



Safer Ballymun Community Safety Forum

MINUTES

MONDAY 9th SEPTEMBER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

BALLYMUN CIVIC CENTRE

<p>Introduction</p>	<p>The Facilitator, Aibhlín McCann welcomed everyone to the meeting explaining that it is an action-based problem solving forum which entails a partnership approach between DCC, BRL, An Garda Síochána and the community to make Ballymun a better place in which to live, work and visit. She requested that issues which didn't refer to community safety should be kept for the 'talkabout' at the end of the meeting.</p>
<p>Issues Arising</p>	<p>DCC Update Mary Taylor had the following updates for the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present there are 4 tenants left in Balbutcher Lane and 11 in Plunkett Tower – it is hoped these will be moved before the end of the month. • Ballymun won 2 awards at the recent Tidy Towns competition, one for Community Endeavour and the other, a National Award for Notice Nature Biodiversity. • The blocks in Shangan will be looked at soon in relation to landscaping. • There is a 13-week cycle for road sweeping in the area and specific roads should be reported to Mary if they need cleaning. <p>Various issues were raised about drains that need cleaning, weeds that were sprayed and had now grown back. There was also a query about when the boilers would be serviced as these were to be done every 12 months and hadn't been done since 2011. A resident reported that door handles in his house were broken and another reported a manhole with no cover. Aibhlín requested that the discussion focus on community safety issues only. All maintenance issues should be reported to the relevant department and could be discussed at the 'talkabout'. A resident stated it was sometimes difficult to get an appointment to see anyone in the Housing Office. Another said she had a similar experience, as the person she had an appointment with was not available to meet her when she arrived.</p> <p>A resident reported that Knowth and Druid Court are extremely dirty and are not being cleaned.</p>

<p>An Garda Síochána Update</p>	<p>Sergeant Bernard Young had the following updates for the period 29/7/13 to 9/9/13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious Assault – 2 • Burglary – 11 (6 in Ballymun) • Criminal Damage – 30 (10 in Coultrey/Shangan, 1 in Whiteacre) • Section 3 Drugs – 14 • Section 15 Drugs – 5 (2 in Shangan, 1 Whiteacre) • Section 23 Drugs – 120 (30 Shangan) • Public Order – 31 • Robbery from Persons – 1 • Robbery from Shops – 1 • Theft from Persons – 3 (I-phones) • Theft from Shops – 26 • Stolen Cars – 5 • Theft from Cars - 14
<p>Issues Arising</p>	<p>Several residents from Coultrey Way reported that the anti-social behaviour there has escalated recently i.e. damage to cars, motorbikes driving recklessly and lights being vandalised. When the Gardai arrive the gang hide as there are 4 different ways in and out of the road. Another resident stated it was the worst summer ever for this type of behaviour. A resident reported several broken bottles and litter in the playground at Whiteacre</p> <p>A resident spoke about alleged harassment and expressed concerns about the nature of this harassment and its impact. Sergeant Young said that he will take details of this after the meeting and mentioned that his figures do not reflect the alleged trouble there.</p> <p>Deputy Ellis stated that the playground and bandstand in Shangan Park need to be looked at again and a plan is required to deal with the ongoing anti-social behaviour in Plunkett Tower.</p> <p>The length of time taken for court proceedings and the issue of bail was mentioned. Hugh Greaves mentioned that Public Representatives should use their influence to make sure that judges realise that the current laws and policies are inadequate and that the court system should provide more protection for local people. The Chair of the JPC, Councillor McAuliffe said that the JPC works to try and shape policy on these issues but that the Courts Service had refused their request for a member of the judiciary to attend a meeting to discuss sentencing policy.</p> <p>Councillor Montague said the drug problem in Shangan is of great concern at the moment and praised the work of the local community in the face of such adversity.</p> <p>Deputy Ellis asked whether the case management system applies to more serious recurring young offenders. Sergeant Young said that it does, and that the relevant Guard appointed to these cases has a file which is presented to the court when</p>

the case is being heard. It is hoped that this procedure will be used in adult cases in the future.

The issue of how alcohol is being paid for on delivery was raised and a local business representative asked for clarification on the issue. Sergeant Young said he did not have the legal details on this yet and it is an issue that is hard for the Gardaí to enforce. Aibhlín suggested that the legal facts might be clarified by the Gardaí if possible so that the issue can be progressed at local level.

Hugh Greaves said clear legislation was required and that another problem was alcohol being delivered into Ballymun from off-licences outside of the area. Several residents agreed with this and mentioned free alcohol being delivered with take-away food deliveries.

The issue of a local arrangement re alcohol deliveries was raised again. Aibhlín suggested that this warranted further discussion and action as it comes up regularly and had been discussed at the recent Round Table gathering on the Ballymun Community Alcohol Strategy.

Councillor Montague asked if it was possible to do a sting operation to find out who is selling illegally and a resident asked if CCTV footage in the shops can be used to identify who is buying alcohol for minors.

A resident asked if the Gardaí had any plan in place for Junior Cert results night. Sergeant Young said that 4 Gardaí including 2 plain-clothes Community Guards will be monitoring the parks, off-licences etc on the night. The deputy Principal of Trinity Comprehensive School said students will also be encouraged to celebrate sensibly with their families. It has been shown that students respond very favourably to adults who show an interest in their welfare.

Councillor McAuliffe raised the issue of petty drug dealing and asked what the public can do to help the Gardaí to tackle this. Sergeant Young said there are a high number of methadone and tablet users in Ballymun and no matter how the Gardaí target these they move around from place to place.

Hugh Greaves said there are 406 people in Ballymun on methadone and said that the proposed new legislation particularly in relation to selling tablets should make the problem easier to police. He noted that the sustained surveillance of drug dealing especially in Shangan was making progress and acknowledged Garda efforts in the area. Councillor Montague said that it was a positive trend that the methadone list is reducing. It was clarified by Sergeant Young that the Drugs Unit will notify the pharmacist if their clients are caught selling on their methadone to other users.

A resident noted what appeared to be youths coming into Ballymun to obtain drugs.

An employee of Poppintree crèche expressed concern about gangs hanging around in the afternoons there and agreed to speak to Sergeant Bernard Young after the meeting.

BRL Update

Eamon Farrelly had the following update for the meeting:

- BRL, set up by the DOE and DCC in 1997 to implement the Regeneration Programme in Ballymun, is currently being wound down, with 24 staff either being made redundant or reassigned from October 4. A scaled down team will be left in situ until the end of December to complete projects on site and to assist in the transition of all deferred projects to Dublin City Council.
- The demolition work in Silloge and Shangan is almost complete.
- Work on the drainage in Silloge Avenue is due to be complete by the end of September.
- Any areas identified on a recent walkabout as having incomplete footpaths will be handed over to DCC to finish.

Issues Arising

A resident asked about the ECO houses on Silloge Road Eamon said there is a formal planning application in for this project and Clúid have appointed a design team to complete it.

A resident asked for updates on the ESB station, the empty retail units in the area and the Shopping Centre. Eamon said that the ESB owns that site, that ongoing discussions are taking place about the Shopping Centre between DCC, NAMA and the Receiver and that all retail units will be handed over to the Development Department of DCC.

The issue of dirt in Ballymun was raised with several residents complaining about the grubby paint on houses and that the regeneration company should be handing them over in a pristine condition. Eamon noted that many of these houses had been taken in charge by DCC. Mary Taylor noted that Housing Maintenance has gone €5 million over budget and the Community Section will be happy to help organise any clean-up.

The area between Poppintree Crescent and Belclare Avenue was raised. The resident raised concerns about cars driving on the footpath to avoid the bollards, and endangering children playing there. Eamon said that he had engaged in protracted discussions with residents about their concerns and that he is happy to look at it again if required.

Eamon confirmed that a programme and budget has been agreed with the DOE to reinstate all unfinished sites.

A resident asked who is responsible for the gutters after BRL leave, who is responsible for the gullies, who will maintain the trees and what is being done about the current rat infestation? Eamon said that various Departments in DCC will be looking after the gutters, gullies and trees and that the Steering Group had spoken about the rat problem at the pre-meeting and this issue will be addressed.

Another resident reported that when she rang the HSE about

<p style="text-align: center;">Community Alcohol Strategy Update</p>	<p>the rat problem, they asked her to phone the City Council. Eamon was thanked by a resident for all the work he had put in over the years since the beginning of the regeneration programme.</p> <p>Councillor Tormey said people need to know how the rat problem can be dealt with and that although BRL and DCC are essentially the same organisation, this community safety forum should continue even when BRL finishes up. Mary Taylor said she will speak to the Parks Dept. about the rat problem.</p> <p>Hugh Greaves spoke about the ongoing work of the Drugs Task Force and how it continues to implement the Ballymun Community Alcohol Strategy. He called for clarification on the issue of alcohol deliveries from off-licences.</p> <p>With regard to supply, availability and enforcement, An Garda Síochána continues to monitor off-licenses about selling to minors, but adults' buying for minors continues to be a problem. Clarification is required from an Garda Síochána re payments from 'off licensed premises'. In the absence of regulation, we have begun to look into a voluntary code for retailers at local level.</p> <p>Concerns about the possibility of an off licence for retail premises on Sillogue Road were brought to the recent JPC meeting. The JPC agreed to write to BRL, who are offering the lease, to outline its opposition to an off licence being part of the lease. It was clarified that objections to an off licence would be best dealt with through the planning process.</p> <p>The Responsible Server training organised by An Garda Síochána and the BLDTF was very well attended. A Community Alcohol Detox project working in partnership with local GPs is being rolled out in conjunction with Finglas Cabra LDTF. Two new Strengthening Family Programmes are being rolled out bringing the total of families going through the programme to 130. Inspector Gus Keane, Ballymun Garda Station is the contact for anyone experiencing drug related intimidation.</p> <p>Councillor Montague said he is involved in the Sustaining Regeneration Committee, comprised of key agencies who will be progressing the Social Plan for Ballymun and anchoring interventions around social issues in Ballymun into the future. A resident asked for clarification again on plans for the Shopping Centre – Eamon repeated that negotiations are ongoing. A local businessman said that he welcomed news of the progress on the Shopping Centre and expressed a desire that DCC liaise with the tenants there going forward.</p> <p>Marie Balfe, the community Safety co-ordinator said that the Safer Ballymun newsletter would be issued shortly and asked anyone who was interested in helping her to plan for Safer Ballymun Week (which is due to start on October 21st) to contact her.</p>
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Aibhlín McCrann, independent facilitator, concluded by stating that the ‘talkabout’ would now take place and that the Agency Steering Group would discuss the issues raised at this meeting and report back to the group at the next meeting.

Next Safer Ballymun meeting: October 21st 2013. Join us for the launch of Safer Ballymun Week by Dr Mona O’Moore, Anti-bullying unit, Trinity College Dublin, Time: 7.00 pm. Venue: Council Chambers, Ballymun Civic Centre. Light refreshments will be served.

CONTACT NUMBERS:

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