

**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL****Table of Contents**

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**Ballymoney Borough Council**

Minutes of Consultation Committee Meeting No 63, held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 at 7.00 pm.

**IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor A Cavlan

**PRESENT:**

**Aldermen**  
F Campbell  
H Connolly  
C Cousley, MBE  
B Kennedy

**Councillors**  
J Atkinson  
W Blair  
J Finlay  
R Halliday  
P McGuigan  
T McKeown, Deputy Mayor  
C McLaughlin  
I Stevenson, Mayor

**APOLOGIES:**

**Councillors**  
E Robinson  
M Storey, MLA

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive  
Committee Clerk

**NI Housing Executive (Item 2)**

Presenters:

Clark Bailie – Acting Director of Corporate Services  
Frank O'Connor – Area Manager

Also attending

Mairead Myles Davey – District Manager  
Mona Conway – Area Planner  
Yvonne Montgomery – Information Officer

**Planning Service (Item 6)**

J McCaughan, Planning Officer

**Press** x 2  
**Public** x 3

**63.1 MINUTES - MEETING NO 61 – 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2011**

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

*that the minutes of Meeting No 61 – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.*

**63.2 MINUTES - MEETING NO 62 – 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011**

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

*that the minutes of Meeting No 62 – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2011, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.*

**63.3 NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE DISTRICT HOUSING PLAN AND LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY**

*The Chair welcomed representatives from NI Housing Executive to the meeting to present their District Housing Plan and Local Housing Strategy for 2011/2012.*

Mr Bailie, Acting Director of Corporate Services, advised that despite the difficult economic situation, a record 2,418 social housing units were started last year. The commencement of 302 properties in rural areas was the highest rural outturn in over ten years. However, with reducing levels of funding for new housing in the coming years, the target for the year ahead will only be 1,400 starts and the budget for the succeeding two years may see further reductions.

New figures on homelessness show an unwelcome rise of 5.3%, with 10,443 applicants having been accepted as homeless over the past year. Significantly there has also been an increase in those who have lost their rented accommodation. Acting Director of Corporate Services, Clark Bailie, said, "The record number of new homes started is a considerable achievement, but given the current overall housing situation in Northern Ireland the full benefits may not be immediately evident in terms of a reduced waiting list. In terms of our own houses, we remain limited in the number of improvements that we will carry out, yet the recent severe winter weather highlighted the need to invest in our stock and ensure our houses are as warm and energy efficient as possible. We therefore will continue to robustly make the case for investment across all tenures and look to see how this might be achieved during a period when government has limited resources.

The ongoing economic climate continues to have an impact on the entire public sector and recent budgets signal continuing reductions in public expenditure, especially in capital projects, for the foreseeable future. In addition the depressed property market has a direct effect on the amount of income that we can try to raise from selling our houses and land. However, it is essential that decades of progress are not lost.

2011 marks the 40th anniversary of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, with a proud history of fairness, achievement, delivery and progress. The Housing Executive is working to serve the community and will continue to move forward and meet the difficult housing

challenges which are ahead of us. We will work with our elected representatives and the wider community to ensure that good quality housing for everyone remains a priority.”

**Referring specifically to the Housing Executive’s investment in Ballymoney Borough in 2010/11, Frank O’Connor, North East Area Manager, said:**

“Last year the Housing Executive:

- Spent £1.1million on improving and maintaining Housing Executive homes in Ballymoney Borough;
- Invested £650,000 to assist vulnerable people through the Supporting People programme.
- Provided £400,000 for grant aid to improve housing conditions in the private sector;
- Invested £207,000 on adapting Housing Executive homes in the District; commenced adaptations to 18 tenants’ homes;
- Provided 1,108 private sector tenants with Housing Benefit assistance, an increase of over almost 60% from 2007;
- Worked with 13 community groups throughout Ballymoney Borough.”

Spelling out the Housing Executive’s agenda in the Borough for the coming year when the investment will be £3.12 million, Frank O’Connor said:

**Housing waiting list**

“The housing waiting list for Ballymoney has decreased in the past two years, from 203 applicants in housing stress in December 2008 to 138 in December 2010. We believe that the growth in private renting in the Borough has been instrumental in creating increased choice for people looking for a home of their own.”

**Housing allocations**

“Last year we allocated 100 Housing Executive homes to waiting list applicants compared to 127 the previous year.”

**New social housing**

“In the past year a scheme for 5 units of supported housing was completed at Garryduff Gardens by Triangle Housing Association. The draft Social Housing Development Programme for 2011-2012 includes a scheme for 6 new general needs homes at Fenton Park Cloughmills. This is also a Triangle Housing Association project. A Prospectus has been published to highlight locations where new social housing is needed but where housing associations have been unable to acquire sites.”

**Homelessness**

“In Ballymoney Borough the number of homeless people increased slightly from 96 in March 2010 to 102 in March 2011. Approximately 45% of those accepted as homeless were single person households. The Housing Executive will continue to work hard to provide services to support those faced with homelessness in Ballymoney Borough. Carnary Hometel provides temporary accommodation and support for homeless applicants. We are also reviewing our temporary accommodation and examining the range of help we provide to vulnerable households.”

**Supporting people to live independently**

“This year we will invest around £690,000 to help the most vulnerable people in Ballymoney Borough to continue to live independently. This is especially important for older people and people with disabilities. Existing funding delivers 12 supported housing accommodation based schemes and one floating support scheme in the District.”

**Maintaining Housing Executive homes**

“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’s work programme also includes a scheme for new kitchens in 19 properties at Lime Park and Fortview; heating replacement for 66 Carnany homes and planned external maintenance for 386 homes in the rural areas of Dervock, Clintyfinnan and Rasharkin. This latter contract is already underway.”

**Warm Homes Scheme**

“In Ballymoney Borough in the year to March 2011, 113 homes were insulated, 6 had heating installed, and a further 12 had both insulation and heating installed.”

**Grants improving private homes**

“We have allocated £370,000 for home improvement grants for Ballymoney Borough in the coming year and expect to start 13 Disabled Facilities Grants.”

**Building stronger communities**

“Ballymoney Housing Community Network and 13 local community and residents groups, 10 representing rural communities, are doing valuable work reviewing and improving housing services for local people. Members of staff are working diligently with residents and other agencies to promote and encourage safer, settled and inclusive housing areas within Ballymoney Borough.”

**Improving public housing services**

“Our Ballymoney District Office, under the management of Mairead Myles Davey, continues to provide dedicated housing services in our Ballymoney District. Members of staff here are ably assisted by the Customer Services Unit, Accounts and Housing Benefit Units in the North East Area Office in Ballymena.”

Councillor Finlay, whilst welcoming schemes for new builds at Dervock, Clintyfinnan and Rasharkin, expressed concern at the condition and lack of maintenance of current stock. He paid tribute to the work carried out at the Ballymoney office and expressed disappointment that staff have been lost to Ballymena. He also referred to the planned reduction in housing benefit in the autumn stating his concern that this may increase the demand for more social housing as private rental becomes more prohibitive.

Alderman Connolly requested clarification on use of available land at Corkey. He was advised by Mr O’Connor that a site survey is currently being undertaken and that a rural pilot scheme is being considered due to exception clauses in PPS21 to include development in locations which could not previously be considered. Alderman Connolly welcomed this initiative.

Mr O’Connor responded to queries from members relating to:

- Waiting list and turnover of housing stocks – 100 dwellings per year becoming available to meet the current need.
- Ability to respond quickly to increased demand for social housing due to reduction in housing benefit - this is dictated by finance but is envisaged by frequent review of programmes, increased monitoring of vacant properties and availability of unsold developments.
- Emergency planning – Mr O'Connor stated that a major programme of improvements has taken place. Staff are currently undertaking training and there remains an ongoing training programme as the winter weather approaches.

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, District Office members of staff and I look forward to continuing to work with the Council on issues of mutual interest in the coming year."

The Chair thanked the representatives for their presentation which concluded at 7.30 pm. The representatives left the meeting at that time.

- \* **Councillor McGuigan and Councillor McKeown joined the meeting during the presentation at 7.05 pm and 7.20 pm respectively.**

#### **63.4 NORTHERN AREA PLAN EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC – CONSULTANCY COSTS**

At rate estimates time last financial year, Council agreed to minimise costs by co-operating insofar as possible with Limavady BC in submitting combined responses to the draft Area Plan. On that basis a total cost to each council was estimated at £15,000 and half that figure was included in the Ballymoney rate estimates for 2011/12; this was on the assumption that the Examination in Public would straddle two financial years and therefore full payment of consultancy costs would not be incurred in 2011/12. While the final timetable is not published, Stage 1 hearings begin in September 2011 and are likely to end before Christmas; it is therefore likely that full payment will be incurred in 2011/12.

Council's consultant requires confirmation that Council is content to proceed on this basis and has submitted a confirmed cost of £15,000 per council, plus VAT plus expenses; expenses are estimated as not exceeding £1500. Preparatory work needs to start immediately and further submissions to stage 1 of the PE must be lodged by 1 August 2011.

Council is asked to confirm acceptance of these terms and to advance the date of the August Council meeting from August 1<sup>st</sup> to the last Monday in July (July 25<sup>th</sup>), so that Council ratification can be given to the submission by the deadline set by the Planning Appeals Commission.

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

***that Council confirm acceptance of the terms outlined and advance the date of the August Council meeting from August 1<sup>st</sup> to the last Monday in July (July 25<sup>th</sup>) to enable ratification of the submission by the deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> August.***

### **63.5 PLANNING CONSULTATIONS**

Draft responses to the undernoted two planning consultation documents, prepared by NILGA were circulated. Committee is invited to consider endorsing the NILGA response.

- a. PPS23 "Enabling Development"
- b. PPS24 "Economic Considerations"

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

***that Council note the retrospective responses to the Planning Consultations.***

\* **Planning Officer joined the meeting at 7.40 pm.**

### **63.6 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

As a result of staff changes in the local office Julie McMath has replaced Pat McGrogan as Senior Planning Officer responsible for the Ballymoney Borough Council area.

#### **6.1 New Applications**

Items 1 – 10 were considered and the opinion of the Planning Service accepted except where stated otherwise.

Full details of applications can be viewed at:

[http://apps.planningni.gov.uk/council\\_shcedules/balymoney.aspx](http://apps.planningni.gov.uk/council_shcedules/balymoney.aspx)

#### **Item No 2 – D/2010/0084/F - Approval**

Car-port to side of existing dwelling with en-suite bathroom above at 10 Downview Crescent, Ballymoney for Mr Gordon McCaughey.

**Objection Letters (2)**            Loss of light, overdevelopment of property.

#### **Item No 3 – D/2010/0115/F – Refusal**

Erection of 225kW wind turbine with a tower height of 31m approx 70m West of 31 Tamlaght Road, Rasharkin.

**Objection Letters (2)**            Visual impact, noise impact and impact on wildlife.

It was **AGREED:**                    That an office meeting be held (Alderman Kennedy)

#### **Item No 4 – D/2010/0215/F – Refusal**

Change of use from factory to mixed use commercial/retail/light industry/storage units including alterations to existing premises at part of former Tyco factory (Southern part), Garryduff Road, Ballymoney for Lynas Food Service.

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

**Item No 5 – D/2011/0004/F – Approval**

Retrospective application for sub-division of existing unit and construction of additional new access at Colourcote Factory, Ballymoney for Mr James Murray.

Alderman Kennedy thanked the Department for their decision to approve the application. He referred to a previously refused application for a similar proposal at Model Road and highlighted inconsistencies in Planning Service decisions. Councillor Cavlan and Councillor Stevenson concurred with Alderman Kennedy's remarks.

**Item No 6 – D/2011/0041/O – Approval**

Proposed site for a 2 storey dwelling and garage adjacent to 148 Culcrum Road, Ballymena for Mr R Wilson.

**Objection Letters (1)** Impact on local character.

**Item No 7 – D/2011/0044/O – Refusal**

Proposed farm dwelling 100m SW of 29 Fivey Road, Armoy for Mr G Black

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Alderman Connolly).

**Item No 8 – D/2011/0056/O – Refusal**

Site of dwelling and garage 60m SW of 30 Drumlee Road, Ballymoney for Mr L Dunlop.

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

**Item No 9 – D/2011/0072/O – Refusal**

Site for dwelling and garage 120m NW of 72 Ballybogey Road, Ballymoney for Mr J Hanna.

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

**Item No 10 – D/2011/0076/F – Refusal**

Dwelling, garage and implement and animal feed store at lands adjacent to 76 Carrowreagh Road, Ballymoney for Mr & Mrs Hogg.

It was **AGREED:** That an office meeting be held (Alderman Kennedy).

**6.2 Deferred Applications**

Items 1 – 4 were considered and the opinion of the Planning Service accepted except where stated otherwise.

**D1 – D/2008/0097 – Approval**

**Objection Letters (62)** Flooding, Traffic impact, sewerage, density, potential overlooking.

The Planning Officer advised that a traffic impact assessment was carried out and no issues were raised by Roads Services. Ground levels have been raised resulting in no development in a flood plain and offering greater protection to existing dwellings at the Meadows. A flood survey has been carried out by



specialist consultants and Rivers Agency confirms no reason to disagree with their assessment.

Alderman Kennedy welcomed the decision to approve the application and at the request of Councillor Stevenson the Planning Officer confirmed that the objections raised have been addressed following exhaustive and thorough consultation with all agencies who are now satisfied. Alderman Cousley highlighted the number of objectors who are strongly opposed to the application on the basis of increased traffic in the area. The Planning Officer reiterated the findings of the traffic impact assessment stating that Roads Service has not raised any issues relating to this. Councillor Finlay, whilst sympathizing with the objectors, agreed that in satisfying the agencies concerned, the application should be progressed, concurring with Alderman Campbell that Council should now accept the decision of the Planning Appeals Commission to approve this application.

#### **D2 – D/2008/0399/F – Approval**

The Planning Officer advised that a traffic assessment was not required and there has been a change of opinion to approve the application. Alderman Campbell and Alderman Kennedy welcomed this decision.

#### **D3 – D2009/0227/F – Approval**

Alderman Connolly, whilst stating his disappointment that the proposal was not established as a replacement dwelling, thanked the Department for their decision to approve the application.

#### **D/2010/0094/F – Approval**

**Objection letters (2)**                      Density and possible overlooking.

Revised plans have been received indicating increase in private amenity and separation from other residents enabling the application to be approved.

**Office Meetings:**                      **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July, 9.30 am, Lanyon Room, Riada House.**

At the request of Councillor McGuigan, the Planning Officer clarified timescales and procedures in issuing decisions. He referred to current administrative staffing shortages resulting in a delay in the usual two week timeframe for this process.

\*                      **The Planning Office left the meeting at 8.05 pm.**

\*                      **The meeting closed at 8.07 pm.**