

MALAHIDE COMMUNITY FORUM
DRAFT MINUTES OF AGM 24 FEBRUARY 2014

held at The Grand Hotel, Malahide.

MINUTES

The meeting started at 8.05.

Committee Report & Accounts

The Chairman welcomed everyone and briefly summarised the work of the Forum and its subcommittees. The Hon Treasurer summarised the accounts for 2013 which were then put to the meeting and approved.

Election of the Committee for 2014

The Chairman explained that nominees of member Residents' Associations (18 in all) were automatically re-elected, so no motion was necessary. The Committee had nominated 8 individual members and no additional nominations had been received. He therefore proposed to put the 8 names to the meeting *en bloc*. The nominees were Hazel Bolton, Nuala Burke, Gerry Duggan, Margaret Farrell, Mark Hely Hutchinson, Paul Nevin, Harry O'Neill and Brian Walshe. All were re-elected.

Address by Sergeant Austin Cox of Malahide Garda Station

Sergeant Cox advised that when phones are diverted to Coolock during the night time closure of Malahide Garda Station residents should dial 999 for urgent matters and not the local number, which is diverted to Coolock. Particularly in cases of suspicious activity etc. the closest car available will be despatched on a 999 call and it will cut down on delays. Malahide Neighbourhood Watch is the largest in Dublin and the text alert system will be launched here within the next 3 months. Contact your Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator for more information. To form a group attend the meeting held on the 2nd Monday of each month. A meet-and-greet system has been put in place for buses and Darts during fine weather whereby alcohol is confiscated from youths on arrival in Malahide. Parking at schools is still problematic and each school has been given advice on this. Car pooling is to be encouraged to cut down on school traffic. An attendee pointed out that it is difficult for children to cycle to school as the cycleways are inadequate and nothing is being done to improve the situation. Sgt. Cox replied that FCC has opened up the Demesne early specifically to cater for this. It was also pointed out that due to a recent planning application there is an opportunity to ease traffic congestion by putting in a cycle and pedestrian bridge between the Community School and the old Rugby Club grounds which would take the children off the R124. One member said it is impossible to access Grove Avenue during school times. The Traffic Department conducted a survey to monitor traffic flow on a day when the school was closed and also on a Sunday. Sgt. Cox is trying to address the problem and a Garda is at schools whenever possible.

Senator Darragh O'Brien expressed concern that following the downgrading of Malahide Garda Station in 2012 it will ultimately end up being closed altogether. It was closed at night time to put extra Gardaí on the streets but this has not happened and the level of resources is down. He asked that the Forum and community as a priority tries to prevent further downgrading of the Station. The Chairman advised that the Forum will continue to monitor the situation and urged residents to push our representatives to lobby for increased resources.

It was felt that the exits to the petrol station and the bottom of Townyard Lane are both dangerous. There is no stop sign at Townyard Lane and the parking space to the left blocks motorists' view when turning. Sgt. Cox undertook to discuss with FCC engineer. It was pointed out that the exit to the railway station is also dangerous as motorists do not stop for pedestrians.

Presentation on the Malahide Public Realm Strategy

Ms Rachel Kenny, Senior Planner, Fingal County Council gave a presentation on FCC's plans for the public areas of Malahide village following consultation with community groups, residents and schools. Various short-term projects will be undertaken in 2014 whilst preparations are made and funding is sought for the larger schemes, e.g. bicycle racks will be put at the library and at The Green; FCC will improve the footprint of the Bridgefield car park to gain a further 18 spaces which will make up for the removal of some at pinch points on streets, and signage will be improved between the car park and the village to make it clear that it serves the village; The traffic light sequence will be amended at The Diamond to make it safer for diagonal crossing; The method that has been on trial for dealing with tree roots breaking up pavements will be used where appropriate; There will be a paint project in New Street and the street furniture and lighting will be improved; A tourism map and a mobile phone app are underway. Larger schemes will include a boardwalk behind the tennis club and revamping of the Green with a youth facility included.

A number of questions were then raised.

It was requested that the second ramp outside the Community School be smoothed in the same way as the other has been, and there are very bad tree roots outside Bissett's in New Street. Ms Kenny said FCC will go back over all of the street trees, will replace footpaths with the resin but poor quality trees cannot be saved.

The possibility of part of the Broadmeadow Way being routed along O'Hanlon's Lane was raised and it was felt it is not feasible as the roadway is not wide enough in parts. Ms Kenny advised that the bridge at Bissett's Strand is a constraint to the routing and it is essential to link the walkway to the coast.

Stumps left behind when trees are cut down are dangerous and should be removed. Cllr. O'Brien advised that FCC employs a contractor to do this and all stumps are removed at the same time.

The Broadmeadow Way was welcomed but it was felt it should also serve the Seabury area. Barrack Bridge is a dangerous section of road and a bridge is needed over the marsh to Cave's Marsh and Bissett's Strand for children to access schools safely by bicycle. It was also urged that FCC spends money on Low Rock as there is no facility in Malahide for people to swim.

A question was raised whether there are any developments with Casino and Fry Railway. Ms Kenny advised that FCC has been in consultation with the legal representatives of Mr Gaffney and matters should be finalised very shortly. Cllr. Lavin advised that the building will only be used for the Fry Model Railway as there will be very little extra space available for anything else.

When asked if any concerts are planned for this year Ms Kenny said there was a provisional date for the (June?) Bank Holiday but nothing definite yet.

The matter was raised of the problems with pupils accessing primary school from Millview and the Estuary and it was suggested the best way to reduce risks would be for the children to go via Cave's Marsh. Alan Farrell TD advised that this did go as far as public display on one occasion but local residents didn't agree with the proposed route and there are also constraints with permission from Heritage and Wildlife.

It was said the bridge on Back Road is very dangerous and was asked if representations have been made for it to be altered like the Station Road bridge. Ms Kenny replied that the Broomfield LAP made provision and that was delayed but it will happen. The original bridge will stay with a pedestrian bridge put inside in consultation with Irish Rail. FCC is very aware of the problems and The Hill and Back Road junction also needs to be resolved.

It was felt that the recycling banks at the Castle and beach are always dirty and untidy and no-one seems to be taking responsibility for keeping them clean. Cllr. Lavin advised that there is a dispute over responsibility between FCC and the contractor.

It was pointed out that the steps on the bridge at the station are warped and dangerous as water lodges on them and they are especially bad in frost.

It was stated that there is no footpath by the golf club on Blackwood Lane and this is very dangerous. Cllr. Lavin advised that this has been an issue for years and all local Councillors are endeavouring to have this remedied but this is not being done due to financial constraints.

The Chairman stated that the beach and Bridgefield car parks are not covered by CCTV and there have been a number of cars broken into there. Ms Kenny advised that when the Bridgefield car park is altered CCTV will be introduced there.

Certain sections of the pathway in the Demesne from the Swords Road gate around to the car park at the main entrance badly need resurfacing. Cllr. Lavin advised that a lot of work was done there but recent heavy rain means it needs to be done again and FCC is aware of this.

The Chairman thanked Ms Kenny for her very informative presentation and her responses to questions raised.

Heidi Bedell from Malahide Tidy Towns advised that regular clean ups are starting on the first Saturday in April, meeting at 10.30am at the station, and she urged residents to please help. She also requested that Residents' Associations send photographs of works done in their estates to malahidetidytowns@eircom.net, for inclusion in the Tidy Town's application.

A member then thanked the Forum and local Councillors for all the work done on behalf of residents.

CONCLUSION

The Chairman thanked those people who had given presentations and all who had attended the meeting. The meeting then concluded at 9.25pm.