

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

SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

4 DECEMBER 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, T McCaul, J McCorkell (Chair), S McGlinchey, C McLaughlin, G Mullan, D Nicholl, A Robinson and E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

APOLOGIES: None

ROADS SERVICE AUTUMN CONSULTATION:

The Chair welcomed Ms Deidre Mackle, Divisional Roads Manager and Mr Austin Montgomery, Section Engineer to the meeting.

Ms Mackle stated that the main purpose of the report was to give an update on the progress of delivery of the work programmes and to consult with Council about the scheme priorities for 2013/2014. She said that the operation of a preparation pool of major schemes without a funding commitment was allowing the Division to take some important major schemes on the strategic route network through the statutory processes and to be in a good position when funding would be confirmed.

Ms Mackle presented the Northern Division Interim Roads report which detailed work completed in 2012 , progress on schemes planned for 2012/2013, including resurfacing of roads and pathways, surface dressing, drainage, major utility works, winter service, minor works schemes, traffic schemes, traffic management, maintenance of structures, street lighting and major works schemes.

Alderman G Robinson and Councillor A Robinson joined the meeting at 7.05 pm.

The following points were made during the presentation:

- There was no provision in the 2011-2015 Northern Ireland budget for the construction of the A2 Ballykelly Bypass and it would be dependant on funding being made available by the Executive through the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021 process.
- The Public Inquiry report on the A6 Londonderry to Dungiven dual carriageway was expected to be complete by the end of March 2013.

Construction would still be subject to the availability of finances. *Alderman Coyle declared an interest as a landowner in this area.*

- An environmental statement was currently being prepared for the A37 Gortcorbies Climbing Lane. The disposal of a substantial volume of surplus material arising from the construction scheme had frustrated the development of the scheme.
- Successful funding bids had increased spending on resurfacing from £176k to £1.1m and footway resurfacing increased from £50k to £210k.
- Northern Division was prepared and ready for the winter with 40 gritters and 89 men on standby and plentiful reserves of salt.
- Roads Service had a contract with the Meteorological Service for the provision of weather forecasts throughout the winter period but would continue to utilise local knowledge and experience of staff.

During the question and answer session the following points were discussed:

- Roads Service confirmed they were working on reducing the backlog of unadopted roads.
- Roads Service was investigating ways of reducing light pollution.
- Both the A37 Gortcorbies Climbing Lane and the A6 Dungiven By-Pass should be given priority to provide better access to Altnagelvin Hospital and the Royal Victoria Hospital.
- Vehicles were continuing to drive over and cause damage to the new paving in Market Street.
- Possibility of putting a vehicle constraint on a section of the Legavallon Road was being investigated.
- The issue of congestion caused by drivers parking on the road at the Bovally clinic would be investigated.
- Members to be advised where the footpath between Bellarena School and Bellarena Station was on the priority list.
- The disabled parking bays in Dungiven were welcomed.
- Roads Service agreed to investigate the report that a section of road between Cartens Road and Laurel Road was cracked because of the constant use by a contractor's lorries.
- Serious consideration needed to be given to the A2 Ballykelly Bypass in the light of the relocation of the DARD HQ and staff to Ballykelly.
- The request to install street lighting on the Limavady By-pass has been turned down on a number of occasions as it did not meet the criteria for lighting provision on rural roads.
- Roads Service would look at the request for improved lighting on Catherine Street near the Housing Executive Offices.
- The flagged footways at Albert Terrace (Linenhall Street) needed to be improved but because of lack of funding only spot repairs could be carried out.
- Confirmed that visibility splays were cut with several swathes at road ends. Roads service to be advised if this was not being done.
- The leak at 300 Drumsurn Road caused by the natural spring needed to be resolved between Northern Ireland Water and the Roads service.
- The whole of the road in front of Gortnaghey School needed to be salted.

Mr A Montgomery, Mr R Scott and the Roads Service staff were congratulated on the programme of work carried out in the Borough and thanked for their help and co-operation.

The Chair thanked Ms D Mackle and Mr A Montgomery for attending the meeting.

Ms D Mackle and Mr A Montgomery left the meeting at 8.15 pm.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting held 6 November 2012 were approved on the proposal of Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor C McLaughlin.

MATTERS ARISING: None

HEAD OF FINANCE MONTHLY REPORT – DECEMBER 2012:

Payment of Accounts – October 2012: The Head of Finance presented the payment of accounts for the month of October 2012 which was approved by members.

Accounts for 7 Months Ended 31 October 2012: The Head of Finance presented the accounts for 7 months ending 31 October 2012 and advised that there were no major changes in the variances reported in the 6 months accounts ended 30 September 2012.

Rates Estimate Workshop: Members were reminded that a Rates Estimates workshop would be held on Monday 17 December at 7 pm in the Council Chamber. The Chief Executive agreed to send out a further e-mail to remind all members.

The Head of Finance Monthly Report was approved on the proposal of Alderman G Robinson, seconded by Councillor B Douglas

HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES MONTHLY REPORT – DECEMBER 2012:

IN COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor C McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor A Robinson.

Human Resources Report: The Head of Human Resources presented the Human Resource Report for December 2012, which detailed standing items including total number of employees & temporary workers, recruitment & selection, absenteeism & cause of absence, and long term sick details.

Staff Career Breaks: The Head of Human Resources answered queries on staff entitlement to career breaks and confirmed that the normal period for a career break was 2 years but in exceptional circumstances staff could request an extension to this. She advised that Council was under no obligation to grant a career break and that it was solely at management's discretion.

Volunteer Policy: In response to a member’s query the Head of Human Resources confirmed that all volunteers were properly supervised and would undergo a shortened induction process.

The Head of Human Resources Monthly Report was approved on the proposal of Councillor G Mullan, seconded by Alderman G Robinson.

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

NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY ALDERMAN J RANKIN AND COUNCILLOR E STEVENSON

Before reading out the notice of motion Councillor E Stevenson asked the Chief Executive to confirm that he was content for him to proceed with the notice as written. In response the Chief Executive stated that should the motion be accepted that it would be subject to a policy screening exercise as required by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act and after that possibly an Equality Impact Assessment.

Councillor E Stevenson proposed that:

“We the undersigned hereby propose that Limavady Borough Council recognises the sacrifice of the many fallen and injured service personnel of the Borough serving in recent international conflicts; realises the potential for this Council and other statutory bodies to provide practical and moral support to service personnel, veterans and their families; and commits to give meaning to its support for our service personnel and veterans by signing the Community Covenant (attached) as a voluntary statement of our support for the local Armed Forces Community”.

Councillor Stevenson stated that the Armed Forces Community Covenant sought to support all aspects and regiments in the armed forces both at home and overseas and to ensure that personnel were treated with the dignity they deserved and were not disadvantaged in any way by their service. He continued that we had an obligation to those service men and women who came back from conflict wounded or disabled and it was a sad indictment on our community when service personnel were left to live on the streets or suffered from alcoholism. In conclusion he added that this was not about politics, religion or allegiance but was about fair treatment for those who had served their country.

Councillor J Rankin seconded the motion and added that there was an obligation on us to support our service personnel.

There followed a discussion during which the following points were made:

- The Covenant should include all personnel who served under “Operation Banner” including the RUC and Fire Service.
- Pleased to see that the 60,000 volunteers from the Republic of Ireland who fought for freedom and religious liberty had now been acknowledged.
- All of the sick, disabled and those in need of care should receive the utmost care equally – the motion if passed would create a hierarchy of need.

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act placed a statutory obligation on government departments and other public authorities to promote equality of opportunity in respect of all functions they performed and services they provided. These equality protections were already afforded to Veterans as they are with other groups under this legislation. Special treatment could not be afforded to one side of the community.
- The Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defence pointed out during a debate in Westminster on 21 December 2012 that the issue of a military covenant falls outside the remit or authority of this Council and would be for the Executive alone to decide.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared lost - 6 for, 9 against 0 abstentions.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Provision of Hospitality: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor C McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor A Brolly that Council would provide the hospitality for the guests during the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure's visit to Dungiven on Wednesday 5 December 2012.

NEXT MEETING: - 8 January 2013.

THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 8.35 PM.

Chair: _____