

Ballymoney Borough Council

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Ballymoney Borough Council

Minutes of Council Meeting No 877 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 7th April 2008 at 6.30 pm

IN THE CHAIR: Cllr J Finlay, Mayor

PRESENT:

Aldermen
F Campbell
H Connolly
C Cousley
J Simpson

Councillors
A Cavlan
M McCamphill
D McKay
E Robinson
I Stevenson
M Storey, MLA

APOLOGIES:

B Kennedy
P McGuigan
T McKeown
A Patterson
R Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive
Director of Borough Services (Items 1-10)
Director of Central & Leisure Services (Items 1-10)
Head of Corporate & Development Services
Committee Clerk

PSNI (Items 1-2)
Superintendent W Kerr
Chief Inspector D Wallace

Press

877.1 CONGRATULATIONS

The Mayor congratulated Ballymoney Ladies' Hockey team who have had a successful season, making it to the final of the Irish Cup. The Mayor intends to hold a civic reception for them in the near future to mark their achievement. Members concurred with the Mayor's remarks.

* **Councillor McCamphill arrived at 6.35 pm.**

877.2 PRESENTATION – PSNI

The Mayor welcomed Superintendent W Kerr and Chief Inspector D Wallace from PSNI to update members on the proposed new police station and manpower issues in the Borough.

In his opening remarks, Superintendent Kerr stated that Ballymoney is regarded as one of the safest areas in Northern Ireland with its low crime baseline. Crime figures have further reduced in the last reporting year (April 2007 – March 2008) with crime rates down by 14%. Superintendent Kerr expressed thanks to Chief Inspector Wallace and his team in achieving this level of crime reduction.

Superintendent Kerr explained the rationale in the change to policing districts. The new districts will exist for a three-year period when the structure will be reviewed following RPA.

Superintendent Kerr welcomed the proposed new station build and advised that £5M had been set-aside for this purpose, representing a significant investment in Ballymoney in the future. Work will commence in 2009 on the site at Charlotte Street. Superintendent Kerr advised that Chief Inspector Wallace would be pleased to present the plans for the build to Council at a future date.

Superintendent Kerr explained the rationalising of police support functions, including the preparing prosecutions, operational planning, tactical crime unit and the Public Protection Unit, which child abuse and domestic violence, missing and vulnerable persons. Two of these key functions would be based in Ballymoney.

The Superintendent also explained the move towards neighbourhood style of policing, advising that additional neighbourhood officers had been provided in Ballymoney, doubling the size of the Neighbourhood Team which would address, among other things, anti-social behaviour.

The response service had been rationalised and a base in Coleraine would serve the area, with a response car provided for Ballymoney (also covering Kilrea and Garvagh).

Following a survey in the number of people calling at the police station, opening hours are now between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm, with officers working shift patterns to provide a greater police presence on the street during weekend periods. This had allowed the rationalisation of resources to take place with more neighbourhood officers and beat officers.

Superintendent Kerr requested members to consider ways in which Council could assist PSNI in areas such as neighbourhood wardens, noise abatement and pollution and litter control.

The presentation concluded at 6.46 pm.

* **The Director of Central & Leisure Services, the Director of Borough Services and Councillor McKay arrived at 6.50 pm**

Superintendent Kerr and Chief Inspector Wallace then responded to members' questions. Included in the matters which engaged members' attention were:

- Concern about the extended area to be covered by the Ballymoney response car.
- Reduction in the number of officers based in Ballymoney and phasing out of full time reserves.
- Need to increase beat patrols in rural villages
- Anti-social behaviour in town
- Teething problems with new call handling system
- Reduction in opening hours of police station

The Mayor indicated his reservations about the service provided by PSNI under the new regime. Superintendent Kerr stated that changes have been made to provide a more efficient service across the North East and that the reduction of crime by 14% during 2007/08 is significant.

877.3 MINUTES – MEETING NO 876 – 3RD MARCH 2008

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Alderman Cousley and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of meeting No 876 on 3rd March 2008, as circulated, be adopted.

877.4 CONSULTATION COMMITTEE NO 25 – 19TH MARCH 2008

Councillor Cavlan presented the report.

4.1 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman Connolly, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 25 – 19th March 2008, as circulated, be adopted.

4.2 Addendum – Planning Service

The Chief Executive advised members of a letter received from the Divisional Planning Manager requesting an opportunity, at the Consultation Meeting on 21st April, to outline proposals for a pilot scheme for streamlined consultation on planning applications. The revised scheme for Council consultation on straightforward applications has enabled Planning Service to provide an enhanced service to customers and they would welcome the opportunity to trial the scheme in the rural district of Ballymoney.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED:**

that an invitation be extended to the Divisional Planning Manager to attend the Consultation Committee Meeting on 21st April 2008 to outline pilot scheme proposals.

877.5 DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE NO 192 – 19TH MARCH 2008

The report was presented by Councillor Stevenson.

Matters Arising

5.1 Project Update (192.4)

Alderman Campbell advised members of his attendance at the Atlantic Corridor Exploratory visit on 2-3 April, stating that this was a worthwhile and interesting event.

5.2 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Alderman Campbell and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 192 – 19th March 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

877.6 LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE NO 341 – 18TH MARCH 2008

Alderman Campbell presented the report.

Matters Arising

6.1 Proposed Footway at Corkey Road (341.8)

Councillor Cavlan expressed disappointment that there are no plans to proceed with this long awaited work in 2008/09. She will pursue this matter directly with Roads Service.

6.2 Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust Photographic Competition (341.6)

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

that the matter be referred back to Leisure & Amenities Committee.

6.3 Rasharkin Cemetery (341.15)

At the request of Councillor Stevenson, the Director of Borough Services advised that a report relating to subsidence at the cemetery will be presented at the April meeting of the Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting.

- * **Councillor McKay left the meeting at 7.20 pm**

6.4 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting 341 – 18th March, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved, with the exception of item 341.6 as referred to above.

877.7 HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE NO 338 – 27TH MARCH 2008

Councillor Robinson presented the report.

Matters Arising

7.1 Underage Sales Test Purchase Exercise (338.8)

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

that this matter be referred back to the Health & Environmental Service Committee

7.2 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Alderman Campbell and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 338 – 27TH March 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved, with the exception of item 338.8 as referred to above.

877.8 CORPORATE & CENTRAL SERVICES MEETING NO 361 – 26TH MARCH 2008

Alderman Cousley presented the report.

It was proposed by Alderman Cousley, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 364 – 26th March 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

877.9 NILGA PRESENTATION – 6TH MARCH 2008

A report on the presentation by NILGA to Council on 6th March 2008 was tabled for information.

877.10 RESOURCES TASK GROUP – 3RD APRIL 2008

Alderman Simpson presented the minutes of the Resources Task Group meeting of 3rd April 2008, a copy of which was circulated. Councillor Robinson extended thanks to those officers involved in compiling detailed information relating to agency costs, the precise nature of which provided clarity on this arrangement.

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

that the minutes of the Resources Task Group dated 3rd April 2008 be adopted.

- * **The Director of Borough Services and the Head of Leisure Services left the meeting at 7.45 pm.**

877.11 ROADS SERVICE**[a] School Safety Zones – Variable Speed Limits**

Roads Service are implementing a series of road safety measures at schools across the province, including new school warning signs with flashing lights, red coloured surfacing and enhanced road markings. A number of schools in the borough have already been treated. Roads Service are now introducing a trial initiative involving variable speed limits at schools and one of the two school sites chosen in our borough – Kilmoyle PS on Benvardin Road near Ballybogey.

The variable speed limit scheme will introduce a 20mph speed limit along the front of the school and electronic signing.

[b] Temporary Traffic Weight Restrictions – Bregagh and Carrowcrin Roads, Armoy

The Department has given notice of road closure from 10 March – 15th August to facilitate water mains works at this location.

[c] Adoption of Roads

Roads Service have advised of the following private street adoptions:

- Mountview, Stage 3, Stage 4, Stage 5 and Stage 6
- Castlehill, Ballymoney, Stage 1, Stage 4, Stage 6, Stage 7, Stage 8

[d] Consultation on Programme

Roads Service has advised that their programme and report will be available for consultation between 1 May and 30 June. Arrangements will be made to schedule their presentation at a meeting of the Consultation Committee.

877.12 POST OFFICE – NI AREA PLAN PROPOSAL

Post Office has published their Network Change Programme Area Plan Proposal for Northern Ireland. The formal public consultation on the proposal has commenced. The closing date for comments is 12th May. A Copy of the document is available for inspection in the Office of the Chief Executive (Interview Room).

The Mayor advised members of his intention to write to Postmasters at Glenbush, the Quay and Killans Post Offices expressing disappointment at the closure of these premises and thanking them for their service to the community over many years. Councillor Storey referred to the six-week consultation period stating that during this time, members should establish those Post Offices with issues that might benefit from Council representation on their behalf. Councillor Cavlan expressed concern at the loss of benefit payment via the Post Office which would adversely impact on the elderly and disabled.

* **Alderman Connolly left the meeting at 7.35 pm**

It was **AGREED:**

that this issue be tabled for discussion at the next meeting of Council on 5th May when information obtained from Postmasters seeking Council representation will be considered.

877.13 HOUSING RESEARCH BULLETIN

The Housing Executive has published in its Housing Research Bulletin –

- details of the 2006 House Condition Survey
- summary findings from the latest phase of a partnership project with UUC looking at the characteristics of the private rented sector
- a baseline analysis of segregation on housing executive estates in Belfast, carried out for NIHE by QUB.

A copy of the publication is available from the Office of the Chief Executive.

877.14 DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL – PRESERVING THE RENEWABLE ENERGY INDUSTRY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

At its meeting on 18th February 2008, the following Notice of Motion was agreed by Down District Council:

“In considering the world-wide concern over climate change and the inexorable rise in the price of oil and gas, and in the interests of the people of Down and Northern Ireland, and in consideration of the need to have a consistent approach to climate change across the UK and the important of meeting our obligations in an all-island and pan-European energy market

This Council expresses its great concern that recent, separate decisions by Ministers in the Assembly, when taken together, will effectively end the fledgling renewable energy industry in NI, losing over 100 high-skill private sector jobs in County Down and over 1000 around Northern Ireland.

And this Council resolves:

- *write to the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and to ask him to reconsider the decision to end the Reconnect Grants for renewable energy in housing in March and further calls for the Minister to continue the Reconnect scheme until 2010 and taper off afterwards.*
- *write to the Minister of Department of Social Development and ask for her to consider implementing a zero carbon approach using renewable energy for the 5,200 new social homes in the recent budget, in line with the UK Code for Sustainable Homes.*
- *And this Council will remind the Ministers of the need to build up the capability of the renewables industry in NI to cope with the UK governments declared intention to move towards "zero-carbon" buildings from 2013 onwards, with the next step in 2010."*

Council agreed that a letter be written to the Minister for Department of Social Development requesting that renewables be built into the new homes.

Down District Council has copied this motion to all 25 District Councils and request that this matter be debated.

877.15 BALLYMENA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Ballymena Borough Council, at its monthly meeting on Monday 3rd March, passed the undernoted Resolution:

"Ballymena Borough Council deplored the concerted campaign launched by Sinn Fein/IRA, supported by SDLP, to purge Councils of revered symbols relating to our British heritage, unionist convictions and our Protestant culture."

Ballymena Borough Council has written to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and to all District Councils.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Alderman Campbell:

that Council support this resolution

A vote was taken with six members voting in favour and two members voting against.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

877.16 ARMAGH CITY & DISTRICT COUNCIL

Armagh City & District Council has advised that, for some time now, they have been concerned regarding the additional charges levied by BT for non-direct debit payments and that it is particularly concerned at the impact this levy is having on people on low incomes/benefits; the vulnerable; young families and elderly in society, and has written on a number of occasions to BT, the General Consumer Council and Offcom on this matter and seeking a review of BT's decision.

At a recent meeting of the Armagh City & District Council's Public Services Committee, the matter was discussed once again and the Clerk and Chief Executive of that Council will be writing to NILGA, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Investment and each Council in Northern Ireland outlining their concerns.

Armagh City & District Council has requested this matter be brought to the attention of Council's members.

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

that Council support Armagh City & District Council relating to charges levied by BT for non-direct debit payments and write to NILGA, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Investment and other Councils, concurring with the concerns expressed.

877.17 REPORTS

A schedule of reports was tabled for members' information

877.18 NILGA REPORTS/UPDATES

NILGA's March monthly update was circulated for members' information. Councillor Robinson reported on the Environment Ministers attendance at the last meeting of NILGA and the information provided, but expressed disappointment at the poor attendance of NILGA representatives for the Minister's address.

This being all the business, the meeting closed at 7.45 pm.