

**LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH**

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**1 MAY 2007**

Minutes of meeting held in the Council Offices, 7 Connell Street, Limavady at 7.00 pm on the above date.

**PRESENT:**

Alderman G Robinson. Councillors P Butcher, A Brolly, M Carten, B Chivers, L Cubitt, M Coyle (chair), M Donaghy, C Ó hOisín, A Robinson, and E Stevenson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Committee Clerk, Human Resource Manager and the Chief Executive.

**APOLOGIES:**

Aldermen G Mullan and J Rankin. Councillors B Douglas and J F McElhinney. Director of Support Services.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of meeting dated 3 April 2007 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Ó hOisín, seconded by Councillor Butcher.

**MATTERS ARISING:** - None.

**PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS:**

The payment of accounts for the month of March 2007 were approved on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Carten. Comments were noted in relation to payment to Consarc Design Group and it was suggested that the details of the contract between Lough Foyle Ferry Company Ltd and Council be reviewed to reflect the service throughout the year.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:**

**IN COMMITTEE:** The Chief Executive presented the Confidential Human Resources Report and enlarged on the following:

- Recruitment and Selection – *starters & leavers*
- Employee Training & Development – *training requests*
- Sickness & Absence – *statistics & costs per directorate*
- Single Status Job Evaluations – *results expected May 2007*
- HR Policies – *update to incorporate legislative amendments*
- Employee Assistance Programme – *introduced 1 May 2007*
- Gender Equality Group – *update on draft gender action plan.*

Members voiced regret that the Human Resource Manager was leaving Council at the end of May 2007 but wished her every success in her new post. Gratitude was expressed to staff for their service to Council, particularly those who covered the reception desk and answered queries during the lunch hour. **OUT OF COMMITTEE.**

#### **ABSENTEEISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCILS 2005/06:**

The Chief Executive presented a report on Absenteeism in Northern Ireland Councils 2005/06 from the Local Government Audit Office. He explained that the number of days lost per employee for the last three year were 10.98, 20.58 and 12.65, which equated to an average of 14.74 but this was distorted by the figure of 20.58 for 2004/05.

Members noted the 12 main causes of absenteeism for 2005/06 and how Council was proactively addressing these by having in place the 6 recommended management tools for reducing absences.

The Chief Executive advised members that Council had set a target of 11 days absence per employee for the year 2007/08 but stressed that as a small employer with 123 full time equivalent staff, a few unavoidable long term illnesses could distort the averages, evidenced by the fact that for several years Council was one of the best of 26 Councils in short term absenteeism.

There was an objection to the negative reporting of absenteeism by the media and it was suggested that incentives for staff to attend work be investigated.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE (NILGOSC):**

The Chief Executive informed members that NILGOSC was due to be reconstituted for a 4 year term with effect from 1 October 2007 and appointment of chairperson and ten committee members were subject to approval of the Minister responsible for the Department of the Environment. Members noted that the appointments advertised via the media in April 2007 encouraged those interested to apply by the deadline of 14 May 2007.

#### **INTERIM NILGA EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS:**

The Chief Executive explained that currently Councils pay for members attending both NILGA Executive and Full Meetings and that NILGA pay for members attending the working group and outside bodies. Members noted that further to the introduction of the new system of member allowances, the NILGA Executive Committee had felt the following were most appropriate:

*Full NILGA Members – Council Representatives on NILGA Full meeting receive no allowance, as this is part of normal Council duties.*

*Executive Meetings – NILGA to pay an allowance on an interim basis for Executive meeting, equivalent to a maximum of £22 x 36 people x up to 12 meetings = (max) £264 per person, with Councils requested to pay milage.*

*Other NILGA Roles – NILGA will pay Office Bearers, Working Group Members and people on outside bodies a NILGA allowance.*

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

**CIWM Conference:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Alderman Robinson that the Technical Service Manager would attend the CIWM Waste Management Conference in Torbay to be held week commencing 12 June 2007 at a cost of £781+VAT.

**Vale Centre:** The Chief Executive informed members that a solicitors letter had been received on behalf of the Vale Centre seeking compensation

**Death of Sinn Féin Councillor:** It was agreed that a letter of sympathy would be forwarded to the family of Sinn Féin Councillor Michael McAnespie, Omagh District Council who had tragically died the previous week.

**NEXT MEETING:** - 5 June 2007.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS**  
**(The meeting ended at 7.40 pm)**

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_