

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

**SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE
12 JANUARY 2012**

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, M Coyle 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, Director of Development, Director of Environmental Services and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES: - None.

RATES ESTIMATES 2012/2013:

Notes

The Head of Finance opened the discussion on the rates estimates by providing an overview on movement on the net amount to be raised from what was discussed at the Estimates Workshop on 19 December 2011 as follows:

<i>Other Expenditure:</i>	
Car Ferry – Contracted Service	(17,500)
Dry Recyclable Gate Fees	(80,000)
Dry Recyclable Disposal Vehicle Hire	(29,120)
Economic Development Programme	<u>5,000</u>
	(121,620)
<i>Balance Applied:</i>	
Smoothing of Future Landfill Gate Fees	103,200
MoD/BT Rates Clawback	<u>108,553</u>
	<u>211,753</u>
Movement	90,133
Net Amount to be Raised (19 December 2011)	7,717,871
Net Amount to be Raised (12 January 2012)	<u>7,808,004</u>

Landfill Closure Costs:

The Chief Executive outlined that Council was continuing to seek clarification from the DoE as to whether costs associated with the remedial and infrastructure works of the closure plan could be treated as capital costs spread over 25 years as opposed to 3 years if the costs were treated as revenue. He said that financial assistance was still being pursued for the delay in closure of the site.

The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that tenders had been accessed for the Dry Recyclable service and that the tender submitted by Recyco had been the most advantageous as this would generate income to Council; hence that was why £80k had been taken out of the estimates. He said that the contract could not be awarded to Recyco until a challenge to the tender had been resolved.

General Grant:

The Head of Finance stated that the DoE would not finalise its budget until February/March 2012. 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. He said that once the General Grant was finalised by the DoE the Resources Element of the General Grant would not change during the year 2012/13.

Draft Estimates 2012/13 Booklet:

The Head of Finance circulated a revised booklet which set out the key elements of the rates which were loan charges, other expenses, salaries & wages and income, which resulted in a net expenditure at £9,026k, an increase of £151k or 1.71%.

The Head of Finance outlined the amount of the General Grant was £1,430k – a decrease of £52k. After adding a balance applied of £212k, the amount to be raised by the rates was £7,808k which is equivalent to a Domestic Rate of 0.4050 pence in the pound – an increase of 1.12% and a Non-Domestic Rate of 27.7302 pence in the pound – an increase of 1.12%.

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

- The contract with Recyco meant that Council would be a supplier of commodities and the contract would need to be managed very carefully, with the blue bins being checked for contamination.
- Property revaluations would have no real impact on the rates.
- It was acknowledged that a lot of Council facilities were aging and in constant need to repair. Officers would be looking at all facilities to consider what was needed immediately and for the future taking into account best value for money and other external factors.
- There was a view that higher rates was putting shops out of business and that many properties were vacant because of high rent.
- It was suggested that a working group be set up to see if Council was getting value for money in funding festivals.
- Take on board facilities provided by Hands that Talk when doing any upgrade to the Sports Pavilion.
- It was suggested that the £20k set aside for the Olympics/Queen's Jubilee was excessive. It was clarified that the £20k included additional payments for staff that might have to work during the bank holiday.
- It was noted that the budget included funding for a new play park but the location for this had not been decided.

Local Government Finance Act/Prudential Code – Capital: The Head of Finance explained that to meet the requirements of the Prudential Code, Council had to provide details of capital expenditure for the years 2013/14 and 2014/15. Following discussion, it was agreed that the capital works programme would include changing rooms at the Burnfoot, upgrade of Dungiven Sports Pavilion and a stand for the 3G Pitch at Scroggy Road.

It was agreed that the rate would be struck at the February 2012 Monthly meeting of Council.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: - None.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 8.10 pm)

Chair: _____