

**Ballymoney Borough Council
Council Meeting No 954 – 30th January 2012**

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954.1 Rates Estimate 2012/13

*Further meeting on 6.2.12
agreed*

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Council Meeting No 954 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 30th January 2012 at 7.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor I Stevenson, Mayor

PRESENT:

Aldermen
F Campbell
H Connolly
C Cousley, MBE
B Kennedy

Councillors
J Atkinson
W Blair
J Finlay
R McAfee
P McGuigan
T McKeown, Deputy Mayor
C McLaughlin
E Robinson
M Storey, MLA

APOLOGIES:

Councillors
A Cavlan
R McAfee

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

954.1 RATE ESTIMATE 2012/13

In his opening remarks, the Chief Executive explained that the target at the last meeting was an increase of under 5%. Version 3 increase is 3.47%. He recorded thanks to the Directors and Heads of Service for the detailed work carried out to obtain this result, which was achieved by a 3 stage process: -

Stage 1: Started with the 2011/12 budget figures and allowed for changes to EPP, Grant and Employers' Pension.

Stage 2: Made savings in some cost centres.

Stage 3: Added costs only where: -

- i. Essential to maintain existing services (e.g. increases in fuel, energy or insurances) OR
- ii. Imposed by existing or new legislation (e.g. landfill tax, vehicle operator licensing)
- iii. Imposed by others (e.g. Audit Fees, payments to specified bodies) OR
- iv. Committed by council decision (e.g. new fixed term project post).

He accepted that Version 3 probably does not include everything council will want to include. Items considered by Council or Committees which have not been approved are not included e.g. some ED & Tourism projects. Some of these are listed at the end of the analysis sheet and on the separate page headed "OCE - Possible increases".

No provision is made for an employee pay rise, neither is there any extra provision for closing the landfill site.

An analysis sheet of the main changes has been provided and he and the two directors will explain the changes in budgets within our various remits.

Before passing over to Mrs. McCleery he reminded members of inflation at December 2011, CPI 4.2% and RPI 4.8%

The following papers, circulated.

- Rates Estimates 2012/13 book, Version 3, produced from starting point of 2011/12 baseline.
- Analysis of additions/savings, including LAC additional contributions to be considered.
- Programme of Capital Expenditure 2012/13 – 2014/15.
- Possible Increase to 2011/12 OCE budgets
- Variance Report @ month 8

The Director of Central & Leisure Services presented the general budget issues relating to Penny product, de-rating and rates support grant, balance applied, MRP and the increases/reductions in the various services for which she was responsible whilst the Chief Executive and the Director of Borough Services outlined increases/reductions in the services within their remits.

During the ensuing discussion, officers responded to a range of questions from members. Specific issues which engaged their attention included:

- Museum – McArthur Exhibition
- Blue bin contract
- NILAS targets
- Utility bills
- Trade refuse service
- Vehicle inventory
- Operating costs/licence fees for community centres
- Increase/reduction in income in various services
- Inadequate recompense re warmer homes scheme
- THI contribution
- Increased work and changes to building regulations/establishment levels compared to other councils.
- Increase in group building control staff
- Revenue and capital spend over past five years
- Increase in establishment over last five years
- Level of inflation over last 5 years
- Electricity spend at Leisure Centre
- Community Festival Fund and Good Relations Programme – retained at same level as current year and grant assured

***Councillor McKeown & Councillor McGuigan left the meeting at 9.00pm.**

The Chief Executive presented possible increases in OCE budget. The Director of Central & Leisure Services presented details of matters from the Leisure & Amenities Committee relating to contributions, to be considered by council during the rates setting process.

She pointed to the need for Council to consider and agree the proposed capital expenditure programme for 2012/15. Members requested that a further meeting be arranged in advance of the next stated meeting to give further consideration to the Version 4 rate estimate and to consider the variance report and further questions from members on budget provision.

It was **AGREED**

that the Council meeting on 6th February be convened at 6.30pm and that a meeting of Council to further consider the draft rates estimate be held immediately following this meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.35pm.