

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

MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING

28 AUGUST 2007

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

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Stevenson.

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk, Corporate Policy Officer and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES: - Alderman Robinson

PRESENTATION BY HELP THE AGED:

The Mayor welcomed Seamus Lynch, Public Affairs Officer Help the Aged to the meeting.

Mr Lynch explained that elderly abuse happened when an older man or woman was harmed, mistreated or neglected by someone who they should be able to trust. He said the abuser could be a health or care worker, a volunteer, a friend or relative and often those being abused were scared to speak out as the abuser may be someone they loved dearly, or they fear the repercussions. He added that the abused often feel ashamed, embarrassed or scared that no one would believe them.

Mr Lynch informed members that abuse took place in many locations, hospitals included and that although some was unintentional, for example through lack of knowledge, often the elderly were harmed deliberately due to being an easy target and vulnerable.

Members noted the various types of abuse, signs to look for if someone might be suffering and how help was available from a confidential helpline or from GP's. Members also noted that Noel Quigley, Western Health & Social Services Trust was organising a conference whereby the PSNI and local clerics would come together to try and eliminate abuse in the area.

The work of Help the Aged was applauded by members and it was agreed that the campaign against elderly abuse would be highlighted by all political parties. Mr Lynch thanked Council for passing a resolution regarding elderly abuse.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting held 26 June 2007 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Ó hOisín, seconded by Alderman Mullan.

MATTERS ARISING: None.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MONTHLY MEETING:

The minutes of meeting held 9 July 2007 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Carten, seconded by Councillor Coyle.

CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT – AUGUST 2007:

DPP Reconstitution: The Chair welcomed Dr Debbie Donnelly, Deputy Chief Executive Northern Ireland Policing Board to the meeting.

Dr Donnelly tabled a summary of implications and actions arising from the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 for District Policing Partnerships (DPP's). She explained timeframe for appointment of political and independent members and members noted that:

- Council may decide to change current structure from 15 to either 17 or 19;
- Schedules 8 of the St Andrews Agreement Act allows reconstitution of DPPs outside local government elections;
- Policing Board to assess and list which DPP's meet the 'political condition' at meeting on 6 September 2007;
- affected partnerships to publish a date within 3 months of publication of Board's list which political members would be appointed to the DPP;
- existing members cease to be members the day before the new members are appointed by the Council;
- appointments must be in accordance with political composition of Council as at 4 September 2007 rather than at the last local government election;
- Policing Board to publish a date on which independent members would be appointed to the DPP (expected to be March 2008) and current members with satisfactory performance appraisals would have right to reapply through a fast track process.

In the question & answer session which followed, Dr Donnelly advised that it was crucial that new DPP Political members were trained to sit on interview panel for selection of independent members.

Councillor Brolly proposed, seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín that the DPP membership be increased to 19 members, 10 political and 9 independent. Councillor Cubitt proposed an amendment that membership be increased from 15 to 17 members, 9 political and 8 independent. Councillor Douglas seconded the amendment.

The amendment was put to the meeting and declared carried, with 7 voting for and 6 against. The substantive motion was put to the meeting and declared carried with 7 voting for and 6 against.

Integrated Business Plan – Progress Report: The Chief Executive presented a progress report on Councils Integrated Business Plan for the first quarter of 2007/08 which was noted subject to a query in relation to the staff conference and value of this.

Dernaflaw Playground Update: The Chief Executive updated members regarding conditions of contract on sale of land to a developer at Dernaflaw in which the proposed playground would be located. He said the developer has agreed, subject to planning agreement and details of how the site should be prepared, that the playground would be fast tracked as separate from the rest of the development of the site. It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Councillor Coyle that this approach should be pursued and it was suggested that a further contract be drawn up regarding the agreement.

Civic Centre Update: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Alderman Mullan that commercial aspects would be discussed **IN COMMITTEE**. The Chief Executive tabled initial tender analysis and project cost projection from Consarc for the proposed Civic Centre. He explained that Consarc had reviewed priced documentation and a list of savings had been compiled in the order of £150,000 (subject to agreement by the design team and contractor) and that further saving could be offered in consultation with the successful contractor. He said there were two considerable increases to the project costs, an NIE sub-station at an estimated costs of £35,000 and £65,000 costs for Fold accommodation works, bringing the overall project to £4,053m which was in line with the £4.059 m loan sanction approval and predicted costs by Consarc.

OUT OF COMMITTEE on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Cubitt.

A discussion followed in which a number of comments were made ‘for’ and ‘against’ continuing with the project and after consideration, it was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Alderman Mullan that Council would:

- pursue in agreement with Fold Housing bringing the road up to adoptable standard and
- respond to the Draft Agreement with the amendments drawn up by Council solicitor as outlined within the Chief Executives Report.

Northern Corridor Railways Group: Members were urged to attend the Northern Corridor Railways Group event on 18 September in the City Hotel to lobby for the development of a strategy to influence the governments’ views regarding the northern rail corridor.

It was agreed that Councillor Cubitt would replace Councillor Robinson on the Northern Corridor Railway Committee.

Section 75 – Annual Report to Equality Commission: The Corporate Policy Officer provided an overview of the Annual Report to Equality Commission on how Section 75 statutory duties had been implemented for submission to the Commission by 31 August 2007. Approved.

Appointment of Independent Chair – Neutral Public Space Forum: Councillor Butcher proposed, seconded by Councillor Coyle that Dorothy McKee, Red Hat Consulting be approached to oversee the introduction of the new Neutral Public Space Policy and appointment as Independent Chair of the Public Space Forum.

The Mayor, Councillor Stevenson urged members to rethink implementing the Neutral Public Space Policy, however on being put to the meeting, the proposal was declared carried.

There were no nominations to fill the 2 seats reserved for unionist members on the Neutral Public Space Forum.

European Committee for the Regions Delegation Visit – 10/11 September 2007: It was agreed that Council would co-host a dinner with Donegal County Council for a delegation from the European Committee for the Regions on 10 September in Jackson's Hotel, Ballybofey at a cost of €700.

Developing a Shared Vision for Local Government in Northern Ireland Stakeholders Events: It was agreed that Alderman Rankin, Councillor Coyle and Councillor Cubitt would attend the above events to be held 12 September in Ramada Hotel Belfast and 16 October 2007 in Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown.

The Court of the University of Ulster: Councillor Butcher was nominated to serve on the Court of University of Ulster Committee on the proposal of Councillor Ó hOisín, seconded by Councillor McElhinney.

EXTERNAL MINUTES NOTED:

- Western Health & Social Care Trust – 29 March & 31 May 2007
- Western Health & Social Care Trust – 4 April, 3 May & 7 June 2007
- Western Group Environmental Health Committee – 12 June 2007.

CONSULTATIONS:

It was agreed that the Corporate Policy Officer would respond to the following consultation documents:

- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency – ‘Changes to the Regulation of Number Plate Supply in the United Kingdom’
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – ‘Proposed Inshore Fishing (Prohibition of Fishing and Fishing Methods) (Amendment) Regulations’

With regard to the consultation by Postwatch Northern Ireland on the Post Office Closure Programme, it was suggested that a representative from Post Office Limited attend and present to Council proposed changes to rural post offices.

COURSES/CONFERENCES:

It was agreed that the following members/officers would attend the conferences/courses listed:

- *One officer to attend the Society of Personnel Directors Annual Conference on 7 – 9 November 2007 in Old Course Hotel, St Andrews at a cost of £350.*
- *Councillor Coyle to attend the National Association of Councillors Northern Ireland Annual General Meeting & Conference to be held 5 & 6 October 2007 in Marine Court Hotel, Banger at a cost of £175.*

- *Councillor Coyle to attend the Department of Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform Consultation on 17 September 2007 in Belfast – no fee.*

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Butcher that the transfer station lease between Council and R J Pattison & Nut would be signed and sealed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Civic Amenity Sites Workshop: Councillor Cubitt suggested that Councils Cleansing Officers attend the workshop regarding Civic Amenity Sites.

Protocol – Mayor/Duputy Mayor: It was suggested that Council should consider putting in writing protocol for attendance at events by Mayor/Deputy Mayor.

Civic Reception: It was agreed that a civic reception would be held for Faughanvale GAC who had recently win the intermediate Gaelic title.

It was suggested that hosting civic receptions for everyone devalued its purpose and that Council should reassess when these were held.

Statement of Fact by Councillor Stevenson: The Mayor read a prepared statement as follows:

‘Over the past few months there have been serious disruptions in this Council. There have been various accusations concerning various matters which still remain unresolved. There have also been pressure put on staff which has resulted in absence from work with stress related illness. I also believe that officers are being subjected to undue pressure and stress due to the manner of questioning adopted by some elected representatives. I am therefore contracting the Staff Commission requesting that they instigate an investigation into every department and at all levels. I do this in the sincere hope that better relations and mutual respect can be achieved in this Council.’ Noted.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

The Chief Executive tabled a comprehensive list of formal correspondence from external bodies and said copies of same could be obtained from his office.

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 25 September 2007.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 10:25 pm)

Signed: _____
Chair of Meeting