

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**8 JANUARY 2013**

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, S McGlinchey, C McLaughlin (Chair), 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:** Councillor J McCorkell

**CHAIR OF MEETING:**

In the absence of Councillor J McCorkell, it was agreed that the Mayor - Councillor C McLaughlin would chair the meeting.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of meeting held 4 December 2012 were approved on the proposal of Councillor A Brolly, seconded by Alderman M Coyle.

**MATTERS ARISING:** None

**HEAD OF FINANCE MONTHLY REPORT – JANUARY 2013:**

**Payment of Accounts – November 2012:** The Head of Finance presented the payment of accounts for the month of November 2012 which were approved without comment.

**Accounts for 8 Months Ended 30 November 2012:** The Head of Finance presented the accounts for 8 months ending 30 November 2012 and advised that there were no major changes in the variances reported in the 7 month accounts ending 31 October 2012. He said that the surplus for the 8 months was £66k and that as a budget surplus of £96k was forecast, there was an adverse variance of £30k. It was noted that Council had been notified at the end of November 2012 that the general grant would be reduced by £17k for the whole year.

**Report by the Chief Local Government Auditor in the year to 31 March 2012:** It was noted that the aim of the above report was to provide key messages from audits performed during the year to 31 March 2012 and to highlight a number of important issues that would impact on Councils in the future.

Reference was made to page 6 of the report which set out Councils' loan position at 31 March 2011. It was stressed that difficult times were ahead and that Council needed to be prudent and monitor spend. Noted.

### **HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES MONTHLY REPORT – JANUARY 2013:**

**IN COMMITTEE** on the proposal of Councillor B Chivers, seconded by Councillor A Brolly.

The Head of Human Resources presented the Human Resource Report for January 2013, which detailed standing items including total number of employees & temporary workers, recruitment & selection, absenteeism & cause of absence, and long term sick details.

**Request for Extension to a Secondment:** Council approved the request from Belfast City Council to extend the Building Control Surveyor secondment for a further year to 31 March 2014.

**Request for Extension to a Career Break:** It was recommended that the request for an extension to a career break by the Tourism Development Officer would be refused due to operational requirements and staffing arrangements. Following discussion it was proposed that as a caring employer that the request be approved for an additional 3 months. It was agreed that the request for an extension to the career break would be reviewed in consultation with the employees' line manager and a further recommendation brought back to Council for approval.

**Sponsorship Requests:** Council approved the request by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Officer to undertake a NEBOSH National Certificate in the Management of Health and Well Being at Work at a cost of £600.

**Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures:** Council adopted the revised and updated Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Procedures which was subsequently signed by the Mayor and Chief Executive.

**Health & Safety Training:** Members were advised that the Health Safety & Wellbeing Officer would deliver corporate health & safety training across the Council. It was noted that although most of the training would be at no cost to Council, the Level 3 IOBH course on Managing Safety was an accredited course ran via North West Regional College at a cost of £2,640 for 12 candidates.

**Audit of Human Resources:** Members congratulated staff from with the Human Resource Department on achieving a substantial level of assurance in recent audits carried out on recruitment & selection, staff training, attendance management and registration.

The Head of Human Resources Monthly Report was approved on the proposal of Councillor S McGlinchey, seconded by Councillor A Brolly.

**OUT OF COMMITTEE** on the proposal of Councillor B Chivers, seconded by Councillor T McCaul.

**NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR E STEVENSON:**

Councillor E Stevenson proposed:

‘That this Council fly the Union Flag from all Council owned buildings on designated days.’

Speaking on the motion Councillor Stevenson highlighted that the Union Flag was part of his identity and outlined the importance of the flag to Unionists. He added that the flying of the national flag of the country should not have been considered under the No Flag Flying Policy and that Council should revert back to flying the flag on designated days. Alderman J Rankin seconded the motion.

Alderman G Robinson proposed the following amendment:

‘That this Council reviews its current policy with the view to flying the Union Flag all year round at the Civic Headquarters.’ The amendment was seconded by Councillor A Robinson.

Alderman M Coyle indicated that the timing of the motion was insensitive and that the SDLP would not be supporting either the motion or the amendment. He said that the riots, damage to properties and threats received by his party colleagues since Belfast City Council had passed a motion to limit the flying of the flag had not been carried out by law abiding individuals and that flags did not make a person any more loyalist or nationalist, with them often being used to mark territories. He added that Northern Ireland was in danger of diverting back to the dark days of the troubles and urged people to sit down and talk about their differences.

Councillor A Brolly pointed out that the reason that Council had a No Flag Flying Policy was because of it being a public building and that people needed to feel comfortable when using it. It was also stressed that during his year as Mayor, that Councillor S McGlinchey had extended an invitation to elected members to sit down and discuss the flag but this invitation was declined.

Councillor B Douglas stated that Unionist identity was being eroded and proposed a further amendment:

‘That this Council fly the Union Flag at the front of the council building on designated days.’

Councillor E Stevenson withdrew his original motion at this stage in favour of Councillor B Douglas’s motion, which he proceeded to second.

The amendment put forward by Alderman G Robinson was put to the meeting and declared lost, 2 for, 9 against and 3 abstentions.

The amendment put forward by Councillor B Douglas was confirmed as being the substantive motion and on being put to the meeting and also declared lost, 3 for, 9 against and 2 abstentions.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

**NEXT MEETING:** - 5 February 2013.

**THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 8.00 PM.**

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