

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: NMD/FR

Minutes of the Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Finance and Resources Committee held on Tuesday 18 November 2014 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, District Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry

In the Chair: Cllr. Hearty

In attendance: (Councillors)

Cllr. T Andrews	Cllr. M Carr
Cllr. C Casey	Cllr. S Doran
Cllr. D Curran	Cllr. V Harte
Cllr. H Harvey	Cllr. D Hyland
Cllr. R Mulgrew	Cllr. K McAteer
Cllr. G Stokes	Cllr. P O’Gribin
Cllr. D Taylor	Cllr. B Walker

(Officials)

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive Designate
Mr J McBride, Change Manager
Mr R Dowey Head of Finance
Mrs C Miskelly, Head of Human Resources
Mrs C McAteer, Committee Administrator

(Officials Newry and Mourne District Council)

Mr G McGivern, Director of District Development
Mr E McManus, Deputy Director of Technical/Leisure Services

(Officials Down District Council)

Mrs M Ward, Group Chief Building Control Officer

FR/74/2014: APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor P Clarke, Councillor G Fitzpatrick and Councillor S Burns.

FR/75/2014: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted there were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

FR/76/2014: ACTION SHEET FROM F&R COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2014

READ: Action Sheet arising from the Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21 October 2014. **(Copy circulated).**

NOTED: Mr Hannaway confirmed that all actions had been progressed and it was agreed to mark the action sheet `noted`.

Mr Hannaway gave an update on the following:-

Due Diligence Report on Transfer of Functions

Mr Hannaway confirmed the Deloitte Due Diligence Report was in the process of being finalised and he would be presenting a report to the November Development Committee Meeting.

FINANCE BUSINESS

FR/77/2014: RPA COSTS

READ: Report giving details of the RPA costs from 26 May to 31 October 2014. **(Copy circulated).**

NOTED: Mr Dowey advised that this spend was within budget up until 31 October 2014 and whilst there could be no guarantees he was confident that they would be within budget at the end of the year.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the above report `noted`.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** at the request of Councillor Stokes that officials investigate if the format of financial reports could be changed in future as they were difficult to read on i-pad.

FR/78/2014: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR DOWN AND NEWRY AND MOURNE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR 6 MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2014

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mr R Dowey giving an update on the management accounts for Down and Newry and Mourne District Council for 6 months to 30 September 2014. Mr

Dowey advised that at this stage it would appear unlikely that either of the two Councils would be able to generate sufficient surplus this year to cover the entire amount of the deficit which they have budgeted for. The big unknown would be any adjustment to rate income but this would be difficult to forecast until February 2015. **(Copy circulated)**.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark this report `noted`.

FR/79/2014: **DISTRICT RATE FOR 2015/21016**

READ: Programme for consideration of the District Rate 2015/2016 – timetable of Members' Workshops. **(Copy circulated)**.

NOTED: Mr Dowey said the rates process would be a very intensive one, which may initially be hard to pull together given that the two Council processes are merging and he asked that Members bear this in mind.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark this programme `noted`.

NOTED: In response to a query from Councillor Carr regarding the re-evaluation process and the impact on Newry, Mourne and Down in comparison to other areas, Mr Dowey confirmed that the Chief Executive Designate and himself would be attending a session with Land and Property Services in Belfast on 19 November 2014 and he hoped to be in a position to have answers on this issue after the meeting and also an update on the penny product.

FR/80/2014: **PROGRESS ON I.C.T. ITEMS**

READ: Progress report on I.C.T. issues. **(Copy circulated)**.

NOTED: Mr Dowey advised that in relation to telephony services, the servers had been delivered and it was anticipated that a joined up telephony system would be in place in early December; invitations to quote for the web site development would be going out this week and a parallel run had been completed in Newry and Down in relation to payroll with the system to run live in January/February 2015.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the above report `noted`.

**FR/81/2014: EXTENSION OF THE I.T. PROJECT MANAGER
CONTRACT UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2014**

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mr R Dowey seeking approval to the extension of the I.T. Project Manager contract to 31 December 2014 at a cost of 22 days max x £371 = £8,162. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: **It was AGREED on the PROPOSAL of Councillor Hyland, SECONDED by Councillor Andrews, to approve the extension of the I.T. Project Manager contract to 31 December 2014.**

FR/82/2014: e PROCUREMENT AND FINANCE SYSTEM CONVERGENCE

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mr R Dowey giving an update on progress in relation to Sun Systems; Budgeting Software (Rocket); Cintra iQ Payroll System; eProcurement System; RAMS (Real Asset Management) and Stock System. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: **It was AGREED to mark the above report `noted`.**

**FR/83/2014: CAPITAL BUDGET FOR 2015/2016 AND FORWARD –
DRAFT 2**

READ: Down and Newry and Mourne District Council Capital Programme ref: dates as under Draft 2. **(Copy circulated).**

NOTED: Mr Dowey said that for the period 2014 – 2019 there was a projected capital spend of approximately £62m. He said there would have to be a significant reduction in capital spend and referred in particular to the high level of spend on Council vehicles which needed to be looked at.

AGREED: **It was AGREED to mark the above report `noted`.**

NOTED: A discussion followed in relation to the provision of play parks in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area, following a request made by Councillor Hyland, and supported by Councillor Stokes that there should be a commitment to providing a play area on Council owned land at Carlingford Park, Old Warrenpoint Road, Newry as there were no play facilities in this area.

In response Mr Hannaway advised that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council should develop a play strategy for the area; identifying what the current play provision is and any gaps in this provision. A strategy could then be put in place and fed into the Corporate programme so that over a period of time the

play areas identified as being needed could be provided and to also encourage local groups to form Associations who could draw down funding for play areas.

NOTED: Councillor Harte said that when large housing developments received planning approval, it should be a condition of their planning that they provide play areas within the development. It was noted this was something which the Council could consider when planning powers were transferred.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council proceed to draw up a Play Strategy for the area, to identify where play facilities are located and any gaps in this provision. This analysis to then be fed into the Council's Corporate Programme for progression.

FR/84/2014: **WINDING UP ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LEGACY COUNCILS**

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mr R Dowey seeking permission to go to tender for the provision of accountancy services for year ended 31 March 2015 in both Councils and if necessary supplement existing Finance staff at year end on a temporary basis. **(Copy circulated)**.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the proposal of Councillor Hyland, **SECONDED** by Councillor Andrews to grant permission to go to tender for the services outlined.

FR/85/2014: **VEHICLE FLEET**

READ: List detailing Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's vehicle fleet. **(Copy circulated)**.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark this list 'noted' and that officials in the Technical/Leisure Services Departments of both Councils should analyse the report in detail in terms of ensuring there is a structured approach to the replacement of vehicles and that vehicle fleet be rationalised where possible.

FR/86/2014: **CONSULTATION ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFERRED FUNCTIONS GRANT) REGULATIONS (NI) 2015**

READ: Consultation on the Local Government (Transferred Functions Grant) Regulations (NI) 2015. **(Copy circulated)**.

- AGREED:** It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Stokes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hyland, to approve the suggested response made by the Head of Finance on this Document.
- NOTED:** Mr Hannaway advised that the transfer of functions needed to be kept under review as there were new functions being transferred to Councils such as the Development of the Area Plan and the transfer of NIEA staff and it was important they be transferred with adequate funding for the future.
- FR/87/2014:** **CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED REVOCATION AND REMAKING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT) REGULATIONS (NI) 2006**
- READ:** Consultation on the Proposed Revocation and Remaking of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (NI) 2006. **(Copy circulated).**
- AGREED:** It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Andrews, **SECONDED** by Councillor Curran, to approve the suggested response made by the Head of Finance on this Document.
- FR/88/2014:** **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**
- READ:** Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy and Procedures for staff and the general public (effective date 1 April 2015). **(Copy circulated).**
- AGREED:** It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Taylor, **SECONDED** by Councillor Andrews, to approve the above Policy.
- FR/89/2014:** **CORPORATE GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY**
- READ:** Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality Policy and Procedures for Councillors and employees/Members of staff (effective date 1 April 2015). **(Copy circulated).**
- AGREED:** It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Taylor, **SECONDED** by Councillor Andrews, to approve the above Policy.

HUMAN RESOURCE BUSINESS

FR/90/2014: ELECTED MEMBERS' DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE MEETING – TUESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2014

READ: Minutes of the Elected Member Development Sub Committee Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on Tuesday 11 November 2014. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: **It was AGREED on the PROPOSAL of Councillor Casey, SECONDED by Councillor Andrews to approve the above Minutes and recommendations.**

NOTED: Mrs C Miskelly drew Members' attention to the agreement to defer any further action on the Training Needs Analysis for Members until February 2015 at the earliest due to demands on Members' diaries but said that if any individual Member had a training need before then, that they should contact her directly.

FR/91/2014: ELECTED MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS WISHING TO UNDERTAKE ACCREDITED TRAINING PROGRAMMES

READ: Elected Member Learning and Development Policy and Procedure for Elected Members wishing to undertake Accredited Training Programmes. **(Copy circulated).**

NOTED: Mrs C Miskelly drew Members' attention in particular to Section 9 (Individual Requests for Learning and Development) and Section 11 (Evaluating Learning and Development) of the Policy.

AGREED: **It was AGREED to approve the above Policy and Procedure.**

NOTED: In response to comments made by Councillor Hyland and Councillor Mulgrew about recent Equality Training, Mr Hannaway said it was important that Members complete any evaluation sheets after a training event so that any issues of concern can be addressed.

FR/92/2014: UPDATE ON CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mrs C Miskelly giving an update to Members of the learning and development activities taking place and being planned for Elected Members including:-

- Equality Training
- Planning Training
- Study Visit to Fife Council

- Elected Member Induction **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the above report `noted`.

NOTED: Councillor Andrews requested that a report be brought back on the Fife Study Visit to all Councillors who were unable to take part in the visit.

FR/93/2014: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (NI) COST CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS AND DRAFT LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NI) 2015**

READ: Consultation Document on the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI) Cost Control Arrangements and Draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the above Consultation Document `noted` and that if any Member had any comments they should advise Council officials who would submit same on their behalf.

FR/94/2014: **THE DRAFT LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT) REGULATIONS (NI) 2015**

READ: Consultation Document on the Draft Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) Regulations (NI) 2015. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the above Consultation Document `noted` and that if any Member had any comments they should advise Council officials who would submit same on their behalf.

FR/95/2016: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE AND COUNCILLOR WORKING RELATIONSHIP PROTOCOL**

READ: Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** to mark the above Protocol `noted`.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

FR/96/2014: **ASBESTOS, LEGIONELLA, ELECTRICAL, EMERGENCY LIGHTING AND FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mrs M Ward seeking approval for requests to tender for services associated with legionella/asbestos/electrical Inspections. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Andrews, **SECONDED** by Councillor Taylor to grant approval to go out to tender for the services outlined.

FR/97/2014: **ASSET VALUATIONS – PERMISSION TO GO TO TENDER**

READ: Report dated 18 November 2014 from Mr R Dowey seeking permission to go to tender for Property Services i.e. property valuations; rental reviews/valuations and property sales. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Carr, **SECONDED** by Councillor Stokes, to grant approval to go out to tender for the services outlined.

CONSULTATIONS

FR/98/2014: **RECONSTITUTION OF NILGA**

READ: Letter dated 5 November 2014 from Derek McCallan, Chief Executive, NILGA, enclosing a Consultation Paper “Reconstitution of Your Local Government Association” and seeking responses by 31 December 2014. **(Copy circulated).**

NOTED: Mr Hannaway advised that the Newry, Mourne and Down subscription to NILGA for 2015/2016 year is £47,950.

AGREED: It was **AGREED** on the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Hyland, **SECONDED** by Councillor Andrews, that Mr Hannaway submit a response to this Consultation Document to advise that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council agree to the reconstitution of NILGA and that a representative from each of the 11 new Councils should sit on a negotiating body, with the 11 Councils to discuss how this should be serviced going forward.

NOTED: Councillor Curran encouraged Members to attend the next NILGA meeting in Belfast as it would be dealing with the new structures.

There being no further business the Meeting ended at **7.10 pm.**

For consideration at the Shadow Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 2 December 2014.

Signed: **Councillor T Hearty**
 Chairperson

Mr L Hannaway
 Chief Executive Designate