

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

SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

3 APRIL 2012

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 (Chair), 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: - Councillor McCorkell.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting held 6 March 2012 were approved on the proposal of Alderman Coyle, seconded by Councillor Chivers.

MATTERS ARISING:

Queries on the January 2012 Payment of Accounts: The Head of Finance confirmed that maintenance costs were included in the contracts for vehicle hire. However, Council pays for brushes and any damage caused by Council. He also clarified that the payment made to the Green Shed recycling project saved Council the cost of lifting unwanted furniture and on landfill costs. It was agreed that queries on the payment to the project in the long term would be forward to the Director of Environmental Services.

HEAD OF FINANCE MONTHLY REPORT – APRIL 2012:

Payment of Accounts: The Head of Finance presented the payment of accounts for the month of February 2012 which was subsequently approved by Council.

Summarised Accounts for 11 Months Ending 29 February 2012: The Head of Finance presented summarised accounts for the 11 months ending 29 February 2012. The variances relating to payroll, waste disposal gate fees, vehicle costs, energy costs, loan/lease charges and other income were noted by members. He drew member's attention to the variance for Firmus Gas which had increase from £30k to £36k adverse.

General Grant 2011/12: The Head of Finance advised that the DOE Minister had approved the reinstatement of the reduction to the resources element of the General Grant which had been made at the beginning of the 2011/12 financial year. He said that the payment of £80,511 to Limavady Borough Council would be made as soon as possible. He added that earlier in the year Council had been

notified that there would be a reduction of £6k in the de-rating element of the General Grant, therefore overall Council would receive an additional £74.5k of General Grant. Welcomed.

Domestic Rates Bill 2012/13: The Head of Finance circulated a report which compared the average domestic rates bill of the 26 councils in Northern Ireland. It was noted that Limavady was ranked 13 highest out of the 26 Councils.

Pension Scheme – Policy Statement on Employers’ Discretions: The Head of Finance explained that under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations (NI) 2009, Council was required to publish and keep under review its Policy Statement on certain discretions, which could be exercised under the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2009. He said that under the current policy approved in April 2010, Regulation 18 on Flexible Retirement allowed early payment of total accrued benefits to employees meeting the terms of its Flexible Retirement Policy under paragraph 6.4 except for employees aged 65 or over. He recommended that point 4 of the terms of the Flexible Retirement Policy be amended to remove the phrase **or to the age 65 or less** and that point 7, **an employee cannot flexibly retire after the age of 65** be removed. Agreed.

Councillors Allowances: The Head of Finance tabled details of Councillors Allowances for the year 2012/13. It was noted that the basic allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance would be reduced by two thirds for those Councillors who also served as a MLA or MP.

HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES MONTHLY REPORT – APRIL 2012:

IN COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor Chivers, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin:

Human Resources Report: The Head of Human Resources presented the Human Resource Report for April 2012, which detailed the total number of employees & temporary workers, recruitment & selection, absenteeism & cause of absence, long term sick details and requests for carry over of annual leave. The report was adopted on the proposal of Alderman Robinson. seconded by Councillor Mullan subject to the following:

- **Local Government Pay Update 2012:** The Head of Human Resources reported that correspondence had been received from the Local Government Association to confirm that the National Employers’ were unable to make a pay offer to local government employees for the year 2012/13. She said that the Employers had declined a request from the unions to refer the matter to arbitration and they in turn had invited the unions to begin meaningful discussions on pay and other issues in order to avoid a fourth year pay freeze in 2013/14. In response to a member who queried the possibility of industrial action, the Head of Human Resources confirmed that it was not anticipated that there would be a pay freeze for a fourth year.
- **Policing and Community Safety Partnership Update:** The Head of Human Resources updated members on staffing issues for the newly established PCSP. It was noted that the next stage in the process would be the selection process to

determine who would fill the post of PCSP Manager and that the employee who was potentially redundant would be offered the position of PCSP Officer.

- **Condolences:** It was agreed that a letter of sympathy would be forwarded to the family of the late Desmond Deeny, a former employee of Council.

OUT OF COMMITTEE on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Mullan.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: - None.

NEXT MEETING: - 1 May 2012.

THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 7.35 PM.

Chair: _____