

FG councillor Costello: a man with a mission

ALTHOUGH Cllr Eoin Costello represents only the northernmost residents of Bray on the neighbouring local authority of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, there would be few in the town who would be unfamiliar with the man and his views.

Even people unaware of his proprietorship of the former Costello Jewellers on Main Street may associate him with the acronym CCTV as readily as others associate Charlie Haughey with that dreaded set of initials GUBU.

CCTV - close circuit television - in Bray was one of Eoin Costello's abiding interests before his election as a local politician - his handling of it an indication of his interest in the bread and butter issues of civic life and of his enthusiasm.

Local critics would say he's a trifle TOO enthusiastic - he had a frosty reception from some Bray councillors when, seeking their support, he presented a report in the Town Hall suggesting a rosy future for Bray in the event of CCTV being introduced to the town, and a hellish alternative vision if the facility was not implemented.

Costello argued forcefully that bringing CCTV cameras to Bray would turn the town into 'Holyhead', where crime has fallen dramatically since introducing CCTV. But if the idea had no support and fell by the wayside, he gravely warned, Bray would become 'A Clockwork Orange', turning into something like Stanley Kubrick's disturbing cinematic vision of a world ruled by psychotic, thuggish youths.

Perhaps it was the polar nature of the alternatives or his manner in presenting it, but some councillors seemed quite miffed at this unelected youthful upstart telling them their business - Costello was disappointed by the response, but remains unapologetic about highlighting what he regards as a crucial issue for the town.

'They said that I was giving Bray a bad name, but that wasn't the case,' Cllr Costello recalls, 'I felt I was doing the best for the town. Because we had the business in Bray, I was the last one who would want to give it a bad name, but I felt that unless the issue of crime was grasped in a hard way, the image would be in long-term decline. I recall an Austrian tourist getting his ear bitten off on the Seafront. What's the point in spending thousands of pounds attracting people to Bray and not guaranteeing their safety.'

And what of the accusations of brashness and arrogance? 'Well, you can try to do things behind the scenes, but it has limited results. There is inertia in organisations, and because of this I feel you have to tackle things head on.'

Tackled head-on

He's certainly done that. It is a northern Bray issue which, ironically, leaves Costello facing expulsion from Fine Gael at the very time he's planning to represent the party nationally. In June, residents of Woodbrook Glen were left without bin collection for three weeks and it's on their



■ Cllr Eoin Costello of Bray Business Watch on his way to present the report on CCTV for Bray to the Minister for Justice.

Cllr EOIN COSTELLO

Who is he? Cllr Eoin Costello, a Fine Gael member of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, who represents Bray's northernmost residents.