

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of proceedings of Special Meeting of the Eastern Health Board held in the Boardroom, St Brendan's Hospital on Thursday 18 March 1982 at 6 pm

PRESENT

Ald B Ahem TD

Dr J D Behan

Mrs B Bonar

Cllr D Browne

Cllr M Carroll

Cllr M Freehill

Cllr A Groome

Cllr T Hand

Mr K Harrington

Cllr F Hynes

Dr P McCarthy

Sr Columba McNamara

Mr M Matthews

Cllr H Reilly

Dr B Sheehan

Cllr E Stagg

Cllr J Sweeney

APOLOGIES

Prof J S Doyle

Cllr BJ Durkan

Ms N Kearney

Dr A Meade

IN THE CHAIR

Cllr Dan Browne

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P B Segrave

Mr F J Donohue

Mr T Keyes

Mr L Kavanagh

Prof I Browne

Mr K Hickey

Prof B O'Donnell

Mr P J Swords

Mr J Doyle

Mr M Hayden

Miss A Flanagan

Mr C Mansfield

Mr M O'Connor

Miss M McGahern

Mr M Cummins

Miss E Larkin

Miss E Mattimoe

Mr T Brady

The Special Meeting had been arranged following the adoption of the following resolution by the Board at its meeting held on 4 February 1982:

"That this Board convene an urgent special meeting of the Board to examine the plight and needs of elderly people living alone in squalid conditions of poverty and that this meeting afford Mr Willie Bermingham, founder of ALONE, the opportunity to put his case before the Board for assistance in the form of a Task Force."

Mr Bermingham who was accompanied by Mr Liam O'Cunaigh, was welcomed by the Chairman and invited to address the Board.

Mr Bermingham thanked the Health Board for allowing him the opportunity to address the members. He gave details of the work which had been done by the ALONE organisation since it was founded five years ago and stated that his organisation would continue to provide a back-up service for the various statutory services. He requested the Health Board to consider the establishment of a joint Task Force comprising staff from the Dublin Corporation and the Eastern Health Board who would travel in an unmarked van carrying fumigation and cleaning equipment which would enable them to make houses clean and safe for other statutory and voluntary workers to enter.

In response to questions from Dr Behan, Dr Harrington, Dr Sheehan, Cllrs Freehill, Reilly, Stagg, Hynes, Carroll and Mr Matthews, Mr Bermingham and Mr O'Cunaigh provided the members with further information regarding the activities of ALONE.

Mr O'Cunaigh stated that voluntary workers from ALONE visit two thousand people and he estimated that approximately one-third of these are living in what could be described as intolerable conditions.

Mr Bermingham stated that they had spent £134,000 on the purchase of seven houses in Dublin during the past year in which they have rehoused people who had been living in unfit housing.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bermingham and Mr O'Cunaigh for coming to the meeting and stated that the Board would note their remarks and examine the possibility of establishing a Task Force as requested.

Mr Bermingham thanked the Board for the courtesy extended to his organisation and withdrew from the meeting.

Following a discussion, to which Dr Behan, Cllr Freehill, Dr Harrington, Cllr Reilly and Stagg contributed, it was agreed that this matter should be considered further at the April meeting of the Board and that the report of the Care of the Aged Committee should be re-circulated to the members.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm

CORRECT: P B Segrave
Chief Executive Officer

CHAIRMAN