of the Forum and other bodies will be the liaison person with the Community Secretary and will take requests for assistance and monitor the workload for the Community Secretary.

### **Dame Ninette de Valois.**

Michael Doyle updated members on recent meetings which he has had in relation to our proposed festival at the end of June next year. Michael Doyle with the assistance of Eamonn Kelly, Michael Duggan & his son were heavily involved in the recent production of a short video filmed at Russborough where Interpretative Artists Ireland had arranged for two ballerinas to perform a choreographed short video at the front of Russborough House. The necessary timber platforms etc. were arranged and put in place by our Forum members.

Michael Doyle gave details of the possible outline of events next year which include concerts at the theatre, library exhibition, talks by Jim Corley, possible busker competition, possible pub themed nights etc.

Michael advised also that a business name has been registered and a Bank account is to be opened and grants are the principal source of funds and must be sourced over the coming months.

It is also hoped to involve local dance companies Ruth Shine and Sinead O'Brien next year and also international pianist Fiachra Garvey.

The meeting was also advised that the present owner of Baltyboys has advised "I would be delighted to help in any way and I am sure we could allow a film crew access to her room and places she talked of in her written works. She had some fairly dramatic things to say about Baltyboys which she loved above all, on leaving "it was as if my heart was torn out and left on the nursery windowsill."

### **Christmas Lights.**

Michael Duggan advised of the urgency of agreeing what Christmas lights will be put in place. It is planned to discuss with business people along the street if they would as a once off agree to purchase a light for one of the trees on the street or a motif. The budgeted costs of lighting of trees is €10,200 while the cost of motifs is estimated at €6,880. Michael Duggan advised that when all costs including VAT and electrical installation costs are put in place the total cost is estimated at €28,000. It was noted that whilst funds will be received from the recent Reservoir Cogs event and from our community collection day on 21 October unless businesses assist with the purchase of the lights there will be a considerable shortfall.

### **Enterprise Town Event 25 September 2017.**

Members were advised in relation to this upcoming event on 25 September and the background to the town participation in the event. It was explained that there will be a video and question and answers session with the judges in Avon Ri at 2.30pm on 25 September and that Forum members will need to be in attendance by 2pm. It was explained also that there will be a small expo similar to that which we ran in June in the Community College and that following the Avon Ri presentation members will reassemble in the Coimin Centre at 5.15pm for a final wrap up with the judges.

In response to clarification Killian McGreal advised that this event would showcase Blessington as a top place to do business and would also put the name of the town out there in negotiations with commercial, social and in particular WCC. The event will list the positives associated with living and doing business in Blessington and the presentation will be available for all to see on social media.

### **Community based CCTV.**

The Chairman reported on a meeting last Saturday attended by himself and Charlie Brophy on behalf of the Forum with CCTV Consultant John Riordan and Garda Dermot Treacy from Blessington Garda Station.

Members agreed at the submission to WCP of an application for part funding for the CCTV. It was also advised that no final decision will be made on the camera installation until the CCTV Consultant attends a meeting of the Forum, takes questions and clarifies the position. Members were advised that the initial assessment cost is €950 plus VAT whilst a similar installation in Roscommon had fees of €8,000 plus VAT for specification, installation and monitoring. It was also advised that Roscommon had 22 cameras at a cost of €45,000 plus VAT and that whilst we would not require as many there still would be a large cost involved. The Chairman advised that both Charlie Brophy and Joe Hanly would be liaising in this matter on behalf of Forum members. Details regarding permissions from Wicklow County Council, from property occupiers and from the Gardai were explained.

### **Culture Night.**

Pat Conlon advised that Culture Night will be on Friday 22 September and this year will be at Men's Shed. Pat also expressed his sincere thanks to all supporters who gave assistance at the recent Heritage Week concert in Hollywood.

### **Any other business.**

- Carmel Cashin advised of a social inclusion event at Glending on this Friday 15 September between 11.00am and 1.00pm sponsored by Wicklow County Partnership.
- Carmel Cashin also advised in relation to the requirement for an ASD unit at the Community College for September 2018 so that children presently attending a primary school unit in Lacken can advance to secondary. This is a matter which has

previously been discussed with Simon Harris TD and the Chairman agreed to make contact with Simon Harris in this regard.

- Patsy Phibbs advised of the need to be constantly vigilant in regard to grants available through WCC as only recently following determined efforts in this regard the Coimin Centre received €1,000.
- Michael Duggan raised the question of twinning with O'Neill in Nebraska and advised members that there is a small group presently in correspondence regarding this event. Members agreed that the twinning ceremony should proceed in due course and that as a follow on there would be an event on 17 September (Halfway to Patricks Day).
- Killian McGreal advised that there would be a small ceremony in due course for the launch of the roundabout at Texaco which has been completely refurbished and that it is hoped that Andrew Doyle together with Junior Minister Brendan Griffin will be in attendance.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Proposed by;

Noel Murphy



Seconded by;

Patsy Phibbs

