

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Table of Contents**

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Corporate & Central Services Committee Meeting No 415 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, on Wednesday 29th May 2013 at 7.00pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor I Stevenson

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

Councillors
J Atkinson
W Blair
J Finlay
R Halliday
E Robinson

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive [Item 13-28]
Director of Central and Leisure Services [Item 1-12]
Head of Corporate and Development Services [Item 13 -28]
Committee Clerk

APOLOGIES: Nil

415.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

415.2 MINUTES OF MEETING NO 414 – 22ND APRIL 2013

It was proposed by Councillor Atkinson, seconded by Councillor Halliday and
AGREED:

to recommend that the minutes of Meeting No 414 – 22nd April 2013, as circulated, be approved.

CENTRAL SERVICES

415.3 SEVERANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNCILLORS

A response on the proposed Severance Scheme for Councillors was deferred at last month's committee meeting.

Since the last meeting the Secretary of the National Association of Councillors, NI Region, (NAC) has written to council detailing the NAC's responses to the questions in the consultation documents, for which council support is sought. A copy of the NAC responses was circulated.

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

to recommend that Council support the NAC responses on the proposed Severance Scheme for Councillors, attached as Appendix A, and submit as Council's response to the Department of the Environment.

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

A response to the consultation on the proposal for a revised scheme design for the Local Government Pension Scheme to come into operation on 1st April 2014 was deferred at last month's committee meeting.

The closing date for comments is 6th June 2013. Suggested comments were circulated, the Director drew on members to give consideration to each response.

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

to recommend that Council respond to the consultation on the proposal for a revised scheme design for the Local Government Pension Scheme, responses attached as Appendix B.

415.5 BANKING SERVICES

Following the announcement that the local branch of the Bank of Ireland, the Councils current Banking Services provider, will close at the end of June, discussions have taken place with the Bank to ascertain the implications of this for the Council.

The Bank of Ireland has agreed to continue providing fee free banking services up to 31st March 2015. Lodgements can be made at the local post office, at no cost.

The Councils accounts were managed by the Business Banking Centre and this will continue to be the case.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that the Council continues banking with the Bank of Ireland.

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

to recommend that Council continues to bank with the Bank of Ireland.

415.6 PROVISIONAL ACTUAL PENNY PRODUCT 2012/2013

Land and Property Services (LPS) have completed an initial assessment of the Actual Penny Product (APP) out turn for the 2012/2013 rating year. The provisional figures show a positive out turn of £172,090.63.

LPS advise that the finalisation figures are subject to scrutiny by audit but that they do not anticipate any material changes to the figures.

LPS plan to have figures finalised by the end of August 2013 and will notify councils of the final position in early September. Payments are expected to be made in November 2013.

This Rates finalisation of £172,090.63 will be included in the 2012/13 annual accounts.

Councillor Stevenson welcomed the additional rates income.

* **Councillor Finlay left the meeting at 7.40pm.**

415.7 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2012/13 & GENERAL FUND BALANCE at 31ST MARCH 2013

At 31st March 2012 the Councils District Fund Balance (now renamed the General Fund) was £857,335.

While the final figure for the General Fund balance at 31st March 2013 is not yet available indications are that the Fund will increase.

The increase is due to two main factors, namely a significant positive rates finalisation and underspend in 2012/13 mainly relating to the cost of servicing loans.

As Council has indicated its desire to keep the 2014/15 Rates increase to a minimum, if not a Rates freeze **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that Council give consideration to earmarking a fixed amount of the General Fund to cushion the District Rates in 2014/15 and to finance projects in 2014/15.

Members indicated their desire to earmark a fixed amount of the General Fund to cushion the District Rates in 2014/15 and to finance projects in 2014/15. Councillor Robinson indicated that there may be increased costs associated with the closure of the landfill site. The Director advised that a number of matters would impact on the General Fund balance including landfill site aftercare costs and minimum revenue provision. Alderman Kennedy suggested having an additional meeting prior to the accounts being signed off in June to give consideration to these matters.

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

to recommend that Council hold a Special Committee Meeting on 17th June at 6pm to give consideration to the reserves position before the financial statements are presented for sign off.

The Director will supply draft financial statements at the meeting.

* **Alderman Connolly left the meeting at 8pm.**

415.8 RATES SUPPORT GRANT – DEDUCTIONS 2013/14

The Department has advised that the following deductions will be made from the Rates Support Grant in 2013/14 –

NI Joint Council for Local Government Services	£1,179
Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities in NI	£ 71
Local Government Staff Commission	£6,302
Local Government Training Group	<u>£3,311</u>
	£10,863

Councillor Robinson invited members to avail of the training provided by the Local Government Training Group.

415.9 DISTRICT COUNCIL RATES STATISTICS 2013/14

The Department of the Environment had issued District Councils Rates Statistics for 2013/14.

A summary table of District Council Rates 2013/14 was circulated.

The Director drew members' attention to the statistics of the cluster councils.

A full copy of the Rates Statistics will be placed in the Members Room. A soft or hard copy is available to members on request. Members indicated their preferred option for receiving the Statistics.

* **Councillor Halliday left the meeting at 8.10pm.**

415.10 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Treasury advice schedules detailing payments for Period 2, 2013/14 drawn on the Council's Revenue and Capital Bank Accounts were available for members to inspect at 6.30pm on Wednesday 29th May 2013 in the McKinley Room, Riada House.

The Director of Central and Leisure Service was in attendance to deal with any queries and provide any information requested.

Payments made in Period 2 amount to:

Revenue Account £ 567,915.68
Capital Account £ 33,765.44

(excluding payroll)

415.11 TRANSITION RELATED COSTS LINKED TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The RPA Finance Work Group undertook an exercise to capture estimated transition costs across the Local Government Sector. A standard template was produced for capturing and quantifying transition costs.

The completed template for Ballymoney was circulated.

Details of the Executive funding towards some of the Transition Costs, has been added to the template for members information.

This information will assist the Council/Cluster with its financial planning.

415.12 APPROVAL OF PLACE FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/PARTNERSHIPS

An application for premises to be approved as a venue for civil marriages/partnerships had been received for Lissanoure Castle, 11 Knockahollet Road, Loughguile, Cloughmills, Ballymena BT44 9JP.

The relevant documents were enclosed with the application and the fee of £400 has been paid. A full inspection of the premises has been carried out by the Registrar and an "Approved Place" checklist completed.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Lissanoure Castle is approved as a venue for civil marriages/partnerships under the provisions of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 for a period of 3 years commencing on 2nd July 2013.

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

to recommend that Lissanoure Castle is approved as a venue for civil marriages/partnerships under the provisions of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 for a period of 3 years commencing on 2nd July 2013.

- * **Director of Central and Leisure Services left the meeting at 8.30pm.**
- * **Head of Corporate and Development Services arrived at the meeting at 8.34pm.**

- * **Chief Executive arrived at the meeting at 8.34pm.**

CORPORATE SERVICES

415.13 STAFF MATTERS

There were no matters to report.

415.14 REVIEW OF DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREAS – PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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 27th 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.

In response to a suggestion from Alderman Kennedy, and clarification from Chief Executive as to Public Inquiry arrangements, the item shall be tabled for members’ consideration at Consultation Committee, prior to the consultation’s deadline.

415.15 CORPORATE PLAN

A corporate plan to 2015 has been developed following review and consultation with elected members, council staff and key stakeholder groups from the private and community sector to ensure it reflects local priorities, needs and aspirations for the future of the area.

The plan is the last and most important plan for the current Council prior to the introduction of the new Council in 2015. It sets out a new vision for the borough, the new strategic priorities and key actions that the Council will deliver on before 2015.

Vision:

“Ballymoney will be an accessible, distinctive local hub, offering a safe unique quality of life with a strong sense of community striving to do more”

The following core values to underpin its mission and guide the Council in its business:

Integrity	Be honest, accountable, consistent and transparent
Respect for people	Treat everyone with respect and provide our services on a fair and equitable basis
Excellence	Provide and continuously improve quality services within available resources and strive to enhance the local environment
Adaptability	Promote sustainability and meet changing needs by being innovative, working with partners and developing capacity

A number of strategic priorities have been identified under four strategic objectives:-

1. To provide civic leadership within a community planning framework;
2. To supply services/facilities that our local community need;
3. To encourage local enterprise
4. To protect and promote the uniqueness of our places and people.

A copy of the corporate plan and capital programme 2012-2015, which will be formally launched in the next week or so, was circulated.

Arising from discussion on the scrutiny role of the Causeway Shadow Council, Chief Executive confirmed that Council would be expected to continue to deliver the full range of services while the Shadow Council, with powers available, would interest itself in major capital works, acquisition of major assets or dealing with significant levels of reserves.

The Shadow Council will have to prepare and adopt a Corporate Plan for the new Council to adopt.

415.16 BUSINESS PLAN

A copy of the draft business plan for business management unit in the Office of The Chief Executive was circulated. This has been reviewed to take account of the new corporate plan.

IT IS RECOMMENDED the business management business plan 2013-14 be adopted.

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

to recommend that Council adopt the business management business plan 2013-14, attached as Appendix C.

415.17 CIVIC EVENTS

A programme of civic events to recognise commissioning of new facilities and products is being developed, in association with project funders. Details will be brought forward in due course.

415.18 ARMED FORCES DAY – DEMONSTRATION OF SUPPORT

The Chief of the Defence Staff, Ministry of Defence has written to invite Council's participation in Armed Forces Day 2012, which falls on Saturday 29th June 2013. This marks the fifth Armed Forces Day and the Ministry welcomes the support that the people of the United Kingdom give to the Armed Forces and the recognition and thanks given by the people in communities on Armed Forces Day goes a long way to keeping morale at a high level.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that as in previous years Council hold a recognition event and fly the Armed Forces Day flag commencing Monday 24th June showing support for the men and women of the Armed forces.

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

to recommend that Council hold a recognition event and fly the Armed Forces Day flag commencing Monday 24th June showing support for the men and women of the Armed forces

415.19 COMMITTEE MEETINGS – JULY & AUGUST 2013

As has been the custom in recent years **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that no meetings of standing committees be held during July and only in August where the Officer, in consultation with the Chair, agree that there is essential business.

While the Consultation Committee will not meet in July planning schedule will be circulated to members and treated in the same way as streamlined applications, ie, members who want any application removed should notify the Office of the Chief Executive and it will be deferred; the committee will meet in August in order to ensure that deferred applications are not unduly delayed.

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

to recommend that Council do not hold meetings of standing committees during July and only in August where the Officer, in consultation with the Chair, agree that there is essential business.

415.20 ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Advance notice has been give of the Annual Meeting of Council to be held on Thursday 20th June.

415.21 STATUTORY TRANSITION COMMITTEES - APPOINTMENTS

The Department of Environment, Local Government Policy Division, Reform Implementation Team, has forwarded email, as follows, to be circulated to Councils.

“At the Regional Transition Committee meeting on the 22 May 2013, an issue was raised by an elected member regarding the membership of Statutory Transition Committees. Councils traditionally hold their Annual General Meetings in June and at these meetings the composition and membership of council committees are

decided. The query raised was would it be possible for councils to nominate the membership of their Statutory Transition Committees in the absence of the regulations being in place.

The position put forward by the Minister was that he saw no reason why councils could not provisionally nominate the members of their Statutory Transition Committees (designate) if they wished , although the composition and membership would be subject to and predicated upon the further clearance of the Local Government (statutory transition committees) Regulations (NI) 2013 and the committee membership's compliance with these Regulations. However, councils could also choose to wait until the regulations are in place and then nominate members at a regular council meeting.

The Minister also indicated that as soon as these Regulations are put into the Assembly process the Department would ensure that the Draft Regulations will be circulated to all councils for their information. The Minister was also of the view that in most cases the Membership of the Statutory Transition Committees would replicate the membership of the existing Voluntary Transition Committees.

415.22 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

The Local Government Staff Commission has provided an Equality & Diversity Framework, drafted by the Equality and Diversity Group, and launched at the Equality and Diversity Conference in Belfast on 14th May.

The Commission are now seeking Council's co-operation in formally endorsing the framework (copy attached) which details the Council's statement of intent and approach to ensure equality and diversity.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Council endorse the Equality and Diversity Framework, developed by the Local Government Staff Commission Equality and Diversity Group.

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

to recommend that Council endorse the Equality and Diversity Framework, developed by the Local Government Staff Commission Equality and Diversity Group, attached as Appendix D.

415.23 COUNCILLORS REMUNERATION PANEL

Environment Minister Alex Attwood announced, on 2nd May, the appointments of a Chairperson and four Members to the newly formed Councillors' Remuneration Panel for Northern Ireland.

The panel will review councillors' remuneration and advise the Minister on the system and level of allowances appropriate for the 11 new councils being created as part of the local government reform programme.

The appointments are as follows:

- Chairperson, Mr Deep Sagar
- Members, Mrs Alison McVitty, Ms Sarah Havlin, Mr Hugh Bonner, Mr David Williamson.

The Minister is asking the panel to make recommendations that fairly reflect the roles and responsibilities that councillors will be taking on in the new councils, post reorganisation in April 2015. It will also consider the allowances that should be paid during the shadow period following the local government elections in 2014 when the new councils will operate alongside the existing 26 councils.

In undertaking its work, the panel will consider the schemes and levels of remuneration for councillors in other jurisdictions in Britain and Ireland. There are differences in the roles and responsibilities of councillors in the various jurisdictions, but there is also much that is common. It is because of that commonality that the Minister considers it appropriate that the panel should look at the work undertaken by others, such as the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee and the Welsh Independent Remuneration Panel."

The Panel will have six months to submit its final recommendations.

415.24 COUNCILLORS CONFERENCE POLICY

The Chair has placed this matter on the agenda for discussion by members, with the suggestion that members consider a review of the policy given the increased budget. After consideration, members concluded there should be no change in the existing arrangements.

415.25 ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME – SHARE THE ROAD TO ZERO

Correspondence has been received on behalf of the DoE, about a very important community campaign to reduce road deaths in Northern Ireland to zero.

In 2012 the number of road deaths in Northern Ireland reached its lowest level since records began in 1931. The goal of reducing road deaths to zero is a shared community responsibility.

DOE is encouraging all public bodies, companies, schools, colleges and community groups to Share the Road to Zero and to ask everyone involved in their organisation to do the same by making a commitment to adopt safer behaviours on the roads.

As the Council plays a hugely important role in the community both as the local authority and an employer its support for the Share the Road to Zero campaign is sought.

We are being asked to:

1. [Go](http://www.sharetheroadtozero.com/organisation-pledge) online to www.sharetheroadtozero.com/organisation-pledge.
2. Pledge your commitment to the Road to Zero by entering your details.
3. Share your pledge with everyone in your organisation and ask them to Share the Road to Zero.

We are also asked to explore the PR opportunity to raise awareness that Ballymoney Borough Council is supporting the campaign. Initial discussions have taken place with Ballymoney Borough Road Safety Committee and **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that Council support the initiative in partnership with the Road Safety Committee.

Alderman Campbell paid tribute to the excellent work of the Road Safety Committee and in response to a query from Councillor Atkinson as to allocation of funding from Council to support any initiatives identified the Chief Executive confirmed Council had power to contribute towards activities which would benefit the inhabitants of the Borough.

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

to recommend that Council support 'Share the Road to Zero' initiative in partnership with the Ballymoney Road Safety Committee.

415.26 NORTHERN IRELAND HOSPICE REDEVELOPMENT FUND

Belfast City Council has agreed to contribute £250,000 to the NI Hospice Redevelopment Fund in each of the next two financial years under the specialized expenditure powers which exist under section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011. It has written to all other councils in Northern Ireland requesting that they give consideration to making similar gestures to that made by the Council by providing financial support towards the building of the new hospice on the Somerton Road which will be a much-needed resource for the whole of the region.

Additional information from NI Hospice on services to Ballymoney residents was circulated. The Chief Executive confirmed powers were available under the Finance Act to allow Council to contribute but the benefit to the Borough/ its citizens had to be commensurate to payments made. During discussion Alderman Campbell and other members paid tribute to the excellent work of the Robinson Memorial Hospital in providing respite care etc.

It was considered that Party Groups should discuss the item and come back to a future committee meeting.

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

that committee defer the item of the Northern Ireland Hospice Redevelopment Fund to its next meeting.

415.27 ANNUAL SOMME REMEMBRANCE PARADE & SERVICE AT KNOCKAGH

The annual Parade and Service will be held on Sunday 30th June and an invitation is extended to members to attend. The Knock War Memorial is a Co. Antrim memorial. Members indicated their plan to attend, any other member should contact Office of Chief Executive.

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

to recommend that members be appointed to attend the Annual Somme Remembrance Parade and Service at Knockagh on Sunday 30th June.

415.28 OMBUDSMAN OFFICE – PROPOSED CHANGES

The Ombudsman has written to advise of a number of changes, structural and procedural, that will be introduced in my office from 1st May 2013.

From that date a 'front of office' team will be introduced to deal with complaints when they are first received. The team will be known as ASSIST (Advice Support Service and Initial Screening Team). As the name suggests the team will provide initial advice and support to enquiries which my office receives and also the initial screening of complaints. Initial screening of a complaint will involve, amongst other activities:

- Confirming issues of complaint with the complainant; and
- Liaison with body being complained of in terms of:
 - Verifying the status of the complaint
 - Obtaining relevant information to decide if my office should investigate
 - Exploring opportunities for settlement.

Where a complaint requires detailed investigation it will pass on to one of two investigation teams within the office.

In implementing these operational changes, the Ombudsman aims to improve its service to the public and waiting times for complainants as well as more effectively attempting to resolve complaints. From the perspective of how we will interact with your Council the office aims to ensure that where appropriate those complaints that can be settled at an early stage without a detailed investigation are resolved by ASSIST, where this is possible. A stakeholder event is being held to inform relevant staff of the new structures. A further report will be made to committee.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Appendix A: Severance Arrangements for Councillors

Appendix B: Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Proposed New Scheme Design

Appendix C: Business Plan

Appendix D: Equality and Diversity Framework



Department of the
Environment

www.doeni.gov.uk

Severance Arrangements for Councillors and draft Local Government (Severance Payments for Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

Consultation Response

Return to:

Local Government Policy Division, Department of the Environment,
1st Floor, Millennium House, 17-25 Great Victoria Street, Malone Lower,
BELFAST, BT2 7BN

OR

LGPDConsultations@doeni.gov.uk



NAME: Iris McCleery

ORGANISATION NAME: Ballymoney Borough Council
(If Appropriate)

POSTAL ADDRESS: **Riada House**
14 Charles Street
Ballymoney
BT53 6DZ

Email: iris.mccleery@ballymoney.gov.uk

Question One

Do you agree with the proposed two stage application process? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

YES

Question Two

Do you foresee any practical or administrative difficulties with the prescribed period ending on 31 March 2015?

NO

Question Three

Do you agree that the Secretary of State should be asked to amend the electoral law to allow a vacancy in any of the 26 existing councils to be filled by co-option after 1 January 2014? If yes, what benefits do you think would result from such an amendment.

WE HAVE NO VIEW

Question Four

Do you agree that periods when a councillor was also a Member of the Assembly, the House of Commons or the European Parliament should be excluded when determining the eligibility of councillors?

If not, what alternative would you propose?

WE HAVE NO VIEW

Question Five

Do you think that the minimum qualifying period for severance should be longer than 12 years? If so, what do you think the minimum qualifying period should be and why?

NO

Question Six

Do you agree with the proposed method of dealing with part periods of service? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

YES

Question Seven

Do you agree with calibration based on service bands?

If not, what alternative basis for calibration would you suggest?

YES

Question Eight

Which of the two options do you consider most suitable? If neither, what alternative would you suggest?

OPTION 1

Question Nine

Do you agree that individual severance payments should be capped at £35,000? If not, what alternative limit would you suggest?

YES

Other Comments

We would like to emphasise our support for Option 1 payment model.

Proposed Scheme Design for the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2014

Consultation Response

Return to:
Local Government Policy Division, Department of the Environment,
1st Floor, Millennium House, 17-25 Great Victoria Street, Malone Lower,
BELFAST, BT2 7BN

OR
LGPDConsultations@doeni.gov.uk



NAME: Iris McCleery

ORGANISATION NAME: Ballymoney Borough Council

(If Appropriate)

POSTAL ADDRESS: **Riada House**
14 Charles Street
Ballymoney
BT53 6DZ

Email: iris.mccleery@ballymoney.gov.uk

Q.1. Do you agree with the proposed change to a career revalued earnings (CARE) scheme? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

Comment

Yes

Q.2. Do you agree with the proposed accrual rate? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

Comment

Yes

Q.3. Do you agree with the proposal to include non-contractual overtime and additional hours in pensionable pay? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

Comment

No. There would be a significant increase in employer costs which would have to be met by ratepayers.

The current position should continue where pensionable pay is based on contractual pay.

**Q.4. Do you agree with the proposed contribution bands?
If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

Comment

Yes, except for the higher rate bands. The highest band will mean that Chief Executives and probably Directors in the new councils will pay 10.5% contributions. This will result in the whole pay and reward package for senior posts in local government being less attractive than similar posts in the Civil Service and other parts of the NI public sector, where pay is generally higher and pension contributions lower (much lower for the NI Civil Service where highest earners pay as little as 6.25%).

Currently there are few candidates from outside local government applying for senior posts - this change is unlikely to improve the situation.

Q.5. Do you foresee any payroll or administrative difficulties from including non-contractual overtime and additional hours in pensionable pay?

Comment

Yes. There would be significant pension administration and payroll implications with the potential for employee contribution rates to change from pay period to pay period. May even require software changes – another cost to the council.

Q.6. Do you foresee any payroll or administrative difficulties from the change to the proposed contribution bands?

Comment

No

Q.7. Do you agree that there should be contribution flexibility in the LGPS (NI) 2014?

Comment

Yes

Q.8. Do you agree with the proposed 50/50 option? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

Comment

Yes, we agree with the 50/50 Option but do not agree with the employer contributions remaining at full level while a member is in the 50/50 Option.

Q.9. Do you agree that the people who choose the 50/50 option should be brought back into the main scheme every three years, at the employer's automatic enrolment date? If not, what alternative would you suggest?

Comment

No. A member should be brought back into the scheme when they request it.

**Q.10. Do you agree that there should be an ‘underpin’ for members aged 55 or over at 1 April 2012?
If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

Comment

Yes

Q.11. Should the proposed LGPS (NI) 2014 pension arrangements also apply to councillors? If not, what alternative arrangements would you suggest?

Comment

Yes

The Department would also welcome any other comments consultees may wish to make about the proposed scheme design and the draft regulations for the Local Government Pension Scheme from 1 April 2014.

<u>Comment</u>

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2013-14

1.1 Links to Corporate Plan

The Council's mission and values and principles have been developed to guide the Office of the Chief Executive in the services it provides.

The Council's mission statement is:

"to serve all our people and improve their quality of life"

Core Values

The Council has developed the following core values to underpin its mission and guide the Council in its business:

<u>Integrity</u>	<u>Be honest, accountable, consistent and transparent</u>
<u>Respect for people</u>	<u>Treat everyone with respect and provide our services on a fair and equitable basis</u>
<u>Excellence</u>	<u>Provide and continuously improve quality services within available resources and strive to enhance the local environment</u>
<u>Adaptability</u>	<u>Promote sustainability and meet changing needs by being innovative, working with partners and developing capacity</u>

SECTION 2 – SERVICES PROVIDED

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2013-14

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

- To provide an efficient, effective, economic and accountable business management and support service to the corporate body
- Protect and enhance the reputation and brand of the Council and promote and explain activities and interests of Council
- Ensure access to services and information is readily available to customers to meet their needs
- Enhance the strength of the democratic process
- Enhance Corporate Governance

DELIVERABLES:

COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/ MEMBER SERVICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support Services to Council & Standing Committee • Implement and communicate Council and Corporate & Development Committee decisions. • deliver, monitor and review member training/briefing programme and support services in accordance with member services plan
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support services to Corporate Management Team, including key communication with Heads of Service and inter-organisational liaison on corporate working. • Lead Strategic Planning and Programming, organizational reviews, manpower planning and emergency planning
MARKETING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raise profile of Council and awareness of services through advertising, marketing and positive PR • monitor compliance of corporate identity/branding across all media • deliver corporate/civic, ceremonial projects and events • develop and promote events promotion to mark national events/anniversaries
COMMUNICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead and co-ordinate internal and external communications ensuring that news about Council's initiatives and services reach the public and Council staff through a range of communication media, including news releases, website, citizens information bulletins, events, staff and team briefings

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead inter service working groups and improve cross services understanding • in a civil emergency play key role in supporting the emergency planning team. • develop an approach to consultation and engagement to make sure people have the opportunity to influence decision making. • manage relations with statutory agencies and external organizations to facilitate consultation and representation between bodies and Council. • Manage media relations, including media briefings, interviews, written responses and general information and produce guidelines and protocols for dealing with the media. • Develop & review website and improve access & on-line services • Develop and review policies, procedures and protocols
RECORDS MANAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead development of policies and procedures ensuring legal obligations complied with and provide advice and guidance to service units. • Monitor and Review organizational file plan and develop retention and disposal schedule and ensure legislative obligations are complied with. • Monitor and review publication scheme • Corporate support for FOI/DP.
INTERNAL AUDIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage, through external provider, internal audit function to give independent assurance to Council on adequacy of risk management framework. • Implement action plan in services in compliance with internal audit findings and co-ordinate cross service actions. • Service and support Audit Committee activity as set out in its terms of reference • Co-ordinate development and review of Risk Management Process • Support requirement, as set out in code of practice, to ensure implementation of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources
ELECTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Chief Electoral Officer in the conduct of local and combined elections.
CIVIC LEADERSHIP & REPRESENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby on issues affecting the Borough and its citizens: (<i>opposition to lignite development, upgrading of A26 to dual carriageway, railway network improvements, area plan, broadband</i>).
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement corporate equality scheme
BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all business areas and prepare and implement a Business Continuity Management Plan in accordance with the principles of BS25999
RESOURCE SUPPORT TEAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees x 11 Work placements/Steps to Work Programme Manage delivery of programmes/services within overall cost limits and agreed timescale
BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditure (<i>excl capital charges</i>) £690,273.
EXTERNAL LIAISON / PARTNERSHIP WORKING
<p>External Liaison - <i>Ratepayers, government agencies, MP, MLAs, community groups, local authorities, other departments, media, trade unions, community and business networks</i></p> <p>Partnership Working NILGA, Transition Committee, RPA working Groups, Northern Corridor Railways Group, Ballymoney Borough Road Safety Committee, Local Government Staff Commission, Local Government Training Group, N I Housing Council, Somme Association, Knockagh War Memorial Committee, William Keown Trust, RPA Working Groups.</p>
EXTERNAL STANDARDS
Everything done in line legislative requirements and established good practice.

Ej/rev. 30.4.2013

BALLYMONEY COUNCIL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

This Framework details the Council's statement of intent and approach to ensure equality and diversity

Context

Councils are required to comply with anti-discrimination legislation and Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 (the Act). Section 75 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act.

This Framework is designed to assist councils to meet their equality and diversity obligations and to demonstrate their compliance with them.

The Framework covers everyone who uses the Council's services, our facilities and accesses our information, including:

- Customers of the Council
- Members of the Public
- Partners and Other Stakeholders
- Contractors who deliver services on behalf of the Council
- Council Elected Members
- Council Employees
- Trade Unions
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Business Sector
- Other Public Sector Bodies

In order to assist with the implementation of this Framework the Council has appointed a Councillor and Officer to **champion** equality and diversity across the Council by driving positive actions and acting as a contact point for issues relating to this equality and diversity framework.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE FRAMEWORK

Principle 1: Ensuring we work in a non-discriminatory environment, promote equality, and model best practice in equality and good relations

It is everyone's responsibility to:

- Treat everyone equally and with dignity and respect
- Think about how our actions affect others
- Help people change for the better through example by challenging unacceptable behaviour or language
- Be knowledgeable by taking personal responsibility for training around equality and diversity and good relations (mandatory training for all Council staff and managers is in place)

Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance:

NI Code of Local Government Conduct, Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees.

Principle 2: Ensuring all our decisions are based on evidence to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations

We will:

- Ensure that all policies, projects and programmes of work are screened and, where appropriate, impact assessed
- Publish all screening outcomes including any mitigation or alternative policies considered
- Involve the customers of the council, trade unions, business sector and voluntary and community sector on an on-going basis to assist us in the review and development of existing and new policies

Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance:

Equality Scheme, Disability Action Plan, Progress Reports, Screening Reports

Principle 3: Providing access to services, facilities and information

We will take steps to improve access to services, facilities and information and be open about what we can and cannot do:

We will:

- Involve customers and stakeholders in the design, prioritisation and review of services
- Monitor and review services regularly to identify any under-representation or discrimination
- Make sure information is accessible using Plain English and other accessibility standards
- Provide alternative formats, translations and interpreters when needed
- Make sure buildings are accessible and welcoming to all
- Make sure meetings and events are easy to access

Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance: Equality Scheme, Disability Action Plan, Translation and Interpretation Policy, Good Relations Strategy.

Principle 4: Recruiting and employing people fairly

The Council will make sure that we provide equality of opportunity to all in employment.

We will:

- Use non-discriminatory job criteria
- Take positive action to ensure a diverse workforce
- Apply fair selection procedures
- Monitor and review employment practice
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Support staff through appropriate networks

Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance: Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection, Local Government Competency Framework Staff Handbook, Welcoming Statement

Principle 5: Responding to and learning from complaints and incidents in a positive and pro-active way

Everyone has the right to complain about discrimination and harassment in good faith, without being victimised at any time.

We will:

- Handle complaints and grievances properly
- Resolve matters positively
- Respond to incidents of prejudice or hate crime

Relevant Policies, Procedures and Guidance: Complaints Policy and Procedure, Grievance Procedure, NI Code of Local Government Conduct, Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees.

MONITORING

The Council will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this Framework and will engage with Councillors, employees and the trade unions regarding any proposed changes to policies or practices.

SIGNED: _____

MAYOR
EXECUTIVE

CHIEF

DATE: