

LONDON IRISH CENTRE

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON APRIL 13th 1993 (8.00 p.m.)

PRESENT: E. G. McCormack (acting Monthly Chairman)
Fr. D. Cormican
T. McAssey
M. Sills
D. Egan
Mrs M. Allen
F. Collins
Mrs. B. Shaw
S. Burke
Rev. F. Phelan
In Attendance: J. Reynolds, FCCA

Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs U. Cooper and Fr. P. Carolan. In addition the Chairman stated that he had extended invitations to Mr. John Coote, Mr. Jim Myers and Dr. L. Morton. Apologies had been received both from Mr. J. Coote and Mr. J. Myers (both Directors of London Irish Centre Ltd) who were unable to attend.

Tenants & Residents Association

E. McCormack opened the meeting and welcomed all present. Mrs. Hancock (representing the Residents Association) stated that there were not any complaints apart from the loud music during the previous Saturday evening. The Chairman thanked her for her attendance and expressed sympathy, as also did Fr. D. Cormican, on the recent death of her brother.

Minutes

The minutes of the March 9th 1993 meeting were taken as read. On the proposal of Mr. M. Sills, (seconded by Mrs. M. Allen) they were duly adopted and signed by the March acting Chairman namely Mr. T. McAssey.

Matters Arising

J. Reynolds commented on the two outstanding bad debts and stated that further legal action was currently being pursued. In connection with Migrant Training Co Ltd., Fr. Denis Cormican is attempting to negotiate a commercial rent with T. O'Connor. The Chairman urged that this long outstanding matter be dealt with without further delay and in this connection Monsignor G. Stack stated that professional representatives were available at the Cathedral to handle such matters. Indeed it was also drawn to Fr. Denis Cormican's attention that they be used

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in negotiating a rent with Saxon Inns in connection with the occupancy of one room at 12 Murray Street, London NW1.

The Chairman commented on the state of dis-repair of the top floor of the premises known as 51/52 Murray Street, London N.W.1. He stated that it was imperative that repairs be carried out as soon as possible and to develop those premises otherwise the whole building would descend into further dis-repair. A substantial sum will be required to meet any repairs and/or renovations and it is unlikely that same can be funded out of the usual fund-raising activities.

J. Reynolds stated that a rental agreement requires to be drawn up and finalised with Migrant Training Co Ltd. Furthermore, he has failed to obtain proper documentation from them with regard to their own Public & Employers insurance cover. The Chairman requested copies of same from him in due course. Monsignor G. Stack again referred the Committee to the services of the Cathedral in this connection.

A further discussion took place with regard to the lack of a permanent Chairman and vice-Chairman and it was agreed that names should be available for the June Admin Committee meeting. The Annual General Meeting of the London Irish Centre is likely to be held during July 1993.

Irish Centre Hostels Ltd

No report was available as Fr. P. Carolan was not in attendance.

Financial Report - London Irish Centre Ltd

This was provided by J. Reynolds who stated that accounts down to March 1993, were not, due to pressure of work, available. He did however distribute to the meeting draft budgets for the year ending on March 31st, 1994 in respect of:-

- (a) London Irish (Welfare) - 50 Murray Street, London N.W.1;
- (b) London Irish (Charity) - 51/52 Murray Street, London N.W.1;
- (c) London Irish Centre Ltd.

He commented further on the Social Committee income and stated that same was on a downward slope. Fr. Denis Cormican stated that no new members were forthcoming and that the membership was in decline. He also stated that there were only small profits from this source and that there were not any hidden costs such as cleaning, heating or lighting. These are paid for by Saxon Inns Ltd.

J. Reynolds further commented that the annual audit would commence on Monday April 26th 1993 and would take approximately two weeks to complete. EMC expressed his concern that tight control should be maintained when the auditors are on the premises in order to minimise the appropriate fees. J. Reynolds commented that Touche Ross fees would disclose a slight increase over the previous year. The Chairman then commented that the

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Auditors are not likely to be asked any questions at the AGM and that they should be required to make one attendance at the Irish Centre with an appropriate selected committee to discuss the accounts and audit in detail. It was left to Mr. J. Reynolds to arrange same.

In this connection it was agreed, due to increasing costs, to replace the Auditors at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. Quotations are to be obtained from three recognised auditing firms. He confirmed that Hunt Mark & Co had already been approached. In addition he confirmed that the manual book-keeping system had already been set-up with effect from April 1st 1993 and that in his opinion same should simplify matters.

With regard to Saxon Inns he stated that the weekly returns to March 27th 1993 had been based on till-rolls and expenditure for month. However, the agreement with Saxon Inns Ltd., was not being honoured on a day-to-day basis and day-to-day checking was not being adhered to. Management control at the London Irish Centre is still lacking and requires further urgent attention. The Chairman queried who in fact will be responsible for dealing with Saxon Inns Ltd., when J. Reynolds ceases his employment with London Irish Centre and a broad discussion followed on same. No definite decision was taken and no responsibility was allocated. J. Reynolds confirmed that Bank statements were not produced in support of the returns.

With regard to Saxon Inns, the manager's occupation of No. 12 Murray Street - the Chairman read a letter addressed to the secretary (Una Cooper) stating that Saxon Inns would not be willing to pay rental for this accommodation. Mrs. B. Shaw stated that this provision had not been within the Saxon Inns Ltd agreement and suggested that an eviction order be obtained to remove him. Fr. D. Cormican stated that he was of the opinion that it was an advantage to the London Irish Centre to have the manager living nearby in that in the event of alarms being triggered then same could be attended to. In addition the manager acted as a back-up to himself. The Chairman commented that an agreement requires to be drawn up urgently and a rent/nominal rental charged. If a proper agreement is not in force then it will be difficult to obtain vacant possession of the premises at any given time. It was agreed that the Chairman would write directly to the Chairman of Saxon Inns Ltd., in connection with his letter.

The Chairman again asked whether a daily diary of events/problems at the Irish Centre was being maintained and it was reported that same had not yet been written up. He strongly encouraged both Fr. Denis Cormican and Mr. J. Reynolds to have immediate attention directed to this matter.

With regard to the day-to-day problems both the Clare and Offaly Associations were seeking to rectify major problems ~~on~~ their recent functions. Mr. F. Collins stated that acting on behalf of the Clare Association he had written to Saxon Inns and that a reply had been sent to his business address. It was confirmed

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that the Council of Irish Counties annual St. Patrick's night dinner had not been up to the required standard and that following same the catering manager had been dismissed. It appears that Fr. D. Cormican has regular meetings both with J. Connell and Phil Duggan but reservation was expressed that the Admin Committee was not properly represented at same. Father Denis then commented that Saxon Inns Ltd were still learning the catering business and were now using the experience of Mr. P. O'Dwyer. He was however concerned that no additional business was coming into the Centre but at this stage he did not wish to interfere. The question of advance bookings was raised but Fr. Cormican did not have any details of same. Mr. D. Egan then commented that in the case of a dispute between Saxon Inns Ltd., and any County Association an arbitrator should be appointed and suggested that Fr. Cormican act in this connection. The Chairman emphasised again the need for strong management at the Irish Centre.

Mr. J. Reynolds confirmed that £9,000.00 (net) had been paid over to the London Irish Centre Charity as a net payment in connection with the deed of covenant prior to March 31st, 1993.

London Irish Centre Charity

The detailed accounts to March 31st, 1993 had not been produced. However, Mr. J. Reynolds did distribute the annual budget both under the Welfare/Charity headings. He confirmed that the grant from London Borough of Camden (£18,500) pays the Co-Ordinator's salary. He also confirmed that there was a surplus for the year to March 31st, 1993 estimated at £12,000. He also advised that the budgets had now been separated. In addition he confirmed that the estimated bank balances were currently as follows:-

London Irish Centre Ltd	8,800
London Irish Centre (Welfare) Current Account	11,400
London Irish Centre (Welfare) Deposit Account	60,828
London Irish Centre (Charity) Current Account	4,202

The Chairman thanked J. Reynolds for his efforts in producing the budgets and requested a further detailed break-down of the budget on London Irish Centre Ltd. This to be made available to the May Admin Committee meeting. He also requested that maintenance/repair/renovation of buildings at 51/52 Murray Street be included on a future agenda.

Welfare Report

The Chairman welcomed Geoff Holland (Co-Ordinator) to the meeting following his appointment with effect from April 1st 1993. He had a detailed summary typed and available for distribution to all members of the Committee. He spoke at length concerning the fire which occurred on the previous Wednesday at the Community Services department and confirmed that both the Fire and Police Services had been called. The Chairman thanked

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him for his report.

Matters arising concerned included the closing of the Community Services both at lunch time and on ~~a~~ Wednesday morning~~s~~. A detailed discussion followed and the Co-Ordinator is to re-examine same and report back to the Committee during the course of the next three months. Fr. Denis Cormican reassured the Committee that clients were not being neglected and that all urgent cases were seen and dealt with.

The budget for 1993/94 discloses a deficiency of approximately £24,000. The new Chairman of the Welfare Advisory Committee had not yet been appointed but a meeting is to take place during the course of the next ~~two~~ weeks. E. G. McCormack suggested that the Co-Ordinator need not attend the May meeting but requested that he be available for the June Admin meeting.

The position of Mr. J. Reynolds was next discussed and the Chairman confirmed that he had discussed same with Mr. J. Reynolds earlier that evening. J. Reynolds was not interested in part-time employment at the London Irish Centre. He is due to leave the Centre on May 31st 1993. After some discussion it was agreed to extend his employment to June 30th 1993 in view of the completion of the audit and further administration work. It was agreed that Fr. Cormican immediately, following the meeting write to him. He did however confirm that the accounting function to be considered at the Irish Centre (following June 30th 1993) would be as follows:-

- (1) Usual accounts, cash book, VAT records, PAYE etc., fully up-to-date;
- (2) presentation of accounts for audit;
- (3) extract from accounts available for grant application;
- (4) monitoring and controlling Saxon Inns Ltd., a further detailed discussion took place with regard to a successor and Monsignor G. Stack cited examples of a lay director working alongside a Pastoral Director at All Saints Pastoral Church and also at St. Joseph's Centre for the handicapped. He confirmed that the Admin Committee might seek their advice as a way forward. Fr. F. Phelan suggested "seconding" an administrator from one of the larger banks. Fr. D. Cormican queried whether a Priest had any further roll to play in the London Irish Centre today. D. Egan stated that in his opinion the Priest remains essential to the ethos of the London Irish Centre. No conclusive decision was reached except to pursue the appointment of a part-time person to fulfil the accounts administration roll.

The Roll of the Priest

Same was reviewed at Special Meetings held respectively on February 17th and March 15th 1993. The present roll of the Priest was identified as -

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- (1) Administration;
- (2) public relations;
- (3) welfare;
- (4) pastoral;
- (5) fund-raising;
- (6) development.

It was agreed that a meeting with Fr. Paul ^{Syme}~~Brown~~, OMI. be held at an early date.

Presidential Visit

Same is likely to take place on one of the following dates namely May 26th, 27th or 28th. The London Irish Centre had been strongly recommended by the Irish Ambassador in London as a suitable venue at which President Robinson could meet representatives from the Irish Community. It was stated that we have a central roll to play in arranging for this unique visit and accordingly a sub-Committee was appointed namely, Mrs. B. Shaw, Mr. M. Sills, Mr. D. Egan and (if available) E. G. McCormack. If view of the short time available prior to the meeting it was essential that progress is made as soon as possible.

Remainder of Agenda

Due to lack of time the remaining business on the Agenda was not completed. The meeting concluded at 11.45 p.m with the Chairman thanking all for their attendance and attention.

Next Meeting

Same will take place on Tuesday May 11th 1993 at 8.00 p.m (acting Chairperson - Mrs. B. Shaw).

Dated May 6th 1993

Posted on May 7th 1993