

**Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 25 January 2018 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon**

**Chair:** Councillor Ashton

**Members Present:** Councillors Bateson, Bell, Buchanan, Burton, Clarke, Cuddy, Cuthbertson, Forde, Gildernew, Kearney, Mallaghan, McAleer, McEldowney, McFlynn, McGinley, B McGuigan, S McGuigan, McKinney, McLean, McNamee, McPeake, Milne, Molloy, Mulligan, J O'Neill, T Quinn, Reid, Robinson, G Shiels, J Shiels, Totten and Wilson

**Officers in Attendance:** Mr Tohill, Chief Executive  
Ms Campbell, Director of Leisure & Outdoor Recreation  
Ms Canavan, Director of Organisational Development  
Mr Cassells, Director of Environment & Property  
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure  
Mr McCreesh, Director of Business & Communities  
Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance  
Mrs Forde, Member Support Officer

The meeting commenced at 7pm

**C1/18 Apologies**

Councillors Doris, Elattar, Glasgow, Monteith, Mullen and M Quinn

**C2/18 Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest.

**C3/18 Chair's Business**

The Chair, Councillor Ashton spoke of the shock at the horrendous incident in Aughnacloy which was now being treated as attempted murder. The Chair extended best wishes to Mrs Davidson and encouraged anyone with information to come forward.

Councillor Robinson condemned the despicable incident and made reference to a number of recent 'break ins' when elderly people were being terrorised. He said there were no words to describe the terror Mrs Davidson must have felt lying outside in the cold. He spoke of the fear in the community especially amongst the elderly and that his hope was when the perpetrators were caught they would receive more than a 'wrap on the knuckles.' Councillor Robinson stated that Mrs Davidson like many others had worked hard and given life service to their community and then to receive such treatment was deplorable. He wished Mrs Davidson well emphasising that she would be in both thoughts and prayers.

*Councillor S McGuigan entered the meeting at 7.02pm*

Councillor Mulligan concurred with previous speakers and said he had known the lady and her late husband a long time and would unreservedly condemn the attack during which the action of callous thugs had left alone elderly resident with serious injuries. He continued stating that he found it shocking that such an atrocious act could take place in a village in this Council area and leave a quiet and private lady in her eighties in such a perilous, life threatening condition in hospital fighting for her life. Councillor Mulligan stated that there was a perception within the community that not enough was being done and thus he would call on the PSNI to be more proactive and be seen on the ground as this would be reassuring to the community. He stressed that people are living day and daily with the dread hanging over them that they could be next. Councillor Mulligan concluded wishing Mrs Davidson a speedy recovery.

Councillor McAleer stated that the shameful attack had left the community shocked, fearful and appalled. Speaking of Mrs Davidson the Councillor said how she must have felt during the attack and her lying injured outside does not bear thinking about. Councillor McAleer shared that she knew both Mrs Davidson and her late husband well and wished her a good recovery. Councillor McAleer further advised that she had visited another elderly couple who had been burgled in recent days who had also been targeted the previous year.

Councillor Reid passed on well wishes to Mrs Davidson stating that what had occurred was a tragedy he advised that the PSNI had assured the PCSP that the case was being treated as attempted murder, that no stone would be left unturned and that the PCSP were taking action to support the community through the trauma.

Councillor Burton concurred with previous speakers stating that her support and prayers were with Mrs Davidson and the whole community who were traumatised. Councillor Burton also made reference to other incidents in Ballygawley sharing that over the past two days she had visited many elderly people who were living in fear of the dreadful happenings but emphasised that she had also been contacted by parents and young people living alone who felt isolated and vulnerable. The Councillor also referred to people who had been previously targeted by burglars and how recent happenings had brought this back to them. Councillor Burton appealed to the Council to write to the District Commander of the PSNI to ask that every resource that can be used is used to catch the perpetrators. The Councillor highlighted that one family in Ballygawley had been burgled five times and stated that as an elected Member you feel inadequate in the face of such trauma. She emphasised that the PCSP, officers and Council support the District Commander and to do the best they can to support the people of Aughnacloy highlighting that the sad reality is that it would not be long until it affected all areas. The Councillor concluded stating that if people who see a car or situation which does not 'sit right' take the number of the vehicle and tell the PSNI using the 101 or confidential help line number.

Councillor Gildernew concurred with all that had been said and wished Mrs Davidson a full recovery. He acknowledged that there had been burglaries in his own 'neck of

the woods' and encouraged neighbours to be alert and keep safe. He added his support to send a letter of support to the PSNI.

The Chair, Councillor Ashton stated she would be sending a letter to Mrs Davidson.

**Resolved** That (i) the Chair of Council send a letter to Mrs Davidson; (ii) Council send a letter of support to the PSNI in relation to the incident.

### **Matters for Decision**

#### **C4/18 Environment Committee Minutes of meeting held on Monday 4 December 2017**

Proposed by Councillor McGinley  
Seconded by Councillor B McGuigan and

**Resolved** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on Monday 4 December 2017 (E308/17 – E332/17 and E341/17), transacted in “Open Business” having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

#### **C5/18 Council Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 14 December 2017**

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to item C257/17 regarding gritting of roads and footpaths and highlighted the difficulties which occurred on Friday past in Dungannon when the town was virtually brought to a standstill. He reported that a bus got stuck on Church Street and a lorry got stuck for two hours at the entrance of Perry Street carpark due to un-gritted roads. He spoke of incidents of cars sliding in Scotch Street which resulted in traffic being diverted onto Little Scotch Street where staff of shops were throwing salt onto the road to keep cars moving. Councillor Cuthbertson stated that the agreement with Transport NI was clearly not working when a ‘skiffle’ of snow had caused such havoc. The Councillor emphasised that Officers needed to revisit the agreement with Transport NI.

Councillor Molloy reiterated Councillor Cuthbertson’s comments and stated that Council officers had assisted in getting the issues resolved but highlighted that businesses in the town had been angry at the events. The Councillor asked what had happened that the agreement with Transport NI had failed.

In response the Director of Environment and Property stated that on a point of information the Council has no statutory responsibility for roads under article 9 rule of the Road Order Act 1993.

Referring to the agreement with Transport NI he reminded Members that the agreement had to be triggered by Transport NI and not Council. He further advised that on the occasion of the snow Transport NI did not trigger the agreement. In relation to the agreement he stated that it had been resolved at a previous meeting which footpaths would be included but to extend the area into car parks would require further negotiations but if that was the wish of Members it could be

investigated but asked Member to note that any re-negotiation would come at a cost. The Director reminded Members that within the terms of the agreement Council staff would only participate if they could not carry out their normal duties. He advised that a paper would be presented to the Environment Committee in February.

Councillor Cuthbertson emphasised that a conversation with Transport NI was necessary advising that on the morning of the snow it was on social media to stay out of Dungannon and the PSNI had also put a similar message on twitter. The Councillor was emphatic that ratepayers in Dungannon deserved more than what was delivered on that day.

Councillor Cuddy concurred with Councillors Cuthbertson and Molloy and asked if a car park was a paid facility had Council more responsibility towards its users. In response the Director of Environment and Property stated that he would seek legal clarification but that he did not think it would make a difference.

Councillor Mallaghan referred to the decision of Council in December to publicise responsibilities in relation to gritting. He stated that he was aware a vehicle used for gritting had been removed from the Transport NI gritting schedule and thus had impacted on the service. He stated that the situations which had arisen in Pomeroy, Cookstown and Dungannon reflected this. Councillor Mallaghan stated that the weather had been adverse but it had not been a really bad fall of snow and whilst rural areas are impacted even those in housing estates were badly effected as grit boxes had not been filled. He said that he had telephoned the 24 hours helpline to be told 'everyone has gone home' although where there had been wakes and funerals occurring Transport NI had helped but emphasised that overall the service was unacceptable.

In response to Councillor Mallaghan's comments in relation to the publicity campaign the Head of Marketing and Communication advised that following the December meeting of Council a press statement was issued. The Officer confirmed that it, together with detailed maps, for the winter agreement were posted on the website and that in relation to weather warnings Council was part of an emergency group and received notifications channelled through the NI Direct website so a common message is relayed. The Head of Marketing and Communication further advised that traffic watch and the met office were also referenced together with information from the PSNI regarding conditions on the ground.

Councillor Mallaghan proposed that Council write to the Divisional Roads Manager summarising the feelings of the meeting and sentiments expressed highlighting also the state of the roads with potholes.

Councillor Reid stated that all towns were being effected and referred to a meeting which had taken place in 'The Junction' concerning the Departments of Finance and Infrastructure at which it was highlighted that in 2018 the winter budget would be cut, resulting in zero gritting and that grants to community transport and shop mobility would also be cut.

The Chair Councillor Ashton referred to Councillor Reid's comment and stated that it was a separate matter and would be discussed at agenda item 13.

Councillor Wilson concurred with Councillor Mallaghan and stated that Transport NI did deserve praise in relation to making roads passable for funerals during the adverse weather. However, in relation to grit bins Councillor Wilson stated that it is volunteers who are spreading the grit but that bins had not been filled from 11<sup>th</sup> December until 18<sup>th</sup> January. He made further reference to the number of calls he was receiving on pot holes. Councillor Wilson requested that Councillor Mallaghan change his proposal to write to the Divisional Roads Manager to include an invitation to present to full Council.

Councillor Mallaghan agreed to the suggested change.

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan  
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

**Resolved** That a letter of invitation be sent to Conor Loughrey Divisional Road Manager (Western) inviting him to present to full Council with regard to response to making roads passable during recent adverse weather when there was funerals in the area; Gritting of roads in district; Filling of grit boxes; Current state of roads following adverse weather; and Increased number of potholes and criteria for repair.

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan  
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That the Minutes of Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 14 December 2017 (C253/17 – C265/17 and C273/17), transacted in “Open Business” having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

**C6/18            Planning Committee Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8 January 2018**

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan  
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

**Resolved** That the Minutes of Meeting of the Planning Committee held on Monday 8 January 2018 (P001/18 – P006/18 and P015/18), transacted in “Open Business” having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

**C7/18            Environment Committee Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 9 January 2018**

Proposed by Councillor J O'Neill  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved** That the Minutes of Meeting of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 9 January 2018 (E001/18 – E023/18 and E030/18), transacted in “Open Business” having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

**C8/18            Development Committee Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday  
10 January 2018**

Proposed by Councillor J Shiels  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved**    That the Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee held on Wednesday 10 January 2018 (D001/18 – D018/18 and D022/18), transacted in “Open Business” having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

**C9/18            Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of meeting held on  
Thursday 11 January 2018**

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan  
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

**Resolved**    That the Minutes of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 11 January 2018 (PR001/18 – PR009/18 and PR023/18), transacted in “Open Business” having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

**C10/18           Conferences and Seminars**

Approval was sought for undernoted conferences for attendance of Members and Council Officers outlined in the report, the payment of attendance fees and associated costs as incurred.

**(i)            Member Approvals**

- NILGA – Making Planning Work – Shaping our Built Environment: The Role of Councils in Place-making  
Tuesday 30 January 2018, Grand Opera House, No conference fee; travel and subsistence;  
  
Councillors Glasgow and Reid  
  
Councillor Burton advised that she had registered to attend but would now have to withdraw due to another commitment.
- NILGA – Driving Government Locally  
Thursday 22 February 2018; Killyhevlin, Enniskillen, No conference fee; travel and subsistence.
- 29<sup>th</sup> Colmcille Winter School – Theme: Housing Provision in Ireland  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018; Colmcille Heritage Centre, Letterkenny; Cost €150 plus travel and subsistence
- NI Housing Conference  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018; Titanic Centre, Belfast

Cost: Conference fee £195 plus travel and subsistence

- European Energy Poverty Conference 2018 – ‘*Theme: A United Approach*’ Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018; Croke Park, Dublin  
Cost: Conference fee €80 (early bird, before 28<sup>th</sup> February), €120 standard plus travel and subsistence

**(ii) Officer Approvals**

Conference & Seminar	Date	No. of Attendees	Location	Attendance Fee (Yes/No)
Petrol Filling Stations Construction & Environmental Protection Audit & Inspection	16 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	1	Manchester	Yes
Fire Safety Conference	8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	2 (1 x 1 day) (1 x 2 days)	Armagh City Hotel	Yes

Proposed by Councillor McLean  
Seconded by Councillor J Shiels and

**Resolved** That the attendance of Members and Officers, the payment of attendance fees and associated costs as incurred be approved, as required for attending Members and Officers.

**C11/18 World Butchers Challenge**

The Director of Business and Communities drew attention to the previously circulated report to Members on the World Butchers Challenge Event and sought approval for members to attend two events as outlined below:

- International WBC Soiree Evening on 15 March 2018 at 6.30 pm at Titanic, Belfast to welcome the Butchers of the World to Ireland
- WBC Gala Dinner on 21 March 2018 at 7.30 pm at Titanic, Belfast

Proposed by Councillor Burton  
Seconded by Councillor McLean and

**Resolved** That approval is granted for the Council's Chair and Vice Chair, Chair of P&R Committee, Chair of Development Committee, Chair of Environment Committee and a staff member to attend both events using Council's Protocol for Booking Tables at Functions.

**C12/18 Consideration of Requests for Civic Recognition – January 2018**

Reference was made to the previously circulated report and approval sought for request(s) for civic recognition from members, in line with Council Receptions Policy.

Proposed by Councillor J O'Neill  
Seconded by Councillor McPeake and

**Resolved** That approval be given to submitted requests for civic recognition as outlined in the report.

### **C13/18 Council Consultation Submissions for Approval**

Councillor Reid referred to the prepared response to the Department of Finance Paper on Northern Ireland Budgetary Outlook 2018-2020. He referred to the aforementioned meeting which had taken place in 'The Junction' and stressed that the future budget looked bleak with 50% reduction in street lighting, no gully cleaning, no gritting, grants cut to rural transport providers and Translink cutting services in rural areas. He reminded the meeting that the deadline for the response was Friday 26 January and expressed concern in the Departments timing regarding the consultation, he suggested that officers should liaise with the groups to strengthen the response.

Councillor Molloy noted the draft response and expressed concerns with regard to the timing of the consultation. He stated that the response needed to be stronger especially concerning DAERA programmes which have delivered 500 jobs in the past, he stressed that rural transport cuts were severe and mentioned Translink cutting services. Councillor Molloy also highlighted that within DAERA's budget £13m had been set aside for Brexit issues yet the public were being repeatedly told that Brexit would not cost us money. Councillor Molloy emphasised that there were programmes that needed the money now and requested that the Council response be stronger.

The Chair, Councillor Ashton stated that the Chief Executive would outline the draft response in the report.

The Chief Executive stated that the Director of Finance had prepared the report remarking that the deadline had been tight as papers were issued a week prior to the meeting and that the response was due on 26 January. He expressed appreciation for Members comments highlighting areas to be strengthened as investment in strategic road infrastructure especially in relation to Cookstown Bypass, proposed cuts to the rate support grant and the Rural Needs Act. He also highlighted the Department of Economy Industrial Strategy Launch and stated that if the cuts were implemented there would be no money to do things.

Councillor McNamee drew attention to point 16 of the response together with the letter received by Council from the Department of Infrastructure and expressed his acute disappointment on the current stance reminding Members that the former Minister of the Department of Infrastructure had clearly stated that the plans were in place for the road yet when the Assembly collapsed the project has been moved 'down the rungs'. Councillor McNamee was emphatic that this was not good enough that Members across the board had lobbied for the bypass.

The Chair, Councillor Ashton stated that the problem was that there were no Ministers in post at Stormont.



The Director of Finance summarised the response stating that at a high level he was disappointed at the tone of the document and the stark possibilities highlighted. He remarked that internal payroll for the Departments was referenced at £142m but no consideration given to internal efficiencies, he further outlined that no links had been given to costs and benefits or how any changes would be delivered. The Director expressed concern that government departments seemed to work independent of each other. He emphasised that it was abundantly clear that if the cuts progressed the Rate Support Grant would be cut which would be extremely unfair to the seven recipient councils. The Director advised he would note Members comments and work with the Chief Executive to improve the robustness of the response. In conclusion, he highlighted that in relation to Translink losses it was not highlighted that rural services would be cut but the reality of what they were saying was the 'Private Public Partnership' contract commitments were a drain on budget.

In response to Councillor Reid and Burton's comments regarding making contact with groups such as Community Transport, Shopmobility and COSTA the Chair, Councillor Ashton stated that Council perhaps reference the organisations as the response was due on 26 January 2018.

Proposed by Councillor McLean  
Seconded by Councillor Reid and

**Resolved** That the draft response with aforementioned amendments be approved with regard to the Department of Finance Paper on Northern Ireland Budgetary Outlook 2018-2020.

**Resolved** That Council approve draft responses to the undernoted consultations:

- (i) DEARA's consultation on Bovine TB-Eradication of bovine tuberculosis (Btb); and
- (ii) Northern Trust's consultation 'how we propose to purchase domiciliary care provided by non-statutory providers'.

**C14/18      Public Payphone (028 86751270) at Tulnacross Road, Cookstown BT80 9NH**

The Chief Executive drew attention to the previously circulated report providing an update on the BT Consultation on the proposed removal of the Public Payphone and Kiosk at Tulnacross Road, Orritor, Cookstown BT80 9NH. It was noted that there was currently a six months temporary protection listing on the kiosk agreed at the January planning committee.

Councillor Wilson stated that Councillor Glasgow had requested that Council use their veto to retain the public pay phone. He stated that Councillor Glasgow had contacted residents along the road who stated that as there was poor mobile coverage in the area and in light of earlier discussions regarding break-ins they would like the Council to veto to retain the pay phone.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson

That Council veto to retain the payphone at Tulnacross Road, Cookstown  
BT80 9NH

Councillor Clarke stated that he drove the route on a regular basis and advised that there were briars across the door, which was almost hanging off and this may contribute to the reason for lack of use. He also stated that three miles further along the road a public pay phone had been removed, a further four miles again another pay phone had been removed and also 9 miles from Draperstown a remote area with no mobile signal and a phone had been removed yet he did not recall seeing a consultation from BT on any of the locations.

In response the Chair, Councillor Ashton stated that Democratic Services would clarify to the Councillor the consultation notifications which had been received.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that he had previously spoken on the issue and although he was not familiar with the kiosk at Tulnacross Road it did sound as though it was in a poor condition. He stressed that the demise of telephone kiosks in rural areas came when they had to be used with a card which he assumed had to be purchased at a post office. Councillor Cuthbertson concluded stating that he felt it was important to save kiosks as they are dying out and are part of the heritage and tradition of country roads and thus he would be keen to have it maintained.

Councillor McGinley stated that when you hear that the phone had not been used from 2011 it would make you wonder about the proposal from Councillor Wilson, although he had made valid points. He stated that it reminded him of vinyl records which many had thrown away yet now they had made a comeback.

Councillor Reid stated that Councillor Glasgow had discussed the pay phone with him and that although you could not make a general call it worked for 999 calls. He stated that it was an ongoing battle for internet in rural areas and that this emergency line was one way of ensuring people could make contact with emergency services.

Councillor Kearney stated that in the interests of community safety he would support the retention of the public payphone at Tulnacross Road.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan

**Resolved** Council exercise the Local Veto to retain the kiosk and pay phone at Tulnacross Road, Orritor, Cookstown BT80 9NH, and write to BT on same.

## **Matters for Information**

### **C15/18 Consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council**

Reference was made to the previously report to update Members on the consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council for comment.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor McGinley and

**Resolved** That Council note the consultations.

*Councillor Reid left the meeting at 7.55pm*

## **C16/18 Correspondence**

The Chief Executive drew attention to the previously circulated report providing an update on correspondence received from the Department of Infrastructure (Roads & Rivers) regarding Cookstown Bypass and the Electoral Officer.

Councillor Wilson referenced the correspondence received from the Department for Infrastructure in relation to Cookstown Bypass and stated that it was an insult to the Council, was 'wish washy and insulted Members intelligence. He recalled being at the meeting when the then Minister Chris Hazzard advised that £600k had been allocated to the Cookstown Bypass. Councillor Wilson referred to the road works and adverse weather in recent weeks highlighted the urgent need for the bypass. Councillor Wilson posed the question, with no Minister in place who had given the authority of the £600k to be taken out of the budget and where is it now going?

The Chair, Councillor Ashton concurred and stated that the invitation should be extended to include the Permanent Secretary of Department of Infrastructure and the Deputy Secretary of Roads and Rivers to the meeting

**Resolved** That Council write to the Department of Infrastructure inviting the Permanent Secretary, the Deputy Secretary of Roads and Rivers and the Divisional Roads Manager (West) to a meeting with Council.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to correspondence received in relation to the Electoral Office and enquired if any proposals had been put forward to use council property for electoral office functions. In response, the Chief Executive reminded Members that Council had issued a formal response to the Electoral Office consultation and advised that his discussions regarding the matter had been with the former Chief Electoral Officer but that the new Officer in post had issued the letter detailing the conclusion.

In response to Councillor Mallaghan indicating that he wished to refer back to the item concerning Tulnacross public pay phone the Chair stated that the discussion had moved on.

*Councillor Mulligan left the meeting at 8.00pm*

## **C17/18 Notice of Motions**

Councillor Kearney read the motion as undernoted:

*That this Council is concerned about the negative impact that any potential cut to the Rate Support Grant will have on Council's ability to deliver services to*

*and for the population of the Council Area; recognises that this grant exists to support less affluent Councils; calls on the Department for Communities to maintain the Rate Support Grant at its existing funding level; further commits to write to the Department for Finance and the Head of the Civil Service; and calls on any incoming Executive or future Minister to establish full protection for the Rate Support Grant to ensure any future budget cuts do not impact disproportionately on less financially well-off Council areas.*

Speaking on the motion Councillor Kearney stated that earlier discussions makes it more poignant and emphasised that the rates support grant is an essential source of funding for the seven poorer Councils highlighting that Mid Ulster relied upon grants of approximately £18m and that it would wish to ensure that it is not cut by 4% as the previous year's cut had a negative effect. Councillor Kearney reminded Members that last year the Rates Support Grant had been cut to £17m. He further reminded members that when the SDLP Minister had been in place the Rates Support Grant had been protected but with no Minister in charge this would not be so and any cut would have a major impact especially west of the Bann. He declared that it was unfair and that local councils were endeavouring to support communities.

Councillor Kearney referred to the Councils response to the Briefing on Northern Ireland Budgetary Outlook 2018-2020 and quoting from it stated that "it would simply be a travesty for the rates support grant to be reduced and this must be avoided at all costs."

Councillor Kearney concluded stating that Council should write to the Department for Finance and the Head of the Civil Service; and call on any incoming Executive or future Minister to establish full protection for the Rate Support Grant to ensure any future budget cuts do not impact disproportionately on less financially well-off Council areas.

Councillor McFlynn seconded the motion.

Councillor Wilson expressed his support for the motion stating that the grant is aimed at helping Councils below the wealth average and that Mid Ulster was third in line and thus without the grant could not deliver parity of services akin to those who do not receive the grant. He stated that if the grant was cut the rate payer would see a deterioration in services. Councillor Wilson referred to the trend to cut support over the last few years and stated that by giving Council no time to plan ahead the cutting of the rate support grant would have serious implications. He stated that the constant uncertainty is a direct result of the fiscal incompetence of the Stormont Executive and that even before its collapse Máirtín Ó Muilleoir in his role of Finance Minister had failed to deliver a budget.

Councillor Wilson reiterated the UUP support for the motion and emphasised the impact of fragmented cuts.

Councillor McPeake stated that Sinn Féin supported the motion and advised that at a recent meeting of NILGA the matter had been on the agenda and discussed with the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Communities. He stated that representation to the Department of Finance needed to be strong to ensure there

was no cuts to essential services. He stressed that NILGA has been strongly supportive of the Rate Support Grant as had been all eleven Councils. Regarding Councillor Wilson's earlier comments Councillor McPeake stated that the 'elephant in the room' was the Tory/DUP austerity agenda.

*Councillor McAleer left the meeting at 8.08pm.*

Councillor McLean stated that the DUP supported the motion and highlighted the importance of NILGA representing the support of the eleven Councils.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated like his colleagues he had no difficulty supporting the motion and remarked that all these issues stemmed from a non-working Executive. He stated that to get money to where it is most needed direct rule Ministers needed to be in place if there was to be no Stormont. He pointed out that people are stretched to the limit, businesses do not know how long they are going to remain in business and that Council must do all in its power in relation to issue highlighting the Council's responsibility to the domestic rate.

Councillor Kearney thanked everyone for their points and lay emphasis on the need of the rate support grant if rural needs training, good relations and other services were to continue. He stressed that MUDC put on record that they did not want to see the rates support grant cut.

*Councillor McAleer returned to the meeting at 8.10pm*

The Chair, Councillor Ashton called for a vote

FOR            31

AGAINST    0

### **Confidential Business**

Proposed by Councillor J Shiels

Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

**Resolved**    That items C18/18 – C24/18 be taken as confidential business.

- (i)    Minutes taken as confidential business at the Audit Committee held on Tuesday 12 December 2017
- (ii)   Minutes taken as confidential business at the Council meeting held on Thursday 14 December 2017
- (iii)   Minutes taken as confidential business at the Planning Committee held on Monday 8 January 2018
- (iv)   Minutes taken as confidential business at the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 9 January 2018
- (v)   Minutes taken as confidential business at the Development Committee held on Wednesday 10 January 2018
- (vi)   Minutes taken as confidential business at the Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 11 January 2018

*The press left the meeting at 8.11pm*

**C25/18      Duration of Meeting**

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 8.20pm

CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_