

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE
COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 6 JUNE 2017 AT 6.30PM**

In the Chair: Councillor N Kells

Members Present: Aldermen –W DeCourcy, W Webb
Councillors - T Girvan, M Goodman, P Hamill, M Maguire, N
McClelland

**Non-Committee
Members Present:**

Officers Present: Director of Organisation Development – Ms A McCooke
Director of Finance and Governance – Ms C Archer
Legal Advisor – Mr P Casey
Head of Communications and Customer Service – Ms T White
ICT Officer – Mr John Higginson
Member Services Officer – Ms V Lisk

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

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

1. APOLOGIES

Alderman F Agnew, Councillors B Duffin, D Hollis, T Hogg, A Logue and J Bingham

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 CCS/REG/14 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.

An application had been received from the owner of Dunamoy Cottages & Spa, Ballyclare for the approval of an area at the specified premises.

Part of the process required that a Notice of Interest be displayed for a three week period in a prominent place at the complex to allow for public objection.

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

Proposed by Councillor T Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the garden area at Dunamoy Cottages & Spa, Ballyclare be approved to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act (2004) and a list of approved premises be circulated to Members.

ACTION BY: Emma Thompson, Registrar

3.2 HR/LD/5 ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2016-2020 - ACTION CANCER BIG BUS

As part of Health and Wellbeing events organised by both legacy Councils, Members were reminded that the Action Cancer Big Bus was provided by both legacy Councils every 3 to 4 years. The bus was last used as part of a Learning and Wellbeing Event in July 2016 and was well attended.

Background Information

1. Action Cancer is the only charity in the UK and Ireland to offer breast screening to women aged 40–49 and 70 plus, who fall outside the NHS screening age range of 50–70.
2. Action Cancer's MOT health checks are offered to both male and females aged 16+ and involve a number of assessments including cholesterol, blood glucose, body composition and blood pressure.

3. Following the most recent health and wellbeing event thirteen staff were advised to seek a GP appointment, two from the Breast Screening and eleven for blood pressure and cholesterol checks. In the past, three female members of staff were referred for what was subsequently diagnosed as a life threatening illness.
4. The Big Bus is one of the most popular interventions in terms of bookings for the health checks.

Cost

The Big Bus cost was £1,275 per day and provided 24 Breast Screening appointments and up to 26 Health Checks per day.

All bookings were managed via Action Cancer with appointments booked in advance.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the Council procures the Action Cancer Big Bus twice per year for a Health Promotion event at Antrim and Newtownabbey sites.

ACTION BY: Jennifer Buckley, Human Resources Manager

3.3 CCS/EDP/11 DRAFT EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2017-2021

Members were reminded that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Council, when carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine categories of persons noted within the legislative framework. The Council must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The Council's Equality Scheme described certain arrangements that as a public authority Council must set-up and was obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the statutory requirements of Section 75 (1) and (2), ie the duties to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This included arrangements for training staff, assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that had been adopted. On an annual basis Council must provide a progress report to the Equality Commission to outline how those arrangements had been applied and to assess how effective they had been in supporting the Council to comply with the Section 75 duties.

Members were advised that the next progress report would be made by 31 August 2017.

Following the Council's current Equality Action Plan 2015-2017, a draft Equality Action Plan for the period 2017 to 2021 was circulated for Members' consideration. If approved, the Plan would be subject to a 12 week consultation period, and a further report would be made to Members following this exercise.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the draft Equality Action Plan for 2017-2021 be approved and issued for a 12 week consultation period.

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

3.4 G/MSMO/41 NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In February 2017 at the Policy and Governance Committee meeting it was agreed that six monthly attendance reports for Committee Members would 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 December 2016 to 31 May 2017. A summary sheet had been prepared showing the total attendance for these periods and these were circulated for Members' information, prior to publication on the Council's website.

At the April 2017 meeting, Councillor Arthurs had requested that consideration be given to include attendance of non-Committee Members in these published reports. It was agreed at this meeting that Group Leaders would discuss options and bring forward a proposal, for approval by Members.

The matter was discussed at the Group Leaders' meeting on 25 May. It was noted that attendance by any Member, whether they be a Committee member or not, was already recorded in the relevant minutes of those Committee meetings.

It was suggested that rather than start to record the attendance of non-Committee members for Committees/other bodies in the summary schedules which were published on the website, the attendance reports could be modified to contain a statement along the lines of the following information:

"Many Elected Member also attend Committees where they are not a Committee member. Such attendance is not recorded in this schedule (the information presented only relates to Committee member attendance); but is recorded in the relevant minutes for that Committee".

Proposed by Alderman DeCourcy
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

- (1) the summary sheet, recording:
- (i) Members' attendance for each of the Council meetings; and
 - (ii) Committee-member attendance for each of the Committee meetings for the six month period from 1 December 2016 of 31 May 2017 be noted.
- (2) the six monthly attendance reports, as published on the Council's website, should contain the following wording: *"Many Elected Member also attend Committees where they are not a Committee member. Such attendance is not recorded in this schedule (the information presented only relates to Committee member attendance); but is recorded in the relevant minutes for that Committee"*.

ACTION BY: Liz Johnston, Head of Governance

3.5 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 was subject to a rigorous approval process which required the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team.

There was 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 April 2017 as compared to April 2016. There was an increase of 17 agency staff in April 2017 relating to seasonal grounds maintenance staff, sickness absence, maternity cover and staff required to fill permanent vacancies.

Reason for Agency Worker	April 2017	Position Covered	April 2016	Comments
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Additional Resource	41	36 x Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Operatives IT Systems Assistant Cleaner, Sentry Hill Economic Development Project Officer Caretaker (Lilian Bland Pavilion) Admin Assistant (Cleansing)	40	In April 2017, additional staff were employed through agency for seasonal grounds maintenance. (Some of these posts were previously employed on recurring contracts with the Council and staff had subsequently resigned)
Filling Funded Posts	5	4 x Affordable Warmth Project Officer Grange Community Project Officer	5	No change
Covering Sickness/ Maternity Leave	16	Information Governance Assistant Operative, Bruslee 2 x Recreation Attendant 2 x Arts Technician Payroll Assistant Grounds Maintenance Operative 2 x Waste Operative, CSD 6 x Waste Operative, ESD	7	Increase of 9 due to sickness absences and maternity leave.
Covering vacancies until structures filled	15	Clerical (Building Control) Environmental Health Officer Receptionist (Clotworthy) Leisure Attendant Payroll Manager Activity Coach – Disability Grounds Maintenance Operative Central Services Supervisor Conferencing and Cultural Events Manager Caretaker (JLSP) 2 x Planning Assistants PCSP Admin Officer 2 x Waste Operatives, CSD	10	Increase of 5 due to vacant posts.
Covering career breaks/ secondments	8	Heritage Assistant IT System Support Assistant Neighbourhood Renewal Coordinator E Communications Officer Clerical Officer Leisure Grounds Maintenance Operative Financial Accounts Assistant PCSP Support Officer	6	Increase of 2 due to secondments.
TOTAL	85		68	

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

Appendix one (circulated) set out expenditure on agency workers in April 2017. The cost of agency staff was 6.80% of all staffing costs in April 2017 compared to 6.19% in April 2016. Members expressed their appreciation to the Director for the additional information.

Proposed by Councillor Maguire
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.6 CE/GEN/60 2016-17 BUSINESS PLANS – UPDATE

Members were reminded that departmental Business Plans were approved in June 2016.

Final, fourth quarter progress reports for Audit, Change Management, Communications and Customer Services, Corporate Objectives, Finance, Governance, Human Resources and ICT were circulated for Members' attention. Members welcomed the detail and format of the progress reports.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Maguire and agreed that

the updated Business Plans for Audit, Change Management, Communications and Customer Services, Corporate Objectives, Finance, Governance, Human Resources and ICT be noted.

NO ACTION

3.7 HR/ER/1 PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Members were advised that legislative changes in relation to parental leave had been incorporated into Council Policy.

Key Legislative Changes were as follows:

- Eligibility open to all parents with a child under 18 years, previously 5 years, subject to the employee having one year's continuous service.
- Applicable to a parent, adoptive parent or person with legal parental responsibility (foster parents do not have the rights to parental leave but may request flexible working).
- Total of 18 week's unpaid parental leave can be taken as specified in the policy.

The revised Parental Leave Policy was circulated and had been equality screened.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the revised Parental Leave Policy be noted.

NO ACTION

3.8 G/LAN/2 RATES

Correspondence had been received from the Department for Communities (circulated) on the District Council (NI) Rate Statistics for 2017/18.

This report contained details of the District Rates and the estimates of income and expenditure set by Councils for the 2017/18 financial year.

Members noted on page 4 of the document that Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council was the only Council in Northern Ireland to record a decrease in its estimate of net expenditure for 2017/18 when compared to the previous financial year.

In addition, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council was the only Council to record a decrease in the Non-Domestic and Domestic Rates set for 2017/18 from those set for the 2016/17 financial year.

Proposed by Councillor Maguire
Seconded by Councillor T Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.9 G/IG/7 POLICY FRAMEWORK

Members were advised that in order to fully discharge its roles and functions and provide high quality public services to meet the needs of its citizens Council must develop, implement and maintain a framework of effective policies.

A Policy Framework (circulated) had been developed which, together with a template for policies, would ensure consistency across the Council and assist officers in effective policy making. The Policy Framework took account of National Audit Office guidance.

An action plan for implementation of the Policy Framework, which had been approved by SMT and CLT, was also circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Alderman DeCourcy and agreed that

the Policy Framework and the action plan for implementation be noted.

NO ACTION

3.10 FC/G/25 PAYMENTS REPORT

The schedule of payments for Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council dated 21 April to 12 May 2017 and schedule of manual payments for April 2017 were circulated with any payments over £5000 having been analysed in more detail and were circulated.

A proposal by Councillor Maguire, to commence a monthly review/check/approval of the Payments Report, did not receive a seconder.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.11 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – APRIL 2016 TO MARCH 2017 PERIOD 13

A budget report for the period April 2016 to March 2017 Period 13 was circulated for Members' information.

The budget report showed the current position of the Council for the 2016/17 financial year.

Members were advised that staff in the Finance department were currently finalising the adjustments required to arrive at the final position for the 2016/17 financial year prior to the Statement of Accounts being presented to the Audit Committee in June.

Members were also advised that based on the current figures, the Council's variance on Net Cost of Services was £72k favourable. After accounting for income from District Rates and the De-Rating grant, and applying the credit balance of £757k used in calculating the District Rates, this resulted in a decrease in the Council's General Fund of £487k.

Proposed by Councillor Maguire
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.12 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – APRIL 2017

A budget report for April 2017 was circulated for Members' information.

For the period the Council's variance on Net Cost of Services was £137k favourable. After accounting for income from District Rates and the De-Rating grant, and applying the credit balance of £757k used in calculating the District Rates on a pro-rata basis, this resulted in an increase in the Council's General Fund of £74k.

Proposed by Councillor Maguire
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

3.13 CE/GE/40 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS – PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 put in place a new framework to support the continuous improvement of Council's Corporate Improvement Plan 2016/17 was approved in June 2016 and eight project teams had been established to ensure the delivery of the agreed outcomes were achieved.

A final fourth quarter progress report was circulated for Members' attention.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Councillor T Girvan and agreed that

the final Corporate Improvement Plan progress report is noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor T Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the following Committee business be conducted 'In Confidence'.

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

3.14 IN CONFIDENCE TQ/806 TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF ADVERTISING PLACEMENT SERVICES

Members were advised that the above contract was due to expire.

Following a review of advertising placement by the Council, a spend analysis was undertaken to agree the appropriate procurement route. It was determined that the spend was higher than had been anticipated and therefore competitive tenders will be required to be sought. Moreover, Council had not experience of any significant issues with the advertising placement services received by the current service provider.

In order to facilitate the new tender timescale, officers wished to extend the current contract for a further period to 31 August 2017.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Maguire and agreed that

the current contract for advertising placement services be extended for a further period to 31 August 2017.

ACTION BY: Julia Clarke, Senior Procurement Officer

3.15 IN CONFIDENCE TQ/808 TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF A FRAMEWORK FOR PRINTING SERVICES

Members were advised that the above framework was due to expire on 31 July 2017.

Under the framework for printing services, appointed suppliers to each lot were invited to quote for work each time there was a Council requirement. Therefore, competition was delivered for each procurement. Moreover, Council had not experience of any significant issues with the printing services received by those service providers who had been used under the terms of this framework.

In order to facilitate the new tender timescale, officers wished to extend the current framework for a further period of one month to 31 August 2017.

Proposed by Councillor T Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Hamill and agreed that

the current framework for printing services be extended for a further period of one month to 31 August 2017.

ACTION BY: Sharon Logue, Procurement Manager

PROPOSAL TO MOVE OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Alderman DeCourcy

Seconded by Councillor Maguire and agreed that

any remaining Committee business be conducted in 'Open Session'.

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

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.49 pm.

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