

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE
09 JANUARY 2014**

Minutes of special meeting held in the Council Offices, 7 Connell Street, Limavady at 7.00 pm on the above date.

PRESENT:

Aldermen J Rankin and M Coyle. Councillors O Beattie, B Chivers, B Douglas, G Mullan, T McCaul, J McCorkell, C McLaughlin, D Nicholl, A Robinson (chair), E Scott and E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk, Head of Finance, Head of Human Resources, Director of Development, Director of Environmental Services and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES: - Councillor A Brolly and S McGlinchey.

RATES ESTIMATES 2013/2014:

Draft Estimates 2014/15 Booklet:

The Head of Finance circulated a booklet which set out the key elements of the rates calculation and comparison of estimates. He highlighted the increases/decreases on loan/lease charges, wages & salaries and other expenditure, which resulted in a net expenditure at £10,009k, an increase of £472k or 4.95%.

The Head of Finance outlined the amount of the General Grant was £1,496k – an increase of £27k. After deducting a balance applied of £231k, the amount to be raised by the rates was £8,283k which is equivalent to a Domestic Rate of 0.4159 pence in the pound – an increase of 0.83% and a Non-Domestic Rate of 28.4742 pence in the pound – an increase of 0.83%.

The Head of Finance stated that the DoE would not finalise its budget until February/March 2014. Therefore the General Grant was currently an indicative figure, however, by the time the DoE finalises its budget the rate will have been struck. Therefore, if the General Grant were to change when the DoE finalises its budget it would be too late to affect the rates.

The Head of Finance explained figures set out in the appendices. He discussed the risks that the Senior Management Team had considered when preparing the Estimates. There were various potential cost increases and income decreases but the main risks identified were regarding landfill closure costs. He confirmed Council had an agreement with the DoE, meaning that, commencing in the financial year in which the engineering works to close the landfill site start, a set proportion of the excess costs is released to the general fund over a period of ten years. He outlined what this meant for 2014/15 and stated that if the SMT had considered it likely that the engineering works to close the landfill site would start in 2014/15 a charge of £107k would have had to be added to the “Net Amount to be Raised.” The Head of Finance confirmed that the SMT considered it unlikely that the engineering works to close the landfill site will start in 2014/15.

General Fund Balance as % of Net Expenditure/Risks

The Head of Finance presented the Rates Increase of 0.83% and stated the forecast general fund balance of £754,000 – 7.53% was £254k above the DoE recommended minimum General Fund Balance. The risks that might impact on the rates were noted.

The Head of Finance presented the Rates Increase of 0% and stated the forecast general fund balance of £686,000 – 6.85% was £186k above the DoE recommended minimum General Fund Balance. The risks that might impact on the rates were noted.

The Senior Management Team answered a number of queries from members on items included in the draft estimates as follows:

- It was noted that the replacement of facilities at Magilligan and Greysteel were essential as buildings were at end of lifespan however it was highlighted that any developments on projects under capital programme would be brought to Council for approval.
- Members requested play areas and allotments in locations throughout the Borough. The Director of Development confirmed that a budget had been earmarked for two play areas and refurbishment work however additional requests could be presented throughout the year.
- The Head of Finance confirmed the allocation of RPA costs to ‘population’ was decided on by the Department.

Alderman M Coyle proposed, seconded by Councillor J McCorkell that Council proceed with the 0% increase in the rates.

It was agreed that the rate would be struck at the February 2014 Monthly meeting of Council.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: - None.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 7.55 pm)

Chair: _____