

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Table of Contents**

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CORPORATE SERVICES

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CENTRAL SERVICES

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Corporate & Central Services Committee Meeting No 417 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, on Monday 24th June 2013 at 7.00pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor Finlay [Item 1 & 2]
Councillor E Robinson, MBE [Item 3-22]

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

Councillors

J Atkinson
W Blair
A Cavlan
R Halliday
R McAfee
P McGuigan
I Stevenson

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive [Item 1-13]
Director of Central and Leisure Services [Item 14-22]
Head of Corporate and Development Services [Item 1-13]
Business Support Officer

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Storey, MLA

417.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

417.2 ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was proposed by Alderman Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Stevenson and
AGREED:

that the Mayor take the Chair to facilitate the election of Chair.

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

that Councillor Robinson be elected as committee Chair for the ensuing year.

417.3 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Robinson assumed the Chair and invited nominations for election for Vice Chair of Committee.

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

that Alderman Connolly be elected as committee Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

417.4 MINUTES

4.1 Meeting No 415 – 27th May 2013

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

to recommend that the Minutes of Meeting No 415 – 27th May 2013, as circulated, be approved.

4.2 Meeting No 416 – 18th June 2013

Chief Executive advised the Minutes of Meeting No 416 – 18th June 2013 will be tabled at the Council meeting in July.

417.5 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion, given by Councillor Robinson, was referred by Council to committee at its meeting on 7th May 2013

“That this Council appoints an independent consultant to examine all staffing and resourcing measures with a view to save money on behalf of the ratepayers”.

Alderman Campbell said he believed the timing of the proposal was too close to RPA implementation and Council was in a period of significant change. Hence he was not in

favour of spending money on Consultants. If it was considered there was resource issues the Chief Executive could bring a report to committee.

Councillor Robinson explained that the Consultant she had in mind would be paid out of any savings found and there would be no cost to Council.

Councillor McGuigan expressed concern over any consultant appointment being paid on the basis whereby the only way he could make money was to make savings. The process of procurement and delivery of assignment would take months and giving impending RPA the timing was not right. Whilst he had no difficulty with the suggestion, he considered, if it was felt necessary, it should have been made 3-5 years ago. However, he would support the Chief Executive addressing the matter of resources if he felt this was necessary.

Responding to comments made the Chief Executive said there was less than 650 days to largest upheaval in Local Government in forty years. About twenty staff had been formally notified that they are at risk of compulsory redundancy and the motion before committee would extend the uncertainty to cover every employee. He believed, also, that the main Trade Union, NIPSA, would be likely to oppose such a review at this time.

Councillor Robinson asserted that her motion was not seeking to reduce staff but to alleviate pressure, looking at resources to ensure Council has the compliment of staff needed and Council was equitable with other Councils.

Councillor Cavlan said she had understood from reading the motion that the objective was to examine resources and reduce staff and that, she believed, would be the general perception.

Commenting on financial resources Councillor Robinson indicated that the year end variance report, which was to be published soon, would show money from annual budgets, not spent in the year just past, had gone into reserves.

Councillor Stevenson spoke in support of the motion stating that an examination would determine if Council needed more or needed less or if existing resources could be used better.

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

to recommend that Council does not appoint an independent consultant.

CORPORATE SERVICES

417.6 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Recruitment of Chief Executives for new Councils letter, 14th June 2013, from DoE Minister Alex Attwood, MLA, on recruitment of Chief Executives as part of Local Government Reform programme was circulated to members with OCE memorandum 206-2013 on 17th June 2013.

The Statutory Transition Committee regulations will require each Statutory Transition Committee to appoint a Chief Executive designate who will transfer to the new councils when elected in 2014.

“The regulations stipulate that open public competition should be used to select these new chief executives. I intend that robust selection processes will be put in place to ensure successful candidates are able to meet the demands of the new posts which are complex and challenging and key to the successful implementation of the reform process. I also believe that this is the fairest and most effective way to fill the posts and is demonstrably in the public interest.”

Councillor McGuigan sought further clarification of the recruitment exercise.

The Chief Executive explained that the Minister has decided that the Chief Executive posts in the new councils will be filled by open competition, rather than by an internal process, which would minimise the risk of redundancy. Redundancy costs for Chief Executive and all other grades will fall to the new councils to meet.

* **Councillor Stevenson left the meeting at 7.35pm.**

417.7 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (STATUTORY TRANSITION COMMITTEES) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2013

The Regulations were laid before the Assembly on 17th June and are subject to draft affirmative resolution procedure. They will have to be considered by the Examiner of Statutory Rules, the Environment Committee as well as the Assembly itself. The Regulations are therefore subject to change. A copy was circulated for members' information.

The Department has power to issue statutory guidance in relation to these Regulations and intend to do so as soon as the Regulations are made in the Assembly. As a consequence and because Councils are required to have regard to the statutory guidance no action can be taken in relation to appointments to the Statutory Transition Committees until that guidance has been received and considered.

The Chief Executive advised that the Regulations are timetabled to be laid in the Assembly on Monday, 1 July 2013 and they must be either accepted or rejected, not amended. If accepted will come into operation in the same week and Statutory Transition Committees (STCs) will be required to meet within 35 days. Causeway Coast & Glens STC will have 20 members drawn equally from the 4 councils in the cluster, the same makeup as Voluntary Transition Committee (VTC). Under the terms of Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (NI) 2010, STCs will be bodies corporate so can employ staff and enter into contracts and STCs are open to the public. The DoE has power to issue guidance to STCs and STCs must "have regard to" such guidance. Existing councils may pay an allowance to their members on an STC, such allowances shall be same for each member and shall not exceed £2700 p.a. Councils shall meet any reasonable costs incurred by STCs, costs being divided equally among the four councils in case of CC&G. The STC shall agree with councils in cluster a budget for the operation of the STC, shall appoint a clerk of the new council, with selection to be on merit, fair and open. The appointment must be confirmed by two-thirds majority of STC. The STCs will cease to exist 28 days after local government elections in 2014.

- * **Councillor Finlay left the meeting at 7.45pm during consideration of the above matter.**
- * **Alderman Connolly left the meeting at 7.50pm.**

417.8 PLANNING – OPTIONS PAPER FOR THE DELIVERY OF PLANNING RELATED FUNCTIONS FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

A paper presenting the options and recommendations for the service delivery of planning in the new 11 Council areas was circulated together with the various appendices referred to therein. The options are:

Option	Description
Option 1	Local arrangements with shared services for specialist functions
Option 2	Current Planning Area Office structure
Option 3	Sub regional collaboration based upon voluntary clustering arrangements among 1 or more of the 11 councils

Option 4	Regional collaboration based upon lead council
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An initial assessment of each potential option benchmarked against key criteria was included. Option 1 is put forward as the preferred option (11 Planning local offices with shared services for specialist functions)

* **Councillor Atkinson left the meeting at 7.55pm.**

Chief Executive indicated Option 1 was the preferred method for service delivery, initially looking at high level options and not based on detailed costs, there was further work to be done to work the options up in more detail.

In response to a query from Alderman Campbell Chief Executive clarified; fees for work would come to Council however, Council are paying staff, at the point of transfer it is anticipated the service should be cost neutral, this was one of the areas that has to be looked at.

* **Councillor McGuigan left the meeting at 8.00pm.**

417.9 REGIONAL TRANSITION COMMITTEE

* **Councillor Atkinson returned to the meeting at 8.00pm.**

A draft note of the Regional Transition Committee on 22nd May 2013 was circulated to members with OCE memorandum 192-2013 on 6th June 2013. This will be considered at the next Regional Transition Committee on 24th July 2013.

Record copies of Regional Transition Committee minutes were placed in the Members' Room. An ICE programme update report was also included.

417.10 DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Chief Executive of Antrim Borough Council, in his capacity as Chair of the Employee Relations Working Group has forwarded a copy of the discussion paper on the above framework which sets out a model for future industrial relations within local government in NI. The paper, developed by the Employee Relations Working Group of the LG Staff Commission, established under the People and Organisation Development Strategic Framework, is being issued in order to initiate discussion and gather views across the sector.

A copy of the discussion paper was circulated. A full consultation pack, including attachments referred to in the framework is available from the Office of the Chief Executive.

The Framework provides a common platform for workforce development across local government and is supported by the Local Government Staff Commission working in partnership with local councils. Membership of the Working Group is comprised of Council Chief Executives, HR Professionals and Trade Union representatives. The context for initiating this debate is that the reform of local government will require new regional and local negotiating mechanisms to be in place to service council structures which will become operational in April 2015. This also provides an opportunity to address aspects of the current arrangements which are seen by many stakeholders as ineffective.

The proposals have been endorsed for discussion by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum which as part of its remit is to develop terms of reference and recommendations for consultation and negotiating machinery for local government post April 2015. The model has also received support from the Society of Local Government Chief Executives (SOLACE) in NI. The process runs to 28th June. No specific comments area offered on the high level model structure proposed.

Commenting on the Framework the Chief Executive said it should there should be a general welcome for the new Framework, as current arrangements are not satisfactory. There was need for a separate mechanism to deal with Chief Executives terms and conditions, as they would have a conflict of interest at the Regional Working Committee. He suggested that the separate mechanism should cover both Chief Executives and Director/Chief Officer posts. The nominations of councillors and officers to sit on the regional structures should come directly from the 11 Councils, so that they take ownership of the negotiation mechanisms.

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

AGREED:

to recommend that Council adopt the comments put forward by the Chief Executive.

417.11 CIVIC EVENTS

Council has agreed to host a civic reception in honour of Michael Dunlop to mark his achievements in the Isle of Man TT and arrangements are in hand to agree a mutually convenient date with Michael.

Events to mark completion of new facilities are being arranged in association with Borough Services Director and relevant Chairs and funders, as soon as practical after contract completion dates.

417.12 ARMED FORCES DAY

An event, including a short service at the Cenotaph, was arranged, in conjunction with the Royal British Legion, on Saturday 22nd June.

Councillor McAfee advised of an invitation from the Royal British Legion regarding Council's participation in the annual remembrance parade as well as the remembrance day services. Head of Corporate and Development Services shall follow up and confirm arrangements with the Royal British Legion.

417.13 NORTHERN IRELAND HOSPICE DEVELOPMENT FUND

The request for support towards the building of a new hospice on the Somerton Road was deferred from committee's last meeting to allow party groups to discuss. (min 414.26 refers)

Members sought additional information on how the facility is funded, how much money is raised from voluntary contributions and what other Councils have done.

Chief Executive reminded Members of Council's practice that contributions to charities had been left up to the ratepayers to make that decision for themselves.

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

to recommend that Council defer the item to the next committee meeting in September and that further information be obtained.

- * **Chief Executive left the meeting at 8.10pm.**
- * **Head of Corporate and Development Services left the meeting at 8.10pm.**
- * **Director of Central and Leisure Services arrived at the meeting at 8.10pm.**

CENTRAL SERVICES

417.14 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2012/13

The Accounts Direction for 2012/13 stipulates that the annual accounts of the Council should be produced in the form directed by the Department, approved by the Council

and submitted to the Department on or before 30th June 2013. The Council, at its meeting on 7th May 2013 delegated authority to this committee to approve the Annual Accounts for 2012/13.

The Director of Central & Leisure Services circulated the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013. Members will be given a copy of the complete book at the Council meeting on Monday 1st July. Accounts have been completed in accordance with the Accounts Direction.

The Director explained the financial statements and advised that they included the minimum revenue provision, the revenue contribution to capital and the additional aftercare costs for the landfill site and the change in the discount rate to 3%. She drew members attention to the increase in the General fund and reminded members that at the last meeting there was a discussion about earmarking some of the Reserves for 2014/15 rates purposes and projects.

- * **Councillor Atkinson left the meeting at 8.25pm.**
- * **Councillor McAfee left the meeting at 8.35pm and returned at 8.38pm.**

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

that Council earmark £400,000 of the General Fund to finance projects in 2013/14 and to reduce the Rates increase in 2014/15.

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

that committee approve the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013.

417.15 LOANS TO OFFICERS FOR THE PURCHASE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Section 41B of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 provides for a District Council to make a loan to an officer, for the purchase of a motor car or motor cycle, subject to such conditions as the Department of the Environment may determine.

The Department has now reviewed the existing interest rates applied by Councils and has determined that the interest rate on all such loans granted, with effect from 1st April 2013 will be 2.2% per annum on the amount of the loan (where it is desired that the repayment of the loan and payment of the interest charge should be undertaken by equal monthly installments).

For any officer to be eligible to apply for financial assistance in accordance with the scheme, the Council will be required to pass a resolution that it is essential to the efficient carrying out of official duties.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Council apply the interest rate 2.2% with effect from 1st April 2013. Council currently has no car loans to officers.

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

to recommend that Council apply the interest rate 2.2% with effect from 1st April 2013.

417.16 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Treasury advice schedules detailing payments for Period 3, 2013/14 drawn on the Council's Revenue and Capital Bank Accounts were available for members to inspect at 6.30pm on Monday 24th June 2013 in the McKinley Room, Riada House.

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

***Payments made in Period 3 amount to:
Revenue Account £ 291,007.89 (excluding payroll)
Capital Account £ 476,185.99***

417.17 NI EXECUTIVE'S FUNDING FOR ICT COSTS AND SYSTEMS CONVERGENCE 2013/14 AND 2014/15

The Director circulated a letter from the Department of the Environment clarifying the conditions set regarding the Executives commitment to cover borrowing for funding of the ICT costs and Systems Convergence in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

417.18 COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES 2012/13

The Director circulated a schedule detailing the allowances and expenses paid to councillors in 2012/13. In accordance with the regulations this information will be published on the Council's website.

417.19 POST ENTRY TRAINING SUCCESS

The Director was pleased to report that Ryan Mooney Fitness Instructor in the Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre has successfully completed his Degree course in Sports & Exercise Science with a 2:1.

Ryan has asked that his thanks be passed to the Council and Management for their support enabling him to undertake his studies.

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

to recommend that the Director of Central and Leisure Services send a letter to Ryan Mooney on behalf of Council, congratulating him on his success.

417.20 BALLYMONEY CEMETERY MEMORIALS

The following applications have been received for the erection of memorials in Ballymoney Cemetery –

Section I3 No.22

Mrs Ann Wilson, 22 Dehra Gardens, Ballymoney
Black Granite Headstone and Base

Section E3 No.12

Mrs Patricia McLaughlin, 21 Castlehill Terrace, Ballymoney
Black Granite Headstone and Base

Section C No.18

Mr Daniel Loudon, 16 Antrim Park, Ballymoney
Granite Headstone and Base

Section C No. 19

Mr Leonard Loudon, 16 Torrens Park, Lislagan, Ballymoney
Granite Headstone and Base

Section E3 No. 16

Mr James Boyd, 51 Carnany Drive, Ballymoney
All Polished Granite Headstone & Base

Section E2 No. 60

Ms Sharon Hanna, 115 Drones Road, Ballymoney
Black Granite Headstone and Base

Section B No. 60.

Mr Thomas Reid, Rathain Fold, Union Street, Coleraine
All Polished Black OG, Side Bars and Posts

Section 12 Paupers

Ballymoney Borough Council, Riada House, 14 Charles Street Ballymoney
All Polished Grey Headstone and Base

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Council grants permission for the erection of the above memorials, subject to usual requirements.

The Director of Central and Leisure Services further advised that James McMullan & Son, Funeral Directors, have offered to provide a memorial to mark the Paupers section in the cemetery.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Council accepts the generous offer made and waive the usual fee in this particular instance.

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

to recommend that Council accepts the offer of the memorial to mark the Paupers section and waive the fee, and

to recommend that Council grants permission for the erection of the above memorials, subject to usual requirements.

417.21 RATES SUPPORT GRANT – DEDUCTIONS 2013/14

The Department has advised of revised deductions to be made from the Rates Support in 2013/14-

NI Joint Council for Local Government Services	£1,179.00
Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities in NI	£ 71.00
Employers Organisation for Local Government	£437.00
Local Government Staff Commission	£6,302.00
Local Government Training Group	£3,311.00
	£11,300.00

417.22 CONGRATULATIONS

Alderman Campbell congratulated Councillor Robinson on her appointment as Chair of Committee and wished her well in her time in office.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

