

## **Kilkenny Reporter**

Tim Ryan, Oireachtas Correspondent

### **Aylward concerned at threatened closure of Camphill Community Facility**

The threatened closure of the Camphill community facility in Ballytobin, near Callan was raised in the Dáil by Deputy Bobby Aylward and Waterford Deputy Mary Butler. The facility provides community-based services for residents with challenging behaviours who are in the medium to profound category of disability.

Recently, Deputy Aylward said the independent regulator, HIQA, has issued a notice of determination to cancel the registration of the Ballytobin facility. It followed a two-week stay during which those involved with the Camphill community in Ballytobin had a short opportunity to address issues related to safeguarding and governance.

“The notice of determination came as a shock to many parents who were under the impression that the community was very close to HIQA registration in October 2016,” he said. “The parents and guardians of residents of the facility are concerned that their loved ones will face relocation if a resolution to this HIQA action cannot be found. That would be very unfortunate. Parents have told me about the great respect they have for the staff at the facility. Staff have established fantastic relationships with residents, some of whom have been at Ballytobin for over 40 years. Parents and residents are hopeful that if another service provider can be found and the issues flagged by HIQA can be identified and rectified, the community could be retained in its current form.”

If the residents of the Camphill community in Ballytobin have to be relocated to an alternative location, they will face a tough adjustment, he added.

Deputy Butler said this unique community which is located in a wonderful non-medical environment provides community-based services for residents with challenging behaviours who are in the medium to profound category of disability. Fantastic relationships have been built between residents, staff and family members.

### **Politics is a noble profession - Kenny**

Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny told the Dáil he was eternally grateful to the Irish people and particularly the people of Mayo for repeatedly giving him the opportunity to work on their behalf.

In his farewell address to the members of the House, he said he really believed that politics is work worth doing, “a noble profession”.

“Despite the many scandals and disappointments, I believe the vast majority of people elected to this House are here because we have an interest in and love for our communities and country and we wish to make a difference,” he said. “For me, cynicism is always an easy cop-out. The true measure of worth and courage is to keep trying again and again, knowing that much of that effort will go unrewarded.”

He said he understood the people's disillusionment with politics and the political process. "I believe that a first step towards overcoming that might be for us as politicians to treat one other with a greater degree of respect," he said. "We can argue vehemently the merits of issues or measures without questioning one another's motives or intent. Politics is always about people and government is always about making decisions. For my own part, I am the first to acknowledge I have not got everything right but I can honestly say my motivation was always what I believed was in the best interests of the Irish people."

He said he recently passed through Strade, which is the birthplace and final resting place of Michael Davitt. "To paraphrase what he said in his will to the Irish people, to all my friends I leave kind thoughts, to others I express my fullest forgiveness and to Ireland my undying prayer for absolute freedom and independence, which it has always been my ambition to achieve for her," he said. "I hope that in the two Governments I have led, we have made a modest contribution towards that ambition."