

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

26 OCTOBER 2005

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

In the Chair: Councillor Coyle

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

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

APOLOGIES:

Alderman Rankin.

CONDOLENCES:

It was agreed that a letter of condolence would be forwarded to Alderman Rankin on the death of his wife Emma. Members stood in silence for 1 minute as a mark of respect.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting dated 28 September 2005 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Carten, seconded by Councillor Carten subject to it being noted that on page 4, paragraph 2, 'Nominations to Special Sub Committee on Emblems within Council' that Councillor Douglas and other unionist members had stated that they would not take part in what could be considered a nationalist sub committee for removal of emblems within Council buildings.

MATTERS ARISING:

None

SINGLE STATUS:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Chivers to hold the discussion **IN COMMITTEE**.

The Human Resource Manager explained that in 1997 national representatives of local government employers and recognised trade unions came together to sign the Single Status Agreement, with the main objective being to harmonise terms and conditions of employment for APT&C and manual workers.

The Human Resource Manager outlined that the main features of the 1997 agreement had been – standardisation of working week to 37 hours; increase in holiday entitlement for former manual staff; standardisation on carry over of leave; leave after 10 years service; special leave and training and development.

She explained that although the process was slow and patchy in getting started, National Agreement had been reached in 2004 for implementation to commence by April 2006 and be completed by March 2007. She said this would involve new pay and grading structures and review of job descriptions to ensure there was no discrimination.

In outlining the way forward, the Human Resource Manager said a working group lead by the Chief Executive, Director of Support Services and representatives from each department would forward the process and this would be carried out transparently with the co-operation of employee representatives. She said the main objectives in the forthcoming months would be to conduct an equal pay audit; review outdated work practices; consider opportunities for improved service delivery and cost options. She added that Single Status would be progressed with the support and guidance of NJC/NIJC and SOCPO and that Council would be regularly updated on how this was progressing.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Douglas to come **OUT OF COMMITTEE**.

CORPORATE PLAN PROGRESS REPORT:

The Chief Executive reported that the current Corporate Plan had been compiled to cover the period April 2004 to March 2007 but had not been followed up with annualised Business Plans and that these would be in place for the year 2006/07.

He presented the Corporate Plan Progress Report and said that a traffic light score system had been used for reporting on the progress of aims and objectives within the Corporate Plan, with green being on target, amber off target but achievable with corrective action and those marked red not achievable or unlikely to be achieved without urgent action.

The Directors provided an explanation to members on departmental progress as set out within the report and members noted targets achieved and corrective action to ensure specific aims and objectives were attained.

Councillor Butcher referred to the number of aims scored red and said it was important that a policy be agreed for contributions to voluntary/community organisations. Councillor Brolly agreed and said the Community Development Officer needed to be more proactive and provide feedback or conduct surveys to assess the views of people in the community so that an action plan could be established. The Chief Executive confirmed that communication with the community would be addressed as part of Council's aim of developing an open communication culture.

Councillor Cubitt congratulated the Chief Executive on compiling the report given that he had been in the post a short period of time. In endorsing the report, Alderman Robinson advised members not to be critical of aims/objectives with a red score and that they should be mindful that Council had recently been restructured.

ALTNAGELVIN HOSPITALS HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES TRUST:

Minutes: Minutes of meeting held 5 May, 2 June, 7 July and 17 August 2005 were tabled and noted.

WESTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD:

Minutes: Minutes of meeting held 28 July 2005 were tabled and noted.

NILGA MEMBERS BRIEFING & AGM:

Minutes: Minutes of meeting held on 23 September 2005 were tabled and noted.

NOTICE OF MOTION:

Alderman Mullan proposed that:

“Limavady Borough Council calls on DOE Roads Service and other relevant statutory agencies to develop a local prevention strategy to minimise road traffic incidents within the district.”

Alderman Mullan welcomed to the public gallery relatives of Patrick Guyler who had been killed in a road traffic accident. He said that death and serious injury through road traffic accidents caused untold grief to families and the local community and as a public representative Councillors had a duty to heighten awareness and ensure road safety was improved.

Alderman Mullan stated that the motion had been tabled to encourage debate, to show solidarity with the bereaved and hopefully strengthen actions by government agencies to reduce deaths. He said that although the number of deaths on roads had declined over the last 30 years, there was still much that could be done at a local level and suggested that a forum be set up to develop a local strategy to compliment the NI Road Safety Strategy 2002 – 2012.

He pointed out that the forum could examine causation factors, including speeding, inattention, alcohol, drugs and carelessness emerging/turning right onto main roads. He said that there were many other associated issues, including enforcement of seat belt use, cycle safety, pedestrian safety and the use of lollipop people following WELB cost cutting measures.

In calling for the motion to be adopted, Alderman Mullan said local action should be complemented with approved legislation and that he looked forward to submitting comments on penalty points for none wearing of seat belts; breaching speed limits; using mobile phones while driving or giving the PSNI the right to seize uninsured vehicles.

Alderman Robinson indicated that he would support the motion in principle and said greater awareness & education was the key to preventing deaths on the roads. Councillor Stevenson agreed but pointed out that there could be difficulties on developing a local strategy.

Councillor Douglas reminded members that Limavady was one of the fastest growing towns in Northern Ireland, with increased volume of traffic and that road users should slow down and pay attention to the Highway Code. He suggested that members raise the issue of road safety when Council met with Road Service in November 2005.

Councillor Chivers voiced her approval to the motion and said she had personal experience of the grief road traffic accidents caused. Councillor Brolly said she fully supported what had been said on road safety but said she also had reservations on how a local strategy could be progressed.

In calling for the adoption of the motion, Alderman Mullan stated that the motion was not a panacea for every ill and although time was a great healer he would like to see as an initial first step that Council set up a forum on how a local strategy would be implemented and monitored.

The motion being put to the meeting was unanimously carried. It was agreed that the Chief Executive would look at the technicalities of setting up a forum/sub committee on implementation and monitoring of local plan to minimise road traffic accidents.

RESOLUTIONS:

It was agreed that the following resolutions be noted:

Submitted by Carrickfergus Council:

“Calling on Central Government to immediately increase the basic Winter Fuel Payment to £360, this being the current cost of 900 litres of heating oil.”

Submitted by Armagh City & District Council:

“This Council deplores the unilateral actions of the Minister and Planning Service. The changes to the planning consultation arrangements with District Councils represent a change in policy and have been introduced in such a way as to make a mockery of the statutory responsibility of Planning Service to consult with Councils.

The actions of the Minister and Planning Service fly in the face of Government policies for consultation and are in breach of their own arrangements for effecting policy change.

This Council demands that the Minister and the Planning Service postpone the proposed changes and actively engage with Councils to bring about real improvements in the planning system as a matter of urgency.”

CONSULTATIONS:

The Chief Executive tabled the following consultations documents and it was agreed that a copy would be forwarded to the leader of each political party for response two weeks before the consultation deadline:

1. Seat Belt Wearing in Buses and Coaches (response due 25 November 2005)
2. Making Services Safer in Sperrin Lakeland Trust (response due 25 November 2005)
3. OFM&DM – Promoting Equality of Opportunity: Consultation on the draft Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 (response due 30 November 2005)

COURSES/CONFERENCES:

Making the Planning System Work for Your Proposals: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Broly that the Chief Executive attend the Making the Planning Service Work for Your Proposals conference to be held 27 October 2005 in Culloden Hotel Belfast.

Chartered Institute of Housing Northern Ireland – Anti-social Behaviour Seminar: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor Carten that Alderman Robinson would attend the above seminar to be held 6 December 2005 in Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast.

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

None

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Western Education & Library Board: The Chief Executive reported that a meeting had been arranged for members to meet with the Chief Executive of Western Education & Library Board on 10 November 2005 at 3 pm in Western Board Offices, Omagh. It was agreed that attendance at the meeting would be considered an approved duty.

Request for EA Determination – Proposed Wind Farm: The Chief Executive tabled application for proposed wind farm on lands between Limavady and Coleraine, in the Townland of Dunbeg North of the A37 and requested members comments thereon. On their being no comments, it was agreed that the application be noted.

Vehicles - Loan Sanction Approval: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Carten, that Council seek Loan Sanction Approval of £110k for Council vehicles.

Strategic Waste Management Partnership: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Robinson that Councillor Cubitt would attend the Strategic Waste Management Partnership to be held in Burnavan Arts Centre, Cookstown on 29 November 2005.

Playpark at Greysteel: Councillor McElhinney expressed his disappointment that Vale Centre officials had not responded regarding the possibility of Council locating a primary school playpark inside the Vale Centre Business Park gates. The Director of Development said a meeting had taken place with the Chairman of the Vale Centre and although several sites had been identified, any decision in respect of this request had to go before the Vale Business Board of Directors.

The Director of Development stated that whilst Council had not agreed to provide a playpark on this site, it had been agreed that a number of sites needed to be identified as part of 'The Way Forward for Play within the Borough'.

After further discussion, it was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McElhinney, seconded by Councillor Cubitt that the Director of Development would write to Mr Hugh Nicholl, Chairman of Vale Centre requesting decision at the earliest convenience with regards to the site.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- Camelot Social Report Summary 2005; Celebrating achievements, responding to challenges
- Environment & Heritage Service - Annual Report 2004/2005
- Health Promotion Agency - Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005
- Rivers Agency - Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005
- WEA - Annual Report 2004/2005
- Rural Transport Fund for NI – Annual Review 2004/2005
- NICCY Corporate Plan 2005 to 2008
- Roads Service Annual Report & Accounts 2004/2005

NEXT MEETING:

30 November 2005

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 9.35 pm)