

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
5 JANUARY 2004

Minutes of a meeting of the above Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, 7 Connell Street, Limavady at 7.30 pm on the above date.

PRESENT:

Aldermen M Carten, J Dolan, G Robinson (in the chair), Councillors A Brolly, F Brolly, B Brown, M Coyle, L Cubitt, M Donaghy, B Douglas, D Lowry, M McGuigan, G Mullan, J Rankin, E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Town Clerk, Economic Development Officer, Clerk
Chief Technical Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

None.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of meeting held on 1 December 2003 were approved and signed, on the proposal of Councillor M Coyle, seconded by Councillor M Donaghy subject to an apology from Councillor D Lowry being noted.

MATTERS ARISING

None.

The Town Clerk informed members that a deputation from Dungiven had submitted a request to attend the meeting during the discussion about the civic amenity site in Dungiven.

Following discussion Councillor L Cubitt proposed, seconded by Councillor F Brolly, that the meeting should continue with the Economic Development business and that the delegation be permitted to attend during the discussion about the civic amenity site in Dungiven.

Councillor L Cubitt thanked members and staff for their condolences following the recent death of his mother.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT – JANUARY 2004:

The Economic Development Officer presented his report for January 2004 and enlarged on it as follows:

Broadband: The Economic Development Officer informed members that a trigger level of 500 registrations had been set for Broadband enablement of the Dungiven exchange. He confirmed that Council had been approached by BT and local interests to support campaigns to encourage Broadband registrations in Dungiven, Feeny and Bellarena.

He outlined the issues of fair competition which needed to be considered by Council. He recommended that the Broadband Partnership which was set up by Council in February 2003 should be recalled and that interested parties locally be invited to join. He further recommended that BT be invited to attend the Partnership meeting for discussion.

Following discussion it was unanimously agreed to reconvene the Broadband Partnership to further discuss the issue and that a letter be written to the Chief Executive of BT, N Ireland expressing Council's concern that some of the exchange areas in the Borough were not being addressed as quickly as others.

Invest NI: Members welcomed the recent announcement from Hüco Lightronic following the official opening of its new 22,000 sq. ft manufacturing premises at Aghanloo Industrial Estate.

The Economic Development Officer's report for January 2004 was adopted, on the proposal of Councillor L Cubitt, seconded by Councillor F Brolly.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

DUNGIVEN CIVIC AMENITY SITE:

The Chief Technical Services Officer joined the meeting at 8.20pm.

The Chairman welcomed a number of residents from developments adjoining the proposed Dungiven Civic Amenity Site who objected thereto and the Mayor passed to the Chair a petition containing the signatures of some 1206 residents who also objected to the development of the civic amenity site.

Officers explained that at a meeting in Dungiven on 18 December 2003 with residents, objectors had vigorously registered their objections to the scheme and had requested that Council would reconsider the proposal.

In the discussion that ensued the following points were made:

- members acknowledged the fears and concerns of the residents;
- it would be appropriate to be mindful of the Wednesbury principles in arriving at a decision;
- whilst existing civic amenity sites were maintained to a high standard and did not represent a nuisance to adjoining properties, this site was unacceptable as it would be extremely difficult to access the main road;
- it would be unreasonable for the Council to proceed with the scheme against the wishes of 100% of the people of Dungiven;
- Council should listen to the objections and look for an alternative site outside the town;
- Council had unsuccessfully looked for a site in Dungiven for some considerable time and this site was the only site available and had been granted the necessary statutory approvals;
- Council needed to consider the requirements of all the residents of the Benevenagh District Electoral Area;
- Council had taken the decision to develop this site on the best available advice;
- Care needed to be taken to avoid civic amenity sites being given a bad name;
- It was clear that a civic amenity site was needed in Dungiven and, accordingly, the support of the public should be enlisted to identify alternative sites, and
- Abandonment of the contract would adversely affect Council's recycling targets as required by Government.

The Chairman thanked the deputation of residents for their attendance and they then left the meeting.

IN COMMITTEE

Officers advised members of the implications of both proceeding with the contract or terminating the contract for the construction of the civic amenity site at the Bleach Green.

After further discussion it was agreed, on the proposal of Councillor D Lowry, seconded by Councillor B Brown, to authorise the Chief Technical Services Officer to negotiate with the contractor, without prejudice, the termination of the contract and to continue to give consideration to representations from the residents, with 9 voting for the motion, 3 voting against and 3 abstentions.

NEXT MEETING:

2 February 2004.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 10.10pm)