

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

30 NOVEMBER 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 and E Stevenson.

In Attendance: Committee Clerk, Chief Executive, Director of Environmental Services, Director of Support Services, Corporate Policy Officer and Home Safety Officer.

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Robinson

BOOK OF CONDOLENCE – GEORGE BEST:

Alderman Robinson paid tribute to George Best, deceased 25th November 2005 and said the former Northern Ireland footballer had been held in high esteem in Great Britain and throughout the world. It was agreed that a book of condolence would be available at Roe Valley Leisure Centre for those wishing to express their sorrow at his death. All in attendance stood in silence 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 Alderman Rankin.

MATTERS ARISING:

Limavady Community Forum – Road Safety: The Chief Executive referred to the official launch of Limavady Community Forum to take place on Thursday 1 December 2005 in the Gorteen House Hotel. He said the forum of over 25 Community Groups/Associations could provide a platform to raise awareness and accumulate ideas for a local plan on road safety as suggested in Alderman Mullans' notice of motion the previous month.

WESTERN HEALTH ACTION ZONE:

The Chair welcomed Ms Siobhan Sweeney and Ms Collette Brolly, Western Health Action Zone to the meeting.

Ms Sweeney explained that the aim of Western Home Safety Check Scheme was to reduce accidents amongst children under 5 and older people living in areas of deprivation through provision of advice, support, practical help and equipment. She said that an survey of A&E Departments in Northern Ireland revealed that more accidents occurred in the home than at work or on the roads put together and that 75 deaths, 9042 hospital admission per year occurred as a result of injuries

received in the home. She added that whilst falls accounted for a number of deaths in those aged 65 and over, 50% of older people who had sustained a hip fracture were unlikely to regain previous physical function and independence, which resulted in admission to residential care.

Ms Sweeney pointed out that the objective of the scheme was to identify gaps in provision of equipment for families with young children and older people; prioritise areas of greatest need; carry out home safety checks; provide and fit equipment; establish a mechanism to assist with simple household repairs and to provide information on home safety. She said the partners in the scheme included Investing for Health Partnership; Councils of the Western Board; Western Group Environmental Health; RoSPA; Local Home Accident Prevention Groups; Statutory, Community and Voluntary Groups; Fire & Rescue Service and the OT Department of Sperrin Lakeland.

Ms Sweeney highlighted that up the end of September 2005, there had been 341 referrals to the scheme in Limavady, 278 checks carried out, 654 pieces of equipment provided, 156 referrals to other agencies and ongoing information sessions and presentations to local groups.

Ms Sweeney referred to the future of the scheme and said although the programme could be viewed as a model of good practice through possible reductions in the number of home accidents in the Western Board area, Executive funding for the programme was coming to an end. She requested that Council put forward its support for continuation of the post of Home Safety Officer and suggested local MLA's lobby against funding cutbacks to the scheme.

In response to members' queries, the Home Safety Officer explained that initially areas of social need had been targeted by the scheme but this had been extended to other locations, including rural areas. She said the alarming results of a questionnaire revealed that open fires and cookers were the cause of many home accidents and fire guards or smoke alarms had been distributed to those homes who needed them to prevent further incidents. She added that data had to be analysed to give accurate figures on the impact of the scheme in lowering the number of deaths or serious injury caused by accidents in the home.

The chair thanked members of Western Health Action Zone for attending the meeting and it was agreed that the request for funding would be considered in the rates estimates.

ROADS SERVICE:

The Chair welcomed Ms Deidre Mackle and Mr R Johnston, Roads Service to the meeting.

Ms Mackle explained that in the past few years there had been an increase in finance available for improvement schemes on the road network and this had been welcomed by the Northern Division. Ms Mackle presented the progress report on the current year's capital and maintenance programme and answered various questions put to her by members. The replies were noted as follows:

1. NETWORK MAINTENANCE:

Kilhoyle Road: Councillor Chivers stated that the residents of Kilhoyle Road were unhappy that part of road had fallen away and fences were pushed down into fields. Mr Johnston said that the road was to be piped and stoned and vehicles would be directed to the other side of the road.

Drainage – Aghanloo Road/Shanvey: Councillor Butcher highlighted that his car had been damaged by gullies standing proud above road level at Aghanloo Road, Shanvey and suggested a flashing light should have been in place to warn drivers of the hazard. Ms Mackle clarified that Mr Johnston, Section Engineer would be the first point of contact when such incidents occurred and that the contractor was responsible for ensuring that signs or cones were in place to warn road users of the heightened gullies.

2. STRATEGIC ROAD IMPROVEMENTS:

Dungiven By-Pass: Members welcomed that the proposed by-pass at Dungiven had been included in the 5 – 10 year Forward Planning Schedule scheme.

Artikelly Roundabout: Alderman Robinson referred to visibility and slant in the road at Artikelly and suggested the roundabout should have been lowered. Ms Mackle said that whilst the roundabout was slightly titled, it had been put through a Safety Audit and had not been deemed unsafe. Alderman Mullan suggested warning signs for road users to give way to vehicles coming from the right were needed as cars drove at speed through the roundabout onto Windyhill Road.

Maintenance – By-Pass Roundabouts: Ms Mackle clarified to Councillor Cubitt that Roads Service had left the roundabouts on the by-pass in a maintainable condition and suggested Council investigate the possibility of sponsorship for these.

Gortcorbies Climbing Lane: Ms Mackle informed members that Roads Service hoped to construct a climbing lane on the A37 Londonderry to Coleraine Road at Gortcorbies during 2006/2007 and said that during construction the Broad Road would be closed, with traffic diverted via Ringsend Road and Windyhill Road. Councillor Stevenson suggested that visibility from Drumaleaf Road be included in the scheme and that improvements were needed on the Windyhill Road before the diversions were put in place.

Councillor Brolly left the meeting at 9.20 pm.

3. NETWORK DEVELOPMENT:

Rossaire Road: Ms Mackle reported that subject to successful land acquisition, Roads Service would provide the missing link of carriageway in the housing development at Rossaire Road. Councillor Cubitt said there was a need to get this commenced as soon as possible as the grassed area was used for illegal dumping and antisocial behaviour.

Child Fatalities - Edenmore and Roemill Road: Alderman Robinson referred to the child fatality on Edenmore Road and presented to Ms Mackle a petition of over 4,000 signatures for Road Service to introduce a bus lay-by and other

remedial schemes on the road. Ms Mackle said she had been saddened on hearing of the death and agreed to give the petition due cognisance on deliverance.

Alderman Mullan voiced his regret that a child had also been killed on Roemill Road. He presented to Ms Mackle a petition from Roemill Road residents for the introduction of speed ramps and said that whilst he had been outspoken on the issue of road safety, the Divisional Roads Managers response to his notice of motion to develop a local strategy to minimise road traffic incidents had been lukewarm. He praised the PSNI for their role in and said there was a need to get a level of support from other bodies and hoped a forum would be set up to encourage debate and draw attention to causation factors, which could prevent further deaths.

Mullaghmesh Park – Feeny: Councillor Donaghy stated that Roads Service had been unconstructive in indicating that parking facilities at Mullaghmesh Park were low priority. Ms Mackle said the response was not meant to be dismissive and that Roads Service devoted time and energy to progressing Collision Remedial schemes.

Mr Johnston agreed to investigate the following:

- Edenmore Road – additional gritting on upper end of this road due to the large volume of traffic using the route to access Ballyquin Road. (Alderman Rankin)
- Benbradagh Avenue/Ard-Na-Grann - uneven surface and pavement flags lifting. (Councillor Ó hOisín)
- Legavallon/Curragh Road Bridge – replacement of reflector lights (Councillor Chivers)
- Limestone Road – repair to level crossing (Alderman Mullan)
- Clooney Road, Greysteel – filling in potholes on the hard shoulder from the Vale Centre up to Faughanvale Chapel (Councillor McElhinney)
- Ballyquin Road – improvements at dangerous black spot (Alderman Robinson)
- Limavady By-Pass – additional street lighting (Councillor Cubitt)
- Baranailt Road/Ballykelly Road Junction – improvements at junction for cars turning right into Limavady Town (Councillor Douglas)
- Ballykeen Cottages – provision of car parking facility (Councillor Carten)
- Tartnakilly/Laural Road – improvements to dangerous corner (Councillor Carten)
- Ballykelly to St Finloughs Church – provision of footpath (Councillor Carten)
- Lilac Avenue – suitable crossing for children to access local shop (Alderman Mullan)
- Legavallon/Galvin/Peters Road Intersection – provision of warning signs.

The Chair thanked Ms Mackle and Mr Johnston for meeting with Council and addressing members' queries.

WELCOME:

The Chair welcomed Miss Elizabeth Beattie, Councils newly appointed Corporate Policy Officer to the meeting.

Miss Beattie thanked members for making her feel welcome and said she would be looking at the issue of equality, Section 75, Best Value, Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

WESTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL:

Minutes: Minutes of meetings held 2 June, 1 September and 6 October 2005 were tabled and noted.

FOYLE HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES TRUST:

Minutes: Minutes of meetings held 30 September and 28 October 2005 were tabled and noted.

WESTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD:

Minutes: Minutes of various meetings of the Board were tabled and noted.

ALTNAGELVIN HOSPITALS HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES TRUST:

Minutes: Minutes of various meetings of the Trust were tabled and noted.

NOTICE OF MOTION:

It was agreed that the notice of motion submitted by Councillor Broly regarding Council committing itself to building a 'Child Friendly Council Area in line with UNICEF Child Friendly City Initiative of 1996' would be deferred until the December 2005 meeting.

RESOLUTIONS:

It was agreed that the following resolution submitted by Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council on Planning Reform (NI) Order be noted:

“This Council, having considered the above, have agreed to engage with Councils located in the Western Region with a view to requesting a meeting with Lord Rooker to discuss the practical implications of the Order.”

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) Consultation on the Draft Planning Reform (Northern Ireland) Order (Response due December 23rd, 2005)
- b) Consultation on Recommendations to DARD for a Renewable Energy Policy – Study on the Potential Market for, and Economic and Environmental Sustainability of, Health and Power and Heat-Only Systems in the Rural Economy (Response due December 31st 2006)
- c) Consultation on the Housing Executive Corporate Plan 2006/07 to 2008/09 (Response due January 6th, 2006)

- d) Consultation Paper on the Draft Planning (Control of Major Accident Hazards) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 (Response due January 13th, 2006)
- e) Rivers Agency - Consultation on a Proposed Policy for Changing - Recoupment of Drainage Infrastructure Costs (Response due January 20th 2006)
- f) Consultation on Draft Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (Response due January 27th, 2006)
- g) Consultation on Future Support to the Northern Ireland Potato Sector (Response due February 6th, 2006)
- h) Consultation on Compulsory Seat Belt and Child restraint Wearing Requirements in Cars and Goods Vehicles (Response due February 6th, 2005)

COURSES/CONFERENCES:

Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Butcher that an Officer of Council attend the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation course to be held Monday 5 December 2005 in the Park Avenue Hotel, Belfast.

Sligo Presbyterian Church – 9th Gala Celebration of Christmas Peace: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Carten that Councillor Cubitt would attend the Sligo Presbyterian Church 9th Gala Celebration of Christmas Peace to be held Monday 12th December 2005 in Waterfront Hall, Belfast. It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó hOisín, seconded by Councillor Donaghy that Councillor Brolly would also attend.

DRAFT COMMUNICAITON PLAN:

It was agreed that discussion on the Draft Communication Plan would be deferred until the December 2005 Monthly Council meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING LANDS AT SHANREAGH PARK:

The Chief Executive tabled letter dated 11 November 2005 from Stephen Knox, Local Government Auditor in response to an e-mail sent by the former Town Clerk on a notice of motion regarding Shanreagh Park. He highlighted that the Auditor had advised that Council take legal advice on the implications of the motion and that in his opinion the present Council and its successors could not resolve ‘never to dispose of the open space at Shanreagh.’

Councillor Cubitt pointed out that Council had been in unanimous agreement regarding the motion and queried who give the former Chief Executive authority to contact the Auditor regarding this matter. In the debate that followed it was agreed that the legal advice would be sought regarding the notice of motion.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:

The Chief Executive tabled press release from Lord Rooker regarding the reform of Local Government and outcome of Review of Public Administration.

Members noted that the Minister had announced that evidence pointed to seven councils as the optimum model for local government as per the view expressed by almost two thirds of respondents to the consultation and that this could mean that Limavady would amalgamate with Strabane and Magherafelt into Derry City Council. Members also noted that the minister had stated that the seven councils would have an enhanced role in planning, economic development, tourism, urban regeneration and development; environmental services, building regulations, community planning, leisure and recreation, arts and culture, community development and relations; maintenance of local roads and maintenance of public realm.

Councillor Stevenson said the Ulster Unionist Party were opposed to the Ministers decision and proposed that members adopt the following statement:

“That this Council is opposed to the Review of Public Administration’s seven-council model for local government as it will inevitably create democratic deficit, limit local accountability and identity and, in the longer term, will negatively impact on community relations.

We call on the Secretary of State to recognise that the overwhelming majority of elected representatives are opposed to these plans and, as RPA has therefore failed to satisfy the test of public opinion, to immediately suspend its plans as a matter of urgency. We further call on the Secretary of State to engage with elected representatives in order to arrive at a conclusion which is acceptable to a majority of parties in Northern Ireland and which is capable of enjoying cross-community support, unlike the current proposals.

Councillor Donaghy stressed that this was going against Council policy as it had been agreed previously not to respond to the Review of Public Administration and suggested that the statement be presented to Council as a notice of motion.

A recorded vote was requested and on being put to the meeting the proposal to adopt the statement was declared carried with 8 voting for, namely Aldermen J Rankin, G Robinson and G Mullan, Councillors B Douglas, L Cubitt, E Stevenson, M Carten and M Coyle. Councillors B Chivers, P Butcher, M Donaghy and C Ó hOisín voted against the proposal.

DANNY BOY FESTIVAL PROPOSAL:

The Chief Executive outlined that Council had been approached by Limavady College of Further Education regarding organising a Craft Workshop in co-ordination with the Danny Boy Festival. He suggested that the Danny Boy Festival Committee be restructured and become less formal, which would allow additional partners such as community groups and the local college to come on board. Members welcomed the proposal and it was agreed that the festival would be organised for the week commencing 14 August 2006.

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

Limavady Borough Council – Robert Jeffers: The legal agreement for Robert Jeffers to access the Town Hall site for refurbishment of Alexander Arms Hotel was signed and sealed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Alderman Rankin.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Internal Audit: In response to advice from the Local Government Auditor, it was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Mullan, seconded by Councillor Cubitt that tender be sought for the provision of an Internal Audit Function for Council.

Civil Partnerships and Councils Responsibility: The Chief Executive explained that the Civil Partnership Act would come into force from 5 December 2005 and that from this date same sex couples could register their intent at a Register Office to form a Civil Partnership, with ceremonies being allowed from 21 December 2005. He said Council was legally obliged to provide similar facilities for Civil Partnerships as currently provided for Civil Marriages and that under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act of 1998, Council was required to carry out its functions relating to this with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity for persons of different sexual orientations.

The Director of Support Services tabled a revised list of fees for marriages and partnership ceremonies in Council buildings and other approved places. The fees were approved on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Alderman Mullan.

Housing Growth Indicators: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Rankin, seconded by Councillor Carten that Council appoint Michael Graham of Farningham, McCreadie Partnership to represent Council at the review of Regional Housing Growth Indicators public examination at a cost of £4,050.

Members Training Audit: The Chief Executive tabled a training audit form and requested that members indicate their preference so that training could be arranged as soon as possible.

Christmas Fair Trade Table: Members noted that a Fair Trade table would be on displayed on 12 – 14 December 2005 in Council building and that this could give staff and members of the public an opportunity to purchase a variety of certified Fair Trade goods.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- Northern Ireland – Housing Land Availability Summary Report 2004
- Citizens Advice Bureau – Annual Report 2004-2005
- Public Appointments (Volume 1 & 2) - Annual Report 2004/2005
- Caring for People Beyond Tomorrow – A Strategic Framework for the Development of Primary Health & Social Care
- Arts Council of NI National Lottery Fund – Annual Report 2004-2005
- The Architectural Heritage Fund – Annual Review 2004-2005
- Northern Ireland Draft Priorities & Budget 2006-08

Next Meeting – 21 December 2005

**THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 10.40 pm)**