

Croke Park Community Liaison Committee

Minutes of meeting held 1st September 2009

Chaired by:

Claire Barry, Sonas Consulting Ltd.

Attendees:

Cllr. Mary Fitzpatrick

Cllr. Nial Ring

Julie Manahan (Páirc an Chrócaigh Teoranta)

Alan Gallagher (Páirc an Chrócaigh Teoranta)

Inspector Tony Gallagher (Fitzgibbon Street Garda Station)

Pat Gates (CPARA)

David Purdue (CPARA)

Noel Morris (CPARA)

John McPartlan (Public Domain Officer, Central Area, Dublin City Council)

Charlie Lowe (Executive Manager, Central Area, Dublin City Council)

Bláthnaid Casey (Assistant Staff Officer, Central Area, Dublin City Council)

Apologies:

Roddy Guiney (Páirc an Chrócaigh Teoranta)

Julie McDermott (CPARA)

Conor Martin (Drumcondra Businesses)

Peter McKenna (Páirc an Chrócaigh Teoranta)

1. Minutes and matters arising:

John McPartlan proposed the minutes of the last minutes were in order; Inspector Tony Gallagher seconded the minutes.

2. Debriefing from public meeting:

A general discussion on the public meeting of July 13th took place.

Overall, the consensus was that the reaction in general to the Impact Study and the CPCLC was disappointing, as the meeting was eclipsed by the anger of residents about the then-upcoming U2 concerts and the working hours associated with relaying the pitch afterwards.

Cllr. Ring said that since the public meeting the feedback of residents on Garda and DCC issues has been positive, with improvements noted, while feedback on Croke Park remains negative.

Julie Manahan said it was a matter of improving communication with the wider community. Pat Gates argued that it was not simply a matter of poor communication; it was the lack of delivery on Croke Parks' part that caused people to be so irate. He said the concerts and associated works were indicative of how Croke Park treat the community generally.

Charlie Lowe expressed his disappointment at Pat Gates' address at the meeting, he said Pat spoke on the position to date with Croke Park, and didn't mention the CPCLC process and he wondered if the dissemination of information to the larger community about the CLC had been forgotten about. He had also noted that there were no direct DCC issues raised other than the issue of the planning permission granted for the concerts and associated works.

Pat's response was that the consensus within the community was that there had been a lack of movement on the part of Croke Park – as a community representative it was the consensus opinion that he was expressing on the night.

Cllr. Fitzpatrick said that the meeting undermined the CPCLC and she felt that the surprise Peter McKenna expressed at the strength of negative feeling was disingenuous and that further engagement is pointless unless Croke Park is willing to engage more honestly. She said more regular public meetings are required and regretted not having had one sooner, as it would have provided context for a wider discussion.

Alan Gallagher indicated that when planning the project Croke Park did all in their power to avoid the huge numbers of hours of work involved in the post-concert works.

3. Discussion on Claire Barry's report re: ending of this phase of the CPCLC:

Claire Barry referred to her final report to the members on the committee process, which was circulated to members last week.

Claire's main recommendations, based on an analysis of the 2 years work including the Impact Study, were that Croke Park appoint a Community Liaison Officer and that they take the lead in the conceptualising and championing of an effective Traffic and Transport management plan. A copy of Peter McKenna's letter of September 1st, sent in response to the report, was circulated. Claire to respond in writing to this letter to acknowledge it and to inform Peter that the content of the minutes of this meeting will constitute her response.

Julie Manahan said that while Croke Park take the points made in the report on board, she is unable to say now that a Community Liaison Officer will be appointed by a certain date. Charlie Lowe said he can't understand why a Community Liaison Officer has not yet been appointed as the need is so apparent. He indicated that this view is shared by the City Manager. Charlie suggested that if the process of recruiting one is underway, that it be concluded as quickly as possible.

Referring to the report, Julie Manahan said that while Croke Park would be happy to participate in and support the experts in relation to resolving the traffic and transport issue, it would not take the leadership role recommended, as this is not their area of expertise. Claire clarified that she was not suggesting that Croke Park operate or devise a plan in relation to traffic and transport but that they should lead the project, having demonstrated the leadership capabilities required to undertake large scale and complex processes in the past. Charlie Lowe said that no single agency can take responsibility for public transport/ diverting cars from the stadium but Croke Park is well placed to further the work already done.

Pat Gates reported that following protests after the recent concerts, Paraic Duffy and Christy Cooney of the GAA met with CPARA members and others. Pat gave a brief overview of this meeting. Pat noted their lack of knowledge in terms of issues and that both were unaware of the Impact Study. A discussion was had on core issues and they committed to intervening and being involved in addressing these. Charlie Lowe welcomed the fact that such a meeting had taken place. A further meeting will be held shortly.

A discussion was had on the ending of this phase of the CPCLC. Charlie Lowe read out the motion from the Central Area Committee meeting of November 2006 which formed the basis for the establishment of this committee. According to the motion and the terms of reference agreed at the outset by the committee he is happy that he has completed what was required and the terms of the motion have been complied with. While the terms of reference have progressed matters they have not resolved them and he doesn't think the CPCLC can directly resolve relationship difficulties. He suggested that Croke Park hold a 3-monthly public forum, involving residents, politicians, Gardaí etc and that this would present an opportunity to take personalities out of the equation.

Cllr. Fitzpatrick supported the proposal for a public forum but said some process of handover and a meaningful commitment from the GAA is crucial before this committee can be dissolved and that another motion of the Central Area committee is required to put an end to the process it started. Julie Manahan reiterated that the appointment of a Community Liaison Officer is planned and that the public forum will happen. Claire Barry agreed to write to Peter McKenna on behalf of the committee seeking commitment on delivery in terms of a Community Liaison Officer (including timeframe for appointment) and Traffic and Transport. Response to be circulated to members by Claire Barry upon receipt of same. Members agreed not to dissolve the committee pending the outcome of the planned meeting between CPARA and GAA senior executives and Peter McKenna's response.

The report circulated to the members of the CPCLC, the previous week, provided an ending to this phase of the CPCLC. As indicated earlier in the year Claire Barry stepped down from her role as Independent Chair. She encouraged the committee to consider the range of ways in which they might address the outstanding issues.

It was agreed to convene another meeting following on from the CPARA/GAA meeting. The next meeting on Tuesday, October 6th will be convened by Dublin City Council and hosted again by Croke Park Stadium. It was agreed to invite Christy Cooney and Paraic Duffy of the GAA to attend, assuming they have met CPARA in the meantime. It was agreed that it would be more beneficial that this meeting takes place before any next meeting of the CPCLC is convened.

4. **A.O.B.:**

Charlie expressed his thanks to Claire Barry for all her efforts over the last two years on behalf of Dublin City Council. Claire wished the committee well and thanked Bláthnaid Casey for her accurate recording of the events of the CPCLC meetings.

A meeting of the CPCLC will be held on Tuesday, 6th October at 7pm in the Croke Park Conference Centre.