

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Table of Contents**

400.1	Minutes of Meeting No 399 – 28 th November 2011	<i>Approved</i>
CENTRAL SERVICES		
400.2	Land & Property Services	<i>Presentation received</i>
400.3	General Grant – De-rating Grant 2011/12	<i>Information</i>
400.4	Employment Agency Services	<i>Agree to jointly tender</i>
400.5	Draft Guidance on Councillors Allowances – Consultation Document	<i>Comments regarding Special Responsibility Allowance</i>
CORPORATE SERVICES		
400.6	Ice Programme	<i>Information</i>
400.7	Staff Matters	<i>Employee No 5148 granted honorarium of £1,667.36</i>
400.8	Robert Dunlop Memorial Garden Sculpture Agreement	<i>Information</i>
400.9	Copyright Agreement	<i>Information</i>
400.10	Causeway Hospital Artscare (394.9)	<i>Information</i>
400.11	Electoral Registration	<i>Write to NIO</i>
400.12	World Autism Awareness Day – 2 nd April	<i>Support</i>
400.13	NILGA Annual Conference and Exhibition	<i>Information</i>

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Corporate & Central Services Committee Meeting No 400 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, on Wednesday 21st December 2011 at 10.00am.

IN THE CHAIR: C Cousely, MBE

PRESENT: **Aldermen**
F Campbell
H Connolly

Councillors
A Cavlan
J Finlay
R McAfee
T McKeown
C McLaughlin
I Stevenson

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive [Items 1,2, 6-13]
Director of Central & Leisure Services [Items 1-5]
John Wilkinson, Chief Executive, Land & Property Services [Item 2]
Sharon Magee, Senior Valuer, Land & Property Services [Item 2]
Mervyn Adair, Head Rates Collection, Land & Property Services [Item 2]
Head of Corporate and Development Services [Items 6-13]
Committee Clerk

APOLOGIES: Councillors
J Finlay
P McGuigan
E Robinson
M Storey

400.1 MINUTES MEETING NO 399 – 28TH November 2011

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

AGREED:

to recommend that the minutes of meeting no 399 – 28th November 2011, as circulated, be approved.

CENTRAL SERVICES

400.2 LAND & PROPERTY SERVICES (LPS)

Chair welcomed the Chief Executive of Land & Property Services and two officials to the meeting, attending at the request of the Council.

Chief Executive, Land and Property Services thanked members for giving him the opportunity to present to Council. He provided information on the rates incomes for both domestic and commercial properties, the level of debt and the recovery process, the rating of empty houses and the data matching exercises with other agencies.

- * **Councillor McKeown arrived at the meeting at 10.09 during consideration of the above item.**

Alderman Campbell queried if there was a rate tiered system in N Ireland. Chief Executive of LPS, explained that rates for non-domestic properties are based on their rental value, and that the rental values would be different depending on the location in Northern Ireland, e.g Rates per square metre would be much higher in Belfast than in Ballymoney.

Councillor Stevenson questioned LPS on the success of their rates collection process within the Ballymoney Borough. Chief Executive of LPS agreed to arrange for other officials to provide further information.

- * **Councillor McKeown left the meeting at 11.13am and returned at 11.21am.**
- * **Alderman Campbell left the meeting at 11.21am and returned at 11.25am**
- * **Head of Corporate and Development Services arrived at the meeting at 11.26am.**

The Chair thanked the representatives very much stating that he was now better informed regarding rates incomes.

- * **Land & Property Services Representatives left the meeting at 11.29am.**
- * **Chief Executive left the meeting at 11.29am.**
- * **Councillor McLaughlin left the meeting at 11.29am.**
- * **Councillor Cavlan left the meeting at 11.39am**

400.3 GENERAL GRANT – DE –RATING GRANT 2011/12

The Director advised that the Local Government Policy Division of the Department of the Environment has recalculated the de-rating grant for 2011/12.

This has produced a positive outcome for Ballymoney with the de-rating grant now amounting to £277,744.00, an increase of £4,211.00.

This will be paid with the remaining installments this financial year.

400.4 EMPLOYMENT AGENCY SERVICES

The Director advised that the four Councils in the Causeway Cluster, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle are jointly tendering for the Provision of Employment Agency Services.

While Coleraine Borough Council is the lead Council for the tendering process each Council will have its own contract with the successful tenderer. The tender will be advertised shortly and it is planned to have a new contract in place around the beginning of the new financial year.

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

to recommend that Council jointly tender for the Provision of Employment Agency Services with the four Councils in the Causeway Cluster, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Moyle.

400.5 DRAFT GUIDANCE ON COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCES – CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

This matter was deferred to the December committee meeting and Council has granted authority to this committee to respond to the Consultation Document by 31st December 2011.

*** Councillor Cavlan returned to the meeting at 11.50am during consideration of the above matter.**

Alderman Campbell referred to the proposed conditions relating to the Special Responsibility Allowance, stating that his Party felt that the current system in Council worked well and would like it left as it is. As DUP is the majority Party, other parties may be disadvantaged within the revised proposals.

Councillor McKeown concurred with Alderman Campbell's comments.

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

to recommend that Council comments as follows on the Draft Guidance on Councillors' Allowances – that Council does not agree with the proposed condition that "no more than 50% of councillors (excluding the council chairperson and vice-

chairperson) should receive Special Responsibility Allowance, (paragraph 6.9 as this may disadvantage minority political parties in a small council like Ballymoney.

No comments were made on the remainder of the consultation document.

- * Director of Central and Leisure Services left the meeting at 12.07pm
- * Chief Executive re-joined the meeting at 12.09pm
- * Head of Corporate and Development Services arrived at the meeting at 12.09pm.
- * Councillor McKeown left the meeting at 12.09pm.

CORPORATE SERVICES

400.6 ICE PROGRAMME

Chief Executive reported that an overview and update on the ICE programme had been circulated, under separate cover, to members.

400.7 STAFF MATTERS - HONORARIUM

The Chief Executive reported during sickness absence of employee 05070 a colleague, employee 05148 had carried out a substantial amount of the duties and responsibilities of a higher graded post. In recognition of undertaking the additional duties and responsibilities it is recommended that an honorarium of £1667.36 be paid to employee 05148, based on an evaluation of the additional duties and responsibilities undertaken during the period of 21 weeks.

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

to recommend that Employee No 5148 be granted an honorarium of £1,667.36 in recognition of undertaking some of the duties and responsibilities of the post of Human Resources Assistant during the absence of the postholder on sick leave.

400.8 ROBERT DUNLOP MEMORIAL GARDEN SCULPTURE AGREEMENT

The agreement between The Sculpture Fund and Council has been finalised by our Solicitor and prepared for completion.

Alderman Campbell paid tribute to Head of Corporate and Development Services who had put a lot of work into delivery of this project. The Officer recorded the work and commitment of the Sculpture Fund and which had been vital in the successful delivery of the project.

400.9 COPYRIGHT AGREEMENT

Council granted permission to Parnell Crest, Ontario, Canada to reprint a Stevenson & Co. advertisement which appeared in the Urban Council 1937 Ballymoney Official Guide, within a book that is being written about *Ballymoney Ancestors*.

Confirmation has been received from the applicant that Council's permission will be acknowledged in the publication and will also will provide a copy of the publication for Ballymoney Museum. She also paid tribute to Council's ancestry website and the tourism it generates.

400.10 CAUSEWAY HOSPITAL ARTSCARE (394.9)

In April 2011 Council agreed to grant £500 to the Causeway Hospital Artscare, towards commissioning a piece of art which would represent the concept of 'COMBIHNE'; on the tenth anniversary of the hospital opening.

The sculpture was unveiled on 13th December 2011 at Causeway Hospital and the Mayor was invited to attend.

The Mayor spoke in complimentary terms about the artwork displayed in the hospital and said a plaque would acknowledge Council's contribution.

400.11 ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

In response to Council's representations further correspondence has been received from the Chief Electoral Officer regarding legislation to the requirement for citizens to register to vote and on whom it falls to enforce the law.

The Chief Electoral Officer has a duty to take all necessary steps for the purpose of complying with his duty to maintain the register of electors (*The*

Representation of the People Act 1983 Section 9A). He is also obliged to meet the following statutory registration objectives:

“to secure, so far as reasonably practicable –

- a) That every person who is entitled to be registered in a register is registered in it,
- b) That no person who is not entitled to be registered in a register is registered in it, and
- c) That none of the required information relating to any person registered in a register is false.”

(The Representation of the People Act 1983 1ZB)

Regulation 24 of the Representation of the People (NI) Reg. 2008 empowers the Chief Electoral Officer to require any person to give such information or documentation as is required for the purposes of his duties in maintaining the registers of electors. In practice, this task is delegated to Area Electoral Officers. The Chief Electoral Officer or his staff may also specify the form in which any information required is to be provided.

If any person fails to comply with any such requirement, they shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (£1,000).

The responsibility for prosecuting such cases falls to the Chief Electoral Officer and if he decides to prosecute they are passed to the Public Prosecution Service. It is important to note that citizens are not required by law to register. However, if they are contacted by the Chief Electoral Officer or his staff and required to provide information for the purpose of maintaining the register of electors, it is an offence to refuse to do so.

Councillor Stevenson suggested the Electoral Office should be doing more to get people onto the Electoral Register and Council should write to NI Office seeking further action.

Members were concerned that democracy was being undermined and that even in Northern Ireland where traditionally there were higher levels of turnout figures are declining.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Councillor Cavlan and

AGREED:

to recommend that Council write to NI Office asking them to review the present system for voting and registration with a view to encouraging higher level of registration and better turnout at elections.

400.12 WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY – 2ND APRIL

Council is invited to support recognition and compliance with the UN designation of the annual World Autism Awareness Day on 2nd April, by joining in the global “light it up blue for Autism” campaign which encourages government authorities to illuminate key public buildings on April 2nd.

Council has lent its support for the successful campaign resulting in the Autism Act (NI) 2011 (which requires the establishment of a government led Autism Awareness Campaign).

Council is also asked to consider exploring the securing of specialist ASD training from Autism NI’s training department to assist Council facilities with compliance (regarding access issues) under the Autism Act (NI) 2011, which amended disability discrimination legislation to include Autism. This has been included on the draft corporate training programme.

It was noted that it would not be technically feasible to participate in the ‘light it up blue’ day without significant cost.

Members were content to explore specialist ASD training from Autism NI’s training department to assist Council facilities with compliance (regarding access issues) under the Autism Act (NI) 2011,

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

to recommend that Council lend its support to the initiative to recognize recognition the annual World Autism Awareness Day on 2nd April, and participate in a training initiative.

400.13 NILGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

The 2012 Annual Conference and Exhibition will be held on 23rd February in Templepatrick. The theme is “2012 –Positively Local”. This is included on the conference schedule and applications should be made to the Office of the Chief Executive. Fee £145.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 12.30pm.