

**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Meeting No 347 – 25th September 2006

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Minutes of Finance & General Purpose Committee Meeting No 347 held in the Chamber, Riada House on Monday 25th September 2006 at 7.30 pm.

In the Chair: Councillor A Patterson

Present:

Aldermen
 F Campbell H Connolly
 C Cousley J Simpson

Councillors
 A Cavlan J Finlay (Mayor)
 B Kennedy P McGuigan
 D McKay

Apologies: Councillor E Robinson
 Councillor I Stevenson
 Councillor M Storey, MLA
 Councillor R Wilson

In Attendance: Chief Executive (6-10)
 Director of Central & Leisure Services (2-5)
 Head of Corporate & Development Services (6-10)
 Committee Clerk

347.1 MINUTES – MEETING NO 346 – 29 AUGUST 2006

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 346, on 29 August 2006, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

CENTRAL SERVICES

Time 7.35pm

347.2 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Treasury advice schedules detailing payments for Period 6, 2006/07 drawn on the Council's Capital and Revenue Bank Accounts were circulated at the meeting.

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

to recommend that accounts to the value of £505,266.88 from the Revenue Account and £69,380.41 from the Capital Account be approved for payment.

347.3 **BANKING SERVICES**

3.1 **Bank Mandate**

The Director of Central & Leisure Services explained that approval was sought to amend the bank mandate to include the name of John Michael as an authorised cheque signatory.

The authorised cheque signatories on cheques drawn on the Council's bank accounts effective from 3 October 2006 to be John Dempsey, Iris McCleery, David Wright, Elizabeth Johnston and John Michael.

3.2 **Credit Card Facilities**

Approval was also sought to obtain another Ballymoney Borough Council business card in the name of John Michael. There are currently two business credit cards held by John Dempsey and Iris McCleery.

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

To recommend that the bank mandate is amended to include the name of John Michael as an authorised signatory and that another business card is obtained in the name of John Michael.

347.4 **WOMEN IN LOCAL COUNCILS – GENDER ACTION PLAN**

In January 2006 the council adopted the Declaration of Principles, which committed elected members and officers to work towards gender equality. As a further stage in the initiative, the Women's Development Steering Group has developed a Gender Action Plan to assist councils addressing the key issues in the Declaration.

The Action Plan aims to

- ensure that policies and practices meet the legal requirements
- promote best practice
- address gender under-representation and job segregation

To achieve these aims the Action Plan includes sections for elected members and for officers respectively.

Councils are asked to consider adopting the Action Plan under their own names and to determine their own priorities within the framework of actions and indicators.

To assist with implementation, councils are encouraged to establish an in-house steering group to oversee the process.

Committee is asked to consider nominating an elected member.

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

to recommend that Councillor Cavlan, Councillor Robinson and Councillor Patterson be nominated to an In-House Steering Group.

CENTRAL SERVICES REPORTS

347.5 Consultation on the Amendment to the Local Government (Accounts & Audit) Regulations (N.I) 2006

The Department has issued a consultation document on the proposed Amendment to the Local Government (Accounts & Audit) Regulations (N.I) 2006 was circulated.

The proposal is to amend the Local Government (Accounts & Audit) Regulations (N.I) 2006 to provide for internal control and internal audit.

No comments were offered.

347.6 Consultation on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Local Government 2007 –2009

The Local Government Staff Commission has issued a consultation paper on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Local Government was circulated. Comments are invited by 27th October 2006

The Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) earlier this year sought preliminary advice from its legal representatives in relation to the implications of the introduction of the vacancy control system in order to safeguard the employment of existing local government staff as a result of decisions arising from the Review of Public Administration.

The purpose of the consultation paper is to outline the context and legal considerations in respect of the introduction of a vacancy control system and to seek the views of local government.

Following the consultation period, the LGSC will evaluate responses and issue detailed guidance on a vacancy control system, which will apply in councils.

No comments were offered.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Time 8.12pm

347.7 **COUNCIL DECISION MAKING STRUCTURES (345.10)**

This matter was deferred from committee's meeting No. 345 on 24th July.
(Min 345.10 refers)

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

to recommend that the committee name be changed from Finance & General Purposes Committee to Corporate & Central Services Committee.

347.8 **CIVIC POLICIES (DRAFT EQIAS) (346.6)**

The undernoted two EQIAs within the responsibility of OCE, have been developed for public consultation. The documents were circulated at the committee's last meeting. Under the consultation arrangements these will be issued to all members in addition to those bodies on our equality consultation database. Comments are invited on the draft documents prior to their issue for public consultation. Some minor amendments to text, party names and statistics calculations were noted. Following the consultation exercise a further report will be brought to committee.

(a) Council Representation on Committees and External Bodies

(b) Election of Office Bearers

It was agreed to recommend to Council that the two consultation documents used above be issued for public consultation.

347.9 **EQUALITY PROGRESS REPORT 2005-2006**

A copy of the report submitted on Council's behalf to the Equality Commission, circulated, was commended for Council's endorsement.

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

to recommend that Council endorses the report to the Equality Commission, subject to a check of complaints received during the period and amendment, if necessary, of the report.

347.10 **LSP - POST ENTRY TRAINING**

An application has been made by the LSP Monitoring Officer to attend Advanced Diploma in Management Practice programme entitled "Leading for Excellence",

being offered by the University of Ulster, 26th September 2006 - 8th October 2007 . The themes are Leadership, Teamworking, Managing Self and Personal Skills, Managing the Organisation, Finance, Governance, Managing Change and Project Management. The Local Government Staff Commission Training Group are subsidising the programme and the cost to Councils will be £875 per participant.

LSP have agreed to meet the costs from their staff costs budget under the Service Level Agreement.

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

to recommend that the above application, supported by head of service and recommended by the Chief Executive, be granted, course and examination costs, as appropriate, to be met from LSP budgets.

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

347.11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES REVIEW – PROCEDURES GUIDE

A copy of the guide was circulated for members' information. It provides details of the legislative framework for the current review of local government boundaries and the key stages of the review process. It also explains the procedures for the public hearings that are to take place during January and February 2007.

347.12 ELECTORAL COMMISSION CONSULTATION

The Electoral Commission previously advised of its intention to seek views on the legal framework and operation of the regulatory and enforcement framework of the Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act 2000. (PPERA)

The Committee of Standards in Public Life (CSPL) launched its 11th Inquiry into the work of the Electoral Commission in February this year and a significant number of political parties, academics and others have submitted written and oral evidence relating to the PPERA framework. It has therefore been concluded that the Commission will await the outcome of the CSPL process before deciding whether and how to undertake its own consultation.

This concluded the business of the meeting, the time being 8.43 pm.