

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE
1 NOVEMBER 2011**

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

PRESENT:

Aldermen M Coyle, J Rankin and G Robinson. Councillors O Beattie, A Brolly, B Chivers, B Douglas, G Mullan, T McCaul, J McCorkell, S McGlinchey, C McLaughlin, D Nicholl, A Robinson and E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk, Head of Finance, Head of Human Resources and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES: - None.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting dated 4 October 2011 were approved on the proposal of Councillor Beattie, seconded by Alderman Coyle.

MATTERS ARISING:

Page 2 – Heating of Buildings: Given the current economic climate whereby many ratepayers were struggling to heat their homes, it was stressed that Council needed to lead by example by reducing energy used in all of its buildings. It was also stressed that when reducing the heat in buildings there was a need to take into consideration that many disabled people had a lower intolerance to the cold than those who were able bodied. The Chief Executive clarified that Council had a dedicated officer who looked at the energy efficiency in all of council buildings.

HEAD OF FINANCE MONTHLY REPORT:

Payment of Accounts: The Head of Finance presented the payment of accounts for the month of September 2011. He answered queries on payments to Coleraine Borough Council for waste and to RPS for the Recycling Centre at Dungiven. The Head of Finance agreed to report back to Councillor Stevenson on the amount of money raised from the Kieran Goss concert. The accounts as presented were approved by members.

Summarised Accounts for 6 Months Ending 30 September 2011: The Head of Finance presented summarised financial information for 6 months ending 30 September 2011. The variances relating to salaries & wages, waste disposal, vehicle costs, energy costs, loan/lease charges, other income and rates reserve clawback owed to the MOD and BT were noted by members.

It was agreed at a query on ownership of the former MOD site at Ballykelly would be passed to the Director of Development. It was also agreed that the Director of

Development would update members on the Management Agreement for the pitch at the Grammar School.

2010/11 Audited Accounts Adjustments: The Head of Finance presented a report on the 2010/11 Audited Accounts with adjustments which included that £53k had been added to the rates income and that additional costs of £62k & £36k had arisen as a result of new accounting treatment of closure and aftercare costs regarding the landfill site. Council would have incurred these costs in the next 2 or 3 years, therefore, the adjustment was a timing issue. It was noted that Councils' financial statements had received an unqualified audit opinion.

Councillor Allowances – Proposed Change in Payment Date: In the interest of efficiency, members agreed with the proposal to change the date for payment of Councillors' Allowances and mileage claims to the 4th working day from the end of each month.

2012/13 Estimates Timetable: The Head of Finance circulated a timetable setting out dates and deadlines for the 2012/13 estimates. It was noted that a meeting would be held with Councillors on the week commencing 19 December and that a special Support Services meeting would be held on the draft estimates on 12 January 2012, with the rate being stuck at the Monthly meeting held on 7 February 2012.

Local Government Finance Act & Prudential Code: The Head of Finance explained that that above Act and Code was effective from 1 April 2012. He said that the main items which would affect the Council were as follows:

- Estimates for 2012/13 plus estimates for 2013/14 and 2014/15. Estimates for 2012/13 will be as in previous years and the following 2 years will be in summary form.
- Capital Expenditure for the three years 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- Borrowing limits for the three years 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15.

It was agreed that elected members and officers would undertake a CIPFA training course on the Local Government Finance Act & Prudential Code at a cost of £600 approximately. The date and time to be negotiated around members diaries.

HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES MONTHLY REPORT:

IN COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor Mullan, seconded by Alderman Robinson:

The Head of Human Resources presented the Human Resource Report for November 2011, which detailed the total number of employees & temporary workers, recruitment & selection, absenteeism & cause of absence and issues relating to investors in people. The report was adopted on the proposal of Alderman Coyle, seconded by Councillor Beattie subject to the following:

Analysis of Cause of Absence: The Head of Human Resources explained that analysis of absence because of musculo-skeletal problems revealed that two employees from Roe Valley Leisure Centre accounted for 82% of absences and

18% of absences were Technical Services staff. Members welcomed that there were no employee's absence from work through stress compared to two years previously.

Potential Industrial Action: The Head of Human Resources advised that NIPSA, GMB, UNITE and UNISON had recently balloted their members in local government on the question of strike action relating to pensions, pay and staffing reductions, with a view to taking action on 30 November 2011. She said that the trade unions had a statutory duty to inform Council of the result of the ballot and give at least 7 days notice before beginning any industrial action. She added that Council was currently reviewing contingency plans to ensure that statutory duties would continue to be met and that essential service delivery would be maintained where possible. It was noted that taking part in industrial action could have an effect on employees pay and pension entitlement and that employee's would be made aware of this.

Employee Group Grievance: Members welcomed that the five employees had withdrawn their grievance regarding the removal of overtime and that matter was now closed.

Agency Workers Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011: Members were advised that from 5 December 2011 the above legislation would come into operation given Agency Workers the right to the same basic employment and working conditions as if they had been recruited directly when they complete a qualifying period of 12 weeks in the same job. Workers would have access to collective facilities from first day of employment and after 12 weeks would be entitled to equal treatment rights relative to pay and other working conditions. This was welcomed by members.

Severe Weather Policy & Procedures: The Severe Weather Policy & Procedures which outlined the necessary steps the organisation, managers and employees should take in severe weather conditions was adopted by Council.

Councillor Training: Councillor Brolly proposed, seconded by Councillor Chivers that Councillor Nicholl would undertake the Advanced Diploma in Civic Leadership & Community Planning at the University of Ulster at a cost of £2,250 funded from the corporate training budget.

OUT OF COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Councillor Chivers.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Bus Shelter – Lilac Avenue: Members were advised that a site meeting had been organised with Roads Service, the PSNI and Translink regarding provision of a bus shelter at Lilac Avenue and that this would take place on 8 November at 9.30am.

NEXT MEETING: - 6 December 2011.

THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 7.55 PM.

Chair: _____