

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH

21 DECEMBER 2005

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 Environmental Services, Director of Support Services, Director of Development and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES:

None

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting dated 30 November 2005 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Carten.

MATTERS ARISING:

Lands at Shanreagh Park: The Chief Executive reported that Councils' solicitor continued to investigate implications of notice of motion and decision on use of land at Shanreagh Park. Councillor Cubitt reminded members that conditions had been given on use of the land when it had been given to Council.

Members Training Audit: The Chief Executive outlined that an analysis of returned training needs questionnaire showed a priority for training on Running of Effective Meetings. He said two sessions would be organised for the first quarter of 2006 and that the cost would be £450 + VAT, 50% funded by the Local Government Training.

MINUTES FROM EXTERNAL BODIES:

The following minutes were tabled and noted.

- Western Health & Social Services Board - 29 September 2005
- Altnagelvin Hospitals Health & Social Services Trust – 6 October 2005
- Foyle Health & Social Services Trust – 25 November 2005

NOTICE OF MOTION:

Councillor Brolly proposed that:

“This Council commits itself to building a Child Friendly Council Area in line with the UNICEF Child Friendly City Initiative of 1996.”

In proposing the motion, Councillor Brolly said the 1996 initiative had been launched to act on the resolution passed during the second UN Conference on

Human Settlements (Habitat II) to make cities liveable places for all. She said the key objective was to support and build the capacity of cities in their commitment to developing a rights-based agenda for children and to promote networking of communities, experts, child/youth groups and other partners interested in sharing experiences and information on innovative policies/programmes aimed at making cities child friendly.

Councillor Brolly stated that Council had a legal obligation to support the initiative and ensure that the Borough had child protection policies. The motion was seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín.

Councillor Douglas said that whilst he had no difficulty with the motion, a member from Councillor Brolly's party had been arrested and implicated with the Claudy bombings where a 9 year old child had died. Councillor Brolly referred Councillor Douglas to Article 34 of Standing Orders and said the remarks were insulting.

In the discussion that followed, the chair asked Councillor Douglas to refrain from making further comment as his choice of words had implied an accusation in the way they were phrased. Councillor Douglas objected at not been able to speak and said he had been stating facts, which should offend no-one.

Councillor Donaghy and Robinson joined the meeting at 8.45 pm.

In summing up, Councillor Brolly called for the adoption of the motion and said she had devoted her life to teaching and wanted children to be brought up without the bitterness that had been shown in the chamber during the debate.

On being put to the meeting the motion was declared carried with 9 voting for and 1 abstention.

RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY DERRY CITY COUNCIL:

It was agreed that the following resolution submitted by Derry City Council would be noted:

“That a strongly worded letter be sent to HM Revenue and customs regarding its shabby treatment of this Council in relation to a meeting regarding the Family Tax Credit system and that this letter be copied to all Councils in Northern Ireland.”

CONSULTATIONS:

The Chief Executive tabled the following consultations documents for member's consideration:

- a) Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission - Consultation on Strategic Plan 2006-2009 (Response due 31 January 2006)
- b) Fire Authority for Northern Ireland – Proposed Northern Ireland Emergency Response Standards and Draft IRMP Action Plan 2006/07 (Response due 28 February 2006)
- c) Bribery – Reform of the Prevention of Corruption Acts and SFO Powers in Cases of Bribery of Foreign Officials (Response due 1 March 2006)

- d) New Post Primary Arrangements and Proposal for Draft Education (NI) Order (Response due 7 March 2006)

It was agreed that the Corporate Policy Officer would prepare a draft response to the consultation on New Post Primary Arrangements and Proposal for Draft Education (NI) Order for the February 2006 Monthly meeting of Council.

RIVER ROE AND TRIBUTARIES AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST:

The Chief Executive tabled letter 30 November 2005 from EHS, which notified Council that under Article 28 of the Environment (Northern Ireland) 2002, River Roe and Tributaries were designated and described as an Area of Special Scientific Interest. He said that the Department would consider any representation or objection to be made by 8 March 2006 before deciding to confirm the declaration.

It was agreed that the ASSI declaration would be placed on the agenda for discussion at the January 2006 Monthly meeting of Council. Members noted that Council awaited response from EHS on possible prosecution for pollution of the River Roe which had happened 6 month previously.

EC HABITATS DIRECTIVE – RIVER ROE AND TRIBUTARIES POSSIBLE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION:

The Chief Executive tabled letter dated 30 November 2005 from EHS, which advised that the Department of Environment were satisfied that River Roe and Tributaries ASSI contains rare and threatened habitats and associated wild animals and plants which must be protected under the terms of the Habitats Directive. Noted.

REVISED COMMUNICATION PLAN:

The Chief Executive explained that the 2004 Appraisal Audit referred to a number of deficiencies in Councils internal and external communications and the need for a Communication Plan.

He proposed a number of objectives in relation to internal and external communication and said the main Communication Strategy for internal communication would include Corporate Briefings (established November 2005), Corporate Plan scorecard (established November 2005) and a Staff Conference to be held June 2006. He said staff would be briefed on decisions taken at Council meetings and would be updated through a staff meeting structure, to include weekly/fortnightly senior team meetings in each Directorate and monthly 1:1 sessions with direct line managers.

Members noted that improved external communication would include corporate identity initiatives to be reviewed by April 2006; PR/Media opportunities to be maximised by press releases and introduction of a Council newsletter to the general public by June 2006.

In conclusion the Chief Executive pointed out that communication was a two way process and would be improved through effective contact with community

groups/associations by officers; compilation of a comprehensive database of contacts; establishment of focus groups for consultation purposes and a monthly update of Councils website, which would be revamped in May 2006.

Councillor Cubitt commended the proposed Communication Plan and suggested local shops be used for provision of corporate gifts. The Communication Plan was formally adopted on the proposal of Councillor Brolly, seconded by Councillor Chivers and it was agreed that a communication budget allocation be included in the annual rate estimates in February 2006.

COUNCIL MEETINGS PROPOSAL:

The Chief Executive outlined that a limited level of consensus had been agreed to restructuring of Council meetings and sought member's direction on suggested range of start times and proposal to hold the Support Services Committee and Monthly Council meeting on the same night.

Councillor Brolly said that whilst members of Sinn Féin would prefer a 6 pm start, 6.30 pm would be accepted as a compromise. Councillor Cubitt proposed an amendment that the meetings start at 7 pm. The amendment was put to the meeting and declared carried with 8 voting for and 6 against. The substantive motion to was put to the meeting and declared carried.

Members discussed the possibility of holding a joint Monthly and Support Services meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Councillor Cubitt proposed that the Support Services meeting be held on the first Tuesday, Development Services on second Tuesday, Environmental Services on the third Tuesday and Monthly on the fourth Tuesday. This was seconded by Alderman Robinson and on being put to the meeting was declared carried, with 7 voting for, 6 against and 1 abstention.

Councillor Brolly proposed, seconded by Councillor Butcher that the agreed restructure be implemented from January 2006. Councillor Stevenson proposed an amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Cubitt, that the restructure commence after the AGM in June 2006. The amendment was put to the meeting and declared lost, with 6 voting for, and 9 against. The proposal to commence the restructure in January 2006 was put to the meeting and declared carried, with 9 voting for and 6 against.

It was agreed that the Director of Environmental Services would service the Planning & Services Committee; Directors to attend the Monthly meeting when advised to; where possible meetings to end by 9 pm and refreshments to be served at 6.45 pm. It was also agreed that the Chief Executive would inform sub-groups and committees of whom members were represented of the agreed changes.

LOAN SANCTION APPROVAL:

Loan Sanction approval was agreed for the following on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded Councillor Ó hOisín:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|----------|
| 1. | Lough Foyle Ferry | £558,000 |
| 2. | Sports Strategy | £410,000 |
| 3. | Vehicles | £112,000 |

Councillor Cubitt suggested the bin lorries be upgraded or replaced. Noted.

DIRECTORS JOB EVALUATION REPORT:

IN COMMITTEE: The Chief Executive reminded members that following the Appraisal Audit Report of 2005, a major restructuring of Council Senior positions had led to change from 5 Chief Officer to 3 Director posts. He said this had been effective from 1 July 2005 and was subject to job re-evaluation and salary recommendation to be agreed at a later date.

The Chief Executive informed members that in August 2005 the Hay Group of Consultants had evaluated the posts and provided a summary of recommendations thereon. The recommended salary scales for the 3 Directors to be implemented from 1 July 2005 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Carten. **OUT OF COMMITTEE.**

SEAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

None.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Limavady Twinning Association: The Chief Executive informed members that Limavady Twinning Association planned to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the twinning arrangement with Vigneux-sur-Seine on 28 – 30 September 2006. He said events to take place over the celebration weekend included music, dancing, culture and an official anniversary ceremony dinner with a number of guests from Vigneux-sur-Seine.

Members agreed to a contribution of £2,000 to assist with financial planning for the event, which would be included in the rates estimates.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland: The Chief Executive explained that the template to assist Public Authorities to report on implementation of the equality and good relations duties under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 had been completed and returned to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. Noted

Woman in Local Councils – Declaration of Principles: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Carten that Council endorse the Declaration of Principles regarding woman in local Councils.

Stormontgate Spy Ring: Councillor Stevenson proposed that the Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State regarding the expulsion of Denis Donaldson from Sinn Féin as a British agent and called on the Government to carry out a public inquiry into the Stormontgate spy ring. This was seconded by Alderman Robinson.

Threat of Industrial Action by Planning Service: Councillor Cubitt suggested that the Chief Executive write to Lord Rooker to express concern at the potential for industrial action by the Planning Service in relation to proposed pay increase and urged that negotiations be held with NIPSA in an attempt to reach agreement and avoid strike action. Agreed.

Motor Industry Federation 2005 Award: Councillor Carten requested that congratulations be conveyed to Bob Mullan Motors on being awarded the Motor Industry Federation 2005 award for Best Independent Garage of the Year.

Delivering a Countryside for Health & Well Being: It was agreed that Councillor Coyle, the Director of Development and the Countryside Recreation Officer would attend the above conference to be held 26 – 27 January 2006 in Four Seasons Hotel, Carlingford, Co. Lough at a cost of £195 per person.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- Report on the Implementation of Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Duties by Public Authorities Based on Public Authority Annual Progress Reports;
- Community Evaluation Northern Ireland – Annual Report 04/05;
- The Big Lottery Fund – The Big Message: Consultation Outcomes and New Northern Ireland Programmes;
- Inspection of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland - December 2005;
- Department for Transport – Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS);
- Fire Authority for Northern Ireland Annual Report & Statement of Accounts 2004/05;
- Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee – Annual Report & Accounts 2004/2005;
- Foundation for Credit Counselling – helping people to be free of D&BT;
- Northern Ireland Community Relations Council – Accounts and Grant Awards 2004/05 and 15th Annual Report;
- National Heart Forum – Annual Review 2004/05;
- Heritage Lottery Fund – Our Heritage, Our Future, Your Say;
- Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland – Corporate Plan 2005-2008;
- Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland – Annual Report 2004-05;
- Home Energy Conservation Strategy for Northern Ireland – Conservation Report 2005.

SEASONS GREETINGS:

The Mayor – Councillor Coyle wished members and Council employees a happy and peaceful Christmas.

NEXT MEETING:

24 January 2006 at 7 pm.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 9.15 pm)