Ballymoney Borough Council

Table of Contents

891.1	Condo	blences	Family of Colonel Cramsie		
891.2	Congr	ratulations	Sharon Mornin Ballymoney Netball Team Scorpion Boxing Club		
891.3	Minute	es – Meeting No 889 – 3 rd November 2008	Confirmed		
891.4	Minute	es – Meeting No 890 – 20 th November 2008	Confirmed		
891.5	Seal [Documents	Sealed		
891.6	Consu	ultation Committee No 32 – 17 th November 2008	Received		
891.7		Additional Guidance on the Establishment of ition Committees (Doe LG circular LG16/08-/08)	Deferred to December Consultation Committee Meeting		
891.8	Devel	opment Committee No 198 – 17 th November 2008			
	8.1 8.2	Programme Update – Rural Development (198.2) Adoption of Minutes	Write to Minister Adopted		
891.9		Leisure & Amenities Committees No 352 - 18 th November & 353			
	9.1 9.2 9.3	Intermediate Football Ground Improvement Project (352.8) Invitation to Attend Lower Bann Partnership Project Site Visit Tour (352.5) Drumaheglis Caravan Park – Booking system (352.4)	Deferred to December Committee Meeting Alderman Simpson Expenditure Noted		
	9.4 9.5	Riada Stadium Upgrade (352.10) Adoption of Minutes	Adopted		
891.10		re & Amenities Committees No 353 - 21st nber 2008			
	10.1	Community Support Grants (353.7)	Additional application – MS Society – Award £100.00		

	10.2 10.3	Belfast Telegraph Sports Awards (353.9) Meeting of Museum Working Group (353.5)	Noted Monday 8 th December at 2.00 pm
	10.4	December Committee Meeting	Leisure – 16.12.08 at 7.00 (JDLC) Amenities – 19.12.08 at 10.30 am (chamber)
	Adopt	ion of Minutes	Adopted
891.11		a & Environmental Services Committee No 344 – ovember 2008	
	11.1 11.2	Sunday Opening of Bookmaking Offices (344.25) Children & Young Person (Protection from Tobacco (NI) Order (344.41)	
	11.3	Adoption of Minutes	Adopted
891.12	Corporate & Central Services Committee No 370 – 24 th Adopted November 2008		
891.13	Audit	Committee No 9 – 19 th November 2008	Adopted
891.14	Buddy Bear Trust		Support Buddy Bear Trust
891.15		ts – Proposed Runway Extension at George Best t City Airport	Support Antrim Borough Council
891.16	Clamping Unlicensed Vehicles – New Powers		
891.17	Railway – Track Works between Ballymena & Coleraine		
891.18	Reports		For information
891.19	NILGA	A Reports & Updates	For information
891.19	Re-Organisation costs		Endorse NILGA's letter to Minister

Ballymoney Borough Council

Minutes of Council Meeting No 891 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 1st December 2008 at 7.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR:	Councillor J Finlay, Mayor (Items 1-8 inc) Alderman C Cousley, Deputy Mayor (Items 9-20 inc)
PRESENT:	Aldermen F Campbell H Connolly J Simpson
	Councillors A Cavlan B Kennedy M McCamphill T McKeown A Patterson I Stevenson M Storey, MLA
APOLOGIES:	Councillors P McGuigan E Robinson
IN ATTENDANCE:	Chief Executive Director of Borough Services Director of Central & Leisure Services Head of Corporate & Development Services Committee Clerk
	Press

891.1 CONDOLENCES

The Mayor expressed condolences to Mrs Cramsie and the wider family circle on the recent, sudden death of Colonel Cramsie.

891.2 CONGRATULATIONS

The Mayor extended congratulations to Ballymoney child minder Sharon Mornin who has recently received Cow & Gate's 'Baby Minder of the Year' award. The Mayor said that this is a great achievement for Sharon and her award brings distinction to the borough. A letter of congratulations has been sent.

They Mayor said he would also be sending a letter of congratulations to Ballymoney Netball Team who won the final of their competition and to Mr Alan Martin and the Scorpion Boxing Club for their fine performance, both events taking place in the Isle of Man.

891.3 MINUTES - MEETING NO 889 – 3RD NOVEMBER 2008

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 889 on 3rd November 2008, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

891.4 MINUTES - MEETING NO 890 – 20TH NOVEMBER 2008

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 890 on 20th November 2008, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

891.5 SEAL DOCUMENTS

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

that the Seal of the Council be affixed to Grave Registration Certificate numbers 1123 - 1129

891.6 CONSULTATION COMMITTEE NO 32 – 17TH NOVEMBER 2008

Alderman Connolly presented the report.

It was proposed by Alderman Connolly, seconded by Alderman Campbell and AGREED:

that the minutes of Consultation Committee Meeting No 32 – 17th November 2008, as circulated, be received.

891.7 RPA – ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRANSITION COMMITTEES (DOE LG CIRCULAR LG16/08 – 24/11/08)

The Chief Executive advised members of additional guidance received on the establishment of Transition Committees, as set out below. In presenting the additional information, the Chief Executive advised members that two other Councils in the cluster have agreed to a fifth place being filled. Limavady are yet to make a decision.

Background

Guidance was issued on 28th October 2008 on the formation of Transition Committees. This Circular is additional guidance to clarify the specific issue of the formation of the Transition Committee for the new local government area made up of Limavady, Coleraine, Ballymoney and Moyle Councils.

This area poses a unique issue for the creation of a Transition Committee in that four councils are coming together. The Department has become aware that the maximum of 16 members set out in the guidance means that each amalgamating Council can only nominate 4 members, which is less than any of the other amalgamating Councils affected and this may pose problems in achieving an accurate representative balance from each of the councils.

Detail

In this particular case only, the maximum number of Transition Committee members shall be set at 20 ie up to five from each council. This will facilitate the councils in nominating members reflective of their political balance.

All other Transition Committees will retain a maximum membership of sixteen, drawn equally from constituent councils.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT Council agree that the Transition Committee shall have five members from each council and that the fifth place is allocated on the basis of proportionality as agreed at the Consultation Committee No 32 on 17th November 2008.

If Council adopts this recommendation, the representation from Ballymoney Borough Council will be:-

DUP – 2 places SF, UUP & SDLP – 1 place each

Parties should supply the names of their representative(s) to the Chief Executive as soon as possible. The first meeting of the Transition Committee is likely to be held at 10.00am on 12th December, in the offices of Coleraine Borough Council.

Motion 1

It was proposed by Councillor McCamphill, seconded by Councillor Cavlan

that Council agree that the Transition Committee shall have five members from each council and that the fifth place is allocated on the basis of proportionality as agreed at the Consultation Committee No 32 on 17th November 2008.

In support of his motion, Councillor McCamphill referred to Council's decision on the system of nomination taken at Consultation Committee Meeting No 32 on 17th December, stating his view that deviation from the method adopted would be against Standing Orders. Councillor Cavlan concurred with this view. Councillor McCamphill requested that votes taken in respect of his motion be recorded.

At the request of the Mayor and Councillor Kennedy, the Chief Executive confirmed that the matter for decision was the filling of the fifth place, the method of proportionality already have been agreed. He clarified the mechanism to be applied in rescinding decisions adopted by Council or referring issues back to Committee. He advised if the latter was to be the case in the nomination of a 5th place on the Transition Committee, a decision would not be possible prior to the anticipated date of the first meeting ie 12th December. The meeting could not take place without a decision having been made as to a fifth member.

The Mayor asserted that the make up of the council representatives on the Transition Committee should be reflective of Council's makeup and therefore the allocation of the fifth place should re reviewed.

Motion 2

It was proposed by Alderman Cousley, seconded by Councillor Stevenson

that the recommendation be referred back to Consultation Committee.

Alderman Campbell expressed the view that the offer of a fifth place on the Committee has changed the structure of the decision taken at Consultation Committee No 32 on 17th November and the matter should be now reviewed. In response to Councillor Cavlan's request for an explanation of the SDLP being awarded a place, in accordance with the mechanism already adopted and Councillor Stevenson's query relating to first preference votes, the Chief Executive confirmed first preference votes and the rationale for using this as a basis to fill a last place if two parties are equal and nearest to a whole number.

A recorded vote was taken in respect of Motion 1.

FOR (4)

AGAINST (6)

Councillor Cavlan Councillor McCamphill Alderman Connolly Councillor Kennedy Councillor Finlay Alderman Cousley Councillor Stevenson Councillor Storey Alderman Simpson Councillor McKeown **ABSTENTIONS (2)**

Alderman Campbell Councillor Patterson

The Chair declared the motion lost.

A recorded vote was taken in respect of Motion 2 to refer the recommendation back to the Consultation Committee.

FOR (7)

AGAINST (4)

ABSTENTIONS (1)

Councillor Patterson

Councillor Finlay Alderman Cousley Councillor Stevenson Councillor Storey Alderman Campbell Alderman Simpson Councillor McKeown

Councillor Cavlan Councillor McCamphill Alderman Connolly Councillor Kennedy

The Chair declared the motion carried.

* Councillor Storey joined the meeting during the discussion at 7.10 pm.

891.8 DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE NO 198 – 17TH NOVEMBER 2008

Councillor Stevenson presented the report.

Matters Arising

8.1 **Programme Update – Rural Development (198.2)**

At the request of Councillor Kennedy, the Head of Corporate & Development Services clarified the delay in funding, stating that DARD will now progress its Corporate Body Legislation via the Assembly that there may be a need for Council to take legal advice when it is clear what the proposed structure is.

It was proposed by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor McCamphill

that Council write to the Minister of Agriculture about the delay of funding via DARD.

A vote was taken and the motion was passed unanimously.

8.2 Adoption of Minutes

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

that the minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 198 – 17th November 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

891.9 LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE NO 352 – 18TH NOVEMBER 2008

Alderman Campbell presented the report

Matters Arising

9.1 Intermediate Football Ground Improvement Project (352.8)

Responding to a request by Alderman Simpson at Committee's meeting on 18^{th} November relating to the timeframe for expending the IFA ground improvement grant, the Director of Borough Services advised members that the grant must be expended by April 2009 or the project will be lost. He reiterated that no budget provision has been made to match the grant and that Council's contribution of £7,328 must be found from Council's reserve fund, the Director suggested that the matter be deferred to Committee's meeting in December to facilitate further discussion.

It was proposed by Councillor McCamphill, seconded by Councillor Cavlan

that Council proceed with the project providing match funding in the amount of £7,328 from Council's Reserve fund.

Councillor Kennedy supported the improvement to football grounds emphasising the need to ensure grounds were up to the relevant standard for clubs to continue to play games at the standard they were currently paying at. He concurred with the Director that this expenditure should be considered further, providing that time constraints do not impinge on Council's opportunity to take advantage of the funding offered.

Councillor McCamphill withdrew his motion with the agreement of his seconder and it was **AGREED**:

that the matter be tabled for discussion at the December meeting of the Leisure & Amenities Committee.

9.2 Invitation to Attend Lower Bann Partnership Project Site Visit Tour (352.5)

The Director of Borough Services advised members that due to a prior commitment, Councillor Robinson is unable to attend the tour on 10th December 2008 and invited members to consider alternative representation.

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

that Alderman Simpson will attend the tour on 10th December 2008.

9.3 Drumaheglis Caravan Park – Booking System (352.4)

Alderman Simpson expressed the view that the expenditure of £1,300 to provide a computerised booking system at Drumaheglis Caravan Park should be considered as part of the rates setting process. The Director of Borough Services emphasised the improvement that SITEBOOK would provide to the service offered to site users and the advantages to be gained in assisting staff to manage the facility more effectively. He stated that in order to tie in with Caravan Club booking requirements this year it was hoped to have the software available for 1st January and that it was the intent that the online aspect would come into effect prior to the commencement of the new season in March 2009.

9.4 Riada Stadium Upgrade (352.10)

Responding to a query by Alderman Simpson as to why Council staff originated schemes such as the proposed upgrade at Riada Stadium, the Director advised that Council had agreed at its meeting on 4th August that the work be done so that were IFA grant to become available Council would be in a position to bid for same. The Mayor advised that the possibility of IFA grant aid being available was mentioned by the IFA President at the Milk Cup reception hosted by Council and that this had led to Council commissioning the work mentioned by Alderman Simpson from the Council's consultants.

9.5 Adoption of Minutes

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

that the minutes of Leisure & Amenities Committee Meeting No 352 – 18th November 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

* The Mayor relinquished the Chair and left the meeting at 8.10 pm to visit his father in hospital and invited the Deputy Mayor to assume the Chair on his behalf. The Deputy Mayor took the Chair and on behalf of members wished the Mayor's father a speedy recovery.

891.10 LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE NO 353 – 21ST NOVEMBER 2008

Alderman Campbell presented the report.

Matters Arising

10.1 Community Support Grants (353.7)

Alderman Campbell advised members of an additional application received from MS Society, Ballymoney Branch for £100.00 towards a Christmas dinner for volunteers which was recommended.

Councillor Cavlan pointed to the grants to groups to go on shopping trips and said Council should be encouraging people to shop locally.

10.2 Belfast Telegraph Sports Awards (353.9)

It was proposed by Councillor Kennedy

that if there are no nominations of sportsmen or women from the Borough for an award, Council should note the event.

This was seconded by Councillor Simpson

A discussion ensued with the Director of Central & Leisure Services advising of previous arrangements with the Sports Advisory committee on reimbursement of places taken by representatives from that Committee with council fundings its members and officers. Alderman Campbell expressed the view that Council should attend to show support for sportsmen or women who may be nominated from the borough.

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

Alderman Cousley used his casting vote to vote in favour of the motion and declared the motion carried.

Alderman Campbell expressed his disappointment at the decision.

10.3 Meeting of Museum Working Group (353.5)

The next meeting will take place on Monday 8th December at 2.00 pm.

10.4 December Committee Meeting

The Committee will meet on two occasions in December due to the volume of business to be conducted. Leisure business will be conducted on Tuesday 16th December at 7.00 pm at the Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre. Amenities business will be conducted on Friday 19th at 10.30 am in the Council Chamber.

10.5 Adoption of Minutes

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

that the minutes of Leisure & Amenities Committee Meetings No 353 – 21st November 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved including additional Community Grant at 10.1 above.

* Councillor Kennedy left the meeting at 8.30 pm.

891.11 HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE NO 344 – 24TH NOVEMBER 2008

Councillor Cavlan presented the report.

Matters Arising

11.1 Sunday Opening of Bookmaking Offices (344.25)

Councillor Stevenson welcomed the proposal to write to the First Minister and local MLA's expressing concern at proposals for Sunday opening of bookmaking offices, stating that the letter should reflect the strength of cross party opposition expressed.

11.2 Children & Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco (NI) Order 1991 (344.41)

In response to a query by Councillor Stevenson, the Director advised that advance notice had been given but the date of the inspection had not been disclosed.

11.3 Adoption of Minutes

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

that the minutes of Health & Environmental Services Committee Meeting No 344 – 25th November 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

891.12 CORPORATE & CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE NO 370 – 24TH NOVEMBER 2008

Alderman Simpson presented the report and referred members to the letter to the Chief Executive from Councillor Robinson regarding NILGA strengthening member council engagements and protections which had been copied to each member.

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

that the minutes of Corporate & Central Services Committee Meeting No 370 – 24th November 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

891.13 AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 9 – 19TH NOVEMBER 2008

Alderman Cousley presented the report.

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

that the minutes of Audit Committee Meeting No 9 – 19th November 2008, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

* The Director of Borough Services, the Director of Central & Leisure Services and Alderman Connolly left the meeting at 8.35 pm.

891.14 BUDDY BEAR TRUST

The Buddy Bear Trust has written seeking Council's support for a meeting with the Department of Education Permanent Secretary to explore options in relation to the future of the Buddy Bear School. The Department's Permanent Secretary has declined to meet the Trust as the Minister for Education has already written to them fully explaining the Department's position in regard to the issue of independent schools and also in particular regard to the options put forward for the future of the Buddy Bear School and he cannot add any further comment from an education perspective.

In support of their case the Buddy Bear Trust point out while that some education boards claim that they can meet the needs of children with cerebral palsy, these same Education boards are now aware that the figures received from Will Haire are accurate. They state that at 17 June 2008 almost 9000 children were at stage 3 waiting to be assessed, also that the Minister of Education has almost completed a review of Special Education but a review will not help our children with cerebral palsy. Long waiting lists held by the Boards are not an answer but a sign of failure.

They also advise that a cross party of MLAs have asked for an urgent meeting with the First Ministers about the resolution of the Assembly to financially support Buddy Bear. It is hoped that a letter of support from Council will strengthen the case of the MLAs who have asked for the urgent meeting. Council is asked to send a copy of any letter of support to the Trust and the media.

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

that Council support Buddy Bear Trust's request for a meeting with the Department of Education Permanent Secretary to explore options in relation to the future of School and send a copy of any letter of support to the Trust and the media.

891.15 AIRPORTS - PROPOSED RUNWAY EXTENSION AT GEORGE BEST BELFAST CITY AIRPORT

Antrim Borough Council has written to seek the support of stakeholder councils to the continued development of Belfast International Airport as the main facility for the province and its call to the Environment Minister for an appropriate Public Inquiry be held at the earliest convenience to fully examine the implications of this project.

The Council's case to the Minister states: "Antrim Borough Council undertook to support calls for a Public Inquiry to be held to examine the ramifications of this proposal. This is based on the need to ensure that all factors such as economic, community, environmental and planning impacts are taken into full consideration.

Antrim Borough Council asks the Department to acknowledge the complexity of these issues, and recommends seeking consideration of the issue by the Northern Ireland Executive as a strategic priority, given its cross-departmental implications.

As the Minister will be aware, Belfast City Airport is one of only a handful of airports within the European Union designated as a 'city airport' (EU Directive 2002/30/EC). This permits more stringent noise-related operating restrictions to be imposed than at other airports in the EU, if desired. The proposed runway extension will permit Belfast City Airport to receive larger – and more importantly – noisier aircraft, thereby contradicting the principles of this Directive, and by potentially creating a significant detrimental impact on local residents and communities.

In addition, Antrim Borough Council is concerned that the infrastructure deemed as necessary by the City Airport operators is already provided at Belfast International, and given the highly competitive domestic air travel market, there are serious concerns that such a proposed development may undermine the relative position of the main Northern Ireland airport possibly to the benefit of Dublin Airport. Again, these concerns can only be fully considered within the remit of a Public Inquiry.

Council respectfully recommends that an appropriate Public Inquiry be held at the earliest convenience to fully examine the implications of this project."

The Minister has advised Antrim Borough Council that pre-application discussions have taken place with the Planning Service on a proposal to extend the runway at the George Best Belfast City Airport. These remain ongoing and to date a planning application has not been submitted. Any forthcoming application to extend the runway is likely to be designated as one of major importance under Article 21 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991 and will require to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement. Under Article 31 procedure one option open to the Department is to cause a public local inquiry to be held by the Planning Appeals Commission. Should a planning application be

submitted the Minister has assured the Council that careful consideration will be given to all relevant factors, including the issues council has raised, before a decision is made on the procedure to be followed.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and AGREED:

that Council support Antrim Borough Council in the continued development of Belfast International Airport as the main facility for the province and its call to the Environment Minister for a Public Inquiry to fully examine the implications of this project.

891.16 CLAMPING UNLICENSED VEHCILES – NEW POWERS

The Diver and Vehicle Agency has advised of an important change in the law which came into effect on 1st October 2008 that make it an offence to use or keep an untaxed vehicle in off road areas unless a valid statutory off road notification (SORN) is in force. The only exception to the offence is where the vehicle is on land associated with a dwelling or is kept at the business premises of a motor trader or garages. The Agency believes that the new legislation may be of benefit to Council in that they will be able to assist us in removing unlicensed vehicles that are left parked for pro-longed periods in areas of the public road.

891.17 RAILWAY - TRACK WORKS BETWEEN BALLYMENA AND COLERAINE

Translink has been carrying out significant engineering work to extend the life of the track between Ballymena and Coleraine. The project has been progressing on schedule and the first phase is nearing completion. The second phase of work will involve relaying track in a five mile section between Ballymena and Coleraine. There will be no disruption for passengers initially, but a period of complete closure between Ballymena and Coleraine is planned from March to June next year. A communications programme will ensure that all passengers are kept informed of the bus substitution service which will be put in place.

891.18 **REPORTS**

A list of reports was circulated for members' information.

891.19 NILGA REPORTS & UPDATES

Schedule of reports and updates was circulated for members' information.

891.20 RE-ORGANISATION COSTS

NILGA has written to seek Council's endorsement of representations by its president to Environment Minister, Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, to address the lack of identified resources to support RPA. A response was requested by 26th November. As Council has already taken a view that Local Government should not bear the costs of re-organisation and transformation as envisaged the Chief Executive has confirmed that Council endorses the approach to the Minister.

Council is invited to formally endorse the representations to the Minister, as set out below.

"DRAFT FOR COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT TO BE PRESENTED TO THE MINISTER AT THE NILGA FULL MEETING 28 NOVEMBER 08

Significant Investment for Local Government Required Transition to Transformation

Local government is committed to working with your department and wider central government to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the RPA, to seek efficiencies and improve services to citizens. Local government agree that the appropriate way to achieve this is to focus on the transition to the 11 new councils and then to provide a longer term focus on modernisation. We welcome the new emerging partnership with your department which is facilitating genuine political leadership. We also welcome the new guidance on transition committees and the proposed resource package to underpin the transition work which represents a substantive move forward.

However, as you will be aware, NILGA has raised the issue of a wider resource package to support the change process consistently with Ministers, since the inception of the RPA in 2002. This issue came into sharp focus at the RPA Planning Day (5 November, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre), which was attended by all the key leaders across our sector. Members and officers articulated their significant apprehension about the capacity to effectively implement the RPA transition phase without an appropriate funding package.

It is therefore regrettable that I have to write to you in the mouth of the implementation phase, to raise with you the significant concern across the sector regarding the lack of identified resources to support RPA.

I think you would agree Councils and NILGA have demonstrated their commitment to taking the RPA forward. However councils are already in difficult financial circumstances due to the ongoing issues with rates revenue and increasing delivery costs. Councils therefore have extremely limited capacity to further invest in major change and it is not tenable, nor fair, to place a further burden on ratepayers at this time of economic hardship.

Furthermore, unlike our counterparts in other regions, councils in Northern Ireland have not received additional resources to support modernisation; this is despite many central government functions receiving significant support to improve. Councils are close to communities; they are responsive, accountable and provide an essential integrating role, which can add value right across the public sector. It is therefore vital that local government is not treated as an 'after thought' in the modernisation of government. Councillors want to ensure services can be delivered effectively and in a modernised way and that local government has an opportunity to drive forward improved public services in partnership with other agencies, as in the case in neighbouring regions.

I would like to reiterate that this project was initiated by central government, and since its inception the commitment has always been that central government would provide the resources. An appropriate funding package which was promised and deemed necessary in the first place is therefore now essential.

The NILGA Executive members identified securing government resources to support firstly transition and then transformation as our overriding priority at our Strategic Planning day on the 14 November.

I would therefore call on you and the Executive to seek to redress this situation as a matter of priority. As a first step we would request government urgently agree a funding package to support the transition process, the cost of which was estimated to be in region of £60M by Deloitte. In the longer term, we would welcome reassurances that a further substantive investment will be provided to support the modernisation process.

While we appreciate that the Executive are facing financial constraints, local government must be afforded a fair apportionment of public resources. Failure to do so would not just undermine local government, but the entire public sector as it seeks to provide services in a joined-up manner, which are accountable to the communities they serve. We believe failure to provide resources at this time would defeat the entire purpose of the RPA.

In closing we do not consider it is acceptable, nor practicable to bring forward the RPA without providing the necessary funding.

As an indication of the strength of feeling across the sector please note that this letter has been endorsed by 26 (??) local authorities. We hope therefore you will take the appropriate strenuous action to address the situation as a matter of priority. "

The Chief Executive advised members that he had written to NILGA stating that Council has taken the view that it could not and should not incur the cost of implementation of RPA and that a commitment is needed that implementation costs will be centrally funded. Council is asked to formally endorse NILGAs letter to the Minister.

It was proposed by Councillor Cavlan, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and AGREED:

that Council endorse NILGA's letter to the Minister, as set out above.

The meeting concluded at 8.45 pm.