

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, held in committee, in the Council Chamber, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB on Wednesday 14 April 2010 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor J Beattie
(in the chair)

ALDERMEN: J White

COUNCILLORS: Ms J Bunting
Mrs M Chambers
M Copeland
Mrs S Duncan
C Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Administration & Community Services,
Health & Safety Officer, HR Officer, Senior
Accountant and Assistant Members' Services
Officer

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors
AM Beattie, T Jeffers and L Walker

F&GP/2010/88 : INTRODUCTION OF OFFICERS

The Director of Administration & Community Services introduced the Health & Safety Officer and stated that he was in attendance to assist the Committee in its consideration of health and safety policy documents. She also introduced the Human Resources Adviser who was attending in the absence of a Human Resources Manager to assist her in the presentation of the Committee report.

Noted.

STAFF IN COMMITTEE

The Health & Safety Manager, HR Officer and Assistant Member Services Officer left the meeting at 7.01 pm

Alderman White entered the meeting at 7.04 pm

The Health & Safety Manager, HR Officer and Assistant Member Services Officer re-entered the meeting and the Director of Finance left the meeting at 7.07 pm.

**TABLED : MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE MEETING OF 10 MARCH 2010**

**THERE WERE NO MATTERS ARISING – RE HUMAN RESOURCES &
ADMINISTRATION**

**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNITY
SERVICES**

HEALTH & SAFETY MATTERS

Councillor Bunting entered the meeting at 7.10 pm

F&GP/2010/90 : POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The Director of Administration & Community Services referred to the health and safety policies and procedures being presented to the Committee for approval. Following questions from the Chair, she advised that these matters were not new and were being dealt with under the various pieces of legislation and health and safety requirements, which the Council was obliged to follow. She further dated that it would be in the Council's interest that these policies be formally approved and adopted so that the proper procedures and appropriate training could be implemented. She stated that, if the Committee approved the procedures, they would be formally signed off at the next meeting of the Management Team.

Councillor Chambers reminded Members that it was intended to hold a special meeting to review a range of policies and procedures but that this had not proceeded. She recognised the need for procedures to be formally adopted as soon as possible and suggested that the Committee should adopt them in principle subject to further review.

Noted.

F&GP/2010/91 : FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURE

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for a draft Fire Safety Procedure (copy previously circulated) and advised that the next step would be to begin implementation and appoint fire wardens.

Members raised queries regarding the frequency of fire drills and other issues. Councillor Duncan referred in particular to the difficulty in elderly people using the spiral staircase in the civic building and suggested that a hand rail should be installed at the bottom of the staircase. The Health & Safety Officer advised that fire wardens would be appointed from Council staff and their responsibility would be to ensure that specific areas of the Civic Building were cleared during a fire drill.

After discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Fire Safety Procedure be approved in principle subject to further review at the next special policy meeting.

F&GP/2010/92 : LEGIONELLA CONTROL POLICY

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for a draft Legionella Procedure (copy previously circulated) and advised that the next step would be to begin implementation after final signing off by the Management Team.

RESOLVED: that the Legionella Control Policy be approved in principle subject to further review at the next special policy meeting.

F&GP/2010/93 : CONTROL OF ASBESTOS PROCEDURE

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for a draft Control of Asbestos Procedure (copy previously circulated) and advised that the next step would be to begin implementation.

RESOLVED: that the Control of Asbestos Procedure be approved in principle subject to further review at the next special policy meeting.

F&GP/2010/94 : ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for a draft Alcohol and Drugs in the Workforce Policy (copy previously circulated) and advised that the next step would be to send the policy for consultation to the recognised trade unions, after final signing off by the Management Team.

RESOLVED: that the Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace Policy be approved in principle subject to further review at the next special policy meeting.

F&GP/2010/95 : PERMITS TO WORK PROCEDURE

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for a Permits to Work Procedure (copy previously circulated) and advised that the next step would be to begin implementation after signing off by the Management Team.

RESOLVED: that the Permits to Work Procedure be approved in principle subject to further review at the next special policy meeting.

F&GP/2010/96 : MANUAL HANDLING PROCEDURE

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for a draft Manual Handling Procedure (copy previously circulated) and advised that the next step would be to begin implementation after signing off by the Management Team.

RESOLVED: that the Manual Handling Procedure be approved in principle subject to further review at the next special policy meeting.

The Health & Safety Officer left the meeting at 7.20 pm

HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS

F&GP/2010/97 : APPOINTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

The Director of Administration & Community Services referred to the resignation of the Human Resources Manager and advised that the second reserve candidate had indicated an interest in taking up the post. She advised however that RPA vacancy control procedures currently meant that she could not offer the post on a permanent basis without a business case being made.

Reference was made to uncertainties regarding the RPA process and the expected announcement on this issue by the Minister. After discussion it was

RESOLVED: that further consideration of the appointment of the Human Resources Manager be deferred pending clarification regarding the RPA process and that the Director of Administration & Community Services review the business case to appoint on a full-time basis.

F&GP/2010/98 : RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL

The Director of Administration & Community Services advised that, as there had been no emergency incidents during the month, the Group Chief Environmental Health Officer for Eastern Group was not seeking retrospective approval for any planned overtime in March 2010. Councillor Bunting queried why, if overtime could be planned in advance, it was not possible to seek approval in advance. The Director of Administration & Community Services advised that she would seek clarification on this issue.

RESOLVED : That clarification be brought back to the meeting on the issue of planned overtime for the Eastern Group.

F&GP/2010/99 : MANAGEMENT LED TRAINING COURSE – FRAUD PREVENTION COURSE

The Director of Administration & Community Services advised that it would be in the Council's interest to organise staff training in fraud prevention. She advised that the training would cost £1,200 per course for 20+ employees at a time and she indicated that it was considered that 2 courses could be run. She advised that the course would be suitable for those staff dealing with financial issues, buyers, staff involved in stock taking, etc.

The Director indicated that it was suggested that the first course in fraud prevention would cover staff from Leisure Services.

RESOLVED: that approval be given to run 2 courses in fraud prevention at a cost of £1,200 per course.

F&GP/2010/100 : TRAINING COURSE – REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (2000) – NEW RIPA CODES OF PRACTICE AND REGULATIONS COURSE

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval for the attendance of 3 nominated officers to attend the RIPA course on new codes and regulations that had come into force on 6 April 2010. The course would take place on 28 April 2010 and costs would be £265 per delegate, to be covered from the corporate training budget.

RESOLVED: that approval give given to the attendance of 3 nominated officers at the training course on new RIPA codes of practice and regulations.

STAFF IN COMMITTEE

The Assistant Member Services Officer left the meeting at 7.25 pm

Councillor Copeland returned to the meeting at 7.55 pm

**REPORT FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
(copy previously circulated)**

Alderman White declared an interest in those items relating to the Hanwood Trust.

F&GP/2010/107 : HANWOOD TRUST COMPANY LIMITED – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Economic Development Manager reported that a service level agreement between the Council and the Hanwood Trust for the period 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010 had expired. A new draft service level agreement for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 (copy previously circulated) had been drawn up. He advised that the key issues addressed with the agreement were that the Hanwood Trust would:

- Pay all of its insurances directly

- Reimburse the Council for all scheduled maintenance inspections (Phase 1)
- Reimburse the Council for all works required as a consequence of all scheduled maintenance inspections (Phase 1)
- Pay Council £2,500 per annum for professional support

He reported that the agreement also specified the Hanwood Trust's responsibilities including utility bills, child protection policy, etc.

RESOLVED: that the Council approve the draft service level agreement between the Council and the Hanwood Trust for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

F&GP/2010/108 : HANWOOD TRUST – COMPANY OVERVIEW

The Economic Development Manager referred to the Committee's request that he prepare an overview of the Hanwood Trust for those Members who were less familiar with the project (summary report previously circulated). The Manager took Members through the report which provided a project overview, the composition of the Board of Directors, details of the management structure and the duties and responsibilities of all those involved at each level.

Members indicated that they found the company overview very helpful and thanked the Economic Development Manager for providing a clear and informative report.

Noted.

Councillor Hall left the meeting at 8.20 pm and Councillor Copeland left the meeting at 8.21 pm

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

F&GP/2010/109 : TOURISM STRATEGY WORKSHOP

The Economic Development Manager advised that he would be attending a workshop on 20 April 2010 to review a draft tourism strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020. He advised that he would be bringing a draft response back to the Economic Development Sub-Committee.

Noted.

F&GP/2010/110 : FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Councillor Bunting referred to funding opportunities that were being taken up by other Councils possibly for staff health initiatives.

RESOLVED: that officers be asked to investigate a possible funding opportunity in relation to staff health issues.

The Economic Development Manager left the meeting at 8.20 pm

**TABLED : MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE MEETING OF 10 MARCH 2010**

THERE WERE NO MATTERS ARISING – FINANCE

**F&GP/2010/111 : MINUTES OF THE AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 4 MARCH 2010 (Copy previously circulated)**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 4 March 2010 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

**F&GP/2010/112 : REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT PRACTICES (Minute No
ASC/2010/04 refers)**

The Senior Accountant reported that three tenders had been received in respect of the review of internal audit practices and the successful tenderer was Goldblatt & McGuigan. He advised that the Local Government Auditor was expecting a report to be submitted to the next meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee before the end of April.

In response to a query by Councillor Duncan regarding the tender process, the Senior Accountant advised that 50% of the weighting was price and the other 50% was methodology.

Noted.

**F&GP/2010/113 : MINUTES OF THE IT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 19 MARCH 2010 (Copy previously circulated)**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the IT Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 March 2010 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

**REPORT FROM THE SENIOR ACCOUNTANT
(copy previously circulated)**

**F&GP/2010/114 : SUMMARY OF THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR
THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2009 – 28 FEBRUARY 2010**

The Senior Accountant pointed out that there was an underspend across all directorates in the year to 28 February 2010 and the total underspend was £542,676.

Noted.

F&GP/2010/115 : TREASURY MANAGEMENT/BANK INTEREST/GOVERNMENT BORROWING AND LOAN SCHEDULING

The Senior Accountant advised Members of the amount of interest earned on investments for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 December 2009. He added that there had been no government borrowing or loan rescheduling in the year to date.

Noted.

F&GP/2010/116 : MOBILE PHONE CONTRACT RENEWAL

The Senior Accountant tabled a report on the cost/benefit calculation of the Council funding all Members with blackberrys. It was noted that, if all Members were to be provided with blackberry, it would be necessary for the Council to purchase a blackberry specific server at a cost of approximately £4,500. It was estimated that the costs of providing blackberries, annual running costs and purchase of server would amount to an additional sum of approximately £6,500

Noted.

F&GP/2010/120 : MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ENGAGEMENT WITH NILGA.

Members considered an email dated 22 March 2010 from NILGA advising that it had been agreed that substitutes could be nominated by the Council regardless of party affiliation to attend NILGA meetings.

Noted.

F&GP/2010/121 : MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR THE NORTHERN IRELAND REGION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILLORS

Members considered correspondence dated 1 April 2010 from the National Association of Councillors Northern Ireland Region (copy previously circulated) enclosing an invoice in the sum of £1,500 in respect of annual membership fee for the period April 2010 to April 2011.

RESOLVED: that payment of the annual membership fee of £1,500 in respect of the Northern Ireland Region of the National Association of Councillors be approved.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – FINANCE

F&GP/2010/122 : PURCHASE ORDER NON-COMPLIANCE RISK

Councillor Chambers referred to Minute No ASC/2010/06 in the Audit Sub-Committee minutes of 4 March 2010 and stated that the issues raised needed to be addressed before the next meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee. The Senior Accountant confirmed that the Internal Auditor was dealing with the matter.

Noted.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.20 pm

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of
_____ 2010 with the exception of
Minute Nos. _____

MAYOR