

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF DUNGANNON & SOUTH TYRONE
BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 29 JUNE 2009 IN THE COUNCIL
OFFICES, CIRCULAR ROAD, DUNGANNON**

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** In the Chair, Councillor Brush, Deputy Mayor

Councillors F Burton, R Burton, Cavanagh, Currie,
Daly, Donnelly, Gildernew, Gillespie, Hamilton,
McGonnell, McGuigan, Molloy and Morrow
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Badger, Greenaway and Mulligan
- OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr Frazer Acting Chief Executive
Mrs Smith Council Business Manager
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Representatives Northern Ireland Housing
Executive
Representatives Department of Regional
Development Roads Service

The meeting started at 7.30 pm

1 NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Brush, welcomed John McPeake Director of Design and Property Services, Eamon McKeown Area Manager, Chris Cunningham Area Planner, John McCartan District Manager and Jacqui Gilmore Area Information Officer who were in attendance to present report 'Dungannon District Housing Plan & Local Housing Strategy 2009-2010 copy of which has been circulated to members.

Representatives outlined details in the report, summarised as per news release, copy attached (appendix 1) following which members asked questions and made comments:

Objectives set out in report are commendable but no money to implement. Money for new build would assist with shortage of housing and create jobs in construction industry.

Issue about proportion of resources for Executive. Funding is a problem have come to meeting to state honestly what we can and cannot do. What we can do is significantly contained by funding.

Collapse in house sales has caused shortfall of funding. Current budget collapse due in part to capital receipts.

Adaptations very important will current funding meet all requests and how are requests prioritised. On annual basis receive 50 – 55 applications for extensions in south area requiring major capital schemes. Because of reduction in capital funding our capital programme will be significantly contained. Will be looking at providing alternatives ie chair lifts, floor lifts etc. Applications are dealt with in date order.

If take long hard look at the figures regarding homeless trends there is limited change; in 2005, 538 homeless, 2009, 481 homeless. Long before financial crisis homeless situation that Housing Executive has not been able to do anything with. Shortfall in funding down the years has not allowed for required new build to deal adequately with problem but not as many homeless now.

Concern about grants funding. People have already committed large amounts of money in preparing documentation for to submit with statutory application. Being told funding to approve 2000 of the 7000 applicants. What is process if applicant refused funding this time. Currently taking legal advise on the mechanics of the way ahead.

Rationalisation and budget cuts, how will that affect staff. No kneejerk reaction but a case of continuing rationalisation because of requirement to live within budgets. Staff in land and property section relocated to housing benefits section where there is pressure.

Does there remain any potential for reallocation of existing funding. Monetary round four times per year, if you have funds not able to spend release, if pressure make bid. June monitoring round made bid, in September round will continue to bid for funds. If do not get additional funding reallocation within existing budget and first requirement will be to meet legal obligations. Confident have funding for new build, 1750 units.

Councillor Currie left at 8.25 pm.

Warm homes scheme successful and very popular does money to fund this come from grants budget. Money comes from DSD and is ringfenced to warm homes scheme and cannot be used for anything else. New scheme coming in which the NIHE will be administering.

Millview Manor Coalisland private new build purchased for social housing, how much did it cost to upgrade to Housing Executive standard. Houses were up to standard and did not require upgrade.

Would it not be better with new build rather than buying off the shelf and upgrading. How many units bought off the shelf. For years denied need. For years money from house sales was not ringfenced for new build.

Agree with sentiment and indeed Housing Association priority is to build but difficulty competing with developers in securing sites. Focus group set up in Dungannon to try to identify sites. Equally very good deals to Housing Association off the shelf, less than 300 units in total last year which is about 20 per cent of the programme, part of the reason availability of unsold good quality houses paying £10,000 to £15,000 unit cheaper than building. Never did think that there was not a housing crisis, historically money from house sales has been directed to new build but discounted price not equate to new build price.

Ongoing issues in Ballygawley Road Estate and Gortgonis Terrace, Coalisland. John McCartan trying to address issues.

Ballygawley Road has high level of voids and dereliction. Under regeneration there has been positive movement but major difficulties still exist.

Gortgonis Terrace, extremely difficult but trying to address ongoing issues, resolution problematic. Now have two properties taken back and secured, other agencies also have role to play.

Voids in the area equate to 47, how long until fit for use. 47 vacant properties, 8 being used for decanting purposes Eastvale Avenue, most others constitute part of normal turnover, most will have been re-let by now and number of refusal to let can have effect on voids.

Has there ever been survey in relation to empty private houses. Would be useful to try and identify empty houses and encourage owners to bring into use. Recent research shows that vacancies within private sector three times higher than social housing sector. Fair number of new build apartments vacant.

Councillor McGuigan left at 8.45 pm.

What is the current need for social housing in Fivemiletown? Oaklee Housing Association had application in which has recently been turned down. Chamber of commerce etc not happy with site but not against social housing. 46 on waiting list with 20 of these in housing stress.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Brush, thanks the representatives for their attendance following which they left the meeting at 8.30 pm.

2 DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT – ROADS SERVICE

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Brush, welcomed Mr Pat Doherty Divisional Roads Manager and Mr James Black Section Engineer to the meeting. Mr Doherty presented Annual Report dated 29 June 2009 copy of which had been circulated to members.

Representatives advised that under local transport and safety measures the scheme on the C536/C637 Tullycullion/Tullydraw junction realignment is under review because of the high proposed costs.

Councillor Cavanagh left at 9.05 pm during presentation of report.

Following presentation of the report the undernoted comments/questions were made:

Members welcomed the positive report, progress made on A4, A5 and Carland Bridge scheme.

Representatives were thanked for works completed at Kileeshill.

Need for 30 mph from Clonoe Community Centre to cross roads, high density built up on both sides – will get assessed.

Traffic calming on Annagher Road promised over two years ago. A number of fatalities in last three years, was to be consultation in January and completed this year. Will follow up.

Councillor McGonnell left at 9.10 pm.

Roads Service was thanked for work completed around Coalisland in conjunction with neighbourhood renewal project.

Bridges across Blackwater, at one stage all 3 bridges closed at same time, Moy, Verners and at the Argory causing disruption to locals and businesses. Poor planning between departments. Normally try and co-ordinate work to make sure this does not happen. Will look into to see what happened and try and ensure that will not happen again. Future plans would be to replace bridges.

Good scheme completed at Blackisland Road could a similar scheme be provided at Verner's Inn.

Need for footpath at Brackaville Road.

Drawing of stones to new road works using Aughnagar road causing severe damage to road condition. Road regularly jointly inspected by

Roads Service staff and contractors staff any damaged that can be attributed to contractors haulage operations contractor will put right but are waiting to haulage stops then will repair.

Councillor Donnelly left at 9.20 pm.

48 additional free car parking spaces in Scotch Street and Perry Street car parks welcomed and request was made for more. Came about as review of car park usage and will be kept under review.

A5 Western Transport Corridor Route Options. Preferred route identified and will be announced on 21 July following which a series of information days will be held. Current estimate of cost is between £650 to £850m. Concern expressed that people out surveying being questioned by locals and giving out incorrect information. Environmentalists currently out on all route options to see if no show stoppers.

Continuing maintenance on A4 was questioned considering that new road will be open in approximately 15 months and 80 per cent of traffic moving to dual carriageway. The part of road planned for repair has a limited life left, repairs will bring road up to good standard and will last longer when dualling opens.

Gully cleaning policy 2 urban and 1 rural per annum. Some areas seem to be more prone to flash floods can gully cleaning be increased. During recent heavy rain flooding at rear of Perry Street. Keep regular watch on flooding hot spots. Will investigate Perry Street situation.

Approach road into Benburb need for some speed enforcement.

Redford Park, Old Moy Road, need for some traffic calming measures.

Need for footpath from new enterprise centre to Daly's filling station at Eglis. Request noted.

Welcome 40mph speed limit in Granville. Within 40mph speed limit, lack of sight lines at Eskragh Road, Roads Service say not a high priority. Roads Service agreed to look again at this.

Councillors Daly and Morrow left at 9.30 pm.

Roan Park Eglis – repairs to road level causing flooding at this location. Investigating this area and confident that something can be completed in the Autumn to relive this flooding.

Clogher Main Street – ridge in road towards Fivemiletown, need for repair.

Red coloured markings at schools worn off road.

Grass cutting on verges is it up to level that normally would be at this time of year. Verge cutting programme slightly behind.

Councillor Gildernew left at 9.33 pm.

Bus measures and relocation of bus stop to Edfield Way Fivemiletown. Shelter requires planning permission which is responsibility of Council. Council Officers to check if planning permission applied for.

Corner out towards Round Lake need for footpath. Check if response sent to letter which Councillor had sent to Department.

A4 Dualling – temporary arrangements at Strangmore Roundabout, at end of slip road joining A4 have to give way. Maybe need for additional signage. Concern noted and will check situation.

A5/C633 Ballygawley Roundabout. Construction of footway link approximately 40m long listed in report in planned works for 2009/2010. Concern expressed that was to be provided last year and that work still has not commenced.

Aughnacloy Primary School, Carnteel Road, traffic calming/speed limits not working. Will look to see where stands with regards to safer routes to school and traffic calming.

The Deputy Mayor thanked the representatives for their attendance following which they left the meeting.

3 DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting was called for 7.30 pm and ended at 9.40 pm.

MAYOR _____

CHIEF EXECUTIVE _____
(Acting)