

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

28 SEPTEMBER 2005

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

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Coyle

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

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

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Cubitt.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting held on 24 August 2005 were approved and signed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Carten subject to amendment on page 5, paragraph 1, line 1 ... substitute 'made' with 'make'.

WELCOME OF NEWLY APPOINTED CHIEF EXECUTIVE:

The Chair welcomed Liam Flanigan, newly appointed Town Clerk & Chief Executive to the meeting.

Mr Flanigan said he was pleased to attend the meeting prior to commencement of employment on 3 October 2005 and was looking forward to finishing the restructuring of Council and improving communication between staff, Councillors and the general public.

MATTERS ARISING:

Departmental Progress: The Acting Town Clerk & Chief Executive informed members that the Departmental Progress Report as set out within Corporate Plan would be provided at October 2005 Monthly Meeting of Council. Agreed.

Review of Standing Orders: The Acting Town Clerk & Chief Executive explained that there was nothing in standing orders which stated that notice of motions had to be brought to the Monthly meeting of Council. He said that as all 15 members sat on the 5 standing committees, notice of motions would be brought to any of these committee meetings.

Bindweed on By-pass Roundabouts: The Acting Town Clerk & Chief Executive advised that Council was waiting a response from Roads Service on bindweed and long grass growing on 2 roundabouts on the by-pass.

Vandalism in Blackburn Park: In response to Alderman Robinson, the Director of Environmental Services said that damage caused to equipment prior to handing over of the site to Council would be the responsibility of the contractor.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (RPA):

The Chair welcomed David Finegan, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Review of Public Administration to the meeting.

Mr Finegan provided an outline of the RPA process from its launch in June 2002, the various consultations and implementation through to 2009. He said the message from the 1st consultation was that there was a need for high quality accessible services, a strong local government, with fewer but larger Councils and more collaboration / coterminous. He added that the 2nd consultation put forward options of 7, 11 or 15 Councils and proposals were detailed for health, education and QUANGO's.

Mr Finegan referred to the options of abolition or review of public bodies and recommendation to leave the future of the 18 Executive Agencies to the returning Executive and Assembly. He emphasised the importance of managing the impact of the RPA on staff and developing leadership capacity central to delivering change and said changes would result in savings in administration, which could be available for reallocations to front line services in Northern Ireland.

The Chair thanked Mr Finegan for attending the meeting and clarifying issues relating to the RPA. Mr Finegan left the meeting at 8.40 pm.

The Acting Town Clerk & Chief Executive tabled the response from NILGA to the RPA. Members noted that NILGA adopted a 15 council position, in preference to the existing 10 – 15 position as well as clarify the request to return some local housing functions to Local Government rather than the full responsibilities of the NIHE. Members also noted that additionally it was agreed that a section be added to the document noting that whilst it was a collective NILGA response, individual Councils and parties would submit their own views, which may differ on a number of issues. In particular, NILGA had been asked to record the DUP's opposition to the return of local roads to new larger Councils and requirement for statutory checks & balances, as well as SDLP concerns over the transfer of planning and housing functions.

The Acting Town Clerk & Chief Executive reminded members that the deadline for response to the RPA was 30 September 2005 and sought comments thereon. Councillor Donaghy pointed out that Sinn Féin had yet to finalise their response and said most members would be adopting their individual party view when responding.

In the debate that followed Councillor Butcher proposed, seconded by Councillor Robinson that Council would not respond to the RPA consultation document. The motion on being put to the meeting was declared carried, with 12 voting for and 1 against.

GROUP BUILDING CONTROL COMMITTEE:

Minutes: Minutes of meeting held on 13 January 2005 were tabled and noted.

FOYLE HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES TRUST:

Minutes: Minutes of meetings held on 19 August 2005 were tabled and noted.

RESOLUTIONS:

It was agreed that the following resolution from Newry & Mourne District Council be noted:

“Members expressed their concern in relation to Government plans to pilot a Deferred Payment Scheme or “Death Tax” Scheme in Northern Ireland which will mean that the existing burden of Rates or Council Tax on retirees will be removed and they will be allowed to pay less or avoid taxes altogether. This liability would then be deferred until a person’s property is sold and the tax could be paid on the disposal of an individual’s assets upon death.

The Council unanimously said that plans to test the proposals in Northern Ireland should be resisted and said if the Scheme is implemented it will mean that many retired people cannot pass on their assets to their families and their children if they so required.”

COURSES/CONFERENCES:

Local Government Staff Commission – Good Relations, Local Government Taking Action: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Carten that 1 Officer of Council attend the LGSC conference to be held in Rosspark Hotel, Kells on 5 October 2005.

Environment NI – A Vision for the Future: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín that the Town Clerk & Chief Executive would attend the above conference to be held in Stormont Hotel, Belfast on 18 & 19 October 2005 at a cost of £225+VAT.

Chartered Institute of Housing in Northern Ireland – Annual Conference & Exhibition: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Douglas, seconded by Councillor Chivers that Councillor Carten would attend the Chartered Institute of Housing in Northern Ireland – Annual Conference & Exhibition to be held 22 – 23 November 2005 at a cost of £295.

Building Control Convention 2005 – Another Way of Building: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó hOisín, seconded by Councillor Carten that Councillor McElhinney and an Officer from the Building Control Department would attend the above conference to be held in Canal Court Hotel, Newry on 24 & 25 November 2005 at a cost of £199 per person which included accommodation and meals.

Business Services - 10th Annual Northern Ireland Economic Conference: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Donaghy, seconded by Councillor Butcher that 1 Officer attend the above conference to be held 26 October 2005 in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick at a cost of £255+VAT.

Environmental Health – Making the Difference: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Brolly that 1 Officer of Council attend the Environmental Health Conference to be held in the Radisson Roe Park Hotel on 15 & 16 November 2005 at a cost of £95 per day.

NOMINATIONS TO SPECIAL SUB COMMITTEE ON EMBLEMS WITHIN COUNCIL:

The Chair reminded members that further to an amendment to a Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Butcher, it had been agreed to establish an all party sub group to decide on emblems within Council buildings. Councillor Douglas said it was clear that Sinn Féin had only agreed to the amendment as they would have lost their motion on the night. Alderman Robinson said the motion was divisive and designed to make sure Councillors were at each others throats and that the 3 small pictures referred to in the motion were inoffensive and not in view to the general public.

Councillor Brolly indicated that as a public building, Council offices should be neutral and said it was important that the people who visited or worked in the building were made to feel comfortable. Councillor Coyle said that when the SDLP put forward the amendment, it was to be inclusive and not take away members Britishness. Councillor Butcher proposed that 4 members be nominated to the committee using the D'Hondt method of allocation. This was seconded by Councillor McElhinney.

The motion on being put to the meeting was declared carried, with 9 voting, 4 against. The following members were elected to serve on the committee.

1. (SF) Councillor Ó hOisín on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Donaghy;
2. (SF) Councillor Butcher on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Councillor McElhinney;
3. (DUP) party members decided not to take part in this committee; and
4. (SDLP) Councillor Coyle on the proposal of Alderman Mullan, seconded by Councillor Brolly;

It was agreed that the Corporate Policy Officer would service the committee.

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

The following legal documents were signed and sealed:

- (a) Priority Agreement between Northern Bank Limited and Limavady Borough Council for £380,000 and
- (b) Debenture (Deed of Priorities) between Glenshane Community Development and Limavady Borough Council.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Loan Sanction Approval: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Councillor Chivers, that Council seek loan sanction approval for £3 million for the new Town Hall.

November Planning & Development Meeting: It was agreed that the November Planning & Development would be held on Wednesday 2nd November at 7.30 pm.

Refurbishment of Alexander Arms: The Director of Environmental Services reported that the proprietor of the Alexander Arms Hotel had approached Council to agree temporary access from the Town Hall site for building of a second storey at the back of the hotel. This was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Alderman Robinson subject to road bonds and public liability insurance being in place.

Reseeding of Kickabout Pitch at Pollysbrae Road: The Director of Development Services outlined that Largy Community Association had raised health & safety concerns to the kickabout pitch at Pollysbrae Road. It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Brolly that Council would level and reseed the pitch before the planting season ended.

Winter Sailing Times - Magilligan Ferry: The Director of Development Services reported that from 1 October 2005, it was proposed that scheduled sailings from Magilligan to Greencastle would change to an hourly sailing commencing 7.20 am and ending at 7.50 pm Monday – Saturday, with the Sunday sailing being continuous from 9 am until 7.50 pm. The ratification of winter sailing times were approved on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Chivers.

Invitation by Westport Committee: The Director of Development Services informed members that an invitation had been extended to Council and the Town Twinning Committee for 5 members to attend Dáil Éireann on 19 October 2005 from Westport Urban District Council. It was agreed that Councillor Coyle, Councillor McElhinney, Councillor Butcher, Councillor Brolly and Councillor Chivers would attend for an overnight visit.

Civic Reception – Vigneux Visitors: The Director of Development Services advised that elected members and their partners had been invited to attend a Civic Reception for visitors from Vigneux to be held Friday 14 October 2005 in the Radisson SAS Hotel.

Irish Language Sub Committee: Councillor Ó hOisín suggested the Irish Language Sub Committee hold their inaugural meeting as soon as possible and it was agreed that this would be arranged by members of the sub committee.

Presentation to Council by Loughs Agency/Roe Anglers Association: Councillor Ó hOisín referred to the forthcoming presentation by Loughs Agency and Roe Anglers Association to the Environmental Services Committee and said he hoped it would not be a closed meeting as there were many other interested bodies who would like to be in attendance. Noted.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- EHS Business Plan 2005/2006
- Belfast City Council – Corporate Plan Year 3 Review and Update 2005/06
- The Royal Society of Ulster Architects – Focus on Homes
- Neighbourhood Statistics Service – Annual Report to Ministers 2004/05
- Planning Appeals Commission – Annual Report 2004/05
- Sustainable Northern Ireland – Annual Report 2004/05

- Foyle Health & Social Services Trust – Annual Report 2004/05
- Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation – Annual Report 2004/05
- Altnagelvin Hospitals Health & Social Services Trust – Annual Report 2004/05
- Greenpark Healthcare Trust – Annual Report 2004/05

NEXT MEETING:

26 October 2005

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 10.15 pm)**