



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 5 DECEMBER 2017 AT 6.30PM

In the Chair: Councillor N Kells

Members Present: Aldermen – F Agnew, W DeCourcy,
Councillors – J Bingham, B Duffin, T Girvan, M Goodman, P Hamill, D Hollis, T Hogg, M Maguire, P Michael, N McClelland, B Webb

Non-Committee Members Present: Councillor D Arthurs

Officers Present: Chief Executive – Ms J Dixon
Director of Organisation Development – Ms A McCooke
Borough Lawyer – Mr P Casey
Head of Governance – Ms L Johnston
Head of Finance – Mr J Balmer
Head of Communications & Customer Services – Ms T White
ICT Officer – Mr A Cole
Governance Support Officer – Ms D Conlan

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

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

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were recorded.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.11 – Ms Jacqui Dixon, Chief Executive

3. REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED

The Chairperson noted that an amendment was to be made to the Agenda and Item 3.11 would now be taken in confidence.

3.1 G/MSMO/7 VOL 3 PRESENTATION BY NI FIRE BRIGADES UNION

Members were aware that following correspondence received from the Fire Brigades Union, it was agreed at Full Council on Monday 27 November that the Union would be invited to present to the Policy and Governance Committee meeting in relation to the NIFRS' decision to reduce cover at Antrim Fire Station.

Stephen Boyd, Regional Secretary and David Nichol, Treasurer from the Fire Brigades Union, were in attendance.

Members questions were answered. The Chairperson thanked Mr Boyd for his presentation and he and Mr Nicholl left the meeting.

3.2 G/DPFI3.1/1 DATA PROTECTION REGISTRATION

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) had requested that the requirement for Councillors to have individual registration under the Data Protection Act 1998 in relation to work undertaken on behalf of constituents was brought to their attention.

An ICO advice booklet providing information on this requirement was circulated. This stated that Councillors must decide the role in which they are processing personal information:

1. As a member of the Council
2. As a representative of the residents of their ward
3. As a representative of a political party

When processing information as a member of the Council, Councillors are covered by the Data Protection registration of the Council. When acting on behalf of a political party, for instance as an office holder, councillors are entitled to rely upon the registration made by the party. However, if Councillors are carrying out any processing which falls outside either of these two areas they would require to be individually registered.

The ICO has provided a self-assessment tool on their website so that Councillors can decide if they need to register or not: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/register/self-assessment/>

The ICO had advised that Councillors with any queries should contact Dan Stojic in the Registration Team on 0330 414 6889 or use the Helpline number 0303 123 1113 (Option 2).

Councillors who do need to be individually registered would be required to complete a registration form and pay a £35 fee.

Proposed by Councillor Duffin
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

all Councillors be informed of the correspondence from the ICO to consider their individual circumstances in relation to the processing of personal information and that they respond on an individual basis directly with the ICO.

ACTION BY: Helen McBride, Information Governance Manager

3.3 FI/ICT/38 ROLLING ICT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The ICT Replacement programme would help provide robust and reliable computer equipment.

Aging computer hardware does not provide the high level of service and reliability to the users required for the Council to maintain service levels and meet customer expectations. The ICT replacement programme would provide robust and reliable computer hardware. Without this rolling replacement program, service levels diminish and business continuity is put at risk.

The life expectancy of new PC hardware is much longer and new equipment would be purchased with a 5-year warranty.

The capital costs were as follows:
PC / Laptop Replacement - £42,000

Total capital cost: £42,000 (included in the capital budget) The Economic Appraisal Pro-forma was circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the capital expenditure for the rolling ICT replacement program be authorised.

ACTION BY: Paul Allan, ICT Manager

3.4 G/LEG/291(3)&(4) SOCIETY LOTTERY APPLICATIONS

The Council received the following applications for Society Lotteries.

1. An application from Hill Croft Parent Teachers Association to hold a Society Lottery at Hill Croft School, Newtownabbey on 18 December 2017 to fundraise for additional equipment for the children of the school.

The application meets all statutory requirements and PSNI have no objections.

2. An application from Newtownabbey Mencap to hold a Society Lottery at their premises on 14 February 2018 has been received. The purpose of the

lottery is for the benefit of adults and children with learning disabilities in the Newtownabbey area.

The application meets all statutory requirements and PSNI have no objections.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Hogg and agreed that

the issuing of licences for the lotteries for Hill Croft Parent Teachers' Association and Newtownabbey Mencap be approved.

ACTION BY: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer

3.5 CCS/GEN/8 RURAL NEEDS ACT (NI) 2016

Background

Members were aware that on 1 June 2017 the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 became operational for District Councils (Appendix 1 circulated). An earlier report to Council in June 2017 outlined the three main areas of responsibility under the Act, namely to:

- consider rural needs
- monitor and report
- co-operate and share information with other public authorities

Definition of rural need

The Act defines 'rural needs' as "the social and economic needs of rural areas". In general terms, a need can be considered to be something that is essential to achieve a standard of living comparable with that of the population in general e.g. relates to the ability to access key public services such as health and education, the ability to access suitable employment opportunities, and the ability to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle.

The Act refers to 'having due regard to rural needs' and means that the Council must consciously consider the needs of people in rural areas when developing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. The level of 'regard' that is 'due' will depend on the circumstances and, in particular, on the relevance of rural needs to the decision or function in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact for people in rural needs, the greater the regard required by the duty.

Rural proofing

The Rural Needs Act does not explicitly refer to rural proofing or prescribe any specific process to be used by public authorities in having 'due regard to rural needs'. Rural proofing is the process by which policies, strategies and plans are assessed to determine whether they have a differential impact on rural areas and, where appropriate, adjustments are made to take account of particular rural circumstances.

The DEARA definition of rural is 'those settlements with fewer than 5000 residents together with the open countryside' are classified as rural.

Following a report to Council in June 2017 it was agreed that Officers ensure the appropriate integration of Rural Proofing within strategy and policy development.

Subsequently, Officers have consulted with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA), other Councils, GROW and also taken advice from our Borough Solicitor in exploring the appropriate integration of Rural Proofing.

Work has also been undertaken to develop an initial list of key relevant stakeholders who could be consulted as part of any rural screening activities.

Proposed approach for Rural Proofing

The following steps are proposed to ensure the appropriate regulation of rural proofing within Strategy and Policy Development.

1. That the Rural Proofing process is integrated into the Council's existing policy development process and is carried out alongside the existing equality screening process. A new screening form has been developed to facilitate this joint screening process.
2. As required by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016, the specific requirements for reporting under the two pieces of legislation be completed individually for Council and the relevant external bodies.
3. That the reporting of the screening exercises be, as currently happens for Section 75 screenings, reported with the relevant items to the appropriate Council committee.
4. That the quarterly summary of screened items continues to be reported to the Policy and Governance Committee.
5. The roll out of training should be completed, including the use of the online training module provided by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), be used as part of training provided for Officers. Training will be provided for in the New Year.
6. That the revised Policy Screening template be approved (Appendix 2 circulated); the Rural Needs Impact Assessment steps are highlighted in blue.

Proposed by Councillor Michael
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the screening approach be approved.

ACTION BY: T White, Head of Communication and Customer Service

3.6 HR/HR/11 RECRUITMENT & SELECTION - DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

Members were advised that the recruitment and selection process would commence in the New Year to fill the vacant post of Director of Finance and Governance.

Members were reminded that, in accordance with the Local Government Staff Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection, a suitable recruitment panel, to include two Members, is required to be established to complete the recruitment exercise.

Consistent with the Code of Procedures, it is proposed that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are nominated to the recruitment panel.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the Mayor and Deputy Mayor (or their Party nominees should they be available) be nominated to the recruitment and selection panel to fill the vacant post of Director of Finance and Governance.

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

3.7 G/MSMO/41 MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

In February 2017 at the Policy and Governance Committee meeting it was agreed that six monthly attendance reports for Committee Members be published on the Council's website.

Attendance had been recorded for each of the Committees and the Council meetings for the six month period from 1 June 2017 to 30 November 2017. A summary sheet had been prepared showing the total attendance for these periods and circulated for Members' information, prior to publication on the Council's website.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the summary sheet recording Members' attendance for each of the Council meetings; and Committee Member attendance for each of the Committee meetings for the six month period from 1 June 2017 to 30 November 2017 be noted.

ACTION BY: Member Services

3.8 FI/FIN/11 DRAFT RATES ESTIMATES UPDATE 2018/19

Members were reminded that the Estimates Timetable as agreed by Council in July 2017 outlined that draft revenue estimates would be presented to the relevant committees in December 2017.

A draft rates calculation, estimates summary by service and a detailed report on the 2018/19 Estimates for the Chief Executive, Finance & Governance, Organisational Development and Capital Financing were circulated for Members' information.

Councillor Webb and Councillor Duffin thanked the Finance Team for their work relating to estimates.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the report be noted

NO ACTION

3.9 ST/HS/207 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 provided an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at October 2017 as compared to October 2016.

Reason for Agency Worker	Oct 2017	Position Covered	Oct 2016	Comments
Additional Resource	42	31 x Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Ops Cleaner, Sentry Hill Receptionist Antrim Forum 7 x On Call Recreation Assistant/Leisure Attendant at Antrim Forum for Sunday early opening	41	

		1 x On Call Recreation Assistant/Leisure Attendant Antrim Forum 1 x On Call Leisure Attendant at Sixmile		
Filling Funded Posts	5	3 x Affordable Warmth Project Officer Grange Community Project Officer PCSP Support Officer (PT)	6	Increase in cover for Affordable Warmth
Covering Sickness/ Maternity Leave	5	3 x Waste Operative, ESD Technical Officer Building Control Surveyor	3	

Covering vacancies until structures filled	33	Conferencing & Cultural Events Manager Arts Technician (2 PT – 1FTE) Front of House Sales Assistant, Old Court House Receptionist (Clotworthy) Tackling Deprivation Officer Clerical (Building Control) Systems Support Assistant Payroll Manager HR Officer HR Assistant Activity Coach – Disability 2 x Recreation Attendants Pavilion Attendant (Lilian Bland Pavilion) Team Leader Parks CSD 5 x Grounds Maintenance Operative 2 x Planning Assistants Caravan Park Attendant (JLSP) Central Services Supervisor 4 x Waste Operatives, CSD 3 x Waste Operatives, ESD Driver Site Operative	13	Increase of 19 due to vacant posts
Covering career breaks/ secondments	7	Systems Support Assistant E Communications Officer Clerical Officer Leisure Grounds Maintenance Operative Museums Assistant Waste Operative Clerical Officer Waste	4	Additional Secondments/Career Breaks
TOTAL	92		67	

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

Appendix one sets out expenditure on agency workers in October 2017. The cost of agency staff for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 October 2017 is 8% of all staffing costs compared to 7.9% for the same period last year.

Proposed by Councillor Hogg
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.10 HR/LD/015 MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS UPDATE

Linked to the Council's Employee Engagement Strategy and specifically to the Learning strand of this plan, two bespoke pilot Leadership Programmes, were launched in June 2017.

The programmes had been designed and largely delivered in house by the Council's Human Resources Team. Funding of approximately £7.5k had been successfully secured from the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) for the pilot project (the findings of which will be shared with the LGTG).

The programmes had been branded as iManage and iSupervise with each programme having around 15 participants who work as front line supervisors (iSupervisor programme) and senior Line Managers (iManage programme). Both programmes will conclude in June 2018 to complete the extensive range of developmental learning planned throughout the course duration.

A summary of the key programme objectives is as follows:

- Increase leadership capability to drive cultural change and performance improvement,
- Establish coaching leadership styles,
- Increase performance via participants completing cross functional business improvement projects,
- Improve communication skills (and the ability of participants to adapt their own communication style).

iManage Programme Progress Update

Members were advised that participants had completed a range of developmental work to include:

- 360-degree feedback diagnostic,
- Insights Personality Profile,
- Conflict and Mediation module,
- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team module,
- Managers as Coaches module,
- Read and a collective book review of two leadership books "The Chimp Paradox" and "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team."

- Engaged with their coach and line manager to agree a personal development plan over the next 9 months.

Future learning interventions still to be delivered in 2018 are;

- Leadership module,
- Commercial Acumen module,
- Completion of the business improvement projects,
- Completion of the remaining coaching sessions,
- Stakeholder Management and Strategic Thinking modules,
- Reading (and book review) of the Leadership book "The Truth about Employee Engagement".

iSupervise Programme Progress Update

There is a degree of similarity between the two Programmes and the content for both has been shaped and tailored for the participants. To date the participants of this programme had completed;

- Conflict Management module,
- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team module,
- Communications Skills.

Future learning interventions still to be delivered in 2018 are;

- Leadership - Motivation and Ownership of deliverables,
- Attendance Management,
- Managing Disciplinary / Grievance cases,
- Engaging Teams (emotional intelligence and teams),
- Monthly 1-2-1 progress and feedback sessions line managers to agree a development plan.

The feedback from the programme participants had been very positive and a further report would be made to Members in due course following the completion of the pilot.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Duffin and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Hogg and agreed that

the Committee proceeds to conduct the following business 'In Committee'.

3.11 IN CONFIDENCE HR/LD/014 CHIEF EXECUTIVE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Members were reminded that it was agreed that the Group Leaders Forum would conduct the Performance Appraisal of the Chief Executive and that any concerns or issues would be reported to Council.

Members were advised that the Chief Executive's Performance Appraisal was completed on 23 November 2017.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

MOTION TO PROCEED 'OUT OF COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Hogg and agreed that

the Committee proceeds to conduct any remaining business 'In Public'.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would re-commence at this point.

4. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Members expressed their thanks to the Director of Finance and Governance for her competent and professional service to the Council.

Councillor Maguire reminded Members that a copy of the Finance Director's responses to members' queries' from the Treasurer's Advice Report is available for Committee Members to review and that Alderman Smyth and Councillor Maguire were meeting the Head of Finance on Thursday 14th December 2017 should any other members of the Committee wish to join them.

There being no further business the Chairperson thanked Members for attending and the meeting ended at 7.32 pm.

Mayor

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