

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

**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**15 JUNE 2005**

Minutes of meeting held in the Council Offices, 7 Connell Street, Limavady at 7.30 pm on the above date.

**PRESENT:**

Aldermen G Mullan, G Robinson and J Rankin. Councillors A Brolly, P Butcher, L Cubitt, M Carten, B Chivers, M Coyle, B Douglas, C Ó hOisín, J F McElhinney, A Robinson and E Stevenson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Committee Clerk, Corporate Policy Officer, District Policing Partnership Manager and the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Donaghy and the Chief Finance & Administration Officer.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of meeting dated 14 March 2005 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Carten, seconded by Councillor Chivers.

**MATTERS ARISING:**

**Redevelopment of Multi Function Civic Centre – Former Town Hall:** Councillor Stevenson said the redevelopment of former town hall needed to be expedited as plans were behind schedule. Councillor Cubitt pointed out that Fold residents had only consented to Council using the road when demolition took place but not when the hall was being rebuilt.

**Internet & E Mail Policy:** The Town Clerk explained to Councillor Butcher that consultations were ongoing with trade unions regarding Council's Internet & E Mail Policy.

**Gortnaghey Community Association:** Councillor Chivers reported that Gortnaghey Community Association had been successful in secured funding for the proposed community hall.

**Bus Station Loop Road:** The Town Clerk explained that Roads Service had indicated in letter dated 20 April 2005 that Traffic Management staff were currently considering how best to manage the traffic at loop road in the long term and at present discussions were taking place with PSNI before decision on possible provision of waiting restrictions as short term measure.

**DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT:**

Miss Linda McKee, District Policing Partnership Manager presented the DPP Annual Report and enlarged thereon.

Miss McKee explained that in compliance with the Police (NI) Act 2000, the DPP annual report had to be presented to Council not later than three months after the end of each financial year.

Miss McKee referred to the achievements over the last year and said drug seizures were up and dealers were either on remand or being prosecuted. She said that the community policing team had doubled in size and the public had more confidence in the PSNI.

Alderman Robinson commended Miss McKee on the excellent job she had done since taking up the post of DPP Manager. He also paid tribute to Constable King and wished him a happy and long retirement. Councillor Cubitt indicated that the previous Mayor, Alderman Rankin had worked closely with schools on the theft of bicycles.

Councillor Coyle reminded members that the DPP was still on a steep learning curve and it was a major task engaging with the public.

Councillor Stevenson queried the number of unreported crimes and Miss McKee responded that whilst 25% of crimes went unreported, these were mostly petty crimes such as vehicle burning.

Miss McKee left the meeting at 8.05 pm.

Councillor Brolly stated that as Chairman of the DPP, Councillor Cubitt had shown a poor example by standing and giving his card to those individuals who were erecting flags on Edenmore Road. Councillor Cubitt responded that he had been there as an observer and that no paramilitary flags were erected when he was present.

**PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS:**

Payments for the months of March, April and May 2005 were approved on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Alderman Rankin.

The Town Clerk answered queries relating to the payments and it was agreed that a report would be brought back to Council on payments to Alan Miller for hire of lorries. Councillor Coyle suggested that Council should look at permanent recruitment rather than hire of drivers.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:**

The Confidential Human Resource Report dated 15 June 2005 was adopted on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Coyle subject to the following:

**Leavers:** The Town Clerk reported that Jonathan Gray, Senior Technical Service & Waste Management Officer would be leaving Council in July 2005 for

employment as a Programme Manager with Arc 21. He said that since July 2004, Paul Beattie had been acting as Economic Development Officer and this post needed to be filled permanently.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Chivers, seconded by Councillor Cubitt that both positions would be advertised immediately.

**Current Recruitment:** The Town Clerk explained that final interviews and selection for position of Chief Executive would take place in the Radisson SAS Hotel on 29 June 2005.

**Panel Training:** It was agreed that Alderman Mullan, Alderman Rankin, Councillor Coyle, Councillor Brolly, Councillor Cubitt, Councillor Ó hOisín and Councillor Stevenson would attend the recruitment interviewing and selection training session for recruitment of Chief Executive on Monday 20 June 2005.

**Reorganisation:** Members noted that following the retirement of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, Chief Building Control Officer and Chief Technical Service Officer, the new directors' posts would be effective from 1 July 2005.

It was also agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Alderman Rankin that the following second tier officers to support the Directors would be effective from 1 July 2005:

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>Gerry McCourt</i>  | 2. <i>Debbie Rogers</i>    |
| 3. <i>Nicky Matthews</i> | 4. <i>Jacqueline Glass</i> |
| 5. <i>Jonathan Gray</i>  | 6. <i>Eileen Magee</i>     |
| 7. <i>Paul Beattie</i>   | 8. <i>Barry Toorish</i>    |

**Sickness & Absence:** In noting the number of days lost through absenteeism, members agreed that a more detailed explanation was needed of the figures.

**Fair Employment Tribunal:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Carten, seconded by Councillor Chivers to appoint Mr Francis O'Reilly BL to represent Council in case FET/05 - Dermot McNally v Limavady Borough Council at estimated cost of £30,000. Councillor Cubitt voiced his opposition and said that costs would probably be in excess of £70,000.

#### **ROAD NAMING:**

**Request to erect bilingual signs:** The Town Clerk reported that Council had received a number of requests to erect street nameplates in English and in Irish. It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín that the following nameplates be erected in English and Irish.

<b>Rushie Park</b>	<b>Páirc Na Luachra</b>
<b>Bleach Green</b>	<b>Bóithrín An Tuair</b>
<b>Curragh Road</b>	<b>Bótharan Chorraigh</b>

## **COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI's) 2002/03 & 2003/04:**

The Corporate Policy Officer informed members that PI's were compiled by DOE and were not audited or confirmed by any external means of validation. He said that the figures should not be taken as accurate due to differences in accountancy methodology and lack of full response from some Councils.

The Corporate Policy Officer provided an overview of PI's for Council (Corporate), street cleaning, waste disposal, waste collection, environmental health, building control and indoor leisure facilities. Members noted that in overall cost terms, Council continued to perform poorly for indoor leisure facilities in relation to other Councils.

## **ABSENTEEISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCILS 2003/04:**

The Town Clerk submitted report on absenteeism compiled by the Chief Local Government Auditor in April 2005. Alderman Robinson proposed and Councillor Cubitt seconded that the Chief Finance & Administration Officer would provide a more detailed analysis of short and long absenteeism in Northern Ireland.

## **60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF V. J. DAY:**

Alderman Rankin, Alderman Robinson, Councillor Cubitt, Councillor Douglas, Councillor Robinson and Councillor Stevenson expressed an interest in attending the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of V. J. day hosted by Cheshire Regiment Association Limavady Branch on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2005.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Launch of Helani Strategic Plan 2005/2008:** The Town Clerk tabled invitation from HELANI to the launch of the second HELANI Strategic Plan 2005/2008. It was agreed that Chief Environmental Health Officer would attend the launch to be held in Burnavon Arts and Cultural Centre, Burn Road, Cookstown on Wednesday 22 June 2005.

**Confederation of European Councillors:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Butcher that Councillor Ó hOisín would attend the Confederation of European Councillors conference to be held 23 & 24 June 2005 in Mullingar.

**Appointment of Independent Members to DPP:** Members noted that PricewaterhouseCoopers were holding a training course for members of DPP for appointment of independent members on Saturday 2 July 2005 in Everglades Hotel, Londonderry.

**Launch of Disability Action Plan:** The Town Clerk explained that 2 members and 2 officers had been invited to the launch of Disability Action Plan to be held in Quality House, Belfast on 22 June 2005. It was agreed that Human Resource Officer and Corporate Policy Officer would attend.

**Council Photograph:** The Town Clerk reminded members that it was traditional for newly elected Councillor's to have an official photograph taken. It was agreed that an official photograph would be taken at 7 pm on Wednesday 22 June 2005.

**Town Hall Economic Appraisal:** The Town Clerk explained that DSD/ILEX had come back to Council regarding a further economic appraisal of the Town Hall. This was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Alderman Robinson.

**Danny Boy Festival Committee:** Councillor Chivers highlighted that an emergency meeting of the Danny Boy Festival Committee would take place on Thursday 16 June at 5 pm

**New Entrance to Staff Car Park:** Alderman Robinson referred to staff using the new entrance to the car park and said he hoped a pedestrian entrance could be left at the former entrance.

**Meetings Regarding Northern Area Plan:** Alderman Mullan explained that Magilligan Community Association had held an informative public meeting regarding the impact of Northern Area Plan. He requested that the Town Clerk write to the head to Planning Service requesting providing information seminars in each of the three District Electoral Areas in the Borough. Agreed.

**Attending Meetings of Limited Companies: IN COMMITTEE:** The Town Clerk referred to legal advice obtained jointly by Moyle, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine and Limavady Council's which indicated that district councils in Northern Ireland do not have legal power to set up or participate in Limited Companies. He said that Henry Toner QC, had advised that there was a 'grave risk' that a Court would hold the appointment of members of Limited Companies as being ultra vires and payment of allowances and expenses could also be deemed ultra vires.

The Town Clerk said the seriousness of the situation could not be overstated and it had grave implications for Council's involvement in organisations such as LSP's, Leader + Groups, Enterprise Agencies, RTO's and many other community based companies set up to further the economic and social development of each area.

The Town Clerk pointed out that CLGA was prepared to tolerate the status quo until new powers became available, as long as Council did not enter into any new arrangements in the interim. He said there was a risk that councils would be deemed a shadow director should any of these companies get into financial difficulty and individual members could no longer rely on Council's indemnity insurance should anything go wrong. Members noted that NILGA would raise this as priority at next meeting with the Minister. **OUT OF COMMITTEE.**

**NEXT MEETING:**

17 August 2005

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS**

**(The meeting ended at 11.00 pm)**