

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting No 856 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney, on 8th February 2007 at 2.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR Councillor J Finlay, Mayor

PRESENT**Aldermen**

C Cousley, Deputy Mayor
F Campbell
H Connolly

Councillors

A Cavlan	B Kennedy
M McCamphill	P McGuigan, MLA
D McKay	A Patterson
E Robinson	I Stevenson
M Storey, MLA	R Wilson

APOLOGIES**Alderman**

F Campbell

Councillor

T McKeown

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive
Director of Borough Services
Director of Central & Leisure Services
Head of Corporate & Development Services

856.1 RATE ESTIMATE 2007/08

The Chief Executive advised that since the last meeting on rates, the Management Team had considered the suggestions for savings and the 4th draft of the Rates Book represented an increase of 7.5%, compared with 17.5% in draft 3.

He explained that the largest element of reduction related to capital works, coupled with significant cuts in revenue budgets. Management had some concerns about the impact of these and would detail these when individual budgets were being explained.

He referred to Council's request for clarification on staffing issues arising from the organisational review and circulated a report on this to the meeting outlining the rationale for the review of the senior management structure.

Referring to subsequent increases in the staff establishment, the Chief Executive explained that last year, Council agreed to the creation of five new posts (some part-time) because of increased demands on services. This year, a new post is proposed for the Museum and one in Building Control. Both these increases in front-line services is due to present volume of work, not from the re-organisation two years ago.

The Chief Executive also drew members' attention to the fact that all contributions budgets to other bodies identified had not been removed and these needed to be considered by members.

Before presenting details of savings and proposed revised rate, the Director of Central and Leisure Services circulated to the meeting, information on sickness absence costs (table 1 below) and contributions included within other service budgets (table 2).

Sickness Absence Costs		Table 1
Service	2007/07 P109	2006/06
	£	£
Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre	15,324	16,399
Sports Grounds Parks & Open Spaces	42	935
Cemeteries	1,097	2,427
Waste Collection	3,644	8,117
Street Cleaning	4,681	5,618
Garage	698	2,967
Administrative Building		44
	25,486	36,507

Contributions	Table 2
	£
Riada Pre 1950 Car Club	400
Ballymoney Motor Cycle Show	500
Uister Sports & Recreation Trust	100
BT Sports Awards	480
Irish Power Lifting Championships	200
Ornithological Association	200
NA Horticultural Association	100
Riverside Theatre	200
Talks & Tours	150
Drama Festival	1000
Ballymoney Credit Union Schools Quiz	60
Co Antrim Milk Cup	500
NI Amenity Council	750
	4640

The Director of Central and Leisure Services advised that the revised proposed district rates for the year 2007/2008 are:

Non-Domestic Property District Rate	21.9014
Domestic property district Rate	0.2811

Non Domestic Property District Rate Increase is 1.53 pence or 7.50%
Domestic Property District Rate Increase is 7.50%

She advised that the 3% inflation increase has been removed from the budgets.

The Director of Central and Leisure Services then explained the savings achieved, details circulated, as set out below:

Page	Service	Budget Detail	£	£
1	Bank Interest	Increase	<u>15,000</u>	15,000
1	Loan charges	capital projects	<u>146,944</u>	146,944
1	Reserve Balance Applied		<u>24,625</u>	24,625
4	Cultural Facilities	Arts committee	<u>2,000</u>	2,000
6	Sports Development	Contributions	<u>1,000</u>	1,000
7	JD Leisure Centre	Income	<u>5,000</u>	5,000
9	Sports Gds P&OS	Grounds equipment plants and materials	2,000 <u>9,000</u>	11,000
10	Tourist Facilities	Maintenance – removing silt Events Income	8,000 3,000 <u>5,000</u>	16,000
11	Tourism	Goods for sale Income	- 3,000 <u>5,000</u>	2,000
12	Community Services	Contributions – community support grants	<u>2,000</u>	2,000
14	Cemeteries	Maintenance – Rasharkin	<u>5,000</u>	5,000
15	Environmental Health	Air quality monitoring New equipment Computerisation Protective clothing Printing/stationery Partnership working – IT mobile working Health & safety	1,940 1,250 4,500 250 250 3,500 <u>3,000</u>	14,690
17	Dog Control	Wages Cleaning materials Protective clothing Publicity Printing/stationery Equipment Income	1,600 50 106 250 50 250 <u>1,700</u>	4,006
20	Street Cleaning	Wages Plant/vehicles	36,000 <u>5,000</u>	41,000

21	Waste collection	Plant/vehicles – waste collection	10,000	
		Refuse containers	3,000	
		Publicity	1,000	19,000
		Plant/vehicles – skip services	<u>5,000</u>	
22	Waste disposal	Disposal charges	4,950	
		Haulage costs	16,409	
		Landfill tax	3,600	
		Greenwaste	<u>3,000</u>	27,959
26	Minor works	Minor works general	<u>2,000</u>	2,000
27	Economic Development	Programme launch/publicity event	1,500	
		BSP match funding	<u>29,997</u>	31,497
35	Emergency planning		<u>5,000</u>	5,000
36	Contributions	Hospice	1,000	
		NI ploughing association	300	
		North Antrim community network	3,000	
		Rural community network	<u>200</u>	4,500
		TOTAL		380,221

The Director of Borough Services explained that the reduction in plants and materials under Sports Grounds P&OS had been achieved through removal of works to 'Route Hospital' site, polytunnel and signs to celebrate anniversaries. He also alluded to the fact that under Waste Disposal (22) a rise in costs was in the pipeline next year.

The Chief Executive pointed out that under Economic Development, there was no budget provision for projects requiring match funding.

The Director of Borough Services indicated, that the Lower Bann Advisory Committee had recently made application for additional funding of £3,500 for an additional support worker.

The Director of Central and Leisure Services outlined the proposed capital projects, details, circulated, as set out in (Table 3) below and details of proposed projects funded from Reserves (Table 4) below:

Table 3

Proposed Capital Projects 2007/08

	Cost £	Loan Period Years	Loan Charge Term	Loan Charge £
RCV (big bite skip lorry)	160,000	7	1 year	27,040
Street Cleaning Vehicles (large & small sweepers)	70,000	7	1 year	11,825
Riverside Park – replacing bridges, decking & essential path works	57,500	20	1 year	4,747

Cardiovascular equipment in fitness suite	92,000	5	6 months	10,300
Grounds maintenance equipment	19,500	7	1 year	3,295
Internal CCTV & PA at JDLC	35,000	10	1 year	4,480
Amenities vehicles	34,000	7	1 year	5745
Sub Total	468,000			67,432
Riverside Park Cycle Link to JDLC & Riada PF (£50k grant secured)	220,000	20	1 year	16,285
Changing accommodation & Dervock & Dunloy	212,500	20	1 year	17,475
2 Play Areas – Bendoorah, Dunloy, Dunaghy	143,000	20	1 year	11,760
Extension to CCTV & security at Town Hall	55,000	10	1 year	7,049
Sub Total	630,500			52,569
CAPITAL TOTAL	1,098,500			120,001

Museum £100,000 (loan charge £8,225) – Council has committed to funding the museum fit out – funding is not required until 2008/09

Table 4

Proposed Projects Funded from Reserves

Railings and gates at JDLC	?
Stage curtains at JDLC	15,000
Covers for swimming pool	20,000
ICT equipment	25,000
Main sports hall lighting	30,000
Festive lighting (phase 2)	25,000
Convert store to mat store at JDLC	15,000
Recycling bays at Crosstagherty	15,000
Bus shelters (3 no)	15,000
	160,000

On behalf of Sinn Féin Group, Councillor McKay presented the following proposals:

Capital Projects

- Only one RCV – Big Bite to proceed – saving £28k.
- Reduce street cleaning to £70,000.

- Riverside Park - essential works only should be carried out – reduce by half or more if possible.
- Remove cardiovascular equipment – saving £20,600.
- Grant half grounds maintenance budget – saving £3,295.
- Internal CCTV & PA at JDLC – Agreed.
- Grant £20,000 towards amenities vehicles.
- Remove Riverside Park cycle link – saving £16,285
- Grant changing accommodation at Dervock **or** Dunloy
- Two of three play areas to go ahead – saving £5,894.
- Defer sand mattress pitches at Riverside Playing Fields – saving £16,285.
- Grant external CCTV at Town hall.
- Concern recorded at running costs of Town Hall and lack of income.
- Remove paths and car park surfaces at Riada Stadium – saving £4,113.
- Grant heat and light controls, JDLC, in interests of conserving energy and long-term savings.
- Remove fencing and CCTV at Riada Stadium and new Community Building – saving £45,945.

Projects funded from Reserves

- Grant recycling bays at Crosstagherty.
- Grant three bus shelters.
- Grant swimming pool covers as energy conservation measure.
- Reduce ICT equipment to £20,000

Revenue

- Remove bank interest
- Remove £2,000 for Arts Committee.
- Grant Museum Assistant post
- Retain Sports Advisory Contribution
- Retain summer scheme – JDLC
- Retain sports equipment (GAA posts) - £2,000.
- Oppose Community Services Grant – cut of £2,000.
- Grant street cleansing staff - £41,000.
- Fund Bi-Lingual signage under Minor Works budget.
- Reduce Members' conferences/courses by £4,000 to £6,400
- Reduce Mayor's allowance by £1,000.
- Reduce official visits/civic functions by £6,000.
- Retain contribution – NI Hospice - £1,000.
- Retain NILGA contribution.
- Retain North Antrim Community Network contribution
- Reduce contribution to Twinning Association by £2,000

Councillor Robinson, on behalf of the DUP group, submitted the following, suggested savings.

Page	Details	Saving
7	JDLC – Increase income – improved facilities, soft play area, health suite	5,000
9	Sports gardens and open spaces	3,000

10	Drumaheglis – increase income – increase charges in operation and excellent booking records	2,000
15	Environmental Health salaries – enforcing smoking ban (time in lieu suggested)	3,600
	Partnership working £4,000 suggested at 29.1.07. £3,500 removed so apply another £500.00	500
20	Street cleaning – attempt to recover lost income from NCP or negotiate with Roads Service for more income.	4,000
	The Director has indicated that the street cleansing review will not take place until December 2007 so £5,000 has been removed from estimates at this point. This is a single item and a one-off payment may be made from Reserves when needed.	5,000
21	Waste collection - plant/vehicles – Service will have new 'Big Bite' so maintenance should reduce.	3,000
	Income from sale of refuse containers	5,000
24	Building control – income should be increased to £200,000 from £180,000 (income up – salary stays – to be reviewed after one year)	20,000
		51,100

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Remove changing accommodation (08/09)	+17,475
Reinstate CCVT at Riada Stadium	- 4,000
Reinstate 3 play areas (2-3)	-6,000
Reinstate paths and car park – Riada Stadium	- 4,000
Increase publicity for waste	+ 4,500
Proposed rate increase = 6.25%	
	54,575

Alderman Simpson, on behalf of the UUP group, presented the following suggestions:

- ICT budget be examined and consolidated
- Reduce salaries/wages budget and agency costs by removing sickness costs

Councillor Storey arrived at 3.00 pm and Councillor Kennedy left the meeting at 3.05 pm.

- Increase income JDLC and tennis courts.
- Reduce dog control – new facilities
- Remove waste collection on public holidays
- Increase income from Town Hall
- Increase income – Drumaheglis and change effective date of new charges from 1st September to 1st April 2007.
- Reduce contribution to Twinning Association to £2,000
- Remove building control post or revise to temporary post.
- Provide cardboard waste collection for businesses
- Contain overall increase to 5%

Councillor McCamphill, on behalf of SDLP group, said he was content to support the proposals presented under draft 4 at an increase of 7.5%.

The Chief Executive stated that management would consider suggestions and bring revised proposals to the next meeting. He asked for an indication of the level of increase members wished to achieve.

SDLP	content at proposed 7.5%
UUP	5%
DUP	6.25%
SF	have not calculated % of savings suggested

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm.