

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

28 MARCH 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, B Douglas, J F McElhinney, C Ó hOisín, A Robinson and E Stevenson.

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

APOLOGIES:

None.

THE REGULATION & IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY:

The chair welcomed Mrs Stella Burnside, Chief Executive and Mrs Teresa Nixon, Director of Social Care Services for Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA).

Mrs Burnside explained that the RQIA was a new, independent body, established by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in April 2005, with overall responsibility for monitoring and inspecting health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

Mrs Nixon outlined that RQIA would:

- provide best practice
- carryout routine inspections
- undertake investigations into specific complaints
- liaise with other professional/regulatory bodies and
- communicate with service users, the public and media.

In response to Councillor Brolly, Mrs Burnside explained that the Ombudsman would still be involved in complaints on behalf of individuals.

Members raised a number of general concerns regarding cleanliness in hospitals/nursing homes; lack of staff and long waiting lists for services. Mrs Burnside said that all these issues were being monitored against general standards and that the RQIA were looking towards trends. She added that if members had specific concerns Mrs Nixon or herself would be happy to be contacted.

The chair thanked Mrs Burnside and Mrs Nixon for attending the meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MONTHLY MEETING:

The minutes of meeting dated 28 February 2006 were approved and signed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Robinson.

MATTERS ARISING:

Review of Public Administration: The Chief Executive informed members that 3 names from Council would be put forward to take part in the RPA Workstreams.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT – MARCH 2006:

The Chief Executive presented his Report for March 2006 and the recommendation within were agreed subject to the following:

Business Plan: The Chief Executive explained that the Integrated Business Plan 2006-2007 arose from work commenced at the Strategic Away Day in February 2006 and included objectives from the current Corporate Plan 2004-07 and new objectives freshly identified.

He outlined that Senior Management Team and Senior Management Group had developed the following objectives:

- to co-ordinate the activities of Council's three directorates and eight departments in order to ensure that their activities were consistent with the Council's vision and corporate aims;
- to ensure that there is focus on Council's operational efforts against each of its five Corporate Aims and
- to provide a monitoring baseline against which the Elected Members and Chief Executives Department can monitor the Councils operational progress.

Members gave approval to the Business Plan and agreed that that it should be reported to Council on a quarterly basis using the traffic light scorecard system.

Communication Plan Update: Members noted that the first issue of Council Newsletter would be delivered to every household and business in the Borough by early June 2006. Members agreed to the proposed 'Council Services Consultation Plan'.

Freedom of Information Policy and Data Protection Policy: The Freedom of Information Policy under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Date Protection Policy under Date Protection Act 1998 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Alderman Rankin.

Preparation of Council's Corporate Plan 2007-2009: The Chief Executive gave an update to Council on preparation of Council's Corporate Plan.

Register of Newspapers/Journals used by Council: Members noted the register of newspapers used by Council as requested earlier.

Strike Action: The Chief Executive explained that Council services, including bin collection, street cleaning and leisure services had been affected by the strike action of 28th March 2006. He said that a press release had been issued to inform the public of the next blue bin collection for households and traders affected. Councillor Cubitt congratulated staff who came into work and answered telephone calls regarding the disruption in services.

MINUTES FROM EXTERNAL BODIES:

The following minutes were tabled and noted.

- Western Health & Social Services Council – 2 February 2006
- Foyle Health & Social Services Trust – 24 February 2006

Councillor Donaghy took the chair at 8 pm.

NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR COYLE:

Councillor Coyle proposed:

“That, in the light of the announcement of Draft Planning Policy Statement 14 – Sustainable Development in the Countryside, and this Council’s grave concerns about the implications of this document for farming families, rural communities and the rural economy:-

1. *This Council engages our specialist-planning consultant, Michael Graham, to formulate a response to the document;*
2. *This Council engages specialist legal opinion to scrutinise the document and the implications for the people of our Borough.”*

In support of the motion Councillor Coyle referred to the cultural differences between Northern Ireland and that of England and Wales and that a policy approach there would not necessarily be suitable to the North of Ireland. He doubted if this policy would enable farming families to remain on the land as they traditionally had and said the local economy and construction industry would be adversely affected.

The motion was discussed and concern was raised by a number of members to further spending of money on consultancy fees or legal opinion when NILGA were pursuing such advice.

Amendment:

Councillor Chivers proposed that the Chief Executive write to Lord Rooker expressing Councils grave concerns about the consequences of PPS14. This was seconded by Councillor Brolly and on being put to the meeting was declared carried, with 5 voting for, 3 against and 2 abstentions. The substantive motion was put to the meeting and declared carried, with 6 voting for, 3 against and 3 abstentions.

Councillor Coyle took the chair at 8.20 pm.

NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR McELHINNEY:

Councillor McElhinney proposed:

“That Limavady Borough Council mark and celebrate the anniversary of 90 years since the Easter Rising.”

In proposing the motion, Councillor McElhinney stated that 2006 would see a number of important anniversaries celebrated in the Borough and as other Councils were celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising, Limavady Borough Council should do so as well. The motion was seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín and a number of ways to mark the occasion were mentioned. After some discussion it was agreed that the ways of marking the event would be dealt with separately. Councillor Brolly also spoke in favour of the motion.

In speaking against the motion, Councillor Stevenson made a number of points regarding the history of the rising and queried if such an event should be celebrated. Alderman Rankin, Alderman Robinson, Councillor Cubitt and Councillor Robinson all spoke against the motion.

Amendment:

Alderman Mullan proposed an amendment to replace the word ‘celebrate’ with ‘commemorate’ in the motion. This was seconded by Councillor Butcher.

A recorded vote was requested by Alderman Robinson and on being put to the meeting the amendment was declared carried, with 9, Alderman Mullan, Councillor Coyle, Councillor Carten, Councillor Chivers, Councillor Butcher, Councillor Donaghy, Councillor Brolly, Councillor Ó hOisín and Councillor McElhinney voting for and 6, Alderman Rankin, Alderman Robinson, Councillor Douglas, Councillor Stevenson, Councillor Cubitt and Councillor Robinson voting against.

The substantive motion was put to the meeting and declared carried with Alderman Mullan, Councillor Coyle, Councillor Carten, Councillor Chivers, Councillor Butcher, Councillor Donaghy, Councillor Brolly, Councillor Ó hOisín and Councillor McElhinney voting for and 6, Alderman Rankin, Alderman Robinson, Councillor Douglas, Councillor Stevenson, Councillor Cubitt and Councillor Robinson voting against.

RESOLUTIONS:

The following resolutions were noted by members.

(a) *Submitted by North Down Borough Council:*

“That this Council writes to the Department of Environment stating the following– that plastic bag tax must be introduced in the very near future to help reduce this needless extravagance of modern-day living; that Council writes to all other councils seeking their support on the matter; and that Council writes to the Minister responsible, proposing that this tax must be brought in to tackle the increasing problems caused by plastic bags.”

(b) *Submitted by Lisburn City Council:*

“Until further consideration, the Chief Executive and other officers of the Council be instructed not to get involved in any external discussions or actions relating to the implementation of the seven council model.”

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) DRD – A Consultation Document on Proposals for new Railway Safety Management Regulations (response due 24 April 2006)
- b) Launch of draft EQIA on Water Service Transformation Programme (response due 13 May 2006)
- c) Consultation on Proposal for a Draft Water & Sewerage Charges (Information Sharing) (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (response due 25 May 2006)

COURSES/CONFERENCES:

Seminar for Councillors – The Law of Defamation: It was agreed that Councillor McElhinney would attend the Seminar for Councillors, The Law of Defamation (Libel & Slander) as it Affects Councillors to be held on April 2006 in the Earl of Desmond Hotel, Tralee at a cost of €150.

BMF Business Services – 2nd Annual Northern Ireland Governance Seminar: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Rankin, seconded by Councillor Carten that the Chief Executive would attend the 2nd Northern Ireland Governance Seminar to be held 25 April 2006 in the Culloden Hotel at a cost of £255+VAT.

Woman in Local Councils – Visit to Zomba: Councillor Brolly expressed an interest in taking part in Woman in Local Councils, visit to Zomba, which would cost £1,150 per person but at no cost of Council as all participants would be expected to raise the finance for their visit through sponsorship and other fundraising activities. It was agreed that Council would forward a letter of support to NILGA for Councillor Brolly to take part in the visitation.

NOMINATIONS TO REPLACE COUNCILLOR BROLLY ON LIMAVADY SMALL BUSINESS AGENCY:

The Chief Executive sought nominations from members to replace Councillor Brolly on Limavady Small Business Agency.

Alderman Rankin was nominated on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and Councillor McElhinney was nominated on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín.

The proposal that Alderman Rankin was nominated first as a replacement for Councillor Brolly was put to the meeting and declared carried, with 8 voting for and 7 against.

Members pointed out that the nomination had been to replace Councillor Brolly on the committee and as Alderman Rankin had been nominated first, it could be argued that 1 unnamed unionist position remained unfilled and Councillor McElhinney would be unable to fill that position.

In the debate that followed, Councillor Brolly said that if a unionist replaced a Sinn Féin member, there was no reason why a Sinn Féin would not replace a unionist. When asked to rule on this issue, the Chief Executive said he could only go by the wording before him but would investigate what had been agreed at the AGM before bringing a recommendation to the next Monthly meeting.

REQUEST FROM MARY MACINTYRE REGARDING PLANNING MEETINGS:

The Chief Executive tabled letter dated 21 March 2006 from Mary MacIntyre, Divisional Planning Manager, which outlined that under Matters Arising there was considerable work (2 planning officers for up to 2 days) to update Council on items discussed at earlier meetings. He said that Planning Service had suggested that there was considerable merit in withdrawing the list of planning applications previously discussed from the Matters Arising report and welcomed Councils agreement for this course of action.

Councillor Douglas pointed out this followed on from the March Planning & Services meeting when the format of discussion had been changed without prior warning. He proposed as a concession that Council accept the request in principle, subject to Planning Service responding promptly to members' telephone queries. Councillor Carten seconded the motion and Alderman Robinson proposed, seconded by Councillor Cubitt that Mrs MacIntyre attends a future meeting of Council so that members would voice their grievances.

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

None

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Fire Evacuation at Roe Valley Leisure Centre: Alderman Robinson requested that the Director of Development look at evacuation procedures for swimmers at Roe Valley Leisure Centre when fire alarm sounded. Agreed.

Curragh Road – Bilingual Sign: Councillor Stevenson requested that the bilingual sign at Curragh Road, Magilligan be removed.

Anti-Social Behaviour at Glenside Brae: Alderman Robinson referred to anti-social behaviour which occurred in the open space at Glenside Brae near the Scroggy Road/Ballyquin Road junction and requested that the Chief Executive write to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive regarding provision of adequate fence which would prevent teenagers throwing missiles down the brae to oncoming traffic in the Ballyquin Road. Agreed.

Proposed Price Increases – Magilligan to Greencastle Ferry: The Director of Development recommended that as concerns of Council had now been addressed (with no price increase for Senior Citizens and Children for the period June 2006 – June 2007) that the proposed pricing policy be approved for implementation on 1st May 2006. This was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Donaghy.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- Postwatch – Management of the Postcode Address File, Postcomm proposals – your views
- Mental Health and Learning Disability Review Northern Ireland
- An Evaluation of the North West Regional Education Programme
- Annual Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life 2005
- Ulsterbus Strategic Review Information – Coleraine Area
- Report of Investigation Under Paragraph 10 of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - An Investigation by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

TABLED DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were tabled for information:

- Amendment of Road Service Licence – Airporter Limited;
- DOE – New Year Honours 2007 – Deadline Monday 10 April 2006

NEXT MEETING:

25 April 2006

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