

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Table of Contents**

414.1	Condolence	<i>Received.</i>
414.2	Declarations of Interest	<i>Nil.</i>
414.3	Minutes of Meeting No 413 – 25 th March 2013	<i>Approved.</i>

CORPORATE SERVICES

414.4	Staff Matters Industrial Tribunal Claim	<i>Withdrawn.</i>
414.5	Local Government Reform	
	5.1 ICE Workstreams	<i>Information.</i>
	5.2 Draft Note of Regional Transition Committee Meeting	<i>Information.</i>
	5.3 RPA Staff Severance Scheme For Local Government	<i>Adopt.</i>

Items 414.6 - 414.8 FOR INFORMATION

414.6	Review of District Electoral Areas	<i>Information.</i>
414.7	Local Government Training Group – Budget 2013/14	<i>Information.</i>
414.8	Local Government Staff Commission – Financial Scheme 2013/14	<i>Information.</i>

CENTRAL SERVICES

414.9	Annual Accounts 2012/13	<i>Hold Special CRCS Meeting. Delegate authority to sign off 2012/13 Annual Accounts at June committee meeting.</i>
414.10	Severance Arrangements for Councillors	<i>Deferred.</i>
414.11	Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Proposed New Scheme Design	<i>Deferred.</i>

414.12	Network NI	<i>Sign up, annual service charge £9,996.</i>
414.13	Insurance Renewals 2013/2014	<i>Information.</i>
414.14	Accounts For Payment	<i>Revenue £409,873.72 Capital £102,418.00</i>
414.15	Taxation of Mileage Claims by Councillors	<i>Information.</i>
414.16	Council Reserves at 31 st March 2013	<i>Information.</i>

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Corporate & Central Services Committee Meeting No 414 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, on Monday 22nd April 2013 at 7.02pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor I Stevenson

PRESENT: **Aldermen**
F Campbell
C Cousley, MBE
B Kennedy

Councillors
J Atkinson
W Blair
R Halliday

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive [Item 1-8]
Director of Central and Leisure Services [Item 9-16]
Head of Corporate and Development Services [Item 1-8]
Committee Clerk

APOLOGIES: **Councillors**
J Finlay
R McAfee
E Robinson
M Storey

414.1 CONDOLENCES

Chair expressed his condolences, on behalf of Committee, to Mayor, Councillor Evelyne Robinson on the sad passing of her husband, Desmond, and to the family circle.

Chair also wished Councillor Roma McAfee a speedy recovery after learning of her short stay in hospital.

414.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

414.3 MINUTES OF MEETING NO 413 – 25TH MARCH 2013

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

to recommend that the Minutes of Meeting No 413 – 25th March 2013, as circulated, be approved.

Matters Arising**3.1 Autism NI Light It Up Blue Campaign**

Alderman Campbell and Councillor Atkinson apologised for being unable to attend the event. Councillor Stevenson also apologised for being unable to make the event, he had heard it was a well-constructed campaign.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Chief Executive advised he had an item of information which would be dealt with prior to Corporate Business.

414.4 STAFF MATTERS**Industrial Tribunal Claim (411.9.3)**

Committee had been advised at its January Committee Meeting of Notice that had been received from The Industrial Tribunal, under The Industrial Tribunals (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (NI) 2005 (as amended) of a Case (Ref No: 2489/12IT), lodged on 21st December 2012, relating to an equal pay claim.

Chief Executive further advised the case has now been dismissed following its withdrawal.

414.5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM**5.1 ICE Workstreams**

Update report, 20/3/2013, on ICE Workstreams, as follows, was circulated:

- Customer facing services
- Human Resources
- Support Services
- Procurement
- Information Technology

5.2 Draft Note of Regional Transition Committee Meeting

A draft note of the meeting held on 27th March 2013 was circulated.

5.3 RPA Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government

The Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF) has issued a circular LGRJF/05 – April 2013, (the RPA Scheme) agreed between employers and trade union side of the LGRJF and this is recommended for adoption by councils. A copy is available from the Office of the Chief Executive on request.

The scheme is based on the provisions of the NI Executive's 5th Guiding Principle as recommended by the Public Service Commission "Voluntary Severance Arrangements" and represents the operationalisation of this Principle for the reform of the local government strand of RPA implementation. The scheme will apply to staff under the scope of the Joint Forum, ie.

- 26 district councils (including environmental health and building control joint committees)
- Arc21 and SWaMP 2008 and the North West Region Waste Management Group
- Any staff employed by (statutory) Transition Committees and Shadow Councils
- Staff of the 11 new councils
- NI Housing Executive
- Local Government Staff Commission for NI
- Other appropriate bodies as the Joint Forum may determine

The RPA scheme will apply specifically in cases of both voluntary and compulsory redundancy as avoidance of compulsory redundancy is a necessary requirement to ensure the smooth transfer of staff to new organisations) linked exclusively to the local government strand of the RPA programme including Improvement Collaboration and Efficiency (ICE) implementation and will only apply to staff who are surplus under the new structures and who cannot be offered suitable alternative employment.

No staff will be released before 1 April 2015 (vesting day). The provisions within the RPA scheme are considered and agreed by the Strategic Leadership Board in April 2010. In the event that interpretation matters arising or clarification is necessary contact should in the first instance be made with the Independent Secretariat.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the RPA Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government, circular LGRJF/05 – April 2013, be adopted.

In response to a query from Alderman Campbell, Chief Executive explained the Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE), which applies at point of transfer and the voluntary and compulsory redundancy process.

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

to recommend that the RPA Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government, circular LGRJF/05 – April 2013, be adopted.

414.6 REVIEW OF DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREAS

The District Electoral Areas Commissioner will shortly publish his provisional recommendations for the grouping together of wards into district electoral areas (DEAs) in respect of each of the eleven new Local Government districts, commencing an eight week public consultation period. Each DEA must comprise 5/6/7 wards. The Commissioner is also required to recommend names for each DEA. The Commissioner had now confirmed he would publish his provisional recommendations on 2nd May.

Copies of the provisional recommendations report will be available for public inspection in public libraries and district council offices. Depending on the nature of any objections public inquiries may be held in September/October. The Commissioner will report to the Secretary of State by end of 2013, or the end of January 2014 at the latest.

A discussion ensued on the Ministers recent announcement on transferring of functions to local government. Chief Executive advised it was too early to brief councillors and interested agencies, by Autumn he may be in a better informed position to provide details.

414.7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING GROUP – BUDGET 2013/14

A budget of £300,000 for the financial year 2013/14 has been determined by the training group and approved by the Staff Commission. This will be apportioned on the basis of net rateable value of each district council area. Ballymoney's contribution is £3,311.

414.8 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION – FINANCIAL SCHEME 2013/14

The Commission has estimated the financial requirements for 2013/14 to be £830,600, income from on-going operations is estimated at £121,000, leaving £709,600 to be raised from district councils and the NI Housing Executive. Councils' contribution, based on rateable value is £6,302.

- * **Head of Corporate and Development Services left the meeting at 7.31pm.**
- * **Alderman Kennedy left the meeting at 7.31pm.**
- * **Chief Executive left the meeting at 7.31pm.**
- * **Director of Central arrived at the meeting at 7.35pm.**

CENTRAL SERVICES

414.9 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2012/13

The Department of the Environment (DOE) in exercise of its powers under Article 24(2) of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 and Regulation 4(1) of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 has issued the Accounts Direction for 2012/13, with which the Council's accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 should comply.

The main substantial change in this year's accounts is brought about by the introduction of Prudential Borrowing arrangements under the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 including the requirement for the Council to charge to its general fund an amount of minimum revenue provision it considers prudent for its level of borrowing. The Accounts & Audit Regulations requires the Annual Accounts to be signed off by the Council before submission to the DOE. The Accounts are to be with the DOE by 30th June 2013.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the Council delegate authority to the Corporate & Central Services Committee to sign off the 2012/13 Annual Accounts at its meeting on 24th June 2013.

The Director gave details of the main items that may have an impact on the General Fund balance namely Actual Penny Product finalisation, Rates debt, Minimum Revenue Provision and Landfill provision discounting rate.

Members indicated that they would like a Special CRCS Meeting before 24 June to consider the Reserves position before the Accounts are to be signed off.

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

to recommend that Council (i) hold a Special Meeting of CRCS to consider the reserves position and (ii) Council delegate authority to the Corporate & Central Services Committee to sign off the 2012/13 Annual Accounts at its meeting on 24th June 2013.

414.10 SEVERANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNCILLORS

The Environment Minister, Alex Attwood had launched a consultation on proposed arrangements for severance payments to district councillors. A copy was previously circulated to members together with the consultation questionnaire. The document is also available to view at http://www.doeni.gov.uk/local_government_consultations

The one-off severance scheme is designed to recognise long-serving councillors who will be leaving political life in the run up to local government reorganisation.

The main components of the proposed scheme include a minimum eligibility period of 12 years, graduated yearly payments to ensure that those with longer periods of service are treated fairly and proportionately, and a cap on individual payments of £35,000.

A number of questions are posed in the consultation document on which members may wish to comment. The consultation will close on 31st May 2013.

- * **Councillor Atkinson left the meeting at 8.04pm during consideration of the above matter.**

Alderman Campbell felt he would require additional time to discuss the consultation within his party.

The Director shall write to the Department advising Council shall be making a response, however, due to the timing of its meeting, the Department shall receive Council's response on Tuesday 4th June.

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

to recommend that Council defer their response to the consultation on Severance arrangements for Councillors, to the next meeting.

414.11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2014 – PROPOSED NEW SCHEME DESIGN

The Department of the Environment has issued a consultation document on its proposal for a revised scheme design for the Northern Ireland Local Government Pension Scheme, to come into operation on 1st April 2014. The details of the proposed scheme together with a summary of the new scheme design and a comparison with the current scheme are included in the consultation document – attached. The consultation document can also be accessed on the Department's website at the following address:

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/local_government/local_government_consultations.htm

The consultation document had been issued to all council staff who are pension scheme members and comments invited.

The closing date for comments is 6th June 2013.

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

to recommend that Council defer the item to the next committee meeting.

414.12 NETWORK NI

The Department of the Environment has offered funding to Councils to access Network NI. The objective of this project is to enhance the Councils' ability to modernise their systems and service delivery in accordance with the requirements placed upon them in the Review of Public Administration.

Specific objectives of the project include:

- To provide Departments which are devolving functions, a secure portal to the Local Government sector that will enable a seamless transfer of functions and maintain service delivery.
- To enable individual Councils to communicate safely and securely within their new Council clusters.
- To provide a platform that will enable the new Council clusters to communicate safely and securely with each other.
- To provide a network that will allow the new Council cluster to share services.

The cost of the connection charge is £13,500 and the Department is prepared to offer funding of £13,500 to cover this charge.

The annual service charge is £9,996.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Council sign up to access Network NI and meet the annual service charge of £9,996.

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

to recommend that Council sign up to access Network NI and meet the annual service charge of £9,996.

414.13 INSURANCE RENEWALS 2013/2014

The Council's Insurance portfolio is renewed annually on 1 April, following a competition exercise undertaken by the Insurance Broker, Marsh. A schedule of the renewal premiums together with comparative figures for 2012/13 was circulated.

It is pleasing to report that there is a saving of just over £25,000 on the renewal premiums. Councillor Stevenson concurred, this was very welcome news.

414.14 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Treasury advice schedules detailing payments for Period 1, 2013/14 drawn on the Council's Revenue and Capital Bank Accounts were available for members to inspect at 6.30pm.

The Director of Central and Leisure Service was in attendance and dealt with a number of queries.

***Payments made in Period 1 amount to:
Revenue Account £ 409,873.72 (excluding payroll)
Capital Account £ 102,418.00***

414.15 TAXATION OF MILAGE CLAIMS BY COUNCILLORS

The Director advised, the secretary of the Northern Ireland Region of the National Association of Councillors has written to Council regarding the taxation of mileage claims made by Council Members and seeking confirmation that Councillors are not taxed for mileage between a Councillor's home and the Council Offices.

The Director confirmed that Councillors are not taxed on mileage incurred between their homes and the Council Offices. Councillors are only taxed on the profit element of the mileage allowance rate paid ie the amount of allowance paid in excess of 45 pence per mile.

She will respond to the Regional Secretary confirming Council's position.

414.16 COUNCIL RESERVES AT 31ST MARCH 2013

The Director advised; the Minister of the Environment has written to the Chief Executive seeking details of the reserves held by the Council at 31st March 2013. The Minister indicates that the funding package of £47.8 Million to support the implementation of the Local Government Reform programme will make a real difference to local councils but one of the funding sources available to councils to cover the cost of reform is Reserves.

The Minister would like a response by 30th April 2013 but it is not possible to have the reserves accurately calculated by that date. It is likely to be near the end of June before final year-end figures are available.

The Director will reply to the Minister stating that Council are not in a position to give an accurate figure at this time due to a number of factors which will be stated.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 8.41pm.