

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT THE  
IRISH CENTRE ON 13TH SEPTEMBER 1988

PRESENT:

Rev T Scully OMI, Mr T Dunne, Rev G. Stack, M O'Mahoney, F Swan, T. Mangan, M Allen, M Kenny, A Coyle, J. Myers, Mr C O'Connell, M. Fitzsimons.

APOLOGIES

Mr G O'Flynn, Rev J Gordon, U. Cooper

IN ATTENDANCE

Rev D Cormican OMI, P Murphy.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Accepted, adopted on the proposal of M Allen, seconded by T Mangan.

MATTERS ARISING

Items for discussion included in current Agenda.

FINANCE REPORT

Presented by Mr P Keegan.

Surplus deficit for period ending 30th June 1988 - £29,047.00.

Day Care Centre: Total Outlay - £193,444.00 outstanding Accounts £24,000.00.

Counties Lounge & periphery - £47,505.00.

McNAMARA HALL: RE-DECORATION. £6,782.00 original estimate - to Munster Counties - who agreed to contribute £5,000.00. Concern expressed re falling attendance at week end functions and inadequate bar service - Douglas Hyde Lounge. Small bar favoured by customers. The question arose whether to concentrate on the small bar. Members of the Social Committee felt that excluding lean period - July/August - both bars should function. Sunday morning minimal attendance during August incurring financial loss. More resources suggested to encourage public interest.

Conclusion - The Chairman stated that the financial situation was appalling - at this stage, the Irish Centre should be self-supporting, with a surplus to direct towards Welfare. Bar and catering looks dismal, were it not for voluntary donations, current outlook would be critical. Urgent business incentive needed. Introduction of Sunday lunches as previously discussed. Leaflet circulation for publicity. Existing service offered considered poor, needs investigation and improvement. Ideas to attract younger age group - important to find ways and means to introduce a more efficient business approach and performance. Regarding attitudes and attire of staff it was felt that the introduction of professionalism was a priority. Poor service seems a persistent reason for complaint. Week-end functions should have waitress service when bar closes, during meals, speech intervals etc.



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Internal problems - double bookings and cancellations (due to poor response from Association members) causing dissatisfaction. A non refundable deposit paid on booking a hall for a function. Friday/Saturday nights bookings solid from October/January but free in mid week. Restaurant licence for Sunday lunches now granted - small bar service excellent during the week. Whether to introduce a franchise at week ends - had been considered but reaction - Irish Centre run by a Committee and should make efforts to retain control. Professional advice being sought for internal improvement - members advise on ways and means towards a more acceptable and realistic outcome welcomed. Restaurant setting up will need careful thought - costing dangers - division from existing bar and stocktaking prior to meals - waitress service use of Centre - empty rooms all day - ideal for conferences etc.

Ideas for support - At this stage commercial income decreasing with expenditure increasing - wages, salaries, welfare, whole system needs urgent review. Some difficulty experienced by member re telephone bookings. As previously requested could installation of an Ansaphone service be considered. One member stated that office hours - should be sufficient and acceptable. The Chairman stated that the switchboard was manned by voluntary workers 7 days a week but this idea would be followed up and installation of an Ansaphone considered though not an ideal solution. Chairman expressed appreciation to P Keegan for his report.

## WELFARE REPORT

Presented by Paul Murphy. July/August extensive report - 20% decrease in figures. - more clients using services are in a crisis situation. Centre can cope with 30 per day. Domiciled Irish inclined to abuse system - not encouraged. Main function of service is to help newly arrived Irish - to retain such emphasis a compact leaflet has been prepared for forwarding to groups in Ireland. - has been sent to C I C Centres, Education 3rd Level groups, Student Union Groups. It was felt that poverty figures need studying, reason for fall in number of callers may be due to advanced preparation. Other Centres are also experiencing a fall in numbers. Fr Scully attends various meeting and feels that people are more aware of problems. If numbers are decreasing, a member queried the wisdom of yet more agencies opening. Why not direct resources into existing premises - adequate scope for communication. Prior to April it was felt that youth came to avail of DHSS handouts. Accommodation now available with employment % low. Paul stated that recording feed back if received would be difficult - manual recording only. No statistical method. Expertise and resources needed. A suggestion was put forward to collate information. Chairman stated that Federation and Youth Action Group working nationally. The Irish Centre with 35 years experience is fully equipped. Fr Scully mentioned that the Irish Chaplaincy has become more involved in helping young people. The tendency now is for Chaplains to go to discos and clubs to make contact but they are experiencing difficulties. He had met Bishop Casey before Easter. Two vacant floors were offered to Irish Chaplaincy - self contained appartments for



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meetings, interviews etc for youth. To date no reply. The newly elected Provincial of the Oblate Order - Rev P Byre - is meeting Fr Scully on 14th September. The latter sits on all relevant Committees. Fr Byrne on Irish Hierarchy Commission - next meeting 13th October.

Due to new regulations 16-17 year olds must be on a YTS training course to receive benefits. Camden Council with several other Councils agreed to participate in a scheme of match funding with EC Social Fund in order to help train young people. Application to Irish Government Lotteries, has resulted in negative reply.

Proposal to sell No 12 Murray Street to fund development of 51/52 Camden Square and also to fund new roof and ventilation system in Douglas Hyde.

A request from Paul for clothing and shoes. The Chairman thanked Paul for his comprehensive report expressed appreciation and extended good wishes to him and staff. A special wish for his forthcoming marriage.

### HOSTELS

Both hostels full but not overflowing as in 1987.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Total cost of development, mentioned above, approximately £220,000.00.

McNAMARA HALL - refurbished - adjacent land in Camden Mews - clarification is being sought with Housing Association. Application made to Land Registry to reclaim 30 feet - awaiting reply. Sunday Licence - for Restaurant 2.00 - 7.00 pm agreed. Tour organisers had expressed interest due to difficulty getting Sunday Lunch. Possibility being investigated. Toyota Cars have pledged £15,000.00 per year assistance. Irish Government will not assess comparative values of examination results in Ireland and England.

Fund Raising - Daniel O'Donnell Concert, Royal Albert Hall 23rd September - proceeds to Irish Centre. Fund raising concert in Wembley - 4th February 1989. Car Draw - final Draw October realised £25,000 - £30,000. Irish Festival Day - disappointing due to weather. Whether to hold a future Car Draw in 1989. Needs careful thought as greater interest and co-operation needed. London Irish Society - Grosvenor House. Profits to Irish Centre for second successive year, to the delight of Fr Scully who expressed his appreciation. The Society's reaction was their appreciation of Irish Centre's good work. Some tickets available at £35.00. Quarterly meeting at the Irish Centre 6th October. Due to lack of interest in previous meeting, it is hoped that each Committee Member will encourage at least 6 group secretaries to attend.

Format for discussion ? include fund raising - to be agreed by Executive for Agenda.

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Fr Scully sought opinion of members re proposed sale of No 12 - £250.000.00. Agreement proposed by M Allen, seconded by C O'Connell who commended Fr Scully on his business acumen and success.

### SOCIAL CLUB

Report presented by Anton coyle. Profit August £314.84, July £170.60, June £672.00. Whether to discontinue advertising due to non production of results discussed. Weekly advert cost £104.00 plus VAT. It was felt that advert did not produce desired results. Announcing previous week fell on deaf ears. It was agreed to hold in abeyance as an efficeincy exercise was in progress. Await outcome and probable incorporation with restuarant if comes to fruition. Socail Club D/D McNamara Hall 23rd November - £10.00. Band not yet booked. A request for Coat rails foyer Douglas Hyde. It was felt that supervision in that area was lacking. A notice could be installed 'Owners risk'. It was agreed to look into transferring existing rails from Kennedy Hall.

### BAR AND CATERING

No report.

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

\*\*\* DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 11TH OCTOBER 1988 @ 8.00PM  
AT THE IRISH CENTRE \*\*\*

*J. L. Dwyer 11/10/88*  
*Chairman*