

Ballymoney Borough Council

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Ballymoney Borough Council

Minutes of Council Meeting No 866 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 3rd September 2007

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor J Finlay, Mayor

PRESENT:

Aldermen
F Campbell
H Connolly, Deputy Mayor
C Cousley
J Simpson

Councillors
A Cavlan
B Kennedy
M McCamphill
P McGuigan
T McKeown
A Patterson
E Robinson
I Stevenson
M Storey, MLA
R Wilson

APOLOGIES: D McKay, MLA

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Director of Borough Services
Director of Central & Leisure Services
Committee Clerk

866.1 CONDOLENCES

The Mayor extended condolences to the family of Mr Samuel Anderson from Ballyclare who was tragically killed in a road traffic accident on Friday 31st August on the A26 in Ballymoney. He also wished the female passenger in the car, who is receiving treatment in hospital, a full and speedy recovery.

866.2 TYCO CLOSURE PROPOSAL

The Mayor read the following statement relating to the proposal by Tyco to close down the Ballymoney plant:

“As members are aware, Tyco has announced that it is entering a 90 day consultation period with its workforce on a proposal to close down the Ballymoney plant. I have written to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Investment, Nigel Dodds, to urge him to do whatever he can to avert this closure and I have spoken to the MP and First Minister, Dr. Paisley. I also met with management of the Ballymoney plant last Friday afternoon, along with the Chair of Development Committee and the Chief Executive. Tyco were represented by the Plant Manager, Mr. Dos Santos, the HR Manager, Mr. Watt and the Director of HR Europe, Mr. McIlveen.

I expressed my concern about the announcement both for the impact it would have on the workforce and on the businesses in the area. Mr Dos Santos stated that while he understood the concerns of Council and community leaders, there were many questions which they were not in a position to answer, due to the ongoing consultations with staff.

The Plant Manager told us that a meeting had taken place that day with Ian Murphy of INI. Another meeting is planned for early this week between Tyco management in Mansfield, USA and senior INI personnel. In response to questions about INI's support for the company he confirmed that they use INI's services (e.g. around 100 staff had obtained NVQs as a result of an INI programme).

I asked if the reason for closure was due to a lack of profitability. The company advised that the plant had been in a difficult position for a number of years and that, while it was meeting targets for production, it was making a loss. This was not helped by factors such as the ending of industrial derating. However, the major reason was the high cost base for production, combined with the world downturn in demand for the product, in the face of stiff competition from areas with lower production costs. The company declined to say if there were proposals to move production to another plant but confirmed that there were no plants in Great Britain or Ireland making the same products.

They stated that any proposal to buy the company as a going concern would be considered, as would any other suggestions that emerged during the consultation period. That period comes to an end in November and if closure is the decision reached, the rundown would begin in February 2008 and be completed within 12 months.

The current workforce is made up of about 210 full time, 10 part time and 40 agency staff. When 30 staff were laid off in 2006, they were offered help in looking for alternative employment and similar measures would apply if the proposed closure is implemented. Redeployment to other plants in the group would be offered, where vacancies exist, but the nearest are in Republic of Ireland, at Athlone, Galway, Tullymore and Dublin.

We ended by offering the company whatever support Council could provide to keep the plant open and retain all or most of the jobs.”

* **Councillor McKeown joined the meeting at 7.35 pm.**

Councillor Storey, MLA referred to a recent statement made by the Minister for Enterprise Trade and Investment. Councillor Storey said that over 70% of Ballymoney’s workforce currently work outside the borough and he requested that the Mayor and Chair of the Economic Development Committee give consideration as to what Council can do to interact further with Invest NI in this issue. Councillor Storey recorded his thanks to the Chief Executive of Invest NI and former pupil of Dalriada School for the personal interest he is taking in this matter and wished those from Invest NI who are travelling to America every success in their negotiations. .

Councillor Kennedy expressed the view that politicians in the Assembly should encourage Invest NI to support more local and smaller scale businesses.

Alderman Simpson referred to Tyco’s claim that the major reason for the proposal is ‘the high cost base for production’, expressing the view that this is an issue for identification and further discussion at Development Committee.

866.3 CONSULTATION COMMITTEE NO 18 – 20TH AUGUST 2007

Councillor Wilson presented the report.

Matters Arising:

3.1 Office Meeting Schedules

Concern was expressed regarding delays during summer months, of receipt of office meetings schedules from the Planning Service. It was agreed that this concern be expressed in writing to the Planning Service.

3.2 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 18 – 20th August 2007, as circulated be adopted.

866.4 DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE NO 185 – 13TH AUGUST 2007

The report was presented by Councillor Stevenson.

Matters Arising**4.1 Northern Corridor Railway Group (185.8)**

The Chief Executive reinforced the importance of attending the launch of the 'Railway Renaissance' report on 18th September in Londonderry and at Stormont on 18th October 2007 and requested members make every effort to attend the photocall at 09.45 am on 18th September. Members wishing to travel by train are invited to do so.

4.2 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 185 – 13th August 2007, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

866.5 LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE NO 334 – 21ST AUGUST 2007

Alderman Campbell presented the report.

Matters Arising**5.1 Lower Bann Partnership – Financial Contribution (334.1.1)
Lough Neagh & Lower Bann Advisory Committee (334.3)**

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Alderman Campbell and **AGREED:**

that the financial contribution for the current year be made to:

- i) Lower Bann Partnership*
- ii) Lough Neagh & Lower Bann Advisory Committee*

5.2 Connect2 Project (334.4)

Councillor Storey asked the Director of Borough Services to clarify whether, in the event of Sustrans not succeeding in their overall bid, any of the projects referred to will go ahead. Councillor Storey referred to the delay by Translink in updating Ballymoney's railway station and requested the Director to advise whether Translink and Sustrans are connected.

The Director advised that there is an expectation that Translink would make a substantive contribution but because of the way that Translink are funded, their funding is not secure beyond 2010.

5.3 Community Support Grants (334.11.1)

At the request of Councillor Stevenson, the Director of Central and Leisure Services explained that Ballymoney Badgers, having been awarded £100 towards the purchase of additional sports equipment via Council's Community Support Grant, would need to undertake a Good Relations project, programme or scheme to meet the criteria for a Good Relations grant of up to £300.

Councillor Stevenson expressed his disappointment that Ballymoney Badgers do not currently meet the criteria required to apply for a Good Relations grant. Councillor Storey concurred with Councillor Stevenson's remarks.

5.4 Killyrammer Community Centre (334.9)

At the request of Councillor Robinson, the Director of Borough Services reiterated minute 821.6, 5th December 2005, clarifying the wording of the proposal made at that time that "Council contribute an amount 'not exceeding' £25,000" to the project.

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and **AGREED:**

that Council allocate £25,000 for work to Killyrammer Community Building

A discussion ensued wherein Councillor Robinson said that the Killyrammer community would be happy to help with any work undertaken. Councillor McCamphill asked if Council would need to consider its procurement policy in undertaking any work. The Director of Borough Services advised that the scheme that had previously been proposed and granted had fallen through and that consultants had been involved with the scheme at that time. He expressed the view that Council would need to identify the work necessary and further details of the scheme to enable a decision to be made as to whether Council would carry out work on this Council owned property. Any work over Council's £10,000 threshold would be considered in line with Council's procurement policy.

At the request of Alderman Simpson, the Director advised that the £25,000 would be from reserve monies.

5.5 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting LAC 334 - 21st August 2007, as circulated be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

Matters Arising

6.1 Erection of Street Nameplate in a Language other than English (331.16)

Councillor McCamphill requested that his support for the erection of Street nameplates in a language other than English be recorded.

6.2 Street Litter Bins (331.1.1)

The Director of Borough Services, at the request of Alderman Campbell, clarified his understanding of the proposal made that bins already purchased would be placed throughout the town and monitored to ascertain their performance before making a decision as to whether 'prestigious' bins should be purchased for town centre areas.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Councillor Robinson

that prestigious street litter bins should be purchased for use in town centre areas

The Chairman put this proposal to the meeting, with 7 members voting in favour and none voting against.

It was **AGREED**

that the specification for prestigious litter bins be referred to next meeting of Committee.

The Director responded to a number of queries by Councillor Storey relating to:

- Scheme to be rolled out by Department of Social Development in conjunction with Roads Service relating to work to be undertaken in the town centre.
- Insufficient supply of bins in the Castlecroft area on land not owned by Council
- Transfer of petroleum spirit licensing function to Health and Safety Executive.

Alderman Simpson requested that information relating to the Improvement Scheme be made available on receipt.

6.3 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Alderman Campbell and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 331 – 28th August, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

866.7 CORPORATE & CENTRAL SERVICES MEETING NO 357 – 29TH AUGUST 2007

Alderman Connolly presented the report.

Matters Arising:**7.1 RPA – A Shared Vision (357.9)**

The Chief Executive advised that five places are now available to attend the stakeholder event on 12th September, three nominations for which have been proposed by the Committee. The Chief Executive requested members consider a further two nominations to attend the event as well as a launch of a Manifesto for Strong Effective Local government, which will be held prior to the stakeholder event commencing at 9.00 am.

It was proposed by Councillor Cavlan, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and **AGREED:**

that Councillor McGuigan attend.

It was proposed by Alderman Connolly, seconded by Councillor Robinson and **AGREED:**

that the Chief Executive attend.

* **Councillor Cavlan and Councillor McGuigan left the meeting at 8.50 pm**

7.2 Adoption of Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman Connolly, seconded by Alderman Campbell and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 357 – 29th August 2007, as circulated, be adopted and the recommendations therein approved.

* **The press left the meeting at 8.52 pm**

866.8 COUNCIL MEETING NO 865 – 6TH AUGUST 2007

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 865 on 6th August 2007, as circulated, be adopted.

866.9 SEAL DOCUMENTS

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED**

that the Seal of Council be affixed to:

- i) Grave Registration Certificate Numbers 1074, 1075, 1076, 1077 and 1078**
- ii) Lease for the transfer of land at Alexandra Avenue, Ballymoney to Council to allow for continued use of air quality monitoring station.**

866.10 MEETING WITH BALLYMONEY FAMILY PRACTICE

The Chief Executive reminded members of a meeting to take place on Tuesday 4th September with Dr David Johnston, Ballymoney Family Practice, at Ballymoney Health Centre at 6.30 pm.

- * The Director of Borough Services and the Director of Central and Leisure Services and Councillor Robinson left the meeting at 8.55 pm.**

866.11 THE BAMFORD REVIEW

The final report of the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (Northern Ireland) dealing with the reform of the law for people with mental ill-health and learning disability has been received. A copy of the Executive Summary was circulated and a copy of the report is available from the Office of the Chief Executive.

866.12 AREAS OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Environment & Heritage Service has written to confirm declaration of two areas of special scientific interest in the borough:

Caldanagh Bog Area

Ballymacaldrack Area

This area has been afforded legal protection against specified operations or activities that may damage its scientific features.

866.13 COURT OF UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

The University of Ulster have written advising about the changes made to the Court of the University as part of a wider review of its Charter and Statutes which it has in common with other higher education institutions about the appropriateness of the representation of external bodies on its Court.

The University's governing body, at its meeting in June, agreed to introduce a revised Ordinance to govern the composition of the court, this document is available from the Office of the Chief Executive on request.

Under previous arrangements, approximately 180 external bodies were invited to have representation to the Court, some of whom had ceased to play an active role in the civic life of Northern Ireland. It was for these reasons that proposals to reduce the size of the Court were approved.

The new scheme of membership entitles 50 organisations to apply and the University of Ulster have indicated that Council may wish to consider making such an application for selection by January 2008 in order that nominees can be invited to attend at the next meeting of the Court on 26th March 2008. Application details are available to enable Council to apply to seek renewed membership.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED**

That Alderman Simpson, currently representing Council on the Court, will make further enquiries into the proposal and report on this matter to the September meeting of Corporate & Central Services Committee.

866.14 CHILD POVERTY

Save the Children Fund have launched a campaign to end child poverty in Northern Ireland. More than 100,000 children in Northern Ireland live in poverty and Save the Children organisation are asking that representations are made to the First Minister and deputy First Minister to:

- Make ending child poverty one of the key priorities in Governments programme and in the comprehensive spending review.
- Commit to the targets of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020.
- Engage with children and young people experiencing poverty in developing actions to end child poverty in Northern Ireland.

Council has been invited to lend its support to this campaign.

866.15 ROADS SERVICE

Council has received Roads Service Statutory Rule relating to The Roads (Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations) (Northern Ireland) 2007 (SR2007 No 346). A copy of this Statutory Rule is available from the Office of the Chief Executive.

866.16 POST OFFICE CLOSURE PROGRAMME

Postwatch Northern Ireland have written to Council to set out how they intend to be involved in the process of taking into account, local customer needs and

a prescribed minimum access criteria for the post office network, in view of the forthcoming post office closure programme.

The closure programme commences shortly and runs until October 2008. During this period, Post Office Limited will bring forward 46 area plans covering all parts of the UK. Each plan will contain details on the branches that are proposed for closure and will give information on remaining post offices and any intended substitute services. Postwatch will receive the plans on a confidential basis before each six-week local consultation commences.

Postwatch advise that local authorities are best placed to provide Post Office Limited with details of pertinent, local issues and developments that may inform closure proposals and request that information is supplied to Post Office Limited to determine the structure of the post office network within Councils area with a copy of such responses to Postwatch to assist them in their scrutiny role. Contact details are available from the Office of the Chief Executive in order to facilitate this.

Postwatch will work to ensure that Post Office Limited takes proper account of representations from customers and stakeholders following its public consultation and will be in contact again at the beginning of the consultation process.

Postwatch and Post office held 3 joint Stakeholder Meetings throughout Northern Ireland to discuss Network Change Programme. Further information is available by visiting www.postwatch.co.uk.

This being all the business, the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.