

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Table of Contents**

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Consultation Committee Meeting No 51, held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 21st June 2010 at 2.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR

Alderman H Connolly

PRESENT**Aldermen**

F Campbell, Mayor

J Simpson

Councillors

A Cavlan

J Finlay

R Halliday

B Kennedy

M McCamphill

T McKeown, Vice-Chair

A Patterson

I Stevenson

APOLOGIES:**Alderman**

C Cousley, MBE, Deputy Mayor

Councillors

P McGuigan

D McKay, MLA

E Robinson

M Storey

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive

Head of Corporate & Development Services

Committee Clerk

NI Housing Executive (Item 1)

Mrs H Walker – Acting Director of Housing & Regeneration

Mr F O'Connor – Area Manager

Mrs M Myles-Davey – District Manager

Mrs M Conway – Area Planner

Mrs Y Montgomery – Information Officer

DoE Planning Service (Item 2)

Ms H McSparran – Principaol Planning Officer

Ms K Dickson – Senior Planning Officer

M McCrystal – Planning Officer **(Items 2 - 8)**

Press

51.1 NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE – DISTRICT HOUSING PLAN

The Chair welcomed Mrs Helen Walker, Acting Director of Housing & Regeneration & Mr Frank O'Connor, Area Manager to the meeting to present the District Housing Plan and Local Housing Strategy 2010-2011. Mrs Mairead Myles Davey, District Manager; Mrs Mona Conway, Area Planner and Mrs Yvonne Montgomery, Information Officer were also in attendance.

The Acting Director of Housing & Regeneration said:

“We all know how the recession has affected the housing market, and the fall in the sale of Housing Executive homes has had a significant impact on our funding. Faced with this, the priority is to direct resources towards housing for vulnerable people and those without a home of their own.

“However, we are already aware that the new coalition Government plans to make substantial and unprecedented savings. We have been warned that these cuts will affect everyone in the United Kingdom and will have “enormous implications.” Following on from this the Northern Ireland Executive will therefore have no option but to make some very difficult and painful decisions. We will continue to make the case for continued investment in housing but at the same time be realistic in our expectations and what we can hope to deliver.

“All of us understand the hardship experienced by families who are waiting for a home of their own. The Housing Executive’s focus is to prioritise its resources on those in greatest need. We have made new housing our top priority and concentrated our funding on meeting housing need. Last year we recorded 1,838 new social housing starts. This is the highest number in over a decade. It is an encouraging start but it is only the beginning.”

Helen Walker continued,

“We want to protect the level of investment in housing in Ballymoney to date and to secure funding to improve homes which are not up to standard. We know that Ballymoney Councillors and their constituents are impatient for more and better housing, new bathrooms, new kitchens and new windows. Our responsibility is to meet housing need, to deliver high quality housing services and to rise to the highest standards of public service. We need to ensure that those most at risk in our society are supported and we are channelling our resources to deliver the best results possible. But as a public body we must live within our means.

“Earlier this month a high level report was published into the future for housing in Northern Ireland. This report is timely and important given the changing political, social and economic climate. It acknowledges the transformation in housing in places like Ballymoney. As Councillors you will have seen good housing act as the catalyst for better health and social wellbeing.

“This report has spelled out the central role which the Housing Executive will continue to have on behalf of Government – translating its policy objectives into successful local outcomes.

Helen Walker concluded,

“Housing in Ballymoney is not just about physical ‘bricks and mortar’ issues. We are committed to providing quality housing services and working with others to create safe and confident communities. We want to make sure that Ballymoney housing makes its full contribution to improving the quality of life for Ballymoney people.”

Referring specifically to the Housing Executive’s investment in Ballymoney Borough in 2009/10 the North East Area Manager, Frank O’Connor said,

“Last year the Housing Executive:

- Spent £1.69m on improving and maintaining Housing Executive homes in Ballymoney;
- Invested £660,000 to assist vulnerable people through the Supporting People programme. There are currently 12 supported housing accommodation based schemes and 5 floating support providers in the council area;
- Provided £490,000 on grant aid to improve housing conditions in the private sector;
- Commenced adaptations to 39 tenants’ homes; Invested £129,000 on adapting Housing Executive homes in the Borough;
- Provided 1,021 private sector tenants with Housing Benefit assistance, an increase of 63% from March 2006;
- Worked with 13 community groups in Ballymoney Borough.

Spelling out the Housing Executive’s agenda in Ballymoney for the coming year, when the Housing Executive plans to invest £2.92m in the Borough, Frank O’Connor said:

Housing waiting list

“The number of housing stress applicants on the Ballymoney waiting list decreased from 203 at December 2008 to 135 at December 2009. We believe that the growth in private renting has been instrumental in creating increased choice for people looking for a home of their own.

Housing allocations

“Last year we allocated 127 Housing Executive homes to waiting list applicants compared to 72 allocations the previous year. The District Housing Plan shows that one in two applicants who are in housing stress in Ballymoney Borough want to live in a rural area.”

New social housing

“A scheme for 5 units of supported accommodation is now being developed by Triangle Housing Association at Ballymena Road, Ballymoney. The Association also provided 4 new homes in Rasharkin in the past year. The three year Social Housing Development Programme (April 2010 - March 2013) includes a further 27 homes in Ballymoney town and at Cloughmills, Corkey and Rasharkin.”

Homelessness in Ballymoney Borough

“The number of homeless people has decreased from 155 in March 2006 to 96 in March 2010. Over two-thirds of those accepted as homeless were either single people or small families. The Housing Executive will continue to work hard to provide services to support those faced with homelessness in Ballymoney Borough. We also want to review our temporary accommodation, consider expanding floating support

services and examine the range of help we provide to vulnerable young people and offenders.”

Supporting people to live independently in Ballymoney

“This year we will invest £670k to help the most vulnerable people in Ballymoney to continue to live independently. This is especially important for older people and people with disabilities. There are currently 12 supported housing accommodation based schemes and 5 floating support providers in the council area.”

Maintaining Housing Executive homes in Ballymoney

“Despite pressures on our funding the Housing Executive will continue to provide its day-to-day maintenance service. Housing Executive tenants in Ballymoney Borough will see this service protected in line with their conditions of tenancy. This year we plan to install new heating systems in 42 Ballymoney homes and carry out external maintenance at 390 properties across the Borough.

Empty Housing Executive homes in Ballymoney

“The Housing Executive continues to place importance on reducing the number of empty properties in Ballymoney Borough. At the end of March there were 11 empty Housing Executive homes in the Borough. Nine of these were awaiting allocation and the remaining 2 require improvement work prior to allocation.

Warm Homes Scheme

“In 2006 the level of fuel poverty in Ballymoney Borough was 35.2%, compared to the Northern Ireland average (34.2%). In the 9 months to March 2010 132 homes in the Borough were insulated and a further 12 homes had both insulation and heating installed.”

Grants improving private homes in Ballymoney

“In the past year we have had to limit private sector grants to protect the Statutory Disabled Facilities Grants and Repair Grants. Only a small number of discretionary grants were approved last year. With limited funding this year it is likely that approvals for discretionary grants will remain low. In 2009-10 34 grants were approved to the value of £386k in Ballymoney Borough. We have allocated £470k for grants for Ballymoney Borough in the coming year.”

Building stronger communities in Ballymoney

“The Ballymoney Housing Community Network and the 13 local community and residents groups are doing valuable work reviewing and improving housing services for local people. Local staff are working diligently with residents and others to promote and encourage safer, settled and inclusive housing areas within the Ballymoney Borough.”

Improving public housing services in Ballymoney

“Our Ballymoney office continues to provide dedicated housing services in the Ballymoney Borough. Staff here are ably assisted by the new Customer Services Units, located in Twickenham House, Ballymena, providing Repairs, Accounts and Housing Benefits services.”

Frank O'Connor concluded:

“I would like to extend my thanks to the Councillors and Officers of Ballymoney Borough Council for their support over the past year. The District Manager, staff and

I look forward to continuing to work with the Council on issues of mutual interest in the coming year.”

Mr O'Connor responded to questions from members on issues relating to:

- Maintenance of existing stock.
- Provision of replacement heating systems versus double glazing.
- Availability of social housing. At the request of Councillor Stevenson, Mr O'Connor agreed to provide information on provision of social housing in Ballymoney over the last five years.
- Outcomes of needs analysis in Dunaghy, Loughguile and Corkey. No need identified in Dunaghy or Loughguile. Land is available in Corkey and the scheme is progressing.
- Availability of grants. Category 1 (long standing) grants progressing but remain dependent on budget availability.
- Refusal of housing in Dunloy and Rasharkin.

The Housing Executive publishes annual District Housing Plans for each of the 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland. The Plans detail the range of strategic factors, issues and initiatives which will impact on the local housing environment over the next year. They also provide an opportunity to report on performance for the previous year, 2009/10, and consult with local representatives on proposed housing programmes and investment for 2010/11.

For further information please contact Yvonne Montgomery, Information Officer on 028 25667844 or by e-mail at yvonne.montgomery@nihe.gov.uk

The Chair thanked the representatives for their presentation which concluded at 2.30 pm. Representatives left the meeting at this time.

* **The Head of Corporate & Development Services joined the meeting at 2.31 pm.**

51.2 PLANNING SERVICE – draft NORTHERN AREA PLAN

The Chief Executive advised that the draft Northern Area Plan (dNAP) is now to progress to Independent Examination. Officers from Planning Service attended to provide members with an update on this part of the process. As Council is an objector to dNAP, Planning Service is unable to discuss any of the concerns which Council has raised in its objections to the Draft Plan in advance of the Independent Examination stage of the plan process.

At the request of the Chief Executive, the Planning Officer advised that the timescale for commencement of the process of an independent examination is dependent on the Planning Appeals Commission and it is not possible to predict in which financial year the process might commence. The Planning Officer also advised that the timescale for each section of the process takes between six and eight weeks. She also reminded members that since 2005 there have been changes to the plan by the addition of 1400 dwellings in Ballymoney District. Responding to Councillor Stevenson, the Planning Officer advised that expiry of the plan is scheduled for 2016 and that if planning powers are transferred to Council prior to this, it may be their decision to take this forward. Objectors will be able to access progress on the Department's website.

The Chair thanked Ms McSparran and Ms Dickson for their presentation which concluded at 2.36 pm. The representatives left the meeting at this time.

- * **Councillor Kennedy joined the meeting during the discussion at 2.35 pm.**
- * **The Head of Corporate & Development Services left the meeting at 2.36 pm.**

51.3 MINUTES – MEETING NO 50 – 17th MAY 2010

It was proposed by Councillor Finlay, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 50 – 17th May 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

51.4 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 4.1 **Applications 1-16 were considered and the opinion of the Planning Department accepted except where stated otherwise.**

Full details of applications can be viewed at:

http://apps.planningni.gov.uk/council_schedules/ballymoney.aspx

Item No 6 – D/2010/0048/F – Approval

New dwelling and garage at site 50, Drumnamallaght, Balnamore Road, Ballymoney for C & B Properties.

Objection letters (3): **Difference in site levels, loss of privacy and light.**

Amended plans have been received addressing these issues and the Department is now able to approve.

Item No 10 – D/2010/0094/F – Refusal

Demolition of existing dwellings and erection of 10 No 2-storey semi-detached dwellings, 12 No 2-storey terraced dwellings and roadway at No's 57A & 59 Taughey Road, Balnamore for Drumdollagh Construction.

Objection letters (2): **Increase in density, loss of privacy, overlooking and loss of light, infrastructure of buildings, traffic and change of character in the area.**

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held
(Councillor Finlay/Councillor Kennedy)

The Planning Officer advised that the proposal has been reduced from 25 to 22 dwellings. At the request of Councillor Kennedy, the Planning Officer clarified the required minimum space between dwellings (at least 20m) and that each dwelling is looked at separately to assess how each dwelling relates to the other.

Item No 13 – D/2010/0107/F – Refusal

New farm dwelling approx 300m North of 83 Macfin Road, Ballymoney for Mr R Bartlett.

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held
(Councillor Finlay).

Item No 14 – D/2010/0121/O – Approval

Site for residential development at land to SE of No's 1, 2, 3 & 16 Fenton Crescent and 1, 2, 3 & 15 Fenton Park Cloughmills for NI Housing Executive.

Objection letters (7): **Loss of open space and trees, detrimental impact on amenities, overlooking, density and road safety.**

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held on behalf of objectors (Councillor Finlay).

Item No 15 - D/2010/0122/RM – Refusal

Proposed 6 No apartments and parking area at site 10m West of No's 1,3 & 5 Henry Street, Ballymoney for Mr S Graham.

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held
(Councillor Finlay).

Item No 16 – D/2010/0123/RM – Refusal

Proposed 6 No apartments and parking area at site 10m West of No's 1,3 & 5 Henry Street, Ballymoney for Mr S Graham.

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held
(Councillor Finlay).

Responding to Councillor Finlay on items 15 & 16, the Planning Officer advised that the outline plan was for one apartment block which has now been extended to two separate blocks. The Planning Officer advised that the two blocks sit only 1m apart which the Department finds unacceptable. At the request of Councillor Stevenson, the Planning Officer advised that Roads Service find the proposals to be acceptable.

4.2 Applications Deferred from Previous Meeting

Applications 1-9 (deferred) were considered and the opinion of the Planning Department accepted except where stated otherwise.

Following publication of the final version of the new rural planning policy PPS21 "Sustainable Development in the Countryside" which replaces the draft version of PPS21 published in November 2008, the Minister of the Environment has advised that new applications and those currently being processed which have not yet been taken to Council will be assessed under the provisions of the recently published PPS21 and an opinion will be presented to Council in the normal Manner. Council will have an opportunity to request a deferral in line with the procedures outlined in the Guidance on Consulting Councils issued in July 2006 (item 51.5 refers).

Item No 1 – D/2006/0368/O – Refusal

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Councillor Finlay/Councillor Kennedy).

Item No 2 – D/2006/0570/O – Approval

Original proposal was for 11 dwellings which has now been reduced to 6 apartments.

At the request of Councillor Stevenson, the Planning Officer advised that all objectors are given the opportunity to see amended plans.

Item No 3 – D/2007/0064/O – Refusal

Objections related to: Only two replacement opportunities existing on site.
Visibility splays not achievable.
Visual impact significantly greater than the existing.
Retention of a boundary wall.
Detrimental change in character of the area by reason of build up.

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Councillor Cavlan/Councillor Kennedy).

Item No 4 – D/2007/0183/O – Refusal

This application has been withdrawn.

Item No 5 – D/2007/0186/O - Refusal

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Councillor Finlay).

Item No 6 – D/2007/0198/F - Refusal

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Councillor Finlay)

Item No 7 – D/2007/0201/O – Refusal

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Councillor Finlay)

Item No 8 – D/2007/0397/F - Approval

The Planning Officer advised that there has been a reduction in the number of dwellings to 11 from 17.

Item No 9 – D/2007/0478/O - Refusal

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Councillor McCamphill)

Date of Office Meetings: 9th July at 10.00 am in Dalriada Room, Riada House.

The Planning Officer advised that with effect from July 2010, Mr P McGrogan will be the officer responsible for Ballymoney District. Members thanked Mr McCrystal for his previous good work on behalf of Council.

* **Alderman Simpson joined the meeting during presentation of the applications at 2.45 pm.**

51.5 PLANNING APPLICATIONS PROCESSED UNDER PPS 21 "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE"

Correspondence from the Planning Service to the Chief Executive was circulated. The correspondence indicated that following publication of the final version of the new rural planning policy PPS21 "Sustainable Development in the Countryside" which replaces the draft version of PPS21 published in November 2008, the Minister of the Environment has advised that new applications and those currently being processed which have not yet been taken to Council will be assessed under the provisions of the recently published PPS21 and an opinion will be presented to Council in the normal Manner. Council will have an opportunity to request a deferral in line with the procedures outlined in the Guidance on Consulting Councils issued in July 2006.

51.6 FINAL CONSULTATION

Location: 56-58 Knock Road, Ballymoney

Proposal: Proposed residential development comprising of 10 townhouses, 6 semi-detached, 2 detached and 4 maisonettes with associated car parking facilities.

The above planning application was recommended for approval at the Ballymoney Borough Council Planning Committee on 17th August 2009. The Department would like to advise Council that the decision for this planning application will now issue following final consultation response from Roads Service.

51.7 THE PLANNING APPEALS COMMISSION THE PLANNING (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1991 ENFORCEMENT APPEAL: Raymond Bartlett

**Alleged unauthorized erection of sheds/buildings
Land at 260m north west of No 83 Macfin Road, Ballymoney**

The appellant has been granted a postponement and the new date for the submission of Statements of Case is no later than 4.00pm on 8th July 2010. The date for the hearing is 29th July 2010 at 10.30am in the Cramsie Room, Ballymoney Town Hall.

51.8 IMPROVING DEMENTIA SERVICES IN NORTHERN IRELAND – A REGIONAL STRATEGY

The Bamford Action Plan 2009-2011, published in October 2009, includes a commitment to develop a dementia services strategy. A draft dementia strategy is now being issued for formal consultation. The draft strategy is available in the 'E-consultations' section of the Department's website at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/currentconsultations.htm>
Consultation responses should be returned no later than Tuesday 31st August 2010.

The meeting closed at 3.05 PM.