

**Minutes of Meeting of Policy & Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Tuesday 3 February 2015 in Cookstown District Council Offices**

**Members Present:** In the Chair, Councillor McPeake (Chair)  
  
Councillors Ashton, Bateson, Buchanan, Elattar, Glasgow, Mallaghan, McFlynn, McGinley, McLean, S McGuigan, Molloy, M Quinn, Reid and Totten

**Members in Attendance:** Councillors Clarke, Gildernew, Kearney, B McGuigan, McNamee, Mulligan and Wilson

**Officers in Attendance:** Mr A Tohill, Chief Executive  
Mrs Campbell, Director of Policy and Development (MDC)  
Mrs Canavan, Lead HR Officer  
Mr Cassells, Director of Operations (MDC)  
Mr Deaglán Ó Doibhlin (MDC)  
Ms Sarah Jayne Goldring (MDC)  
Mr Hall, Head of Audit, Risk and Governance (CDC)  
Mr Séamus Kilpatrick, Irish Language Officer (D&STBC& CDC)  
Mrs Mezza, Marketing Communications Manager  
Mr Moffett, Change Management Officer  
Mr McCreesh, Acting Chief Executive (CDC)  
Mr O'Hagan, ICT Manager  
Mr JJ Tohill, Lead Finance Officer  
Mrs Smith, Council Business Manager (D&STBC)

**In Attendance:** **Mid Ulster Forum for the Irish Language**  
Mr Seán-Anton Ó Conalláin  
Ms Máire Coyle  
Mr Níall Devlin  
Mr Pól Ó Gallchóir  
Mr Niall O'Kane

The meeting commenced at 7.05 pm

**PR18/15 Apologies**

None.

**PR19/15 Declarations of Interest**

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

Councillor Ashton declared an interest in the Advertising Policy being an employee of one of the companies. She did not leave the room for the item of business.

Councillors McGuigan and Mallaghan declared an interest in the Mid Ulster Forum for the Irish Language as they attended the Forum. They did not leave the room for the item of business.

## **PR20/15      Deputation – Mid Ulster Forum for the Irish Language**

The Chair welcomed the deputation from the Mid Ulster Forum for the Irish Language and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr Devlin with the use of a power point presentation gave the profile of the Irish language in Mid Ulster, explained Irish as an economic driver, listed the benefits to Mid Ulster and recommended that Council:

1. Establish an inter-agency Irish language partnership supported by Council;
2. Continue to support existing development posts to link Council directly to communities;
3. Develop a strategic development plan;
4. Undertake a full Social Return on Investment audit;
5. Continue to enhance Council's service to become a model of best practice for Irish language promotion.

The Chair, Councillor McPeake thanked Mr Devlin for the presentation and spoke of the richness, value and promotion of the Irish language throughout the district.

Councillor Mallaghan stated that the figures show a strong Irish language in Mid Ulster and asked what growth is expected with respect to those speaking the Irish language.

Mr Devlin stated that it is difficult to quantify, currently 17% which equates to approximately 25,000 who live in the Mid Ulster Council area having knowledge of Irish. Numbers are on the rise in formal education and also with adult learners.

The Chair, Councillor McPeake, asked if the Forum had formally contributed to the recent Mid Ulster District Council community planning process.

Mr Devlin stated that representatives had attended consultation events across the region and fed in thoughts on what should be taken into account for support and development in the coming years.

Councillor McGuigan asked who the Forum thought should take recommendation 4 forward on Social Return on Investment Audit.

Mr Devlin stated that there were a lot of benefits and quite a few measureable in relation to development of social cohesion within communities and developing social enterprises. He stated that An Carn in Maghera, and the range of services that flowed from that, was a good example.

The Chair, Councillor McPeake stated that An Carn was a very good model for moving forward with and felt it would be useful sometime for the Council if the Forum was to share the details of the programmes and services at the centre.

Mr Gallchóir who represented An Chraobh Rua, Dungannon stated that their request to Council was very minimal. The Group had a lot of social activities taking place, had limited income and to have space within Ranfurly House free of charge for a couple of evenings a month would be helpful.

The Chair stated that the group should put the request in writing to the Council for further consideration.

Councillor Mulligan asked that aside from protecting and preserving the language for future generations, do you see a day when the language in any way would be accepted as a major contributor in commerce and be advantageous.

Mr O’Kane stated that languages in their diversity all have a part to play, English is the international language in commerce and Irish language would not replace that. The focus of the benefits of the Irish language is in terms of social, arts and cultural heritage activity and programmes.

Councillor M Quinn asked how much effort is put into a schools outreach programme and if there were any plans for the development of an Irish Officer to go into schools.

Ms Coyle stated that currently ‘A’ level students go to local primary schools and provide sessions on the language. This is something that is of valuable experience and more appealing to young people to learn, given that they’re being delivered by young people.

Mr Kilpatrick advised that currently Cookstown District Council runs an outreach programme within primary schools.

Mr O’Kane stated that the Forum is representative of the area and is happy to take on board suggestions.

Councillor Molloy enquired on the future development within education.

Mr O’Kane stated that the primary sector has experienced growth and were now feeding into language units. The post primary sector is being considered as there is not enough spaces for children and there is debate in relation to whether the development should be units within existing schools or separate streams.

Councillor McPeake thanked the team for the detailed presentation following which they left the meeting at 7.33pm.

**PR21/15      Receive and confirm minutes of the Policy & Resources  
Committee held on Tuesday 13 January 2015**

Item PR3/15 - Deputation – Land & Property Services on Revaluation of Non-Domestic Properties

The Chief Executive referred to the penultimate paragraph on page 2 and stated that what he actually said was that “in doing some quick sums 850 properties will face

increased rateable values of 50 per cent or greater". Amend minutes, Page 2 penultimate paragraph, remove the words "rates bills" and insert "rateable values".

**Resolved** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Tuesday 13 January 2015 (PR1/15 – PR14/15 & PR17/15) were considered and, subject to the foregoing, were signed as accurate and correct.

## **Matters for Decision**

### **PR22/15 Advertising Policy**

The Marketing Communications Manager presented a report with regard to the introduction of an advertising policy for the placement of public notices, tender and recruitment advertisements.

The Officer stated that public notices are used by a range of services to meet statutory obligations, including finance, environmental health and licensing. Tender and recruitment advertising are also required on a cross-service basis.

Mid Ulster District Council has a large geographic area, with a diverse population and a total of 11 local newspapers which circulate in, or in parts of, the new district.

The circulation of newspapers varies from those of a few thousand to the Tyrone Courier which is arguably the largest local weekly newspaper in Northern Ireland. However, in considering the issue of public notice advertising, the geographic reach of the newspapers and the readership preferences of different communities are also important.

### **List of newspapers circulating in the Mid Ulster District Council Area**

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Circulation</b>	<b>Source</b>
County Derry Post	4,478	ABC 2013
Dungannon Observer	Requested	Observer Newspaper Group
Impartial Reporter	12,802	ABC 2013
Mid Ulster Mail	6,534	ABC 2013
Mid Ulster Observer	Requested	Observer Newspaper Group
Northern Constitution	13,725	Alpha Newspaper Group 2012
The Democrat	Requested	Observer Newspaper Group
Tyrone Constitution	7,996	Alpha Newspaper Group 2012
Tyrone Courier	15,083	Alpha Newspaper Group 2012
Tyrone Herald	6,010	ABC 2013
Tyrone Times	3,564	ABC 2012

ABC: Audit Bureau of Circulation

The policy, therefore, proposes that 7 of the 11 local newspapers are used for the purposes of public notice advertising, excluding the Tyrone Constitution (Omagh is at the centre of its circulation) and the Northern Constitution (Limavady is at the centre of its circulation), both of which are sister newspapers to the Tyrone Courier. The

Tyrone Herald which also circulates predominantly in Omagh district and The Democrat, the circulation of which overlaps to a degree with its sister newspaper, the Dungannon Observer are also excluded.

In recognition of the correlation between salary scale and travel to work distance, recruitment advertising is recommended in local papers for those posts from Scale 1 to Scale 6, with the Belfast Telegraph stipulated for those posts of SO1 and above.

The policy recommends that tender advertisements should be placed in the Belfast Telegraph, except in circumstances where a tender is within EU thresholds. This reflects the current policy across existing councils.

The Council's web site, and other digital media as appropriate, will also be used to publish relevant advertisements.

The financial impact of the policy is difficult to assess given a lack of historical data and the anticipated advertising requirements of the new Council.

Public notice advertising for the Planning Service (2013-2014) totalled over £71,000, spread across 6 local papers. The draft policy omits 2 of these titles, the Tyrone Constitution and The Democrat, the advertising costs of which in the last financial year amounted to over £26,000.

While more local papers are proposed for public notice advertising than those used by any of the existing councils, the necessary duplicate advertising which would have taken place by three separate organisations, will no longer be required.

The savings secured on the omission of the 2 titles currently used by the Planning Service should compensate for the additional advertising requirements.

While expenditure on tender advertising is dependent on future procurement needs, tender advertising limits will be higher under the new Council's procurement policy, which is likely to result in fewer advertisements being placed and reduced cost.

Recruitment advertising at SO1 and above has been limited to the Belfast Telegraph, omitting the Irish News and News Letter, which are currently used by 2 of the existing 3 councils. In addition, should the shared advertising model for recruitment, which is currently used by some of the existing 26 councils, be continued post April 2015, there is also scope to reduce expenditure on recruitment advertising yet further.

The co-ordination of the editing, design and placement of all advertisements by a central service will ensure ads from different parts of the organisation can be combined, where appropriate, and that text can be edited to ensure ads make the most efficient use of space, reducing advert sizes and, therefore, cost.

Opportunities to negotiate for discounted rates directly or to take advantage of media rebates available via an agency will also be explored to obtain the most economically advantageous approach to media buying.

The officer recommended that the policy for advertising public notices, tenders and recruitment is considered for adoption for a period of 6 months at which point the policy will be reviewed and amended if required.

Councillor Ashton referred to a section in the policy with regard to Directors and Heads of Service setting budget and then relying on the Marketing Communications service to spend the budget and asked how this would be managed.

The Marketing Communications Manager stated that budget would be set and held by Directors with communications role to monitor where budget is being spent and to co-ordinate and monitor advertising so that two departments not putting in separate adverts in the same week etc.

Councillor Mallaghan asked how the ABC works. The member also stated that the Belfast Telegraph is not the only regional paper and what going to do from 1 April would be very difficult to change and need to be sure that reaching most people by using a limited number of papers.

Councillor McFlynn asked how much would be saved by only going with one regional paper and if all communities would be reached.

Councillor Molloy asked how often it is anticipated would need to advertise in regional papers.

The Marketing Communications Manager stated that ABC is the accepted industry standard. It is accepted that the Belfast Telegraph is read across communities and is a way of controlling expenditure. The Belfast Telegraph is probably the most expensive and would estimate that by only using the Belfast Telegraph would reduce overall costs by about a half. It is not anticipated, given existing restrictions linked to local government reform, that there would be a lot of need for recruitment advertising.

Councillor Reid, in the interest of savings, asked if quotations could be sought or advertising placed in local papers on a rotational basis.

The Chief Executive stated that with a number of the public notices there is a legal obligation to advertise in 2 newspapers circulating in the area. He added that some Councils have taken the decision not to use local papers and to advertise in regional papers only.

The Chair, Councillor McPeake stated that maybe situation should be parked until get comparison figures for Newsletter and Irish News.

The Chief Executive stated that some services, such as street trading, need a steer on the policy approach and recommended that the committee could approve the policy with regard to local papers with further details in relation to regional papers being brought back to committee.

Proposed by Councillor McFlynn  
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Council to approve policy, with regard to use of local papers, as outlined and that the situation with regard to tenders and higher level recruitment in regional papers be further investigated and brought back to committee.

*Councillors Clarke, McNamee and Mallaghan left at 7.45 pm.*

## **PR23/15      Health and Safety Policy**

Mr Hall presented a report on the draft Health & Safety Policy for consideration and approval by committee.

The Officer stated that the Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978 requires that all employees must prepare and keep under review a safety policy to bring to the attention of employees. The bringing forward of a health and safety policy and its subsequent implementation across Mid Ulster Council will assist in meeting this statutory requirement as set out under the aforementioned Health and Safety at Work Order.

The policy will:

- Demonstrate that Council is committed to addressing its health and safety obligations.
- Provide and maintain a safe working environment for employees and the wider community in which they interact.
- Provide a framework for health and safety management at all levels which adopts and supports best practice.
- Comply with, and where practicable exceed, the requirements and targets set by existing health and safety legislation.

The policy allows for and facilitates the establishment of a Health & Safety Committee the purpose of which will be to assist in discharging responsibilities placed upon the office of Chief Executive and the Council. The committee will be consultative in nature and be made up of senior officers and safety representatives from recognised Trade Unions.

The undertaking of Risk Assessments and effective management of risk is integral in providing a safe and healthy work place.

*Councillor Wilson left at 7.52 pm*

Councillor Ashton referred to reference to the appointment of a Director with strategic responsibility for health and safety and also appointment of a corporate health and safety officer and asked for an explanation.

Mr Hall stated that the Director role is to act as health and safety champion, to ensure full compliance with statutory requirements and advise on health and safety issues. The Corporate Health and Safety Officer will provide professional advice and

support. The Chief Executive advised that one of the Directors within the adopted management structure will have strategic responsibility for health and safety.

In response to a question from Councillor Bateson the Chief Executive stated that reports on health and safety performance will come to the Policy and Resources Committee and that will give members the opportunity of monitoring this area of work.

Proposed by Councillor McLean  
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Council to approve the draft health and safety policy as presented.

## **PR24/15 Committee Governance Arrangements**

The Chief Executive presented a report on future committee governance structures bringing attention to the four committees set up with 16 members on each, for Planning, Policy & Resources, Environment and Development for the transitional period. He added that the structure has served the Council well in making preparations for the full adoption of its responsibilities on 1 April 2015, however some refinement is required.

Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2014 states that Councils must operate a committee system unless the council decides otherwise by a qualified majority. A traditional committee system can be summarised as follows:

- Chair and Deputy selected using Schedule 1 (d'Hondt)
- Membership will be selected using Schedule 2 (quota greatest remainder)
- No restriction on number of committees
- No restriction on number of elected members
- Not subject to overview and scrutiny arrangements
- May delegate to sub-committees and officers

A committee based system is proposed to help ensure good governance in decision making of the Council from 1 April 2015. The proposed committee structure with core aligned functions presented were:

### **Planning Committee**

- Development Management
- Planning Enforcement
- Area Plan Development

### **Policy & Resources Committee**

- Democratic Services
- Finance
- Governance
- Human Resources
- Registration



- ICT
- Marketing & Communications
- Policy
- Performance
- All other matters which do not fall within the remit of any other committee.

#### **Environment Committee**

- Building Control
- Environmental Health
- Capital Projects
- Licensing
- Waste Management
- Cleansing
- Property Management
- Grounds Maintenance
- Off Street Car Parks

#### **Development Committee**

- Cultural Venues
- Arts Development
- Languages
- Leisure
- Sports Development
- DCAL Functions
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Play Areas
- Access
- Community Services
- PCSP
- Rural Development
- Economic Development
- Physical Regeneration
- DSD & DETI Functions
- Tourism
- Events

#### **Audit Committee**

- Internal controls
- Audit
- Risk

The Chief Executive stated that the Chair and Vice Chairs of the above committees will be Positions of Responsibility. As was the case during the transitional period it was proposed that there be 16 Members on all committees with the exception of the Audit Committee where it was proposed that there are 8 Members and one independent member.

In line with normal practice it was proposed that the quorum for all committees be one third of the total number of committee members, so 6 for Planning, Policy & Resources, Environment and Development and 3 for Audit Committee.

Members holding positions of responsibility may be paid a special responsibility allowance. The external representative on the Audit Committee will receive remuneration commensurate with the role.

Committee meetings can be accommodated within the existing council chambers in any of the existing councils.

It was proposed to split the committee meetings over the first two weeks of each month and hold the meetings on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7pm alternating between Cookstown and Magherafelt and that Council meetings are held in Dungannon at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of each month. The Chief Executive presented a draft schedule of meetings was presented for Members approval.

The Chief Executive added that a further paper would be brought forward on the terms of reference for each committee and delegated authority, where relevant.

The Chief Executive asked members to consider and approve:

- Five committees as detailed
- Confirm if the Chair and/or Deputy Chair should be ex-officio members of all committees except Audit
- Permit any Member to be present and heard at any committee meeting but only committee members to have voting rights
- Use the default method as outlined in Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act 2014 for the appointment of councillors to committees ie the quota of greatest remainder
- The draft schedule of meetings.

Councillor Mallaghan proposed that it be recommended to the Council that the above items are accepted and in considering the civic responsibilities that will be placed on the Council Chair the position will be very busy and therefore it and deputy chair should not be ex-officio members of each committee but the spaces this would leave on committees be filled by nominating officers in the normal way.

Councillor Wilson stated that he welcomed Councillor Mallaghan proposal and was happy to support.

Councillor Reid seconded the proposal which was agreed.

*Councillors Mallaghan and Wilson left at 8.02 pm.*

## **PR25/15      Filling Positions of Responsibility – Annual Meeting Arrangements**

The Chief Executive presented a report informing members of arrangements for the annual meeting of Mid Ulster District Council and the requirements on filling positions of responsibility.

The Chief Executive stated that Mid Ulster District Council held its first annual meeting, as required under The Local Government (Transitional, Supplementary, Incidental Provisions and Modifications) Regulations (NI) 2014, within 21 days of the 2014 local election at which business was transacted which included filling positions of responsibility for the term ending 31 March 2015, the transitional period. The same regulations require that the Council hold a further Annual Meeting during the transitional period, which the council is currently operating, to fill positions of responsibility for the new term beginning 2015. The Annual Meeting for this purpose and to transact other relevant business will take place on Thursday 12 March 2015 at 7pm in Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council offices. Under existing Council Standing Orders in every year that is not an election year annual meetings will be held in June. Next year's annual meeting will be in June.

The Chief Executive added that the purpose of Council's annual meeting would be to fill Positions of Responsibility as specified within the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 as the;

- Chair of the Council;
- Deputy Chair of the Council;
- Chair of any committee of the council;
- Deputy Chair of any committee of the council;
- Member of a cabinet style executive of the council (not applicable) and
- External representative of the council.

In reference to those bodies identified as receiving an 'external representative' of council the following were identified:

- Housing Council for NI
- Partnership Panel for NI
- Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for NI
- Policing & Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs)

The Chief Executive stated that for clarity purposes and in reference to the Local Government Act the DoE has confirmed that an external representative means a person nominated by the council to serve as a member of any public body, where a public body is specifically established under a statutory provision, such as the Justice Act 2011.

Reflecting on the committee structure previously considered by this committee and positions to be filled on public bodies, detailed above, 67 positions of responsibility are available and will be considered at the annual meeting on Thursday 12 March.

The Chief Executive added that Party Nominating Officers will be requested to select positions for the terms. Where nominating officers select positions which begin with the date of the annual meeting they must also nominate the person to hold the position. Nominating officers at future annual meetings for 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 will then provide the names of members for each position selected at the annual meeting on 12 March 2015.

On the method for filling Positions of Responsibility the Chief Executive added that the Local Government Act provides for the prescribed methods of appointing positions of responsibility; d'Hondt, Sainte-Lague and by single transferable vote. The Council must use one of these methods when allocating members to positions of responsibility. However, unless agreed otherwise by a qualified majority vote of council the default method shall be d'Hondt.

*Councillor B McGuigan left at 8.05 pm*

Making reference to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships as attracting Positions of Responsibility the Chief Executive stated that the Justice Act 2011 permits that a PCSP may have a membership of 15, 17 or 19 with there always being one more elected member than independent members. On the basis of the size of the new Council area a 19 member partnership would provide maximum representation across the district thus creating 10 positions of responsibility on the PCSP.

In referring to the Housing Council he stated the Housing (NI) Order 1981 confirms that Housing Council representation from each local authority should be the chairman of each district. However, the district council may appoint any member to become a member of the Housing Council in place of the chairman, if it so wishes. He added that Members should consider if this position be held by the Chair of Council as the default position within the Housing (NI) Order 1981 or be delegated to another member of the council.

The Chief Executive therefore asked the committee to reflect and consider:

- Note the number of positions of responsibility as 67
- Determine method for Filling Positions of Responsibility, the default being d'Hondt
- Determine if the representative on the Housing Council is the Chair of Council or be delegated to another member
- Agree the size of the PCSP to determine elected member representation

Councillor McLean stated that, in order to have a better understanding and provide good service, maybe there should be continuity of Housing Council representative.

The Chief Executive stated that because legislation states that the Chair of the Council holds the position the natural logic would be that the representative changes each year which would be 4 positions of responsibility, requiring a party to pick that position four times.

Councillor Elattar, a serving member on the Housing Council, stated that it was not a bad thing to have a change in representation on a regular basis.

In response to Councillor Reid's question in relation to commitment required of a Housing Council representative Councillor Elattar stated that there are two meetings a month and it meets at various locations across the province.

Proposed by Councillor Bateson  
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Council that:

- the number of positions of responsibility noted; 67
- use d'Hondt for filling positions of responsibility
- representative on the Housing Council be delegated to member other than the Chair
- the size of the PCSP should be a 19 member Partnership, with elected membership of 10 positions of responsibility

*Councillor Gildernew left at 8.12 pm.*

## **PR26/15 Consultation Arrangements – Irish Language Policy**

Mrs Campbell presented for information a report setting out timeframes in respect of the Irish Language Policy public consultation and assessment of equality impacts.

She added that the Council agreed at its meeting of the 22 January 2015 that the draft Irish Language Policy be subject to an equality assessment and the timescales required were:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
• Equality Screen draft policy	26 Jan – 6 Feb 2015
<b>If the policy is screened in:</b>	
• Preparation of consultation documents • Translation of policy and consultation documents into Irish • Creation of consultee lists and documentation	9 Feb – 28 Feb 2015
12 week consultation period	2 March – 22 May 2015
• Consideration of consultation responses • Assess equality impacts • Amend policy as required	25 May – 13 June 2015*
Amendments agreed by Council	Recommendations presented to June 2015 Council meeting for policy approval.

Mrs Campbell further advised that professional support of £9,000 was previously agreed by Council should an EQIA be required and translations undertaken by existing Irish Language Officers.

*Councillor Kearney left at 8.15 pm.*

## **Matters for Information**

### **PR27/15      Draft Procurement Policy**

The Lead Finance Officer submitted a report on the proposed Procurement Policy drafted in accordance with report to Policy and Resources Committee on Tuesday 3 September 2014 which was adopted at Council's meeting on Thursday, 25 September 2014. Members were asked to give consideration to the draft policy.

The Officer stated that Mid Ulster District Council has a duty to protect the public funds with which it is entrusted and to apply them in a transparent and effective manner having regard to all relevant legislation and in the context of an appropriate governance environment. The adoption of the proposed procurement policy should provide officers with the necessary framework, procedures and documentation to deliver upon this duty and evidence compliance therewith.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Proposed Procurement Approach previously adopted by Council, the fundamental principle is that all relevant staff will conduct each procurement exercise in a consistent manner, having regard to common financial limits which will dictate the method of procurement and how the recommended course of action will be approved. Significantly the process will, for lower value purchases, be decentralised with each process being under the overall control of the relevant Director. The Procurement Department will lead higher value and more complex procurement exercises and be available for advice and support in relation to decentralised exercises.

Professional support such as architects will continue to be required in relation to very complex procurements, usually significant capital projects, and such services will be procured having regard to the procurement policy.

The officers have identified a range of goods and services, which are still being tabularised, which are routinely excluded from the need to comply with the procurement policy on for example the placement of public advertisements and consumables, which are already the subject of a previously awarded contract.

The Lead Finance Officer added that officers were continuing to develop the associated forms and templates which will support decentralised procurement and appropriate evidencing of decisions throughout each procurement exercise on a consistent basis.

Councillor Molloy referred to a conversation with an officer from DSD with regards to tenders for services which are above EU thresholds and the fact that tender has to be assessed solely on what was presented and cannot take into consideration past

works that a particular contractor may have been involved. Councillor Molloy asked if the Council would be tied on a similar basis.

The Chief Executive stated that if a Council contract is above the EU threshold the Council will be in a similar position and will be required to follow EU procurement rules.

Councillor Reid stated that there was a need for everyone dealing with writing specifications and costing jobs to be trained as proper estimates would be required going forward.

Councillor S McGuigan stated that when setting tenders it would be important that contracts contain clauses that are relevant and which are a useful tool for the council to draw on if they overrun.

The Lead Finance Officer stated that one of the items in the policy is to look at the competence of staff writing specifications and there are standard terms and conditions but it is difficult to get specifics included.

*Councillor Glasgow and Reid left at 8.30 pm.*

## **PR28/15      Capacity Building**

A report was circulated informing and updating members on the arrangements put in place to build capacity for both elected members and staff, via the development of a planned programme of capacity building for staff across the 3 councils.

The Council Capacity Building Plan has been developed to ensure elected members, senior staff and all other staff are ready to meet the challenges of change and of a new organisation. The Capacity Building Plan is being delivered in two blocks: September to December 2014, which is now completed, and January to March 2015, which is currently on-going.

The Capacity Building plan has been structured and developed through a series of programmes focusing on the following themes:

- Induction
- Building Knowledge
- Supporting Transition and Change

The programmes and support measures focus on systems development and new business thinking rather than direct service delivery.

The training is being alternated where possible between Councils within the Mid-Ulster Cluster, is funded from within the DOE Capacity Building Budget, Local Government Staff Commission and Local Government Training Group.

## **PR29/15 Criminal Justice Inspection of PCSPs**

A report was circulated updating members on the outcome of the inspection undertaken by the Criminal Justice Inspection (NI) into the review of the operation of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs).

PCSP's were established following the amalgamation of functions previously set under statute for District Policing Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships. Now in operation a number of years Criminal Justice Inspection (NI) has undertaken an inspection with a focus on Governance Arrangements, Monitoring Police Performance, Delivering Community Safety and Improving Effectiveness.

Following the inspectorate's review of governance, delivery and outcomes of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships two strategic recommendations were made;

1. From 2015 the Locals Councils should provide the compliance and assurance framework for PCSPs. The Community Plan should be a focal point for delivery of the long term aims of the PCSP. The action plans of the PCSPs should feed into the Community and alignment with the aims of the statutory partners and other central government strategies should be explicit. The Joint Committee should retain oversight through the Policing Committee reports and regular review of the effectiveness of the PCSPs; and
2. Following implementation of LGR (local government reform), the cost of administration should not exceed 20% of the budget allocated to PCSPs.

Council and relevant officers should consider the contents of the report and the strategic recommendations above in the development and delivery of the Mid Ulster Council PCSP function.

## **PR30/15 ICT Procurement Update**

A report was circulated updating and informing members on the telephony contracts for Mid Ulster Council, the convergence into a single bill and the savings from the application of a universal rate as a temporary measure.

As part of the unified communications deployment across the Council the ICT manager has examined the current contracts providing telephony across the existing three councils. BT is the principle current provider for telephony lines and call services for all three councils. As part of the current analysis of bills it was found that Cookstown was on the most competitive deal after a tender exercise less than 2 years ago. Extrapolation of existing line rentals within the other 2 councils with the lower Cookstown rates would mean £15,000 worth of saving in line rental charges. Call rates based on the existing Cookstown tariffs would also capture in the region of £15k of saving on one year. A total of approx. £30k in reduced spending is anticipated.

Officers are engaging with BT to implement the most competitive contract rate from Cookstown for a period of one year for all lines and calls. Subsequently the contract will be subject to a tender competition as the unified and telephony requirements



across the new infrastructure and structures will be more readily determined and established.

**Confidential Business**

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan  
Seconded by Councillor McGinley and

**Resolved** That items PR31/15 and PR32/15 be taken as confidential business.

In response to a point of information by Councillor Mulligan, who was not a member of the committee, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Member could remain in the meeting.

**PR33/15 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting was called for 7 pm and ended at 9.25 pm.

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_