

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE
2 DECEMBER 2008**

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

PRESENT:

Aldermen G Mullan, J Rankin and G Robinson. Councillors A Brolly, P Butcher, M Carten, B Chivers, M Coyle, M Donaghy (chair), B Douglas, J F McElhinney, C Ó hOisín A Robinson, L Cubitt and E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Clerical Officer, Director of Support Services and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES: - None.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting dated 4 November 2008 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Butcher.

MATTERS ARISING: - None.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS:

In response to a query, the Director of Support Services said under the terms and conditions of contract, essential car users were entitled to receive the monthly allowance for a limited period when off sick or on maternity leave. The payment of accounts for the month of October was approved.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

IN COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín.

The Director of Support Services presented the Human Resources Report dated 2 December 2008, which detailed current staff levels, recruitment & selection, training & development, absenteeism, single status implementation and Development Services funding. The report was adopted on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Chivers subject to the following:

- ◆ A member queried who authorised that an officer covering a post temporarily could attend a course costing £925+VAT. The member was advised that the query would be forwarded to the officers' line manager. The Chief Executive and Director of Support Services said that the system and policy around booking courses would be reviewed in light of the concern raised.
- ◆ In response to a query, the Director of Support Services reminded members that it had been agreed that the service provided by Carecall would be reviewed year on year.

OUT OF COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Coyle.

NJC Documents: The NJC circular 2/08 2008/09 Payscales & Allowances and circular detailing Chief Officers pay for 2008/09 were noted.

Application for Car Loan: The application for car loan Number 37 was approved.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland – Article 55 Review: The Director of Support Services explained that under Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 all registered concerns were required to complete at least once every three years a review of their employment composition and practices.

The Director of Support Services gave a summation of the report content and said the report would be forwarded to the Equality Commission for review and suggested change. Agreed.

NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BUTCHER:

Councillor Butcher proposed:

‘That this Council demands an assurance from Translink that the Derry Belfast train service will be maintained at Bellarena Station and that the facility is upgraded to comply with Disability Access Regulations.’

Councillor Butcher requested that the Chief Executive write to the board of Translink to get clarity on the following:

1. does the Bellarena halt comply with Health & Safety regulations under DDA? .
2. if not, when will work commence to bring the station up to DDA compliance?
3. request a statement of intent on the long term future of the station.

Members queried why there were no clear cut public statements from Translink on the matter and if they were considering closing the station, why had Council should have been informed in the first instance? Councillor Robinson indicated that the DUP had received confirmation that Translink were reviewing the viability of the halt at Bellarena and that decision on the future of the station would be made after the result of a track capacity study.

The motion was seconded by Councillor McElhinney and declared carried, 13 for, 0 against.

DECISION ON TRANSITION COMMITTEE FORMULATION:

The Chief Executive reminded members of guidance previously circulated from Sammy Wilson, Minister for the Environment which increased the number of Councillors on the Transition Committee from sixteen to twenty for the Causeway Coast Council area, that is five from Limavady, Coleraine, Moyle and Ballymoney Councils. He said as a result a further paper had been issued to Council setting out two examples of arriving at nominations through the use of d’Hondt and by proportionality equation. It was recommended that:

1. *Council resolves to form a Joint Committee under Section 19 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 to carry out the functions of the Transition Committee and apply to the DoE to have the Transition Committee established as a body corporate;*
2. *the Transition Committee have five members from each Council, that is a total of twenty, the maximum size possible since the cluster has the greatest number of Councils;*
3. *the term of appointment for the duration of the Transition Committee would be until the fourth day after the election in May 2011 to the new Councils;*
4. *Councillors to be nominated based on "existing political strength" that is based on current numbers of party members in Council.*

A member stated that he felt that the advice given by the Chief Executive was unbalanced and was critical of the reference to the possible use of d'Hondt. The Chief Executive rejected this accusation and stressed to Council that both d'Hondt and proportionality equation had been given as illustrations on how nominations could be made as both methods had been used by Councils in the past. He confirmed that he had not made any recommendation on what system to use nor was Council restricted to the examples given.

In the discussion which followed a number of views were expressed on the use of both methods for nomination. In an attempt to progress the debate, Councillor Coyle proposed that Council agree points 1, 2 and 3. This was seconded by Councillor Butcher and agreed.

With regard to point 4, Councillor Ó hOisín proposed that Council follow the practice currently used within Council by the use of d'Hondt. This was seconded by Councillor Butcher.

Councillor Stevenson proposed an amendment that Council look at the unionist parties as 1 entity and that the proportionality method be used to select members to the Transition Committee. This was seconded by Alderman Rankin but on being put to the vote was declared lost, 6 for, 9 against. The substantive motion was put to the meeting and declared carried, 9 for, 6 against. The unionist parties walked out of the chamber at this point.

It was agreed that nominations to the Transition Committee would be discussed at the full Council meeting on 16 December 2008.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- ◆ A picture was presented to Council from Maiden City Motor Club showing aerial shot of charity event supported by Council held at Shackleton Barracks earlier in the year. It was agreed that a letter of thanks would be forwarded to the event organising committee who had raised over £40k for charity.

NEXT MEETING: - 6 January 2009.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 9:05 pm)

Chair: _____