

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE  
5 AUGUST 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, G Robinson and J. Rankin. Councillors A. Brolly, P. Butcher, M. Carten, B. Chivers, L. Cubitt, M. Coyle, M. Donaghy (chair), B Douglas, Councillor Ó hOisín, J.F. McElhinney and E. Stevenson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Committee Clerk, Finance Manager, Human Resource Manager and the Chief Executive.

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Robinson

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of meeting dated 3 June 2008 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Carten.

**MATTERS ARISING:**

- ◆ Members were advised that the review of Technical Services Department had been delayed due to holidays and annual leave but a report would be presented to Council in September 2008.
- ◆ It was agreed that details of allowances for the Chief Executive and Directors would be made available to Council.
- ◆ It was queried if members/officers were unable to attend conferences once booked, should they be liable to reimburse costs to Council. It was suggested that those who attended conferences should report back to Council on main points from the event as recommended in the Local Government Auditors' Report. It was also suggested that a means of reporting may be required for conferences attended. The Chief Executive agreed to investigate if other Councils had a protocol in place regarding attendance at conferences.

**PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS:**

The payment of accounts for the month of May & June 2008 were approved on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Alderman Robinson. It was agreed that costs for filling in Greysteel Glen and for recruitment of agency staff would be made available to members at the next meeting.

**ACCOUNTS FOR 3 MONTHS ENDING 30 JUNE 2008:**

The Finance Manager summarised the accounts for the three months period ending 30 June 2008, which were noted as follows:

- ◆ Surplus - £97k for the 3 months ended 30 June 2008, an adverse variance of £1k from forecast of £98k and effectively a break even situation.
- ◆ Wages - £38k favourable due to lower care-taking costs for the playing fields and using employees for capital projects instead of contractors.
- ◆ Vehicle Costs - £38k adverse mainly due to higher than expected vehicle hire costs.
- ◆ Waste Disposal Gate Fees - £22k favourable as there was less tonnage than expected.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:**

**IN COMMITTEE** on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Alderman Robinson.

The Human Resource Manager presented the Human Resources Report dated 5 August 2008, which detailed recruitment & selection, employee training & development, absenteeism and single status implementation. The report was adopted on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Cubitt subject to the following:

- Members referred to the causes of long term absence in Councils in Northern Ireland and requested further details on the types of infections causing people to be off work.
- Reference was made to those who had left Council employment within the last month. The Chief Executive was asked why the post of Clerical Officer within his department had been re advertised when the Horwath Appraisal Audit had recommended that the post be made redundant. He responded that following publication of the Horwath Report in 2004, a Cross Departmental Implementation Team had been established to make proposals on re-organisation structure based on recommendation within the report. He explained that a report by the Implementation Team had not identified any posts for elimination or redundancy within his department. He also pointed out that re-organisation proposals approved by Council on 17 August 2005 contained the recommendation of no changes within the Chief Executives Department, however this would be reviewed by the new Chief Executive. He added that the post had been reviewed prior to being advertised and had been re-structured to improve efficiencies of service.

It was queried if a letter of thanks had been sent to those leaving Council employment and the protocol for members giving gifts. In the discussion which followed, it was agreed that the current system whereby those who worked with officers arranged a collection would be adhered to.

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

**MEMBER'S ATTENDANCE:**

Member's attendance at Council meetings for the year August 2007 to June 2008 were noted. Councillor Butcher was congratulated on his 100% attendance record.

**DOE CIRCULAR NO LG/13/08 – TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE:**

The DOE Circular LG/13/08 in relation to travelling allowance was tabled and noted. Reference was made to the rate for travelling by cycle and how this was higher than if travelling by car.

It was pointed out that the possibility of a bicycle pool for Council had been discussed by the Sustainable Development Group and it was suggested that this be pushed forward in order to reduce travelling expenses and Councils carbon footprint.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

- An invitation was tabled for members to attend the NILGA ‘Information Systems Strategy Regional Workshop’ on 7 August 2008 in Antrim Civic Centre.
- It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Stevenson that Council would participate in the INTERREG 4A project ‘Public Services for Crossborder Citizens’ which was open to local authorities in the Crossborder area.
- Council passed a resolution on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Coyle for a bank account to be opened with the Bank of Ireland.
- Councillor McElhinney thanked the caretaker and other members who had looked after him when he had felt ill at the meeting held on 1 July 2008.
- Several members referred to disquiet expressed amongst some workers who had to wear protective clothing displaying the Council logo as it had Irish on it. The Chief Executive outlined that the Council logo had been redesigned in 2003 and used in its current form since then. He said the logo had recently been printed on PPE equipment following the appointment of a new provider but would look further into the issue.
- Reference was made to contract awarded to an English company, Meridian Utilities Limited by Northern Ireland Water for clearing blocked drains in Northern Ireland and the impact this would have on local company Precision Cleaning who had previously provided this service. It was agreed that a letter would be forwarded to Northern Ireland Water and to the Minister for Regional Development, Conor Murphy regarding this decision.

**NEXT MEETING:** - 2 September 2008.

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS**  
**(The meeting ended at 8.15 pm)**

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_