

**Ballymoney Borough Council  
Consultation Committee Meeting No 86 – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of Consultation Committee Meeting No 86 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 6.30 pm.

**IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor J Finlay

**PRESENT:** **Aldermen**  
F Campbell  
H Connolly  
B Kennedy

**Councillors**  
J Atkinson  
A Cavlan  
R Halliday  
P McGuigan  
T McKeown  
C McLaughlin  
E Robinson, MBE, Mayor  
M Storey, MLA

**APOLOGIES:** **Alderman**  
C Cousley, MBE, Deputy Mayor  
**Councillor**  
W Blair

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive  
Business Support Officer

**Northern Ireland Housing Executive (Item 3)**

Mr F O'Connor – Regional Manager  
Mr M Alexander – Area Manager for Causeway Area  
Mrs M Myles-Davy – District Representative  
Mr C Baillie - Director of Finance  
Mr F Coffey - Assistant Regional Planner.

**DoE Planning Service (Item 6)**

Mrs K Dickson  
Press

**86.1 CONGRATULATIONS**

The Chair extended congratulations to Councillor Robinson who has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to Local Government and the community in Northern Ireland.

## 86.2 CONDOLENCES

The Chair expressed condolences to the family of Shaun Esler and Liz Henry both of whom were involved for many years in charity work.

## 86.3 PRESENTATION - NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE DISTRICT HOUSING PLAN AND LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2013/14

The purpose of the plan is to inform and consult Council on the various programmes and initiatives the Housing Executive is developing to meet local housing needs. The report was circulated to members by e-mail and a copy of the Executive Summary was circulated at the meeting.

At the outset of the annual round of consultations with local councils, Housing Executive Regional Manager, Frank O'Connor outlined current challenges. He said:

"With so much of the focus this year being on proposed changes as to how social housing is to be delivered in the future it is easy to forget that the day to day provision of housing services continued as usual.

- 352,957 individuals visited our local offices.
- 472,990 repair requests were dealt with.
- 41,356 applicants on our waiting list.
- £634 million administered through Housing benefit.

"It was encouraging to note that during the year 1,379 much needed new social homes were started. There were also 5,449 kitchen replacements, 4,054 heating installations and external maintenance work to another 8,429 of our own stock. The Minister had made the provision of double glazing a priority and in the last financial year we made significant progress by upgrading over 8,856 homes.

"The Supporting People budget of over £66 million provided funding to over 800 housing support schemes which in turn gave essential support to some 24,000 of the most vulnerable people in Northern Ireland.

"During the year the number of households accepted as homeless rose to 9,878. The new homelessness strategy is now operational and it has an overarching aim to eliminate long term homelessness and rough sleeping by 2020.

"In January the Minister for Social Development outlined proposals for the reform of social housing, to include the restructure of the Housing Executive. Key points in the proposals were;

- DSD responsibility for overall strategy, regulation and inspection;

- The creation of a Northern Ireland regional housing body to deliver housing services;
- The transfer of the landlord function from the public sector to allow access to private funding;
- The establishment of an independent Social Housing Rent Panel.

“There is broad support for the principle of separating landlord and regional housing services and this process of change will be subject to extensive consultation. The Housing Executive therefore needs to prepare for change by putting in place new structures which will facilitate the new arrangements when they are agreed.

“Already three new regions have been formed, North, South and Belfast. These regions have been split into areas which in turn maintain active links to existing council areas. These local offices have always been central to the Housing Executive’s approach to providing a quality customer service.

“The welfare reform programme will directly affect many people. With around 70% of our tenants on benefits, there clearly will be implications which will require careful monitoring. With approximately 27,000 Housing Executive properties under occupied, many tenants are concerned about the future and the delivery of suitable housing. The coming changes are not yet clear and not all details of how they will be implemented are known. However, the impact will be significant for large numbers of low-income individuals in Northern Ireland and indeed for the Housing Executive as it adapts to the new regulations.

“The Housing Executive is looking at a range of issues including stock management, changes to allocations, provision of smaller units of new build, and the provision of advice and support. We will be keeping these matters under close scrutiny during the coming year.”

Referring to the Housing Executive’s investment in Ballymoney Borough in 2012/13, Causeway Area Manager, Mark Alexander said:

“Last year the Housing Executive:

- Spent over £1.85 million on improving and maintaining Housing Executive homes in Ballymoney;
- Invested £0.65 million to assist vulnerable people through the Supporting People programme.
- Provided £0.3 million for grant aid to improve housing conditions in the private sector;
- Invested £157k on adapting Housing Executive homes in this area having commenced adaptations to 23 tenants’ homes;
- Provided 1,166 private sector tenants with Housing Benefit assistance, an increase of 40% from 2009;

- Worked with community groups and other sectors to encourage safer, settled and inclusive communities.

Setting out the Housing Executive's agenda in Ballymoney for the 2013/14 year when the investment will be £2.5million, Mark Alexander said:

### **Housing waiting list**

"The housing waiting list for Ballymoney Borough has increased from 400 in March 2012 to 488 households in December 2012. Single applicants continue to dominate the waiting list.

### **Housing allocations**

"During 2012/2013 we allocated 94 homes to waiting list applicants.

### **New social housing**

"There are six new homes under construction at Fenton Park, Cloughmills and five supported housing units at Market Street, Ballymoney.

### **Homelessness**

"In the past year the number of people accepted as homeless increased from 103 to 117. The Housing Executive will continue to work hard to provide services to support those faced with homelessness. The new Homelessness Strategy 2012-2017 will aim to eliminate long term homelessness and rough sleeping across Northern Ireland by 2020.

### **Supporting people to live independently**

"This year the Housing Executive will invest £0.75m 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 14 supported housing accommodation based schemes and one floating support scheme.

### **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 includes new heating systems for 67 homes, double glazing for 104 homes, kitchen replacement for 74 homes, smoke alarm replacements in 359 homes and frost stats in 200 homes.

### **Warm Homes Scheme**

“In Ballymoney Borough last year 161 private sector homes were insulated, 4 had heating installed, one received internal dry lining insulation and a further 7 had both insulation and heating installed through the Warm Homes Scheme.

### **Grants for private homes**

“We have also allocated £0.25m for private sector grant work for this area.

### **Building stronger communities**

“The Housing Community Network, local community and residents groups 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. The BRIC Programme and Shared Communities Programme will remain important contributors for this range of work.

### **Improving public housing services**

“Our local staff continue to provide a dedicated housing service to the Ballymoney Borough Council area. District Office staff work alongside the Customer Services Unit, Accounts and Housing Benefit Units within the new area and regional structures.”

Mark Alexander concluded:

“I would like to extend my thanks to the councillors and officers of Ballymoney Borough Council for their support over the past year. Housing Executive staff in the Ballymoney office, the Causeway Area office and the North Regional office look forward to continuing to work with the council on issues of mutual interest in the coming year.”

The representatives responded to questions from members relating to:

- Timescale for double glazing programme – to follow completion of central heating scheme.
- Low percentage in supply of new kitchens – kitchens fitted over 20 year cycle; figure of 74 new kitchens is on target and represents 5% of stock.
- Pilot scheme for solar panels – some fitted already in Ballymoney and proving successful
- £2.5M specifically for Ballymoney but includes no new builds
- Bedroom tax
- Allocation of social housing in Cloughmills – available to all on housing waiting list.

- Review of tenant's selection scheme to provide local housing for local people – Minister supports review and consultants have been appointed to carry out research and make recommendations.
- Scheme to carry out repairs to properties not currently up to standard due to rejection of work by previous tenants.
- Criteria for dealing with anti-social behaviour by use of implementation of policy and working with other agencies.

Councillor Atkinson highlighted his concerns at the deterioration of windows in properties at Royal Terrace, Balnamore. He was advised that this will be included in the next double glazing scheme scheduled to commence in December this year. Alderman Kennedy concurred with Councillor Atkinson's comments and welcomed the commencement of the scheme.

The representatives reassured members that all requests for urgent repairs and maintenance will be considered as a matter of priority.

Councillor Storey thanked the Executive for their work in the borough. Alderman Kennedy expressed thanks to the representatives for the boiler scheme which has been welcomed and has proved to be of benefit.

**The presentation concluded at 7.13 pm. Representatives from the Housing Executive left the meeting at this time.**

- \* **Alderman Campbell, Councillor Cavlan and Councillor Storey joined the meeting during the presentation at 6.43 pm.**
- \* **The Planning Officer joined the meeting at 7.15 pm.**

#### **86.4 MICHAEL DUNLOP**

Referring to Michael's recent success in the Isle of Man TT, Alderman Kennedy stated that he has brought great credit and distinction to himself and Ballymoney in winning four out of his five races and congratulated him on his outstanding achievement.

Councillor McKeown, Alderman Campbell and Councillor Robinson concurred with Alderman Kennedy's remarks.

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

***that a Civic reception be held for Michael in the Town Hall on a date to be agreed.***

**86.5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Alderman Kennedy declared an interest in 86.4 (D4) as an applicant.

\* **Councillor McKeown joined the meeting at 6.35 pm.**

\* **The Planning Officer joined the meeting at 7.15 pm.**

**86.6 PLANNING APPLICATIONS****6.1 New Applications**

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

The content of the objections were summarised to members and may be viewed on public access at:

[http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/PublicAccess/zd/tdc\\_home.aspx](http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/PublicAccess/zd/tdc_home.aspx)

<b>ITEM NO 4</b>	<b>APPLICATION NO D/2012/0252/F – APPROVAL</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Aircore Gracehill Road Limited, Belfast
<b>AGENT</b>	Breen Architects & Consultants, Belfast
<b>LOCATION</b>	749m NW of 37 Gracehill Road, Armoy
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Proposed erection of wind turbine with 30m hub height a 30m rotor diameter – max output not exceeding 250kw
<b>OBJECTIONS (1)</b>	Position of turbine. Environmental Health has assessed in terms of Noise and there are no issues.

<b>ITEM NO 6</b>	<b>APPLICATION NO D/2013/0033/O – REFUSAL</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr J Spears C/o Agent
<b>AGENT</b>	2020 Architects, Ballymoney
<b>LOCATION</b>	125m East of 100A Finvoy Road, Ballymoney
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Proposed detached dwelling and garage
<b>It was AGREED:</b>	that an office meeting be held (Councillor Finlay)

\* **Alderman Kennedy left the meeting at 7.18 pm.**

**6.2 Deferred Applications**

Items were considered and the opinion of the Planning Services accepted except where stated otherwise.

<b>D1</b>	<b>APPLICATION NO D/2006/0066/F – APPROVAL</b>
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**D2 APPLICATION NO D/2012/0107/F – APPROVAL**

**D3 APPLICATION NO D/2012/0210/O – REFUSAL**

It was **AGREED:**

*that Council write to MLA, MP and Divisional Manager requesting an office meeting.*

The Planning Officer advised that the application will be held for two weeks to await a request for the meeting.

**D4 APPLICATION NO D/2012/0268/F – APPROVAL**

### **6.3 Office Meetings**

Office meetings will take place on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013 in the Lanyon Room, Riada House.

- \* **The Planning Officer left the meeting at 7.20 pm.**
- \* **Alderman Kennedy re-joined the meeting at 7.20 pm.**

### **86.7 MINUTES – CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MEETING NO 85 – 20<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2013**

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

*that the minutes of Consultation Committee Meeting No 85 – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.*

### **86.8 REVIEW OF DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREAS – PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

This item was deferred from the May meeting of Corporate & Central Services Committee. The closing date for comments is: **27<sup>th</sup> June.**

The proposals for the new Causeway Coast & Glens District are that the forty wards will be grouped into seven District Electoral Areas (DEAs). Two DEAs will have 7 wards, one 6 wards and four 5 wards.

Most of Ballymoney borough will be in a new DEA named “Ballymoney” (one of the two DEAs with seven wards) while Dervock will be in “Causeway” DEA and Loughguile and Stranocum will be in “The Glens” DEA. Of the 40 wards in

Causeway Coast & Glens District, 9 comprise what is currently Ballymoney, 6 Moyle, 10 Limavady and 16 Coleraine.

The average number of electors in a ward in the new Council is 2399 and the number in each DEA is within +6% and -5.9% of that figure. The seven new DEAs have names reflecting the main towns (Ballymoney, Coleraine and Limavady), well established areas (Causeway & The Glens) or geographic features (Benbradagh & Bann).

The current consultation is purely on the way the wards are grouped into DEAs and the naming of the DEAs. The ward and council boundaries and names are already enshrined in legislation (The Local Government (Boundaries) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012) and are not subject to discussion. **The eight week period for consultation ends at 2 pm on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2013.** If an objection from an existing district council or from 100 electors in any new district is received a public enquiry into the grouping of wards in a local government district will be held.

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

*that all parties make their own submissions to the proposals.*

#### **86.9 DISABILITY ACTION PLAN (DAP) & FIVE YEAR REVIEW OF DISABILITY ACTION PLANS**

The Department for Regional Development's Disability Action Plan (DAP), which took effect from April 2013, has been finalised and published on the Department's website. A 5 Year Review of Disability Action Plans was also carried out and has been finalised. Both documents are available from the DRD website [http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/doc-details.htm?docid=8797](http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/doc-details.htm?docid=8797) or by contacting the Office of the Chief Executive.

#### **86.10 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED UPDATES TO NORTHERN IRELAND CREDIT UNIONS AND INDUSTRIAL & PROVIDENT SOCIETIES LEGISLATION**

Following significant regulatory reform of the credit union sector in recent years, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) proposes to update Northern Ireland credit unions legislation. The department will use this opportunity to also update NI Industrial & Provident Societies legislation. DETI has today published a consultation document setting out proposed legislative updates, to be included in a Credit Unions and Industrial & Provident Societies Bill. The consultation document is available on the DETI website at [www.detini.gov.uk](http://www.detini.gov.uk) or by contacting the Office of the Chief Executive.

The closing date for comments is **6 September 2013.**

**86.11 CONSULTATION ON MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILDRENS HOMES**

The Minimum Standards for Children's Homes have been launched for public consultation by the Health Minister, Edwin Poots.

The draft standards set out the requirements for registration and inspection of providers by RQIA to ensure consistency of approach across Northern Ireland and ensure that all children and young people, parents and providers have a clear understanding of the minimum standard of care they can expect to receive and provide. The draft standards and consultation questionnaire can be accessed at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/consultations/current\\_consultations.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/consultations/current_consultations.htm)

The closing date for comments is **6<sup>th</sup> September**.

**86.12 NILGA – NORTHERN IRELAND CLIMATE CHANGE BILL**

A copy of NILGA response to the DoE pre-consultation seeking views on the need for a Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill was circulated for members' information.

**The meeting closed at 7.21 pm.**