

WHY YOU SHOULD REPLACE A GAS BOILER

Climate Opinion & Analysis



“ The most prominent fissure on the Irish landscape is the gap between political decision-making and its consequences for ordinary people

Fintan O’Toole
Opinion & Analysis



LIFE ADVICE
‘I’M CONSIDERING SEPARATING AFTER 40 YEARS OF MARRIAGE’

Trish Murphy
Health & Family



Final rehearsals Wexford Opera Festival

Olga Conway during final rehearsals for *The Critic* by Charles Villiers Stanford which will be one of the featured performances of the Wexford Opera Festival. The festival opens on Friday and runs until November 2nd.

Photograph: Patricio Cassinoni



Residents struggle to find lawyers for planning case

Developer claims alleged ‘shake-down’ was abuse of the planning process

ELLEN O’RIORDAN

Two Co Meath residents accused of serially objecting to Glenveagh planning applications look likely to face the housing giant’s €8 million claim without legal representation after the High Court refused their request to delay the November hearing.

Pat Lynch and Denise Leavy yesterday asked for extra time to engage new lawyers to help them fight what is believed to be the first developer legal action in Ireland alleging abuse of the statutory planning process by way of “tortious interference” with its business interests.

The pair, who strongly deny all of the claims against them, say that, with their previous lawyers discharged and no new team available, they face a “David and Goliath” showdown next month, as Glenveagh Homes can deploy “unlimited resources for expensive lawyers”.

However, he is due to be stripped of his chairmanship of the PAC, as he now becomes an Independent TD. Chairpersons of committees are appointed by Dáil Éireann using the d’Hondt system, where committee chairs proportionately reflect each party’s representation in the Dáil.

→ **Sinn Féin controversy: page 2**

lion price tag had previously been agreed in principle, the firm says.

Alleged demands for “go-away” money in exchange for withdrawing planning submissions or appeals have been in the spotlight over the last year, leading to the Minister for Housing’s vow to outlaw the practice. The Planning and Development Bill passed by the Oireachtas last week contains a ban on requesting payment for not opposing developments and includes provisions designed to deter abuse of planning processes through spurious submissions and appeals.

Rejected
Glenveagh’s case against Mr Lynch and Ms Leavy, who both have addresses in Batters-town, Proudstown, is due to proceed over two weeks beginning on November 26th. It comes after Mr Justice Richard Humphreys yesterday rejected their third attempt at securing an adjournment to try to engage new lawyers.

Ms Leavy, a retired bank official, said they have contacted 22 legal firms since their previous solicitors, FP Logue, ceased representing them in July. Six have conflicts of interest, while eight are constrained or unavailable, but two firms have indicated they could be engaged if the trial is pushed back, she said.

“We need a chance to fight this case,” she said.

Sinn Féin faces fresh scrutiny over TD row

Stanley claims party should have referred allegation made about him ‘to the gardai’

Sinn Féin claims it advised TD to report allegation ‘to the gardai’ in September

JACK HORGAN-JONES and JENNIFER BRAY

Sinn Féin says it told Laois-Offaly TD Brian Stanley in September to go to the Garda with concerns he raised during an inquiry into a complaint against him.

With the issue set to dominate today, the rift between Sinn Féin and its former TD grew as the party hit back at Mr Stanley’s suggestion it should have reported these concerns after he raised them with the party last month during the inquiry.

Mr Stanley resigned as a Sinn Féin member on Saturday evening, citing a “kangaroo court” set up by the party after the complaint about him was lodged in late July.

During the investigation of that complaint, Mr Stanley said yesterday he raised “serious matters” with the panel investigating the allegation on September 11th, and that “the party should have referred it to the Garda”.

Mr Stanley’s resignation was followed by a referral of the

matter to the Garda by Sinn Féin, which is now facing criticism for not doing so sooner.

It is understood there was some uncertainty in the Garda yesterday about how, and through which route, Sinn Féin had filed their referral, with attempts made yesterday in the force to locate it. A source said the referral did not appear to have been lodged in Dublin or with Garda headquarters.

In a statement last night, the Garda said: “In general and without commenting on any specific matter, third party referrals to An Garda Síochána are initially examined to determine whether they meet the threshold for a potential criminal offence. They are not automatically subject to criminal investigation.”

The issue – along with several other political controversies Sinn Féin has been embroiled

in during the last fortnight – is expected to be discussed during Dáil statements on child protection today.

In a statement yesterday evening, Sinn Féin said that during its inquiry “a number of issues of concern were raised including one by Brian Stanley”. The party said: “He was advised to go to the gardai to report this matter, but chose not to. He was accompanied by his barrister and solicitor and was fully advised of his rights and entitlements.”

Mr Stanley and his solicitors were contacted for a comment on the Sinn Féin statement yesterday evening.

Timeline

The party also revealed the gender of the complainant as a woman for the first time in the statement, as well as clarifying the timeline as to when it

received the complaint.

Ms McDonald was contradicted by Mr Stanley earlier in the day after she said it was received in early August, with Mr Stanley saying it was initially made on July 26th.

Sinn Féin said last night that the first contact from the complainant was on July 26th followed by a full statement on August 2nd.

The party said that following the completion of the preliminary stage of its inquiry and report, and having taken further legal advice, the party referred the complaint and the counter allegation to the Garda.

“It is now for the gardai to decide if any of the matters we have brought to their attention require further investigation.”

Mr Stanley (66) became the first Sinn Féin TD to hold the position of chair of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) when

Bogus QR codes on parking meters, warns council

CONOR POPE

A scam which uses bogus QR codes on parking meters to fool people into downloading malicious software or submitting sensitive financial details to websites controlled by criminals has been identified in areas of the east coast stretching from Greystones to Malahide.

Fingal County Council has issued a warning alerting motorists to be vigilant of the scam that has been deployed on some pay and display parking meters and said its staff were assessing

machines and removing any bogus QR codes placed on them.

Wicklow County Council said it was aware of the QR code scam and had reported it to the Garda and deployed staff to check parking machines across Wicklow.

Payzone, which operates the cashless parking service across all Dublin local authority areas, has also engaged IT experts to work with it on taking down fraudulent links from QR codes.

According to reports, one woman in the Wicklow area had €1,000 taken from her

bank account after falling victim to the scam.

“The council is aware that a bogus QR sticker is being placed on some machines, bringing the user to a fraudulent website which requests credit card details and other personal data,” Fingal County Council said.

‘Not to scan’

It said it had reported the scam to the Garda and warned motorists “not to scan any QR codes or bar codes that may appear on pay and display machines.

“Instead, download the genuine parking app Payzone in use directly from your phone’s app store and use this, or pay directly by card or cash where available.”

While QR codes are not new, one council source said they were not aware of its parking meters being targeted in this fashion before.

In a warning posted on the Payzone website, it called on consumers to make sure when downloading its app to download it from trusted app stores and to make sure the app listed

Payzone as the developer and to be alert to any apps with similar names or those from different developers.

The way the QR code scam operates differs depending on the location or the criminals behind the scam.

One form of the scam sees people who scan the bogus QR codes brought to websites dressed up to look like legitimate enterprises where they are asked for sensitive details.

All the information including credit or debit card details is then collected by the criminals.

Weather

Persistent spells of rain and drizzle will spread from the south through the day. Highs of 14-16 degrees in light winds.

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Home News

Policing: Ministers will today approve the appointment of a new deputy commissioner of An Garda Síochána, after attempts to fill the post stalled recently: page 2

Courts: A Kinahan cartel associate who took part in a ‘revenge’ murder conspiracy has been jailed for 11 years: page 4

World News



Middle East: Israel is alleged to have killed 18 people yesterday in an air strike on a village in northern Lebanon: page 6

Business + Your Money

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Sports Tuesday

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League of Ireland: a draw with Sligo means Derry missed a chance to go level on points with Shelbourne: page 21

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