

**Ballymoney Borough Council
Council Meeting No 952 – 11th January 2012**

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Council Meeting No 952 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Wednesday 11th January 2012 at 7.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor I Stevenson, Mayor

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

Councillors
J Atkinson
W Blair
A Cavlan
J Finlay
R Halliday
R McAfee
P McGuigan
T McKeown, Deputy Mayor
C McLaughlin
E Robinson

APOLOGIES: **Councillors**
H Connolly
M Storey, MLA

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Director of Borough Services
Director of Central & Leisure Services
Head of Corporate & Development Services

952.1 RATE ESTIMATE 2012/13

The Director of Central & Leisure Services advised that the Council, when considering the estimates of income and expenditure for 2012/13 needs also to be mindful of the requirements of the 2011 Local Government Finance Act (NI) which is operational from 1 April 2012. She advised that the Local Government Finance Act also introduces the Prudential Code from 1 April 2012. The Prudential Code puts in place a framework for the Council's Capital Expenditure plans and the financing of their Capital Expenditure. The key concepts within the Prudential Code are Affordability, Prudence and Sustainability. Section 13, Local Government Finance Act requires the Council to set an "Affordable Borrowing Limit". The

Director further advised that the Council is also required to agree a three year Capital Programme with details of how the programme is to be financed.

Council has always budgeted for loan charges to cover the cost of the debt. However, under the new Regulations Council is required to produce and approve an annual statement of the Council's policy on meeting Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This mirrors the requirement for the Council to determine and keep under review, its affordable borrowing limit.

When the Council has agreed its Capital Programme for 2012/13 and a programme for 2013/14 and 2014/15, the MRP will be calculated and included in the Rates Estimates for 2012/13. The MRP will replace the existing "Loan Charges" amount and may impact differently on the rates for 2012/13.

The Director also advised that the Council is required to produce and approve Prudential Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy.

The Director of Central & Leisure Services explained that she would not be in a position to provide calculations until Council makes its decision on capital spend.

The Director of Central & Leisure Services explained the analysis of increases in the budget in excess of £1,000 as detailed in the schedule circulated, version 2 of the rates book having been circulated on 22nd December 2011.

- * **Councillor McGuigan arrived during the discussion at 7.10 pm.**
- * **Alderman Cousley arrived at 7.25 pm**
- * **The Mayor left at 7.25 pm.**

In the ensuing discussion, issues which engaged members' attention included:

- Financing of capital expenditure and repayment of loans
- Estimated Penny product for 2012/13
- Level of Rates Support Grant for 2012/13
- Staffing levels
- Costs and income levels of restaurant and vending
- Value for money of contributions to Milk Cup
- De-silting and improvements at Riverside Park

It was proposed by Councillor Finlay, seconded by Councillor Atkinson:

- 1. that Officers review the draft estimates and prepare revised estimates with an increase of no more than 5% on current year's rates.***
- 2. that an additional rates meeting be held on Friday 20th January at 3.00 pm, with meeting concluding by 4.30 pm.***

The Chief Executive thanked members for the guidance indicating that it would be a challenging task.

952.2 MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY

It was **AGREED:**

that report on MRP policy statement be presented at Corporate & Central Service meeting on Monday 23rd January 2012.

The meeting concluded at 9.15 pm.