

THE LONDON IRISH CENTRE.

Minutes of Administrative Committee Meeting - 9th April, 1991

Present:

T. Dunne, Chairman; Fr. D. Cormican, Director; J. Myers; M. Allen; E. Mc Cormack; M. Fitzsimons; C. O'Connell; T. Mangan; P. Finucane; M. Kenny;

In attendance:

Paul Murphy; J. Reynolds, Administrator; D. Grace & J. Cowley, Neighbourhood Assoc.; Declan Curley, A.I.B.; M. Noonan.

1. Neighbourhood/Residents Associations:

Mr. Grace, thanking the Chairman for the invitation, said it was very encouraging having the facility to meet with the Management Committee. Few criticisms apart from one group (Birmingham Six) attending a celebration - noisy (1.30 - 2.00am) vacating the Centre. St. Patrick's night - noisy. One complaint re: Irish Centre bin collection (6.00 - 6.30am). A query whether there was any proposed extension of J.F.K. licence. Chairman assured him not, and Management was trying as good neighbours to co-operate though outside control cannot always be enforced. Security satisfactory inside the building. On the whole both representatives stated there was a marked improvement in relations. Chairman thanked them for their attendance.

2. Apologies:

Jim Kirby; John Walsh, A.I.B.

T. Mangan was welcomed back from his recent illness.

3. Minutes of March Meeting:

Approved, adopted on the proposal of Jim Myers, seconded by C. O'Connell

4. Matters Arising:

T. Mangan queried A.G.M. postponement; Chairman replying said Accounting year extended by 3 months to 15 months with A.G.M. in September, 1991. Irish Centre Ltd. end of year 31st March to conform with Charity Act. T. Mangan noted this affects/cancels Constitution Rules. Chairman replied in this instance a legitimate reason for extended year.

T. Mangan queried lack of Birmingham Six inclusion in Minutes; Chairman stated Committee had acknowledged support of Irish Centre and Directors item on agenda would include report.

5. Welfare Report:

Presented by Paul Murphy. Copies of comprehensive report circulated and details reported. High repeat callers - 100 increase 156 March, 1991. Newcomers stable, probably due to recession.

E.E.C. food - very acceptable - more needed.

Recruitment - 2 Social Advice Workers. 140 Applicants - 9 shortlisted - 5 male, 4 female - all have relevant qualifications in Social Science. Interviews on 9th April.

Social Services, Leighton Road, closing - saving Camden Council £140,000.

Report considered very good - Chairman thanked Paul and extended thanks to the staff, with a special thanks to Anne Mc Donald, resigning to join her husband in Ireland.

6. Finance Report:

Jim Reynolds said there are three areas - Charity, Welfare, Limited Company. Analysing 1990 figures to the end of March, 1991; A/c's for audit in May; Computerisation meeting with Hunt & Co. set up next week; Analysing 1990 expenditure, where money went and where saving can be made. Chairman said it was a difficult job but when computer programme going we can see the problem areas, decisions and where steps can be taken in budgeting and targeting. As a Management Committee we can then monitor and control.

E. Mc Cormack asked if deed of Government had been cleared with the Charity Commission. Chairman replied that all is in order in writing and tax paid up to 31st March.

7. Hostels Report:

Fr. Cormican reported that Conway House was being inundated with new callers. Fr. Carolan was sorting out problems. He is continuing to get the hostel in good shape. Medway Street full.

8. Directors Report:

Fr. Cormican said the release of the Birmingham Six was a tremendous event. He would like to get it in its proper context for the Irish Centre on behalf of Paul May who did not want them to come to the Centre on the night of the release as he felt it was more important for them to spend the first evening with their own families. Committee and supporters would be at the Centre. Paul May expressed appreciation for the Irish Centre open door over the past 6 years. All six men released came on the night and had a good time. Some returned next night and entertained in both Halls. Fr. Cormican said the Irish Centre must be seen to be involved in matters of justice - JUSTICE not POLITICS.

Health and Safety very important - courses set up.

St. Patrick's Day Irish Centre alive - difficult to cope with numbers. Catering/Functions going extremely well - no complaints apart from problem with one barrel of beer. Congratulatory message received.

Lift for disabled being installed to serve Mc Namara Hall and Community Services - delay at makers - Stannah Lifts.

Sad to see Anne Mc Donald leaving - her capability will be missed, hopefully someone with similar calibre will be found.

A visit from Paul Cullen, Labour Attache at the Irish Embassy and Brendan O'Caoillai, Foreign Affairs at the Irish Embassy representing DION. Application for Grant due end of April - hopes to receive a similar grant to 1990. Fr. was pleased with their visit - Paul Cullen could not find fault with Advice Service - Irish Centre provides a professional service, recognised by Camden Social Services who now require Centre to do some work for them.

C. O'Connell asked re: break-in over Easter. Fr. Cormican said initially it looked worse but property damaged did not belong to Irish Centre i.e. 3 Cigarette Machines, 2 Fruit Machines - Irish Centre loss £500.00. Police report - someone in custody.

T. Mangan, speaking as past vice-Chairman of Admin. Committee and Director L.I.F. stated that Committees were adamant that Birmingham Six supporters could not have a stall at Festival - why the objection? Chairman said this was a matter for referral to Festival Committee. Fr. Denis Cormican's remark - 'supporting justice' was his personal comment.

E. Mc Cormack queried security at Irish Centre. Fr. Cormican said that this is very difficult even if a '24 hour patrol' was provided. Increased efforts including shuttering windows at night was enforced.

9. Social Club Report:

P. Finucane reported that it was ticking over. Increased support needed. St. Patrick's morning and night good. T. Mangan queried why the Social Club do not hold the licence as in past years. Chairman replied Social Club was working under the umbrella of the Management Committee Licencees - T. Dunne, J. Myers. T. Mangan commented 'Constitutional Rules are not being adhered to'. M. Allen asked whether Chairman of the Social Club ever held the Licence in the past - D. Rooney had. Chairman said current situation was satisfactory. P. Finucane and M. Kenny, representatives felt changing the present situation would not achieve anything and they are quite happy .

10. Any other business:

T. Dunne said there was worth for each person to progress Irish Centre.

Jim Myers had received complaints re: lack of cleanliness, not up to standard in areas. Fr. Cormican will discuss with Jim and Mary Allen.

T. Mangan queried lack of progress re: reception at entrance - Mary Kenny working in a 'cage' like corner. Chairman replying said this is due to lack of space and Mary Kenny happy to serve in her allotted office.

T. Mangan criticised the lack of manning in the shop, stating a receptionist could use the area. Chairman stated that Irish Centre have a contract on the shop and we are not in a position to change at this time. The question of a more suitable reception area will be kept in mind.

Jim Reynolds said Camden Trades Council were holding a meeting at the Irish Centre on 14th May. Michael Mansfield, speaker for the Birmingham Six to attend - an open meeting.

There being no further business relevant the Chairman thanking the members for their attendance closed the meeting.

11. Date of next meeting:

14th May, 1991.
