

New Town Hall

A proposal for a Town Hall in Ballinrobe

January 2015

Chairman: Michael Sweeney

Secretary: Siobhan O'Malley

Treasurer: Sean O'Connell

PRO: Liam Horan

Committee Members: Rory O'Neill, Tony Walkin, Margot O'Shea, Michael Burke, Mary Jackson, Tim O'Sullivan, Gwen Costello, Des May, Sheena Duddy, Mike Finnerty

Local Representatives: Cllr D Ryan (Cathaoirleach MCC, Cllr P O'Brien)

Ballinrobe New Town Hall - a facility to serve and enhance the Community

The History

Since 1886, a Town Hall had existed in Ballinrobe. Due to a lack of funding to renovate it, the building fell into disrepair and was abandoned in 1996 and eventually demolished in 1999. The site on which the building stood has continued to be owned by a Town Hall Company, a body first formed in 1886 when the Town Hall was purchased by the town for £80.

The Present

Today, following the purchase of a small piece of land adjacent to the site, the integrity of the old Town Hall site is assured. Our Committee is confident that with the goodwill and financial support of Mayo County Council, South West Mayo Development Company, Central Government, other interested stakeholders and the wider community of Ballinrobe and surrounding areas there is a very real prospect of again having a Town Hall in which to congregate and socialise.

The Need

In recent times, Ballinrobe has seen significant improvement in the town amenities. However there is no facility to gather together as a community to socialise, to hold festivals or similar events. We cannot offer a suitable space to invite touring artistic and cultural acts. We do not have a facility to host a town meeting, a seminar, a cineclub or any similar cultural experience. The young Irish Dancers, Ballerinas, Musicians and actors and actresses have no local facility in which to showcase their talent. Members of our community have achieved many successes in National Sports, at AIMS the National Musical awards to name a few, but we do not have a place where we can gather to celebrate those successes and to hold charity events or fundraise to assure future success.

A recent study identified more than 50 groups in the area covering a wide range of activities and catering for a diverse population; all of whom rely upon a great variety of buildings, and the generosity of their owners, in which to hold meetings, whether the space is appropriate or not.

The Proposal

It is our intention to develop a Town Hall for the benefit of the whole community on the historical site of the old Town Hall in the centre of the Ballinrobe.

Comprehensive, community-wide public consultation has been undertaken to establish the needs of the community. A Committee consisting of townspeople, representatives of various local social and community organisations and elected representatives has been established. Plans are being designed based on the afore-mentioned needs. A Company with charitable status is already in place and the Board of Directors has been added to with some members of the wider Committee.

We wish to have a bright, modern, warm, welcoming and multifunctional building that the community will be proud of. Additionally, the economic vibrancy this project will afford Ballinrobe Town and surrounding area is not to be underestimated.