

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

Meeting No 340 – 27th March 2006

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Finance & General Purpose Committee Meeting No 340 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House on Monday 27th March 2006 at 7.30 pm.

In the Chair: Alderman H Connolly

Present:

Councillors
A Cavlan A Patterson
J Finlay M Storey, MLA
B Kennedy

Aldermen
F Campbell
C Cousley (Mayor)
J Simpson

Apologies: I Stevenson (Deputy Mayor)

In Attendance: Chief Executive
Director of Central & Leisure Services
Director of Borough Services (Item 3)
Corporate Services Officer
Committee Clerk

340.1 **Minutes** – Meeting No 339 – 27th February 2006

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

That the minutes of Meeting 339, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

340.2 **Accounts for Payment:**

Treasury Advice Schedules detailing payments for Period 12(1), 2005/06 drawn on the Council's Revenue and Capital Bank Accounts were circulated at the meeting.

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

That accounts to the value of £475,385.86 from the Revenue Account and £154,065.37 from the Capital Account be approved for payment.

340.3 Staff Matters

1.0 Town Project Officer – Extension of Contract

At the Rates Estimate meeting on 14th February it was agreed that the existing part-time contract post, ending 31st March 2006, be retained (cost £15,000) to allow for continued delivery of town centre projects, including the three year marketing plan co-funded by DSD, and support for Ballymoney TCM.

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

To recommend that the post of Town Centre Project Officer, scale 6, be extended for a three year period, commencing 1st April 2006. (est. £15,000 pa)

3.2 Request for Additional Staffing Resources

At the final Rates Estimate meeting on 14th February, prior to setting the 2006/2007 District Rates, Council agreed that any requests for additional staffing be brought to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration.

Further consideration has been given to the additional posts sought. Posts have been prioritised and proposals, supported by the Management Team, details circulated, were submitted for committee's consideration, as follows, the Chief Executive having outlined the need for the posts.

Central & Leisure Services Directorate

- Part-time Personnel Assistant - £14,000 max
- Part-time Receptionist, Town Hall - £8,000 max

Office of the Chief Executive

- Part-time Committee Clerk/Admin Asst – £10,000

Borough Services Directorate

- Part Time Clerical Officer – £8,600
- General Operative, Full-time – £16,551, incl Attendance Allowance

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

To defer the decision on the request for additional staffing resources until the Council Meeting on Monday 3 April 2006

The Director of Borough Services left the meeting at 8.20pm.

340.4 **Timing of Committee Meetings**

At its last meeting committee gave consideration to changing the time of committee meetings to the afternoon or early evening. The Chief Executive reported information on costs relating to various meeting options as follows:

- (a) Meetings in the period 9.00 am – 5.00 pm – no additional cost, except where held in the Leisure Centre.
- (b) Meetings in the period 5.00 pm – 7.30 pm – minimal additional heating/lighting costs, (assuming that for meetings starting at 6.00 pm onwards, officers would not travel home prior to meeting).
- (c) Meetings from 7.30 pm onwards – additional costs including some overtime working (majority of staff involved in servicing meetings operate under time off in lieu system); additional caretaker costs, additional heat/light costs; travel costs for officers required to return to work.

After discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Alderman Simpson and **AGREED:**

To recommend that the timing of committee meetings remains as at present - Option C.

340.5 **Minute Consultation**

The Chief Executive explained that consultation with members and directors on revised minute format had been completed. The objective of the review was to secure a more business-like approach to council/committee meetings, making more efficient use of time and producing minutes in a more user-friendly format. Revised format to include:

- items for discussion/decision
- table showing progress against targets on projects/programmes
- briefing paper on new legislation/policy etc.
- annual performance report

The Chief Executive advised that minutes would be placed on the Council's website with effect from 3 April 2006, thus making the availability of the minute more accessible to the public. Committee endorsed revised arrangements.

340.6 **Somme Pilgrimage – 90th Anniversary**

The annual Somme Pilgrimage is to take place from 28th June – 2nd July. The cost per person is £470.00 (single room supplement £80). Members considered representation from Council.

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

To recommend that Councillors Patterson, Robinson and Storey, MLA represent Council.

2.0 Contribution – North Antrim Agriculture Association

The Chief Executive explained that an application had been received for a contribution towards this year's annual show on 3rd June. There is to be a varied programme of events and exhibits and the event should attract visitors from across the Province and further afield.

Last year Council contributed £1,200 in respect of the running costs of the show and sponsorship and funding had been provided in the budget.

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

To recommend that Council contribute £1,200 towards sponsorship and running costs of the 2006 show.

340.8 Reports

Schedule of reports, circulated, tabled.

Absenteeism Report 2004/2005, circulated, was discussed. It was noted that in 2004/05 the total days lost due to absence in this Council was 2433 days, an increase of 1321 days on the previous year. This is analysed as follows –

Short-term absences (up to 20 days duration) 406 days
 Medium-term absences (20-59 days duration) 447 days
 Long-term absences (60 and more days duration) 1580 days

There were 15 employees with long term absence during the year. The high long term absence rates resulted in the Council dropping from the best quartile ranking to the worst. With regard to short term absences the Council remained in the best quartile.

340.9 Marketing Sub-Committee

Report of meeting on 16 March 2006, circulated, were adopted, attached as appendix A.

This being all the business, the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Appendix A – Marketing Sub-Committee Report

**Finance & General Purposes Committee
Marketing Sub Committee**

16th March 2006 at 11.00am in the McKinley Room, Riada House.

Present: Alderman Connolly (Chair)
Alderman Campbell
Alderman Cousley
Alderman Simpson
Councillor Patterson

In attendance: Corporate Services Officer
Corporate Project Officer

1. Town Hall Opening

Members commended officers involved in the organization of the event. The Corporate Services Officer advised members that a DVD filmed at the opening event and at the Town Hall Open Night on Tuesday 28th February 2006, would be made available for members to view and used as a marketing tool for the Town Hall.

2. Recognition of service

The Corporate Services Officer informed members that portraits for exhibition and an event to mark former members' 25+ years service in Council is planned. The members involved are Joe Gaston, Robert Halliday, William Logan and Robert McComb.

3. Official opening of Sports Stadium, JDLC

Arrangements for the opening of the Sports Stadium were outlined to members. The Corporate Services Officer advised that in addition to the official civic event a community event(s) was to be organized by the Leisure Centre Manager so that the local community could celebrate the opening of the new facility.

It was agreed that an appropriate date for the opening event would be during the week of the Milk Cup (31st July-4th August 2006). Members agreed that the Corporate Services Officer and Leisure Centre Manager should liaise on date and report back to the committee.

4. Memorial Window

The Corporate Services Officer advised that she would report back to committee on options for improved illumination of the window, following a meeting with architects and builders.

5. Borough Newsletter

Members were advised of articles included in Spring edition of the borough newsletter. Some further suggestions regarding items to be included were made by members. A proof of the newsletter will be brought to the next meeting.

The date of the next meeting is Thursday 30th March at 11.00am.