

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 8 March 2018 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

Members Present

Councillor Molloy, Chair

Councillors Ashton (7.14 pm), Bateson, Buchanan, Cuddy, Doris, Elattar, Forde, S McGuigan, McKinney, McLean, McPeake, M Quinn

Officers in Attendance

Mr A Tohill, Chief Executive
Mrs Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure
Mrs Kerr, Head of Finance
Ms McNally, Council Solicitor
Ms Mezza, Head of Marketing and Communications
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT
Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance
Miss Thompson, Committee Services Officer

The meeting commenced at 7.03 pm.

PR044/18 Apologies

Councillors Gildernew, Kearney and Totten.

PR045/18 Declaration of Interest

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

PR046/18 Chair's Business

None.

Matters for Decision

PR047/18 Extract of Policy and Resources Committee Minute dated 8 February 2018 (PR027/18 External Signage Play Areas)

The Head of Democratic Services provided clarification in relation to vote taken by Members on this item. The officer highlighted that, based on the number of Members in the room at the time, the vote should read –

For – 8

Against – 5

The Chair, Councillor Molloy referred to his own notes taken on the night and stated he could concur with the officer's remarks.

Proposed by Councillor Bateson
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to amend vote taken in relation to item PR027/18 – External Signage Play Areas to read –

For – 8
Against – 5

Extract of Policy and Resources Minute dated 8 February 2018
(PR027/18 External Signage Play Areas) to be brought back to Council for approval subject to the foregoing.

PR048/18 External Signage: Cemeteries

The Head of Marketing and Communications presented previously circulated report which considered draft design for external signage to be erected at Council cemeteries. The officer highlighted that the layout of this signage could be in either portrait or landscape format.

Councillor S McGuigan proposed the approval of the design for external signage at Council cemeteries.

Councillor Cuddy stated it was a pity the signage could not incorporate something for everyone.

Councillor McLean stated he would vote against the proposal.

Councillor M Quinn seconded Councillor McGuigan's proposal.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy stated that the proposal was within Council policy but would take a vote if desired.

Councillor McLean requested a vote be taken.

Members voted on Councillor S McGuigan's proposal to approve the design for external signage at Council cemeteries -

For – 8
Against – 5

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the design for external signage to be erected at Council cemeteries.

PR049/18 Blueways Trail Development – Lease of Lands along the River Bann, Portglenone

The Council Solicitor presented previously circulated report which sought approval for Council to enter into a 25 year Lease in respect of a portion of land along the River Bann, Portglenone. The Council Solicitor confirmed that an annual rental amount of £600pa, which was within the LPS valuation received, had been agreed with the Landowner and this was to be reflected within the Lease.

Councillor McPeake stated he was happy to propose approval of the Lease, that the Blueways Trail is an exciting project with good potential. The Councillor stated that this proposal was an integral part of the first phase of the project and that work was ongoing in relation to second phase. Councillor McPeake commended officers on the work done in relation to this project.

Councillor M Quinn seconded Councillor McPeake's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Lease as circulated in Appendix B to the report and enter into same on the terms contained therein.

PR050/18 Special Council Meetings Receiving Deputations

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered the practice of convening meetings of Council to receive deputations from a range of statutory agencies, government bodies and public authorities.

Councillor Ashton entered the meeting at 7.14 pm during presentation of the above report.

Councillor McLean felt that for the proposal to work agencies needed to submit their information to Council in a timely fashion in order for Members to give it due consideration prior to the meeting. Agencies should then refer to their most important points at the meeting. Councillor McLean also felt that Councillors needed to be more strategic in their questioning at the Council meeting and not refer to matters which can be dealt with on a day to day basis.

Proposed by Councillor McLean
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that monthly meetings of Council receive deputations from statutory agencies, government bodies and public authorities, discontinuing the practice of convening special meetings of Council to receive same.

PR051/18 Council and Committee Meeting Packs

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered the practice of producing paper Council and Committee meeting packs.

Councillor McLean stated he would advocate doing away with as much paper as possible but that there were a number of Members who feel they are not au fait enough with the computerised process and that this should be accommodated. The Councillor felt that one month was too short notice to bring in the proposal and that officers should liaise with those who are currently receiving paper copies of meeting packs.

Councillor Forde concurred with Councillor McLean's remarks stating that some Members depend on receiving a hard copy of papers for meetings. The Councillor felt that the current arrangements should remain in place until the end of this Council term and that Council was spending millions of pounds on signage and Members were discussing an average of £4.36 per pack.

Councillor S McGuigan felt it was appropriate for the Chair and Vice Chair of meetings to receive paper copies and that officers should contact those others to review whether they still wanted a hard copy.

Councillor Cuddy suggested that papers be shown on screens at the meeting and felt that those Councillors who are not using the electronic process should not be left behind.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy referred to the size of planning meeting packs and that this was a significant chunk of data to download.

The Head of Democratic Services stated that, based on tonight's discussion, the practice of producing paper copies of meeting packs would be reviewed at the end of the current Council term with a view to ceasing the practice at that time. Officers will make contact with those who currently receive same to discuss their continuing requirements.

Councillor McKinney stated that officers could liaise with those who are receiving a hard copy of papers with a view to providing more training for those Members.

The Head of Democratic Services highlighted that hard copies of papers includes confidential business which needs to be disposed of carefully.

Councillor Bateson felt the situation will improve in the coming months.

PR052/18 Consultation on Improvement Objectives: March – April 2018

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered the initiation of public consultation on existing Improvement Objectives set in compliance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

Councillor Cuddy asked if there were any results from the first year which could be included in the consultation.

The Head of Democratic Services advised that the committee will receive a report next month which will provide statistics for the first three quarters of the last year and stated he would prefer this comes to the committee first before being released as part of the consultation. The officer advised that there were statistics for statutory indicators which could be included in the consultation.

The Chief Executive advised that Council is obliged to produce a report in September on the results of the previous financial year, he stated that this report is subject to audit and is a good way of demonstrating that Council is meeting its targets.

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the initiation of the consultation on retaining the existing improvement objectives for a further 12 month period (2018-19).

PR053/18 Elected Member Development Working Group

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered the report of a meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group on 21 February 2018.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor McKinney and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the report of the Elected Member Development Working Group held on 21 February 2018 as set out in appendix to report.

Matters for Information

PR054/18 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 February 2018 (Item PR027/18 redacted)

Members noted minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 February 2018 (Item PR027/18 redacted).

PR055/18 GDPR Compliance Action Plan Update

Members noted previously circulated report which advised on the plans and actions required in preparation for achieving General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) compliance.

PR056/18 Member Services

No issues.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor McKinney and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items PR057/18 to PR069/18.

Matters for Decision

PR057/18	Lands at Railway Park, Ballysaggart
PR058/18	Dungannon Depot Remedial Works
PR059/18	Staff Matters for Decision
PR060/18	Members' Allowances Update
PR061/18	Prudential Code for Capital Finance Indicators and Authorised and Operational Borrowing Limits
PR062/18	2017/18 Review of Treasury Management Policies, Practices and Activities

Matters for Information

PR063/18	Confidential Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 February 2018
PR064/18	Contracts and DAC
PR065/18	Financial report for 10 months ended 31 January 2018
PR066/18	Staff Engagement Survey
PR067/18	Staffing Matters for Information
PR068/18	Recruitment Campaign
PR069/18	Staffing Numbers Update

PR070/18 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7 pm and ended at 8.46 pm.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____