



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018 AT 6.30PM

In the Chair: Councillor N Kells

Members Present: Alderman – W DeCourcy
Councillors – J Bingham, B Duffin, T Girvan, M Goodman,
P Hamill, T Hogg, A Logue, N McClelland, M Maguire,
P Michael and B Webb.

Non-Committee Members Present: Alderman – J Smyth

Officers Present: Director or Organisation Development – A McCooke
Head of Finance – J Balmer
Head of Governance – L Johnston
Head of ICT - G Smyth
ICT Officer – C Bell
Governance Support Officer – D Conlan

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the May Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee and reminded all present of recording requirements.

1. APOLOGIES

Alderman Agnew
Councillor Hollis

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 G/LEG/291-7 SOCIETY LOTTERY RENEWAL APPLICATION

An application from Mid Antrim Animal Sanctuary to hold a Society Lottery at their premises on 15 December 2018 had been received. The proceeds of the lottery will go to animal welfare, education and rehoming.

The application met all statutory requirements and PSNI had no objections.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

a licence for the lottery for Mid Antrim Animal Sanctuary be issued.

ACTION BY: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer

3.2 FC/G/2 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

Members were reminded that Ms Sandra Cole had been appointed as Director of Finance & Governance with effect from 2 July 2018. Ms Carmel Moore had been appointed Financial Accounting Assistant (P/T) in the Finance & Governance Department with effect from 1 May 2018.

It is a requirement of the financial institutions used by Council to formally minute the authorisation given by Council to named officers to transact business on Council's behalf.

Proposed by Councillor Bingham
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

from the effective date Ms Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance, and Ms Carmel Moore, Financial Accounting Assistant (P/T), are authorised:

- a) as signatories to the Council's bank accounts;**
- b) to submit and approve internet banking transactions;**
- c) to submit and approve Bankers' Automated Clearing Services (BACS) transactions;**
- d) transact business with Council approved counterparty institutions.**

ACTION BY: Denise Lynn, PA to Director of Finance & Governance

3.3 G-LEG LAND ABANDONED BY THE DEPARTMENT – THE FERRARD MEADOW, ANTRIM (ABANDONMENT) ORDER (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2018

The Department of Infrastructure had advised the Council that it is proposing to make an Order to abandon two areas of road totalling 249 square metres at Ferrard Meadow, Antrim in accordance with Schedule 8 to the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993.

The Council has no interest in this land.

The Notice of Intention, draft order and map (circulated) outlined the proposal and highlighted the areas considered for abandonment in red.

Objections to this proposal must be addressed to the Department within the period 8th May 2018 to 15th June 2018.

Proposed by Councillor Hogg
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the correspondence be noted.

ACTION BY: Deirdre Nelson, Paralegal

3.4 CCS/REG/6, CCS/REG/16, CCS/REG/19 APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGE / CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES

Under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act (2004), the Council has the responsibility to approve appropriate applications for Place Approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

Applications had been received from:

- (a) Breckenhill
- (b) Clotworthy and Antrim Castle Gardens
- (c) Chimney Corner Hotel

for the approval of specific areas at the stated premises.

Part of the process requires that a Notice of Interest is displayed for a three week period in a prominent place at each of the complexes to allow for public objection.

No objections had been received to any of the notifications to apply for Place Approval and the premises had been formally inspected and no problems had been found with regard to the applications.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the named premises be approved to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act (2004)

(a) Breckenhill

- Stone Barn
- Drawing Room (in main house)
- Garden area

(b) Clotworthy & Antrim Castle Gardens

- Oriel Gallery
- Massereene Room
- Large Parterre (Garden)

(c) Chimney Corner Hotel

- Larne Room
- Lylehill Suite
- Fergus Suite

ACTION BY: Emma Thompson, Registrar

3.5 F1/FIN/10 AMENDMENT TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members were reminded that Council agreed the Financial Regulations in September 2015.

The Financial Regulations provide a framework through which the Chief Executive can satisfy herself that proper financial administration is being achieved. The aim of these Regulations is to help ensure that high standards of propriety and best value are achieved. All the Council's Members and employees have a duty to promote these aims, not just by following Financial Regulations but in their general approach.

It is necessary to review the Financial Regulations regularly to ensure that this is maintained, and to seek approval for those amendments required. After reviewing the Regulations a number of amendments are now required; a copy of the proposed updated Financial Regulations was circulated for approval.

The Head of Finance and Director of Organisation Development answered Members' questions regarding the recent Ombudsman's Report.

Councillor Webb requested that greater clarity be given regarding the protocol for the disposal of assets below £1000.

Councillor Maguire requested that future review of the Financial Regulations considers the threshold levels of expenditure for procurement of goods and services.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the amended Financial Regulations be agreed with the addition of clarification on the protocol in relation to the disposal of assets valued at less than £1000.

ACTION BY: John Balmer, Head of Finance

3.6 CE/GEN/4 DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE - PROPOSED DISABLED PARKING BAY – ISLAY STREET, ANTRIM

Correspondence had been received from the Department for Infrastructure outlining details of their proposal to reserve an on-street disabled parking space to the front of dwelling at Islay Street, Antrim (copy letter and map circulated).

The Department had requested a letter confirming that the Council was in agreement with this proposal and requested that any comments be forwarded to Traffic Northern 1 (Ballymena) at County Hall, Ballymena, BT42 1QG.

The Chair requested that the quality of all maps be assured in the future, so that Members can easily identify locations.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

the proposal from DfI be accepted.

ACTION BY: Member Services

3.7 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

Members were reminded that the Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016. This guidance requested councils to record specific performance targets of 10 working days and 30 calendar days and continue a cycle of quarterly reporting on prompt payment performance by councils to the DfC and its publication on their website.

The Council's prompt payment performance for the period 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2018 is set out below:

The default target for paying invoices, where no other terms are agreed, is 30 days.

(N.B. 30 days target is 30 calendar days and 10 days is 10 working days).

During the above period, the Council paid 7,546 invoices totalling £12,970,798

The Council paid 6,316 invoices within the 30 day target. (84%)

The Council paid 5,066 invoices within the 10 day target. (67%)

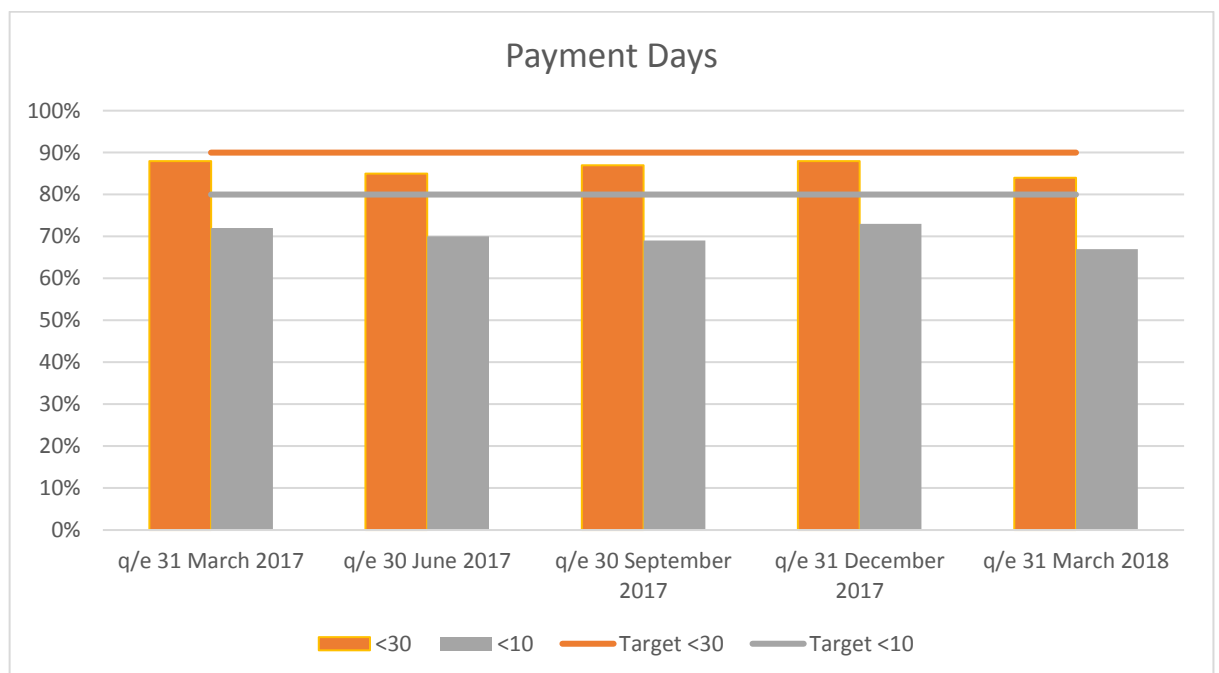
The Council paid 1,230, invoices outside of the 30 day target. (16%)

The Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

The results for the last quarter of 2016/17 and the 4 quarters for the 2017/18 financial year are as follows:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
2016/17			
q/e 31 March 2017	6,494	88%	72%
2017/18			
q/e 30 June 2017	6,384	85%	70%
q/e 30 Sept 2017	5,980	87%	69%
q/e 31 Dec 2017	6,367	88%	73%
q/e 31 March 2018	7,546	84%	67%

The performance presented graphically highlights the performance metrics for quarter 4 and the previous four quarters. A high volume of invoices was paid during March 2018, including invoices registered from previous quarters. This resulted in a slight decrease in the performance metrics for quarter 4.



The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended 31 December 2017 was circulated in Appendix 1; the Council's performance ranked against the other Councils for the first 3 quarters of 2017/18 is set out in the table below.

Period	% Paid Within 30 Days - Ranking	% Paid Within 10 Days - Ranking
q/e 30 June 2017	3rd	Joint 4th
q/e 30 Sept 2017	3rd	2nd
q/e 31 Dec 2017	4th	2nd

The Council recognises the importance of paying its suppliers promptly. As previously reported, to improve performance the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software implemented in quarter 4 of 2016/17 is now well embedded. The aim was to register 60% of invoices received via OCR by 31 March 2018. In quarter 4 of 2017/18, 51% of invoices received were registered via OCR.

We continue to proactively work with budget holders to process invoices efficiently.

Procedures and performance will continue to be kept under review and performance updates will be provided to Members.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
 Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted and that Officers report back to Committee with details of disputed invoices.

ACTION BY: John Balmer, Head of Finance

3.8 HR/HR/019 AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

Members were reminded that agency staff are used across the Council to provide temporary cover for absence such as:

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts

The use of agency staff is subject to a rigorous approval process, which requires the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team.

There is budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

The table below provides an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at March 2018 as compared to March 2017.

Reason for Agency Worker	March 2018	Position Covered	March 2017	Comments
Additional Resource	10	Cleaner, Sentry Hill 6 x Recreation Assistant/Leisure Attendant at Antrim Forum for extended opening Caravan Park Attendant 2 x Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Operative	24	Reflects the reduction of additional resources, some of which were related to temporary projects and phased start dates for seasonals this year.
Filling Funded Posts	5	3 x Affordable Warmth Project Officer Grange Community Project Officer PCSP Support Officer (PT)	6	
Covering Sickness/ Maternity Leave/ Shared Parental Leave	4	3 x Waste Operative, ESD Good Relations Support Officer	18	Reflects reduced absence.
Covering vacancies until structures filled	28	Receptionist, Clotworthy System Support Assistant Leisure Attendant, Crumlin Hook-Loader, Bruslee Team Leader Parks, CSD 4 x Grounds Maintenance Operative Greenkeeper, Parks Working Chargehand, Parks Central Services Supervisor 4 x Waste Operatives, CSD 3 x Waste Operatives, ESD Home Safety Officer 3 x Driver Site Operatives, Recycling Conferencing Administrator 2 x HGV Refuse Collection Driver System Support Assistant Clerical Officer, Leisure	13	Increase due to vacant posts to be filled related to the new structures and the completion of the categorisation exercise.

Covering career breaks/ secondments	6	2 x Grounds Maintenance Operative Clerical Officer, Environmental Health Clerical Officer, Waste Capital Projects Officer Admin Assistant, Planning	8	Reduced Secondments/ Career Breaks
TOTAL	53		69	

The table above excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice.

Appendix 1 (circulated) set out expenditure on agency workers in March 2018. The cost of agency staff has reduced for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 at 6.55% of all staffing costs compared to 7.44% for the same period last year.

The Director of Organisation Development clarified the authorisation process for the use of agency staff and provided examples of circumstances that require the use of recruitment agencies. The Director also agreed to respond to Alderman Smyth's query regarding payment of public holidays.

Proposed by Councillor Duffin
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the report be noted and that a further report detailing agencies' fees be made to Committee.

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

Councillor Hamill left the Chamber.

3.9 G/LAN/002 REVALUATION OF NON DOMESTIC PREMISES – CORRESPONDENCE FROM LAND & PROPERTY SERVICES

Correspondence was received from Land & Property Services on 20 April 2018 (copy circulated) advising that we are now entering a public phase of the next rating revaluation of all non-domestic properties in Northern Ireland and enclosing an information sheet for Members on Reval 2020.

The correspondence also advised that Mr Bronte, Commissioner of Valuation in N Ireland, will brief representatives for District Council Finance Officers on Reval 2020 at the Penny Product Working Group meeting on 3 May 2018.

Members highlighted the burden of rates on the businesses based within town centres and hoped that this rate revaluation would benefit these business owners.

Proposed by Councillor Michael
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the correspondence be noted.

ACTION BY: John Balmer, Head of Finance

3.10 FI/ICT/4 DIGITAL PROJECTS PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that the Digital Strategy was approved in March 2017, with a previous update report issued in February 2018.

There has been progress achieved since the last progress report in February 2018, with 12 digital projects due for completion with the next 6 months and a further 9 due within 12 months. To date 9 of the digital projects identified within the Digital Strategy have been completed.

There are several key projects and the progress is noted as follows:

LEISURE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

To fully support the new Leisure Pricing Strategy introduced in October 2017, a new Leisure Management System has been purchased.

Significant configuration work is currently underway, and although the project is proving complex, it is anticipated that the new system will be operational in June 2018. Any changes to this timeframe will be reported to Members.

RESIDENTS' APP

A procurement exercise took place during April 2018, however it was not possible to appoint a suitable supplier to develop, deliver and support a Residents' App.

A further procurement exercise will commence shortly and it is anticipated the App will be delivered during July / August 2018.

WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

An active procurement exercise is currently underway and it is anticipated that a suitable supplier will be appointed shortly.

The redevelopment is intended to make the Council website easier to navigate while providing more transactional and informational Council services.

During 2017-18, the current website attracted over 1 million visits, while social media channels had a combined following of 17,000 users.

This project is on course to be delivered for October 2018.

The Digital Projects Progress Report (circulated) provided more detail on all the ongoing digital projects.

The Members commended staff for the work completed to date. The Head of ICT agreed to report back to Committee on the pilot point to point Wi-Fi scheme in Ballyclare.

Proposed by Councillor Michael
Seconded by Councillor Hogg and agreed that

the report be noted and further updates be provided to Committee as progress is made.

ACTION BY: Graham Smyth, Head of ICT

3.11 HR/LD/7 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Background

Members were reminded that a Member Development Working Group (MDWG) is in place (6 members with representation from each Party) and it meets on a quarterly basis.

Training and Development Action Plan was agreed for all Members and was informed by the Personal Development plans.

The most common training identified related to:

- Finance
- Community Planning
- IT Skills
- Mediation
- Strategic Focus
- Media Skills
- Social Media

A training programme was delivered for all Members and some specific training needs of Members were also sourced and offered to Members e.g. Sign Language.

Resources for further learning and development were made available on a Members Portal and via a Member Development Folder created on Fluix.

In December 2015 the Council was awarded Elected Member Development Charter status which is a nationally recognised standard designed specifically for the development of Councillors and ensures that the practices and mechanisms required for member development are in place and working.

Delivering Learning and Development for Members

Since April 2015 the Learning and Development Programme offered to Members includes the following:

- Members' Induction Programme i.e. Governance, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Audit and Finance, Planning, Social Media, Chairmanship
- Members' Portal on the Intranet with L&D Resources – Members Handbook, NILGA Councillors Guide, LG Guides, 21st Century Councillor
- Members' folder on FLUIX holding L&D Programmes and additional information
- Member Training Programme – Professional and Internal training courses and seminars to cover individual personal development plans e.g. Computer Skills, Rate Setting, Media Skills, Mediation, First Aid, Good Relations, Equality & Diversity
- 2018 NILGA Regional Elected Member Training Programme
- Access to other courses, seminars and conferences of interest to Members e.g. Outcomes Based Accountability, Citizens Advice, Housing Rights
- A Continuous Professional Development (CPD) policy for Members to avail of academic or higher level courses related to their role
- Access to LGSC funded programmes e.g. Diversity Champions, ADV Dip in Civic Leadership and Community Planning.

A copy of the full Training Programme was circulated.

Future Plans for Member Development

A tailored training programme (circulated) will be delivered from September 2018 – March 2019 to meet the needs of our Members and utilise any appropriate opportunities from the NILGA Regional EMD Training Programme.

In addition to this we will:

- Involve Members in the design of Community Planning, Conflict and Mediation training to be delivered in September 2018.
- Members' L&D resources will be updated and made available electronically, with monthly updates of development opportunities coming up with our own or the Regional Programme.
- Podcasts and E-learning methods of delivering training/awareness will be promoted.
- All Members will be offered to complete the 360 review from May 2018 following the successful Pilot involving 4 Members from the MDWG.
- A plan for the Induction of Members in May/June 2019 will be prepared.
- An Action Plan for Charter Plus status will be reported to the May 2018 MDWG.

Proposed by Councillor Webb

Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Duffin
Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

the following Committee business be taken In Confidence.

**3.12 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/15 SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF CLEANING PRODUCTS
CONTRACT PERIOD: 1 MAY 2016 TO 30 APRIL 2017 (WITH AN OPTION BY THE
COUNCIL TO EXTEND FOR A FURTHER TWO PERIODS OF 12 MONTHS)**

Members were reminded that at the Council meeting held on 24 April 2017, the items included in this contract were extended for the first period of 12 months to the following suppliers:

Lot 1	Pool Items	Cleancare Northern Cryogenics Limited OAK (CWE) Limited William Clements Limited
Lot 2	Laundry & Dishwashing	Source Limited
Lot 3	Washroom	Bunzl McLaughlin
Lot 4	Kitchen	Hypro
Lot 5	Disinfectant & Sanitiser	Bunzl McLaughlin
Lot 6	Floorcare	Bunzl McLaughlin
Lot 7	Carpet & Upholstery Care	Hypro
Lot 8	Miscellaneous	Hypro

The contracts are due to expire on 30 April 2018.

Having reviewed the contracts, the Contract Manager has not experienced any significant issues with the goods provided by the suppliers under the terms of the contract. As the market conditions are broadly similar, the Contract Manager recommends that the option to extend be exercised and that the contracts be extended for a further period of 12 months to 30 April 2019 for all Lots, with the exception of CO2 for ph correction (included in Lot 1), which will be removed from this contract and tendered separately.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the above tender be extended temporarily for a month pending review of the environmental impact of the contracts and a report be made to Committee in June.

ACTION BY: Julia Clarke, Procurement Officer

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Hogg

Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairman advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As this was the last meeting of the current Committee, Members congratulated the Chair and Vice Chair on how they had conducted business over the last year and thanked Officers for their assistance.

There being no further committee business the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting concluded at 7.27 pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and legal advice.