

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of Castlereagh Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Castlereagh Borough Council, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Thursday, 22 September 2011 at 7.03 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor J White
(in the Chair)

ALDERMEN: J Beattie MBE
S Duncan
G Rice MBE
G Robinson (until 9.15 p.m.)

COUNCILLORS: A Beattie
M Chambers
M Copeland MLA
D Drysdale
M Gregg
C Hall
B Hanvey (from 7.08 p.m. until 9.50 p.m.)
C Howard (from 7.28 p.m.)
T Jeffers
M Long
V McCoy
T Morrow
P J O'Reilly
T Sandford
J Spratt MLA
D Vitty (from 7.43 p.m.)

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, Director of Administration & Community Services, Director of Technical & Environmental Services, Director of Finance, Director of Leisure Services, Planning Officer, Planning Service Officer and Member Services Officer

APOLOGIES: Apologies were recorded on behalf of Alderman Henderson and Councillor Cochrane. An apology for late arrival was received on behalf of Councillor Howard.

2011/489 : OPENING OF MEETING (7.03 p.m.)

Reverend Brown opened the meeting with a prayer.

Noted.

2011/490 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (7.05 p.m.)

Members and Officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests (including gifts and hospitality) they should have in respect of items on the agenda. Declarations of interest were put forward, as follows:

- Councillor McCoy declared an interest in Item 13 (j) – Proposed Cuts to Community Pharmacy
- Councillor Morrow declared an interest in Item 4 of the Planning Schedule – Planning Application Y/2010/0352/F
- Councillor Spratt declared an interest in any items raised in relation to Northern Ireland Assembly Committees, particularly the Department of Regional Development
- Councillor Copeland declared an interest in any items raised in relation to Northern Ireland Assembly Committees
- Councillors Long and Morrow declared an interest as members of the Community Sport Development Association

2011/491 : MINUTES (7.06 p.m.)

Councillor Jeffers left the meeting at 7.06 p.m. Councillor Hanvey arrived at the meeting at 7.08 p.m. and Councillor Jeffers returned to the meeting at 7.08 p.m.

RESOLVED (7.09 p.m.) That the Council agree that the Minutes of the following meetings be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings:

- (i) Council meeting held on 25 August 2011, with the exception of Minute No. 2011/487 which was referred for consideration 'In Committee' and Minute No. 2011/455 which was referred for consideration under Agenda Item 11 (a) 'Report from the DPP Manager'
- (ii) Technical & Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 6 September 2011
- (iii) Central Services Committee meeting held on 6 September 2011
- (iv) Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 8 September 2011
- (v) Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 8 September 2011

Councillor Chambers left the meeting at 7.11 p.m.

2011/492 : PRESENTATION BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE RE: DISTRICT HOUSING PLAN & LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2011/2012 (copy previously circulated) (7.12 p.m.)

Councillor White welcomed Dr John McPeake (Chief Executive), Mr Stephen Graham (Area Manager, South East), Mr Norman Hagan (South East Area Planner), Mr Paul Carland (District Manager, Castlereagh) and Mr Gary Watson (South East Area Information Officer). On behalf of Members, Councillor White congratulated Dr McPeake on his appointment as Chief Executive of the Housing Executive and looked forward to working with him in the future.

Councillor Chambers returned to the meeting at 7.14 p.m.

Mr Graham advised that the NIHE's investment package for Castlereagh this year was £8.355m to fund the following:

£6.227m on improving and maintaining existing housing stock
£0.362m on private sector grants
£1.766m on the Supporting People Programme

Councillor Jeffers left the meeting at 7.15 p.m.

Mr Graham stated that, in addition, Castlereagh would receive its share of the South East Area's allocation of grounds maintenance and disabled adaptations expenditure. He advised that the number of applicants looking for social housing in Castlereagh in December 2010 was 1,429, an increase of 95 from December 2009.

Councillor Jeffers returned to the meeting at 7.17 p.m.

Mr Graham advised that a total of 725 applicants were in housing stress in December 2010, an increase of 111 from the previous year. During the past year the number presenting as homeless increased from 651 to 715 and the number accepted as homeless also increased from 358 to 434. The annual Housing Need Assessment calculated a requirement for 415 new housing units in Castlereagh for the five year-period 2010-2015.

He indicated that under new social housing, 46 new homes had been provided in schemes at Gleneagles Gardens, Ballybeen and Breda Park. The Social Housing Programme for this year included a total of 117 units at various schemes across the Borough.

He outlined that the aim of the Supporting People Programme was to help the most vulnerable people in Castlereagh to continue to live independently. He advised that there were currently 32 supported housing accommodation based schemes in the Borough.

Mr Graham stated that the Castlereagh Housing Community Network and 11 local community and residents' groups were doing valuable work reviewing

and improving housing services for local people. Members of staff were working diligently with residents and other agencies such as Community Safety Partnership to promote and encourage safer, settled and inclusive housing areas within the Castlereagh Borough.

Mr Graham concluded by extending his thanks to the Councillors and Officers of Castlereagh Borough Council for their support over the past year. He added that the District Manager and members of staff at the District and Area Office looked forward to continuing to work with the Council on issues of mutual interest in the coming year. He thanked Councillor White for his service over recent years on the Northern Ireland Housing Council and wished Councillor Vitty well as he took over this role.

Alderman Robinson left the meeting at 7.28 p.m. and Councillor Howard arrived at the meeting.

Councillor Spratt raised the following issues:

- proposed eco-friendly housing scheme at Killynure, Carryduff
- investigations into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and potential implications on staff morale
- review of Community Police Liaison Committees (CPLC)

Alderman Robinson returned to the meeting at 7.29 p.m.

With regard to the proposal to develop an eco-friendly housing scheme at Killynure, Carryduff, Mr Graham stated that the scheme was being led by Oaklee Housing Association. He added that the Housing Executive had not received any information with regard to the number of social housing units being developed. He added that the scheme was still listed in the programme to commence this year but he understood that the community centre included in the original plans had been dropped. He indicated that Oaklee Housing Association would be undertaking a consultation exercise and Paul Carland would relay all the issues raised by Members.

In relation to investigations into NIHE, Dr McPeake outlined that he was not in a position to comment on any which were subject to PSNI investigation. He referred to one particular investigation that had been completed and advised that one Senior Officer had been suspended and had subsequently tendered his resignation, effective from 30 November 2011. Two other Officers had been exonerated. With regard to staff morale, Dr McPeake advised that he had written to every member of staff acknowledging the difficult time the Housing Executive was going through.

Councillors Copeland and Jeffers left the meeting at 7.42 p.m.

Mr Graham outlined that the section within the report relating to Community Police Liaison Committees was badly worded. He explained that they were merely highlighting the work carried out by the NIHE, in liaison with other agencies.

Councillor Vitty arrived at the meeting at 7.43 p.m. and Councillors Copeland and Jeffers returned to the meeting at 7.44 p.m.

In response to a query from Councillor Duncan, Mr Graham stated that the Housing Executive would transfer land suitable for housing to the Housing Associations and keep them updated on areas of highest demand for social housing.

Alderman Robinson and Councillor Spratt left the meeting at 7.46 p.m.

Councillor Long raised the following issues:

- plans to replace Economy 7 heating systems
- request to have the site at 15-19 Ballygowan Road cleared

Alderman Robinson returned to the meeting at 7.47 p.m.

Mr Graham outlined that Castlereagh had a high proportion of high rise flats which tended to be heated by Economy 7. He advised that up until now the Housing Executive's heating policy related to the replacement of solid fuel heating systems and as this was progressing better than expected, it was hoped to start the replacement of Economy 7 heating systems next year.

Councillor Drysdale left the meeting at 7.48 p.m.

Mr Graham outlined that a pilot was currently being carried out in the Belfast area with regard to an alternative to Economy 7 within high rise flats. He indicated that feedback was very positive and the Housing Executive would be making a case for Castlereagh to be considered for this approach.

Councillors Copeland and Hanvey left the meeting at 7.49 p.m.

In response to queries raised by Alderman Rice, Dr McPeake advised that the Housing Executive had a particular role in terms of advising Housing Associations where to develop social houses and approve the funding.

Councillors Spratt, Hanvey and Copeland returned to the meeting at 7.50 p.m.

Dr McPeake outlined that over the past 4 years the Housing Executive had provided funding to Housing Associations to purchase 1,600 houses from developers and from home owners who were selling on the open market.

Councillors Drysdale returned to the meeting at 7.52 p.m. and Councillor Long returned at 7.53 p.m.

Dr McPeake indicated that the Housing Executive was keen to work with the DOE Planning and DSD in terms of a policy requiring private developers to include social housing within large housing developments, where a need had been identified.

Mr Graham outlined that there had been occasions when the Housing Executive had supported Housing Associations with the purchase of properties from private developers but there was local opposition from residents who did not want social houses in their area.

Alderman Rice left the meeting at 8.02 p.m.

Councillor Hanvey raised the following issues:

- NIHE land portfolio
- difficulties in obtaining mortgages was resulting in people paying high rental to private landlords
- lack of suitable land to develop social housing

Mr Graham advised that he was aware that the Council had previously requested details on the Housing Executive's land portfolio in connection with a play audit. He outlined that the reason that this could not be provided was because the Housing Executive categorised its land into different types and the information was kept on file at various locations.

Dr McPeake outlined that he shared the concerns expressed with regard to the level of rental charged by private landlords but in order to meet need, the private rental market was huge across Northern Ireland. He added that it was a preferred option for many people.

Alderman Rice returned to the meeting at 8.08 p.m

Mr Graham advised that the Housing Executive had very little land in its ownership in the South East area of Castlereagh suitable for developing houses. He added that they were currently looking at open spaces within larger housing estates but invariably problems arose when seeking planning permission due to residents' opposition to social housing in their area. He assured Members that the Housing Executive was exploring every opportunity to identify suitable land to develop social housing.

In response to a query from Councillor Copeland in relation to changes in the Housing Benefit Regulations, Dr McPeake referred firstly to the Shared Room Rate. He advised that currently the maximum housing benefit that single under 25 years of age were entitled to was the single room rate. It was proposed that from January 2012, this would be extended to single people under the age of 35 years. The Housing Executive estimated that 6,000 people would be affected, and in financial terms, it was estimated that individuals could lose on average £25-£30 per week.

With regard to the reduction in Housing Benefit for under-occupancy accommodation, Mr Graham advised that this was scheduled to be implemented in April 2013 for social sector claimants. It would only apply to working-age claimants and not pensioners. The potential implications were that tenants may have to downsize in terms of the accommodation they

occupied, but the availability of accommodation in the right geographical location may be problematic.

Alderman Robinson raised the following issues:

- implications to staff as a result of modernisation of the Housing Executive's services, particularly in respect of local district offices
- outside maintenance contractors

Dr McPeake outlined that the Housing Executive was aware that one of its strengths was the staff within the local office network and their ability to forge good relationships with local communities and councils. At present there were no plans to close any local district offices and he would support the retention of existing staff within the local offices. However, as the Housing Executive was required to work within available budgets, it had to consider ways of becoming more efficient and cost effective.

With regard to maintenance contractors, whilst a number of changes had been made in terms tenants' reports, Dr McPeake advised that responsibility for overseeing the work of outside contractors still lay with local district offices

In response to a query from Councillor White in relation to vacant properties, Dr McPeake outlined that over the last two years the Housing Executive had managed to reduce its vacant stock and they were currently in the process of producing a vacant property strategy. Mr Graham advised that there were currently 45 vacant properties within Castlereagh, two of which were being used for decamp purposes and 32 were on the waiting list for tenancy repairs with eleven almost ready for allocation. He advised that Paul Carland had been liaising with local community groups in relation to the future plans for Ballybeen Square and the Council would be kept up to date in this regard.

On behalf of Members, Councillor White thanked the Housing Executive representatives for attending, and in particular, he thanked Mr Paul Carland for all the support he had given to Councillors over the years.

Noted.

Alderman Rice, Councillors Spratt and Drysdale left the meeting at 8.26 p.m.

Councillor Mrs Beattie took the Chair for the Planning part of the meeting.

Councillors Copeland, Jeffers, Gregg, Howard, Morrow, McCoy, Chambers and Hall left the meeting at 8.27 p.m., and Alderman Rice and Councillor Spratt returned to the meeting.

PLANNING

SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS DATED 22 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated)

2011/493 : ITEMS WITHDRAWN (8.27 p.m.)

The Planning Service Officer reported that the following applications had been withdrawn from the Schedule of Planning Applications:

- Y/2011/0099/F
- Y/2011/0100/F

Noted.

2011/494 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/2010/0214/F : 11 COMBER ROAD, CARRYDUFF – CHANGE OF USE FROM BIODISED PLANT TO A HAZARDOUS WASTE TRANSFER FACILITY WHICH WILL ACCEPT AEROSOLS, BATTERIES, FLOURESCENT TUBES, INKS, SOLVENT, PAINT THINNERS, PAINTS AND ADHESIVES FRO PROCESSING AND BULKING UP PRIOR TO ONWARD TRANSFER (8.28 p.m.)

In response to a query from Alderman Robinson, the Planning Service Officer advised that no objections had been received from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in respect of the above scheme.

Noted.

Councillors Hall, Gregg and Copeland returned to the meeting at 8.29 p.m.

2011/495 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/2010/0450/F – 64A LISNABREENY ROAD, CASTLEREAGH : ERECTION OF FARM/COFFEE SHOP IN ASSOCIATION WITH EXISTING MEAT FACTORY (8.29 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt asked for an office meeting in respect of the above application. He stated that this was on the basis that not all material planning considerations had been assessed.

Councillor Duncan left the meeting at 8.30 p.m.

Alderman Rice indicated that Planning Policy CTY1 stated that planning permission could be granted for non-residential development in the countryside. Given that there was already a factory on the site, she was supportive of an office meeting. Councillor Morrow outlined that in the current economic climate, new businesses had to be encouraged and he fully supported an office meeting.

Councillors Duncan and Morrow returned to the meeting at 8.30 p.m.

Alderman Robinson asked the Planning Service Officer to provide Members with the reasons behind the refusal.

The Planning Service Officer outlined that whilst the Department supported diversification on farms, this application was for a farm/coffee shop in association with an existing meat factory.

Councillor Howard returned to the meeting at 8.34 p.m.

Councillor Spratt indicated that based on the Planning Service Officer's comments, the problem may have been the way the description of the proposed development had been worded. He added that he would speak with the applicant prior to the refusal being issued to give him the opportunity to withdraw the application.

The Planning Service Officer declined the request for an office meeting.

Noted.

2011/496 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/2011/0257/F – 21 LISDOONAN ROAD, CARRYDUFF : CHANGE OF USE FROM OUTHOUSE STORAGE BUILDING TO HOLIDAY COTTAGE (8.35 p.m.)

Councillor Duncan asked what the difference was in respect of the previous application and this application which the Planning Service was approving.

The Planning Service Officer outlined that as this was a bone fide farm holding, planning policy permitted the change of use from an outhouse to holiday accommodation.

Councillor Beattie indicated that as the proposal was subject to DARD funding he asked that the Planning Service process the application as quickly as possible.

Noted.

2011/497 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/2011/0135/F – ADJACENT TO 6 LISDOONAN ROAD, CARRYDUFF : ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT DWELLING (8.35 p.m.)

Alderman Beattie asked for the above application to be deferred for one month.

Councillor Chambers returned to the meeting at 8.36 p.m.

The Planning Service Officer outlined that the Department would not be supportive of a deferral as no evidence had been presented to prove that the existing building had been used as a dwelling.

Noted.

Councillor McCoy returned to the meeting at 8.38 p.m.

2011/498 : PLANNING APPLICATIONS Y/2011/0225/A : MONEYREAGH ROAD – HOARDING AND Y/2011/0226/A ADJACENT TO 55 HILLSBOROUGH ROAD – HOARDING (8.38 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt stated that the signs had already been in place for quite a while. He advised that the owner of the business was a substantial employer in the area who had diversified into the kitchen business. Since the signs had been erected business had increased by 70% and if removed could have detrimental implications for business and potential job losses.

The Planning Service Officer outlined that PPS17 was very explicit with regard to this particular application, in that, the signage would harm the visual amenity of the area by reason of its size, scale, dominance and prominent siting. He added that whilst they may be acceptable within the confines of the existing building, the signage was three miles away from the business.

Councillors Drysdale and Jeffers returned to the meeting at 8.41 p.m.

Councillor O'Reilly left the meeting at 8.42 p.m. and returned at 8.44 p.m.

The Planning Service Officer agreed to defer issuing a decision for 14 days to enable the Council to organise a site visit.

Alderman Robinson left the meeting at 8.45 p.m.

RESOLVED (8.45 p.m.) That the Council agree that the Planning Service delay issuing a decision in respect of Planning Applications Y/2011/0225/A and Y/2011/0226/A for 14 days to enable a site visit to be organised, in liaison with Councillor Spratt and the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Alderman Robinson returned to the meeting at 8.46 p.m.

2011/499 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/20090019/0 – NOS 720-728 (EVEN NUMBERS ONLY) UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD, DUNDONALD : SITE FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITH NEW ACCESS ROAD (REVISED CONCEPT, AMENDED PLAN) (8.46 p.m.)

Councillor Long outlined that there had been 27 objections to the original application and the Planning Service had outlined 6 reasons for its refusal. It appeared that no substantial revisions had been made and 8 further objections had been submitted. He expressed his concern that the Council did not have the opportunity to request a deferral which he felt was a major loophole in the planning system.

Councillor Drysdale left the meeting at 8.53 p.m.

The Planning Service Officer outlined that the applicant had met with the Planning Service and had negotiated a revised scheme. The applicant would

soon be in a position to specify the number of units and the revised concept gave an indication of height and access arrangements.

Noted.

2011/500 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/2010/0453/F – FOOTPATH OFF MELFORT DRIVE : TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION (8.55 p.m.)

In line with Council policy in respect of telecommunications installation, the Planning Officer advised that she had forwarded a letter of objection.

Noted.

2011/501 : PLANNING APPLICATION Y/2010/0323/F – 121 COMBER ROAD, DUNDONALD : THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IS FOR A NEW DAY NURSERY FACILITY FOR A MAXIMUM OF 50 CHILDREN AND ASSOCIATED PARKING FOR STAFF AND VISITORS (AMENDED PLANS) (9.01 p.m.)

In response to a query from Alderman Robinson, the Planning Service Officer advised that amended plans had been submitted and the Department was waiting for comment from the Roads Service.

Noted.

2011/502 : WEEKLY PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR THE PERIOD 16 AUGUST 2011 TO 12 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (9.01 p.m.)

Noted.

Councillors Beattie and Hanvey left the meeting at 9.01 p.m.

The Mayor returned to the Chair.

Councillor Drysdale returned to the meeting at 9.02 p.m.

ROADS

2011/503 : STUDY VISIT TO NANTES, FRANCE TO SEE THE BUS-BASED RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM (9.02 p.m.)

Alderman Robinson outlined that he and Councillor Hanvey had attended the above study visit which had been lead by the Regional Development Minister. He asked if a letter could be sent to the Minister thanking him for the invitation and advising that he and Councillor Hanvey had found the visit very informative.

Councillors Beattie and Hanvey returned to the meeting at 9.04 p.m.

Alderman Rice stated that she had expressed her support for a rapid transit system on a number of occasions and asked if there was any indication as to when the scheme would be progressed.

Alderman Robinson outlined that the original system that had previously been considered was a rail-based system which was very expensive to develop but the bus-based system now being looked at was significantly cheaper. He indicated that whilst there may be limited financial resources available, other options could be looked at for financing the scheme. He referred to the route being used for the pilot scheme which included the Upper Newtownards Road and advised that existing roadways would be used and the cycling and walking routes at the Comber Greenway would be retained.

The Chief Executive advised that the public consultation would be launched on 12 October 2011. He provided Members with the detail of a number of public exhibitions that would be taking place in venues within West Belfast, East Belfast and the city centre. He indicated that whilst there would be no public meetings as part of the consultation, staff would be available at the exhibitions to answer questions. He recommended that the Council invite DRD officials to attend a Council meeting to present the proposals.

At this point, Councillor Gregg declared an interest as he worked for a company that supplied services to Translink.

Councillor Vitty left the meeting at 9.09 p.m.

Councillor Spratt outlined that, as a member of the Regional Development Committee, he had also attended the study visit. He stated that he hoped the finances would become available to progress the scheme as it would have major benefits for the city, and in particular, the Borough of Castlereagh.

Alderman Rice welcomed the opportunity to discuss the proposals with the DRD officials. She added that she would be asking if the Saintfield Road could be included within the rapid transit route and she hoped that this would be included within the Council's response to the public consultation.

Further discussion ensued, during which, Councillor Long left the meeting at 9.12 p.m. and returned at 9.13 p.m. Councillor Duncan left the meeting at 9.14 p.m.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED (9.15 p.m.) That the Council agree

- (a) to write to the Regional Development Minister on behalf Alderman Robinson and Councillor Harvey for the invitation to the rapid transit study visit in Nantes, France

- (b) to arrange for Department of Regional Development officials to attend a Special Council meeting to present the proposals with regard to the Rapid Transit Scheme

2011/504 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM ROADS SERVICE RE: QUESTIONS ASKED BY COUNCILLORS FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF ROADS SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT (copy previously circulated) (9.15 p.m.)

Noted.

HOUSING

2011/505 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE RE: BELFAST CITY CENTRE WAITING LIST (copy previously circulated) (9.15 p.m.)

Noted.

FINANCE

2011/506 : ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (9.15 p.m.)

Alderman Robinson left the meeting at 9.15 p.m.

RESOLVED (9.15 p.m.) That the Council approve the under noted payments:

General Accounts (Suppliers)	£742,860.47
General Accounts (Emergency Payments)	£ 93,867.65
Subsidiary Account (Wages & Salaries)	£889,913.87

Councillor Sandford left the meeting at 9.16 p.m.

MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR'S BUSINESS (copy previously circulated)

2011/507 : MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR'S BUSINESS FOR SEPTEMBER 2011 (9.16 p.m.)

The Mayor reminded Members about the charity breakfast being held in the civic offices on 23 September 2011.

Noted.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

2011/508 : REPORT FROM THE DPP MANAGER RE: POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS (copy previously circulated) (9.16 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt referred to the option models for establishing a PCSP, and advised that the unionist coalition on the Council were in favour of option 2,

namely 9 councillors, 8 independent members and designated statutory organisations. Members agreed to the 9 councillor model. (9.17 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt put forward the following nominations:

Councillor Spratt
Councillor Chambers
Alderman J Beattie
Councillor D Drysdale
Councillor T Sandford
Councillor C Hall
Councillor B Harvey

Councillors Duncan and Sandford returned to the meeting at 9.18 p.m.

Councillor Spratt outlined that whilst the DUP was entitled to six places and the UUP to one place on the PCSP, the DUP and UUP had agreed that one of these places should go to a Member of the SDLP.

Alderman Rice expressed her support for the 9 Councillor model, and put forward the following nominations from the Alliance Party:

Alderman G Rice
Councillor M Long

Members agreed to the above nominations to the PCSP. (9.19 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt referred to the DPP Manager's report and noted that the NIPB/DoJ was carrying out a consultation exercise on the code of practice for appointing independent members. He added that no indication had been given as to how long the consultation process would take or whether the public and councils would be consulted. Furthermore, no confirmation had as yet been provided with regard to the funding for PCSP's.

The Chief Executive indicated that although Officers had been advised that details on the funding arrangements would be available this week, he had received an email from NIPB/DoJ earlier that day advising that they were not in a position as yet to provide this information.

Councillor Spratt proposed that the Council write to the NIPB/DoJ advising that the Council would only operate a PCSP as long as the NIPB/DoJ provided funding. Alderman Beattie seconded the proposal.

Members agreed to write to NIPB/DoJ. (9.24 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt referred to Minute No. 2011/455 resolution (c) of the August Council Minutes resolving an 8 councillor model. He added that since that meeting, it was felt that any model should include representation from the SDLP, and on that basis, he was proposing the Minute be amended to a 9 councillor model, 8 independent and statutory agencies. He stated that there

was still an issue with the SEELB, in that, it was currently not a constituted body and the Council would therefore not be seeking a nomination at this stage.

He stated that he would not be agreeing to the recommendations within the DPP Manager's report. He added that whilst he was not in favour of a Councillor attending the workshop on 28 September, he was content for the Chief Executive to attend.

Councillor Vitty returned to the meeting at 9.28 p.m. and Councillor Morrow left the meeting at 9.29 p.m.

Alderman Rice advised that some residents had expressed concern that public meetings were not being convened and that they may seek legal advice in this regard. Given that the DPP Manager's report stated that legislation required the current DPP to meet to resolve a number of issues, she felt that a DPP Private and Public meeting should be convened. She added that if this was not agreeable then she was of the view that the Council should obtain legal advice. She sought the Chief Executive's view in this regard.

Councillor Morrow returned to the meeting at 9.30 p.m.

The Chief Executive outlined that whilst the report stated that the DPP needed to meet to resolve certain issues, the legislation was unclear as there was no indication as to precise dates when the DPP needed to convene meetings.

Councillor Spratt stated that he was not in favour of the Council incurring significant legal costs. He added that the Council had carried out what was required of it in terms of agreeing the political representatives on the PCSP. However, the process of appointing independent members was now being delayed by the NIPB/DoJ.

Councillor Hanvey left the meeting at 9.50 p.m. and Councillor Vitty left at 9.52 p.m.

Councillor Spratt indicated that the issue of funding had still not been clarified, and he wanted to ensure that the financial burden for PCSP's should not be placed on the ratepayers. Furthermore, no details had been forthcoming with regard to staffing arrangements which might also have financial implications for ratepayers.

Councillor Spratt outlined that, on the basis of the issues he had just highlighted, he proposed that the Council remain of the view not to convene a DPP meeting. Alderman Beattie seconded the proposal.

Councillor White asked Members to vote on the proposal and a recorded vote was requested. The vote was as follows:

In Favour

Councillor J White

Alderman J Beattie
Councillor Mrs Beattie
Councillor Mrs Chambers
Councillor M Copeland
Councillor D Drysdale
Councillor C Hall
Councillor T Jeffers
Councillor T Sandford
Councillor J Spratt
Councillor V McCoy

Against

None

Abstentions

Councillor Mrs Duncan
Councillor M Long
Alderman G Rice
Councillor M Gregg
Councillor C Howard
Councillor T Morrow

With 11 voting in favour, none against and 6 abstentions, the proposal was duly carried.

Councillor Long stated that, in light of the legislation requirements outlined in the DPP Manager's report, he made a further proposal, in that, the resolution agreed above be subject to the Council obtaining legal advice.

Alderman Rice seconded the proposal.

Councillor Vitty left the meeting at 9.52 p.m.

Councillor Spratt outlined that he was content with this further proposal, subject to the costs of the legal opinion being reported back to Council for consideration, prior to legal advice being obtained.

RESOLVED : That the Council agree

- (a) that Minute No. 2011/455 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings, subject to Resolution (c) being amended to read a 9 Councillor model (9.17 p.m.)
- (b) that the Members appointed to sit on the Policing Community Safety Partnership were Aldermen Beattie and Rice, Councillors Chambers, Drysdale, Hall, Hanvey, Long, Sandford and Spratt (9.19 p.m.)
- (c) to write to the Northern Ireland Policing Board/Department of Justice advising that the Council would only operate a PCSP as long as the NIPB/DoJ continued to provide funding (9.24 p.m.)

- (d) to reaffirm its decision not to convene a DPP meeting, and in the meantime, the costs of the legal opinion be obtained and reported back to Council for consideration (10.01 p.m.)

CONFERENCES

2011/509 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILLORS NI REGION RE: NAC AGM, CLANDEBOYE LODGE HOTEL, 28 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (10.01 p.m.)

RESOLVED (10.01 p.m.) That the Council grant approval for the Council's representatives to attend the NAC Annual General Meeting being held in Bangor on 28 September 2011.

2011/510 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILLORS RE: WEEKEND TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR, CARLISLE (copy previously circulated) (10.01 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/511 : INFORMATION LEAFLET FROM IRISH COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL HOUSING RE: ICSH BIENNIAL SOCIAL HOUSING CONFERENCE, CO GALWAY – 28-29 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (10.01 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/512 : INFORMATION FROM CO-OPERATION IRELAND RE: SEMINAR – SHARING EXPERIENCES ACROSS BORDERS, DUNDALK, 30 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (10.01 p.m.)

RESOLVED : That the Council agree that Councillor Mrs Beattie, the Chief Executive and the Planning Officer attend the Co-operation Ireland Seminar entitled "Sharing Experiences Across Borders" being held in Dundalk on 30 September 2011.

2011/513 : INFORMATION LEAFLET FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS ASSOCIATION RE: AUTUMN SEMINAR 2011, DUNGARVAN, 23-24 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (10.02 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/514 : INFORMATION LEAFLET FROM GREYSTONES TOWN COUNCIL RE: 2011 AUTUMN SEMINAR, GREYSTONES, 30 SEPTEMBER – 2 OCTOBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (10.02 p.m.)

Noted.

GENERAL

2011/515 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND RE: SIXTH PERIODICAL REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES - PUBLICATION OF PROVISIONAL PROPOSALS REPORT (copy previously circulated) (10.02 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/516 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE MAYOR OF OSLO (copy previously circulated) (10.02 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/517 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE DRAINAGE COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND RE: APPOINTMENTS TO THE DRAINAGE COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (copy previously circulated) (10.02 p.m.)

It was proposed by Councillor Spratt, seconded by Councillor Beattie, and

RESOLVED (10.02 p.m.) That the Council agree that Councillor Harvey be nominated to represent the Council on the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland.

Alderman Rice left the meeting at 10.03 p.m.

2011/518 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE TRADE & INVESTMENT RE: APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND TOURIST BOARD (copy previously circulated) (10.03 p.m.)

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Council agree that any Member wishing to put forward an application to sit on the Board of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board could do so individually.

2011/519 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NI POLICING BOARD RE: CONSULTATION ON THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD'S REVISED EQUALITY SCHEME (copy letter previously circulated) (10.04 p.m.)

It was proposed by Councillor Spratt, seconded by Alderman Beattie, and

RESOLVED (10.04 p.m.) That the Council agree that the correspondence and consultation document from the Northern Ireland Policing Board on the Board's

Revised Equality Scheme be forwarded to the Members represented on Castlereagh Policing and Community Safety Partnership.

Alderman Rice returned to the meeting at 10.04 p.m.

2011/520 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM LAND & PROPERTY SERVICES: DISPOSAL OF NEWTOWNBRED A PRIMARY SCHOOL (copy previously circulated) (10.04 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/521 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT RE: CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON ENABLING LEGISLATION FOR NATIONAL PARKS (copy letter previously) (10.04 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/522 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM DRIVERS & VEHICLE AGENCY RE: APPLICATION FOR A NEW ROAD SERVICE LICENCE (copy previously circulated) (10.04 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/523 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM BEECHGROVE GLENCREGAGH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION SEEKING APPROVAL TO MAKE A PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED PUBLIC PARK & LEISURE & PLAY FACILITIES, FORSTER GREEN HOSPITAL GROUNDS (copy previously circulated) (10.05 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt outlined that as the Technical & Environmental Services Committee had already been dealing with this issue and it should therefore be considering the Residents Association's request.

Councillor Vitty left the meeting at 10.06 p.m.

Councillor Duncan indicated that as all Councillors sat on the Committee she asked why a decision could not be reached this evening.

Councillor Spratt reiterated that it was up to the Committee to make a recommendation and he proposed that the correspondence be referred to the Technical & Environmental Services Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED : That the Council agree that the correspondence from Beechgrove Glencregagh Residents' Association be referred to the Technical & Environmental Services Committee.

2011/524 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM COMMUNITY PHARMACY NI RE: PROPOSED CUTS TO COMMUNITY PHARMACY (copy previously circulated) (10.08 p.m.)

It was proposed by Alderman Rice, seconded by Councillor Long, and

RESOLVED : That the Council agree that Community Pharmacy NI be invited to make a presentation to a future Special Meeting of Council.

2011/525 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM NILGA RE: DISTRICT POLICING PARTNERSHIPS POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS (copy previously circulated) (10.08 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/526 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT RE: DARD ESTATE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011-2021 CONSULTATION (copy correspondence previously circulated) (10.08 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/527 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM NI COURTS AND TRIBUNAL SERVICE RE: ACCESS TO JUSTICE REPORT (copy previously circulated) (10.09 p.m.)

Noted.

2011/528 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM LIBRARIES NI RE: REVIEW OF OPENING HOURS (copy correspondence previously circulated) (10.09 p.m.)

Councillor Howard outlined that Libraries NI had indicated that the closure of Braniel and Belvoir libraries would increase usage at Cregagh Library. proposed that the Council write to Libraries NI objecting to the proposal to reduce the opening hours at Cregagh Library and seeking clarification as to the rationale behind this decision.

Councillor Long advised that, following a public consultation event held in Cregagh Library, the libraries in Braniel, Belvoir and Gilnahirk had been closed. He added that Libraries NI had indicated that a further review would not be carried out until 2012 and it was unacceptable at this stage for them to reduce the opening hours at Cregagh Library. He seconded the proposal to write to Libraries NI.

Councillor Spratt indicated that initially the opening hours at Braniel, Belvoir and Gilnahirk had been reduced which resulted in a reduction of usage. Libraries NI then made the case that these libraries were not meeting expectations which had led to their closure. He feared that in reducing the opening hours, Libraries NI would eventually come back with a similar argument for closing Cregagh library.

RESOLVED : That the Council agree to write to Libraries NI objecting to the proposal to reduce opening hours at Cregagh Library and to seek the rationale behind this decision.

2011/529 : EMAIL FROM BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST OFFERING TO BRIEF THE COUNCIL ON THE CLOSURE OF ONE OF THE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS (copy previously circulated)
(10.14 p.m.)

Councillor Spratt proposed that the Council accept the offer from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to brief Members on the closure of one of the hospital emergency departments. Councillor O'Reilly seconded the proposal but suggested that the briefing be deferred to the New Year when more information would be available.

RESOLVED (10.15 p.m.) That the Council agree to write accepting Belfast and Social Care Trust's invitation to provide a presentation on the closure of one of the hospital emergency departments. The presentation to be deferred until early 2012.

2011/530 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSOCIATION OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED BOWLERS SEEKING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TOWARDS AN EVENT BEING HELD ON 15 TO 17 NOVEMBER 2011 (10.16 p.m.)

In response to a query from Councillor White, the Chief Executive advised that the CSDA was not in a position to provide funding as the request did not meet the required criteria.

The Director of Leisure Services outlined that she could not understand why it had not met the criteria and suggested that the correspondence be referred back to the CSDA for further consideration.

RESOLVED (10.18 p.m.) That the Council agree that the correspondence from the Northern Ireland Association of Visually Impaired Bowlers be referred back to the Community Sports Development Association for further consideration of its request for financial assistance.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2011/531 : MEETINGS WITHIN THE CIVIC CENTRE – SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS (10.18 p.m.)

Councillor Drysdale referred to current security measures within the Civic Centre and stated that it was difficult to identify visitors and attendees at Council and other meetings, particularly during the evening. He added that this was especially difficult in respect of large committees which included independent members and representatives from statutory agencies. He asked the Chief Executive to arrange for the current security measures within the

Civic Centre to be reviewed, with a view to introducing measures to identify visitors and attendees at Council and other meetings.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Council agree that the Chief Executive arrange for the current security measures within the Civic Centre to be reviewed, with a view to introducing measure to identify visitors and attendees at Council and other meetings, particularly during the evening.

2011/532 : RESERVE FORCES & CADETS ASSOCIATION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (10.19 p.m.)

Councillor Copeland outlined that he was the Council's representative on the above. He advised that the Association organised two events each year and needed £300 to cover the cost of the events. He asked if the Council would contribute half of these costs.

Councillor White suggested that the Councillor contact the Association and ask them to submit an application for funding.

Noted.

Councillor Vitty returned to the meeting at 10.21 p.m.

2011/533 : MAYOR'S CHARITY : MARIE CURIE (10.21 p.m.)

Councillor Sandford advised that he was organising a function on behalf of the Mayor's Charity in the Royal British Legion Hall, Montgomery Road on 26 November. He outlined that the tickets cost £5.00 each and he hoped that Members would support the event.

Noted.

IN COMMITTEE

2011/534 – MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 AUGUST 2011 – MINUTE NO 2011/488 REFERS (10.23 PM)

Councillor O'Reilly left the meeting at 10.24 pm and returned at 10.25 pm

It was proposed by Councillor Long and seconded by Councillor Gregg that the wording of Minute No 2011/488 be amended. The proposal was put to the meeting and, following a show of hands with 6 in favour, 11 against and 1 abstention, it was declared not carried. It was then

RESOLVED: (10.25 pm) that the Council agree that Minute No 2011/488 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the discussion

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10.26 p.m.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MAYOR