

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**7 FEBRUARY 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), J McCorkell, 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:** - None.

**PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF LIMAVADY COURTHOUSE/HEARING CENTRE:**

The Chair welcomed Mr Philip Kingston and Mr Peter Jack, members of Limavady Solicitors Association to the meeting.

Mr Jack gave an overview of the response by Limavady Solicitors Association to the consultation on the proposed closure of Limavady Courthouse/Hearing Centre. He said that the proposed closure would not result in cost savings as resources would still have to be spent by other Government Departments. For example costs for the PSNI and witnesses to travel to Coleraine Courthouse; costs by the Court Service to retain the building and that the closure of the Limavady Hearing Centre would be unfair on court users, particularly the economically disadvantaged.

Mr Kingston indicated that the PSNI did not want Limavady Courthouse to be closed for operational reasons as their response time to any emergency would be slower given the travel back from Coleraine Court. He said that the Small Claims Court was a vital part of the Limavady Social fabric and that customers would be less likely and reluctant to issue proceedings for Coleraine Courthouse given the time and money travelling. He added that many people paid their fines at the Courthouse and if closed, deadlines would be missed leading to additional costs on the issue of Bench Warrants.

In addition to the above points, Mr Jack and Mr Kingston also highlighted that if saving money was the main priority, why was money not prudently spent on the structure of Limavady Courthouse over the last few years?

Members made the following points:

- There was a need to get the public on board to the closure and that this could be raised via social media sites such as Facebook or by petitions.

- If the Courthouse closed, the building would be left to rot and ruin. The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service should adopt an 'Invest to Save Policy' with regard to the Courthouse.

It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Coyle, seconded by Alderman Rankin that Council would respond to the consultation on the proposed Courthouse closure and put forward the same points made in the Limavady Solicitors Association.

The Chair thanked Mr Kingston and Mr Jack for attending the meeting.

#### **MINUTES:**

The minutes of meeting held 10 January 2012 were approved on the proposal of Alderman Coyle, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin.

**MATTERS ARISING:** - None.

#### **SPECIAL SUPPORT SERVICES MEETING:**

The minutes of special Support Services meeting held 12 January 2012 was approved on the proposal Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Chivers.

#### **HEAD OF FINANCE MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY 2012:**

**Payment of Accounts:** The Head of Finance presented the payment of accounts for the month of December 2012, which were approved by members.

**Summarised Accounts for 9 Months Ending 31 December 2011:** The Head of Finance presented summarised accounts for 9 months ending 31 December 2011. The variances relating to salaries & wages, waste disposal gate fees, vehicle costs, energy costs, loan/lease charges and other income were noted by members.

#### **HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY 2012:**

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

**Human Resources Report:** The Head of Human Resources presented the Human Resource Report for February 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 subject to the following:

**Leavers/Retirement:** It was agreed that best wishes from members would be extended to Mrs Sandra Sufferin, Purchase Ledger Clerk who was retiring at the end of the month after 33 years of service.

**Absenteeism:** Officers were congratulated on keeping the absenteeism levels below the target of 10 days annualised.

**The Diamond Jubilee Bank Holidays:** The Head of Human Resources reported that the Government had announced that there would be an additional bank holiday to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. She said that the 2012 late May bank holiday would be moved to 4 June and that an additional Jubilee bank holiday would be on 5 June 2012. It was noted that in accordance with Part 2, Para 7.1 of the Green Book, employees would be entitled to a normal days pay for the additional bank holiday.

**Policing and Community Safety Partnership:** The Head of Human Resources reminded members that at the 17 January 2012 Development Committee meeting Council had agreed a staffing structure to support the establishment of the new Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) to ensure that the statutory functions of the PCSP could be carried out. She said that in progressing this, Council must adhere to the Local Government Staff Commissions Guidance on the Staffing Implications of Organisation Development and Change and to Councils Redundancy Policy. She added that formal consultation had commenced with staff & trade union representatives and that work was also progressing across the Cluster Councils to agree Job Descriptions for the post of PCSP Manager and PCSP Officer. It was noted that once in place, these would be evaluated in accordance with the GLPC job evaluation scheme and then considered under the LGSC Guidance document.

The Human Resources Report was adopted on the proposal of Councillor Chivers, seconded by Councillor Brolly.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** - None.

**Funding – Ferry Service:** The following points were raised during the discussion on the ferry service:

- The level of funding set aside by Donegal County Council.
- Feedback from the Ferry Working Group meeting held 2 February 2012.
- Contract duration.
- Council's position on revenue deficit funding.
- The possibility of funding from other Councils and both Governments.

Following discussion Council confirmed that there would be no increase in the level of revenue deficit funding set aside within the draft budgets for 2012/13.

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

**NEXT MEETING:** - 6 March 2012.

**THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 7.55 PM.**

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