

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

24 JANUARY 2006

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

In the Chair: Councillor Coyle

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

In Attendance: Committee Clerk, Director of Environmental Services, Director of Development and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Douglas.

GOOD RELATIONS STRATEGY:

The Chair welcomed Ms Dorothy McKee, Red Hat Consulting to the meeting.

Ms McKee explained that from 2007 Community Relations would be diversifying into Good relations. She said it was expected that there would be a significant increase in the Northern Ireland budget for Good Relations in and that a future Good Relations Strategy was needed to concentrate on hard issues, such as the development of safe spaces for residents of the Borough, reducing tension at interface areas and recognising cultural diversity. She added that local government should play a central role in developing and co-ordinating action by promoting better relations, managing conflict and community divisions.

Members noted that since November 2005, Ms McKee had been working with Council in drawing up a new Good Relations Strategy and that Red Hat Consultants had met with the Senior Management Team, Service Managers Group and following on from this would meet with other frontline staff.

Ms McKee suggested that the key questions for Council were:

- What local issues do you think need to be taken into account in developing the strategy?
- What do you see as the future role of Councillors in relation to delivery of a future strategy?

Councillor Coyle suggested that migrant workers, band parades and monuments were just a few examples of sensitive issues that the strategy could address. Alderman Mullan indicated that criminality and the selling of drugs in estates should be added to the list. Councillor Brolly said she believed people should adhere to their culture but the flying of flags from May to September resulted in a large number of complaints and suggested that flag flying be limited to 1 or 2 weeks of the year.

In reply of Alderman Mullan, Ms McKee said although response had been slow to a mail shot that had been sent to all community groups on Good Relations, it was intended that local churches would be included in the consultation process. Councillor Cubitt said no amount of money would bring Good Relations to the Borough and that it would be impossible to impose this on people. He added that respect was needed from all sections of the community and suggested that schools be consulted as Good Relations were currently being promoted at primary school level. Councillor Stevenson said that Good Relations was something Council could only aspire to and Councillor Butcher suggested members who sat on community groups champion the Good Relations cause.

In conclusion the Director of Development said it was important that members agreed on a strategy before 2007 and that additional work, including surveys had yet to take place.

HOUSING GROWTH INDICATORS – RESPONSE TO THE EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC (EIP):

The Chair welcomed Mr Michael Graham, Associate Director, Farningham McCreadie to the meeting.

Mr Graham outlined background to the Regional Development Strategy and Councils objections to housing need figures up to 2015 and to the Housing Growth Indicators (HGI's) for the area. He said although the figures had been reassessed and uplifted by 25%, further objections had led the Minister to agree to an EIP and that a panel of experts would consider the soundness of the methodology and adequacy of housing need/allocations.

Mr Graham submitted draft response on matters to be considered and procedures & stipulations for submission to the EIP. Members voiced concern that the panel had set total response at 2,000 words for matter 2 (*500 for each of the four Councils that Mr Graham represented*) and said Councils was being penalised for using the same consultant.

Mr Graham advised that the panel were leaving themselves open to a Judicial Review and said it was important that all evidence be submitted on the day. He suggested that a possible way around the stipulation would be to provide a brief for the Chief Executive to address the EIP on 16 February 2006. Agreed. Alderman Mullan voiced concern that this might put the Chief Executive in a difficult position as he was new to the job and to the area and was not a planning expert.

In the discussion that followed, it was agreed that a letter of commonality with Councils' objection at being disadvantaged and prejudiced against would be forwarded to the DRD Minister and to the EIS panel on behalf of the four Councils. Councillor Butcher suggested that the panel be made aware that Mr Graham was a specialised consultant and through lack of competition was widely sought as an agent by many Councils.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting dated 30 November 2005 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Butcher subject to the following amendments:

Page 2, paragraph 5, line 1 ...amend 8.45 pm to 7.45 pm.

It was noted by members that Councillor Ó hOisín had suggested that the Chief Executive write to EHS requesting attendance at a forthcoming meeting to answer members' questions regarding the River Roe and Tributaries ASSI.

MATTERS ARISING:

Lands at Shanreagh Park: The Chief Executive reported that he was researching guidance for disposal of surplus land by Public Sector Bodies and would bring back a report at a later date. He also advised Councillor Cubitt that if the land at Shanreagh was disposed of there would be an obligation upon Council to repay to the Department the sum received by way of grant.

RATES ESTIMATES:

Members agreed that the rates estimates would be discussed at a Special Monthly Meeting of Council to be held 7 February 2006.

MINUTES FROM EXTERNAL BODIES:

The following minutes were tabled and noted.

- Western Group Environmental Health Committee - 29 September 2005
- Western Health & Social Services Council – 3 November & 1 December 2005
- Altnagelvin Hospitals Health & Social Services Trust – 3 November & 1 December 2005
- Foyle Health & Social Services Trust – 16 December 2005

CONSULTATIONS:

The Chief Executive tabled the following consultations documents and it was agreed that those members who wished to respond would contact the Corporate Policy Officer two weeks before the consultation deadline.

- a) Department of Environment - Consultation on PSV Licensing for Stretched Limousines (Response due 10 March 2006)
- b) Big Lottery Fund – Consultation on Draft Report on the Screening of Policies (Response due 16 March 2006)
- c) Department of Health – Consultation on Primary Dental Care Strategy (Response due 1 March 2006)

COURSES.CONFERENCES:

Future of Public Administration in Northern Ireland: It was agreed that the 1 Officer would attend the Future of Public Administration Conference entitled Transforming Northern Ireland's Public Services to be held 7 February 2006 in the Stormont Hotel Belfast at a cost of £255+VAT.

CIPFA – Effective Audit Committees: It was agreed that Audit Committee members, the Director of Support Services and the Chief Executive would attend

the CIPFA conference on Effective Audit Committees to be held 9 February 2006 in Stormont Hotel, Belfast.

Western Investing for Health Partnership: It was agreed that the Director of Environmental Services would attend the Western Investing for Health Partnership conference to be held 9 February 2006 in Manor House Hotel, Killadreas.

NILGA – Annual Conference 2006: It was agreed that Alderman Robinson, Councillor Coyle, Councillor Chivers, Director of Environmental Services and Chief Executive would attend the NILGA Annual Conference to be held 16 & 17 February 2006 in Newcastle, Co Down at a cost of £255+VAT.

International Festivals & Events Association: It was agreed that Councillor Brolly and the Chief Executive would confirm attendance at the above course to be held 15 – 17 March 2006 in Waterfront Hall, Belfast at a cost of £420 for the 3 day event.

NORTHERN IRELAND TOURISM AWARDS:

The Chief Executive tabled details of the Northern Ireland Tourism Awards 2005/06 and advised that whilst officers were not putting forward any recommendations, should members wish to nominate the Council for any category, this would be taken on board. Noted.

CORPORATE BRIEF & SCORECARD:

The Chief Executive presented a quarterly report on the progress of delivery of Councils Corporate Plan using the traffic light scorecard. Members noted the percentage achievement in comparison to the last quarterly report and it was agreed that the tourism objective on page 5 of the report be rescinded as there was no means of accurate measurement.

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

None.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Local Government Budget Protest: The Chief Executive explained that NILGA had requested that Council support the protest regarding budget cuts on 26 January 2006 and that the official slogan for the protest would be '**Rooker's Rubbish Rates Rise**'. It was agreed that attendance at the protest would be an approved duty.

Draft Response to Proposals to Reform the Liquor Licensing Law in Northern Ireland: The Director of Environmental Services tabled draft response on proposals to reform the Liquor Licensing Law in Northern Ireland for members consideration. Councillor Butcher explained that Sinn Féin had changed opinion from that given at the Environmental Services meeting and was in support of the response outlined by the Federation of Retail Licensed Trade. It was agreed that the draft response, including members' endorsement of the views of the Federation of Retail Licensing would be forwarded to the Department of Social Development.

Proposed Redevelopment of Site at Former Castle Restaurant: (IN COMMITTEE) The Director of Environmental Services explained that a formal written request seeking Councils' agreement to relocate a right of way at former Castle Restaurant had been received from the legal representatives of the owners of the site. He outlined the main points for decision by Council and in the discussion that followed it was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó hOisín, seconded by Councillor Cubitt that decision be deferred until the implications to change to right of way could be further investigated. **(OUT OF COMMITTEE)**

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- Invest Northern Ireland – Annual Report and Accounts 2004/05
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland - Summary of Monitoring Returns 2004
- RNID – Impact Report 2004/05
- Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission – Annual Report and Financial Accounts 2004-2005
- Community Development Foundation – Strengthening Communities – Annual Review 2004/05
- Community Foundation for Northern Ireland – Report 2005

NEXT MEETING:

28 February 2006

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 9.40 pm)