

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

PLANNING & SERVICES COMMITTEE

20 SEPTEMBER 2011

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

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk, Chief Executive, Building Control Manager and Ms Sharon Mulhern, Planning Service.

APOLOGIES: - None.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting dated 16 August 2011 were approved and signed on the proposal of Alderman Coyle, seconded by Councillor McGlinchey.

MATTERS ARISING:

Signage – Newton Square Car Park: A letter was circulated to members from Roads Service which advised that the one hour parking restriction on the perimeter of Newton Square car park has been reassessed in conjunction with the PSNI and it is considered that the signage was in accordance with recommended guidelines. The size of the signs were adequate given the restricted space available.

Alderman Coyle indicated that he was unhappy with this advice and said given the number of tickets issues by the Traffic Wardens that Roads Service should reconsider the location and visibility of the signs. It was suggested that the topic be raised with Roads Service during the Autumn Consultation with Council.

Disabled Parking Bays: In response to the request to relocate a disabled parking bay to the front of Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre, Roads Service advised that the disabled parking bays at the Bank of Ireland were well used and therefore would be retained. They also reaffirmed that a disabled parking bay should be provided within the cartilage of the Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre site.

Members refused to accept the response and requested that a representative from Roads Service meet with elected members on site to see first hand the parking problems experienced by disabled vehicle users.

It was suggested that members raise ongoing excavation works in Market Street during the site visit.

SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS: (Deferred applications – see appendix):

The Chair welcomed Ms Sharon Mulhern, Senior Professional & Technical Officer for the Limavady area to the meeting.

Review of PPS21: Alderman Coyle stated that Minister Attwood was reviewing how PPS21 was working in practice as many MLA's were arguing that it was being interpreted differently in different regions. He proposed that all refusals on the schedule due to PPS21 be deferred and that an office meeting be granted for each refusal until the review was complete. This was seconded by Councillor McGlinchey.

Ms Mulhern pointed out that she was unable to agree to this as she had not been given direction regarding the review and until guidance was available, planning applications would be processed as normal. Alderman Coyle suggested that Orchard House seek direction from Planning Service Headquarters.

B/2011/0105/F proposed single and two story rear extension, detached domestic garage and retention of existing front porch to dwelling house, 12 Bleech Green, Dungiven (Mr Gregory O'Kane): Ms Mulhern referred to the above planning application which had been recommended for approval the previous month and said that the application was still under consideration by Planning Service as there had been an objection to the application.

The following points were made:

- The application should not have appeared on the schedule until all matters had been dealt with.
- Planning Service had a duty to consider all viewpoints on applications.
- Decisions could be revoked at any time.
- New councillors should receive training on the planning process.
- Planning Officers were willing to give advice to Councillors and if need be applications could be prioritised.
- Members were advised to refer to Planning Service website on guidelines around applications.

Ms Mulhern answered queries on the applications listed on the deferred applications schedule and the decisions were accepted subject to the following.

D1 – B/2008/0183/F – housing development site on lands to the rear of 3, 5 and 7 Limestone Road (Doherty & Devlin Development) It was agreed that decision on this application would be held for 10 days to allow submission of further information.

D4 - B/2011/0056/O – dwelling and garage 100m North of 2 Muldonagh Cottages (Mr Lawrence Doherty) It was agreed that Council would not accept the recommend refusal on this application. Ms Mulhern agreed to hold issuing decision until after holding a meeting with MLA Cathal Ó hOisín to allow for further discussion. .

SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS: (New applications – see appendix)

Ms Mulhern answered queries on applications listed on the new applications schedule and outlined the nature of objections. The recommendations were accepted subject to office meetings being agreed for the following applications:

B/2010/0174/F – E K Properties
 B/2010/0372/F – Andrew Evans
 B/2010/0374/F – Liam Brolly
 B/2010/0379/O – Mr Nutt
 B/2010/0461/F – Daniel O’Kane
 B/2011/0049/F – Kieran Farren (*Alderman Coyle declared an interest*)
 B/2011/0053/F – Malcolm Maxwell
 B/2011/0085/O – R Loughery (*Council refused to accept the refusal decision*)
 B/2011/0128/RM – Mark Gibson (*Council refused to accept the refusal decision*)

The Chief Executive joined the meeting at 7.45 pm.

Comments outside the Schedule:

- *Ms Mulhern advised that John McGoldrick was acting up as the Divisional Planning Manager.*
- *RPA and staff cutbacks impacted on workload and issue to green forms.*
- *Planning Officers workload meant it was not always possible to give advice to applicants before applications were submitted.*
- *Alderman Coyle voiced concerns regarding the IT system used by Planning Service on validation of applications and neighbour notification and said that information that appeared was not always accurate.*
- *It was agreed that Councillor McGlinchey would act in place of the Chair of the Planning & Services committee during the office meetings being held on 30 September 2011.*

PRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY:

Members were advised that the presentation by the Public Health Agency would be rescheduled.

NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY ALDERMAN COYLE:

Alderman Coyle proposed that:

‘this council rejects plans by Translink to downgrade rail services which will impact on the residents of Limavady and calls on relevant government departments to made available the funds needed to upgrade the Belfast-Derry line between Coleraine and Derry’

Alderman Coyle outlined that since the formation of NIR in 1968, the rail line had declined from 900 to 206.61 miles at present. He said that the network had become badly run down by the frequent disruption/damage caused by the troubles and lack of investment. He added that his party colleague John Dallat had been informed that NIR were to get 20 new trains at a cost of £114 million, however the service between Coleraine and Derry would be reduced by 40% and buses laid

on as a substitute. Thus there was no real investment in trains to the North West and a lack of commitment in developing a long term service which would give Derry an important gateway to the rest of the island.

Alderman Coyle indicated that a new rail terminal was needed at the end of the Peace Bridge and the fact that Derry would be the City of Culture in 2013 was good reasons for upgrading the rail network to the North West. He said that this would help tourism, connect the two University Campuses and provide essential public transport for those reaching their place of work. He added that his party colleagues in Coleraine and Derry were fully behind the campaign for a better transport infrastructure and called on Council to also become involved as this would not just help Derry, but Limavady, Donegal and beyond.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mullan who said that the current proposals by NIR for the Derry Coleraine line were unacceptable.

Councillor Douglas stated that he did not agree 100% with the motion and was of the opinion that the rail link was not being downgraded. He said that pressure should be put on MLA's to get funding pushed forward for upgrade of the track.

Alderman Robinson and Councillor Robinson both agreed with the spirit of the motion but said cutbacks to budgets meant funding was not available to upgrade the rail line at present.

In summing up, Alderman Coyle welcomed members support to the spirit of the motion. He highlighted that the Foyle Ferry Service was in difficulties; the A6 at Dungiven was not going ahead for the foreseeable future and now that the rail service was being substituted by bus, pointed to no real commitment and the North West being ignored.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared carried, 15 for, 0 against.

ROADS:

The following issues were raised:

- ◆ A member highlighted that a pedestrian had received 14 stitches after falling in Market Street. He said that reassurance was needed from Roads Service that the street would not be dug up by utility providers for the foreseeable future.
- ◆ The Chief Executive confirmed that Council had entered into an agreement to grit the pavements in the town centres but only at the request of Roads Service.

WATER & SEWERAGE: - None.

HOUSING: - None.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Smell at the Broad Road: Members agreed to meet with Minister Attwood in Stormont on 3 October 2011 at 1.45 pm regarding the smell emanating from a site on the Broad Road.

Provision of Internal Audit: Following tendering process, it was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Rankin, seconded by Alderman Coyle that Moore Stephens would provide an internal audit service for the year 2011/112 and that the contract would be renewed thereafter.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: - 18 October 2011.

THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 8.30 PM.

Chair: _____