

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Special Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, held in committee, in the Council Chamber, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Wednesday, 23 June 2010, at 7.05 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor J Beattie
(in the chair)

ALDERMEN: J White (from 7.55 pm)

COUNCILLORS: Mrs A Beattie (from 7.20 pm)
Mrs M Chambers
M Copeland
C Hall
B Hanvey
Mrs V McCoy (from 7.15 pm)

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Administration and Community Services,
Director of Finance, Senior Accountant, Human
Resource Advisor, Health & Safety Officer,
Members' Services Officer and Alderman Norris

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors
Duncan and Walker

MINUTES

F&GP/2010/188 : MINUTES OF THE AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JUNE 2010 (copy tabled at the meeting)

Councillor Chambers advised that, following discussion with the Deputy Chief Local Government Auditor during the Audit Sub-Committee meeting of 21 June 2010, it had been resolved to accept his recommendation to externalise the Council's Internal Audit function. She therefore proposed the adoption of the Minutes, subject to one amendment:

- Bullet point relating to 'Goldblatt McGuigan report' – add 'with the exception of the Audit Sub-Committee reporting to full Council'

Councillor Chambers further stated that, following consideration of the CIPFA guidelines, it had been agreed that they assisted in record keeping and fraud prevention.

Councillor McCoy arrived at 7.15 pm.

The Director of Finance advised that the Finance & General Purposes Committee had been granted executive powers to make decisions relating to matters contained in the Minutes.

The Director of Administration & Community Services confirmed that any staffing matters or implications arising out of this decision would be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Human Resources policies and procedures.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That approval be granted for the adoption of the Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting of 21 June 2010, subject to the following amendment:

- Bullet point relating to 'Goldblatt McGuigan report' – add 'with the exception of the Audit Sub-Committee reporting to full Council'.

Councillor Mrs Beattie arrived at 7.20 pm.

**DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS
(copy tabled at the meeting)**

F&GP/2010/189 : CONSIDERATION OF THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2010

The Director of Finance tabled the uncertified Financial Accounts for Year 2009/2010 in accordance with Section 5(1) of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. The Senior Accountant then took Members through the details of the report.

The Senior Accountant took Members through the District Fund – Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ending 31 March 2010. He pointed out details of the Gross Income and Expenditure for the Year, Continuing Operations cost (similar to the previous year), exceptional VAT income, Net Cost of Services (a reduction from the previous year due to exceptional VAT income). Furthermore, the Senior Accountant pointed out that the District Fund Reserve showed a favourable balance to that expected.

Alderman Norris arrived at 7.30 pm.

The Senior Accountant took Members through the Balance Sheet and drew attention to the Council's Net Assets, and one new additional item that had been included, ie Intangible Assets. He also explained the increase in debtors and Landfill Provision. Should Landfill annual maintenance costs rise significantly in the future, the provision would also need to increase annually.

Another concern was the current underfunding in NILGOSC Pension Scheme, which would need to be disclosed under future IFRS accounting standards in the Council accounts.

The Senior Accountant went on to say that, rather than raising loans, the Capital Fund had been utilised. Furthermore, the Capital Expenditure funding deficit position (Note 11) had been cleared.

The Senior Accountant also presented the Council's Management Accounts for 2009-2010 for Members' information and commented that they required some further detailed analysis but overall showed an underspend compared to budget after exceptional items.

The Senior Accountant also recommended further analysis as this would assist in the Estimates process for next year.

The Director of Finance reminded Members to give consideration to the appointment of membership to the Estimates Working Group. Councillor Chambers suggested to renew the existing membership. Councillor Beattie was of the view that membership should be kept to a minimum.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the draft Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2010, as tabled by the Director of Finance.

Alderman White arrived at 7.55 pm.

**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF
ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES
(copy previously circulated)**

HEALTH & SAFETY MATTERS

F&GP/2010/190 : FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT PROCUREMENT

The Director of Administration & Community Services advised that, in order to ensure the continued compliance with the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001 and the soon-to-be-implemented Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, the Health & Safety Officer had sought quotations for the inspection and delivery of Fire Risk Assessments for all Council premises.

Four quotations had been received, and the Director of Administration & Community Services recommended to accept the quotation from DGM Fire Consultancy in the sum of £5,850, as they had the scored highest in the required criteria and had provided the second lowest quote.

The Director of Administration & Community Services confirmed that there was sufficient funding available in the Fire Safety Budget to cover this cost.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the quotation from DGM Fire Consultancy for the provision of Fire Risk Assessments for all Council premises at the cost of £5,850.

HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS

F&GP/2010/191 : RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL

The Director of Administration & Community Services advised that the Group Chief Environmental Health Officer for Eastern Group was seeking retrospective approval for planned overtime carried out in April 2010. She indicated that the overtime had been approved by the Group Chief Environmental Health Officer and that the work could not have been carried out during normal working hours.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant retrospective approval for the payment of planned overtime carried out within the Eastern Group Environmental Health Service in April 2010 as follows:

T Morgan	2.5 hours
K McGlynn	4.25 hours
A Hudson	8 hours

F&GP/2010/192 : HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR – REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH FOR A CIPD MANAGEMENT RESEARCH REPORT

The Director of Administration & Community Services outlined details of a request from the Human Resources Administrator to carry out research for his CIPD Management Research report. The research would look at the extent of the link between learning and development and overall performance management. The acquired information would not be made available to third parties, although the Council could have access to the findings.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the request from the Human Resources Administrator to carry out research for his CIPD Management Research report into the extent of the link between learning and development and overall performance management.

F&GP/2010/193 : REQUEST FOR STUDENT PLACEMENT

The Director of Administration & Community Services sought approval to recruit a placement student for the Human Resources Department for a 12-month period, at a gross cost to the Council of £15,143 (salary £12,787), to be met from Single Status Salaries. She confirmed that sufficient funding was available in the 2010-2011 District Funds Reserve, which covered Single Status Salaries.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the recruitment of a placement student for the Human Resources Department for a 12-month period, at a gross cost to the Council of £15,143 (salary £12,787), to be met from Single Status Salaries, with sufficient funding being available in the 2010-2011 District Funds Reserve.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FROM THE HEALTH & SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLANNING OFFICER (copy tabled at the meeting)

F&GP/2010/194 : GREATER BELFAST STRATEGIC FLOOD FORUM

The Health & Safety Officer advised that he had attended the first meeting of the Greater Belfast Strategic Flood Forum, which had been created to address the European Union Floods Directive on the assessment and management of flood risk, in compliance with Article 10 of the Directive and to encourage the active involvement of interested parties in the production of flood risk management plans. The functions of the Forum were as follows:

- Raise awareness of the Floods Directive within Members' respective areas of interest
- Discuss obligations of the Floods Directive within other organisations

- Assist in the identification of appropriate flood risk management objectives and measures relevant to the Greater Belfast area
- Inform the production of a Flood Risk Management Sub-Plan for Greater Belfast
- Provide appropriate information and assistance to DARD Rivers Agency in its role as Competent Authority
- Ensure compliance with the Floods Directive
- Provide flood risk information on issues such as spatial planning, land use, nature conservation and infrastructure

The Council had been asked to respond to the following questions posed by the Greater Belfast Strategic Flood Forum:

1. Do you wish to be an active or corresponding member?
2. Do you agree with the draft terms of reference?
3. Are you happy with the communication methods suggested for the forum? If not how would you like us to communicate with you?
4. Please provide feedback on proposed communication methods to those outside the Forum.
5. Can Forum members provide any other communication opportunities such as corporate newsletters/magazines/internal communications routes?
6. Are there any meetings/events organised by your organisation that we should present to/have a presence at?
7. Can forum members provide us access to relevant databases/disseminate e-zines on our behalf?
8. Is there someone within your organisation that we can contact directly regarding communications issues?

The Director of Administration & Community Services confirmed that the Management Team had considered the proposals from the Greater Belfast Strategic Flood Forum and was recommending that the Council should participate. She referred to the document circulated at the meeting and outlined the recommended responses to the various questions asked.

The Health & Safety Officer stated that there would be tasks required by the Rivers Agency at no direct cost to the Council. However, the Forum intended to meet approximately twice per year, which could result in time commitments on the Health & Safety Officer.

Councillor Hanvey felt that the Council was aware of high risk areas. He enquired whether the Forum would have authority to ensure that infrastructural work was carried out.

Councillor Chambers had reservations and felt that the Council should not commit to any actions that could result in additional costs to ratepayers, although she agreed to the Health & Safety Officer's attendance at meetings, provided the Forum reimbursed the Council for the time this would take up.

Members felt that the Council should not be doing the work of other agencies, and Members had concerns that, in participating in such a forum, the Council was being drawn into an area which was not their direct statutory responsibility. Members felt that Council Officers rose to the challenge if there were any community issues relating to flooding, but this was not the same as being an active member in such a forum.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to join the Greater Belfast Strategic Flood Forum as a corresponding member only and that the Health & Safety Officer monitor the position accordingly.

F&GP/2010/195 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PSNI, DATED 17 JUNE 2010, RE: RENTAL OF LANDS AT LADAS DRIVE

The Director of Administration & Community Services tabled correspondence from the PSNI, advising that the proposed renewal of the lease for a term of ten years for rental of lands at Ladas Drive had been accepted. Furthermore, as funding was now available for the purchase of this land, the PSNI was asking whether the Council would be agreeable to a sale.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That Officers arrange for an up-to-date valuation of lands at Ladas Drive following a request from the PSNI for the purchase of this land and report back to the Committee in this regard.

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

F&GP/2010/196 : REQUEST TO WORK BEYOND RETIREMENT DATE - 1

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the request from the Director of Finance's Secretary to work beyond the retirement

age of 65, on the basis of her currently contracted hours of 22.5 hours per week, with effect from 13 July 2010, subject to a review in six months time.

F&GP/2010/197 : REQUEST TO WORK BEYOND RETIRMENT DATE – 2

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the request from the Caravan Park Warden (Leisure Services) to work beyond the retirement age of 65, on the basis of his currently contracted hours of 25 hours per week, with effect from 1 June 2010, subject to a review in six months time.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of

_____ 2010 with the exception of

Minute Nos. _____

MAYOR