

A

Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 6 October 2014 at 7 pm, in Cookstown District Council Offices

Members Present: In the Chair, Councillor Kearney (Chair)
Councillors Bell, Clarke, Cuthbertson, Glasgow, McEldowney, McKinney, McPeake, Mallaghan, Quinn (7.08 pm), Reid and Robinson

Officers in Attendance: Mr Tohill, Chief Executive
Mr Boomer, Area Planning Manager
Mr Moffett, Change Management Officer
Mrs Grogan, Secretariat (Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council)

Others in Attendance: Ms Hilda Clements, Senior Planning Officer

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

P12/14 Apologies

Councillors Bateson, Gildernew, Mullen and J Shiels.

P13/14 Declarations of Interest

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

Matters for Decision

P14/14 Receive and Confirm Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Monday 1 September 2014

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Monday 1 September 2014, (P6/14 – P11/14) were considered and signed as accurate and correct.

P15/14 Receive Paper on Accommodating Population Growth across Mid Ulster

The Area Planning Manager introduced Ms Hilda Clements and stated that she was responsible for the preparation of the paper on Population and Growth. He advised that it was for information purposes only at this stage.

Ms Clements took members through the paper which provided information on:

- (i) a profile of the population including the different Section 75 groups of people, identifying those which the plan is likely to have an impact on;
- (ii) population growth and population projections up until 2030;
- (iii) a settlement strategy for accommodating growth

Councillor T Quinn entered the meeting at 7.08 pm.

Councillor Reid stated the population growth in Dungannon is greater than Greater Belfast due to the migrant worker population.

Councillor Clarke stated that population is growing and that measures need to be put in place to best facilitate this. Mid Ulster District Council area has a massive rural structure which needs to be looked at in all situations including villages and hamlets. He added the older generation needs to be considered in all of this and appropriate facilities such as adequate housing, hospitals and acute services would be required.

Councillor McPeake stated planning did not currently fit the area and enquired how the Committee could influence change.

The Area Planning Manager advised that this is still in the very early stages and evidence would need to be built. The next paper will be much more on the urban and not so much on rural policy. She added it would not be wise to cut the housing growth indicator as people are living longer and if we did not accommodate young people in the countryside there could be difficulties. Mid Ulster District Council area is in an advantageous position with its strong links with construction and engineering.

Councillor Mallaghan stated the rural economy in Mid Ulster is working well. He added that many companies have started on a small scale and have continued to expand. Councillor Mallaghan stated that planning policy was restrictive and did not allow for small family business expansion thus the need to be supporting businesses.

Councillor Reid agreed with Councillor Mallaghan and felt that land needed to be zoned for such purposes away from residential housing.

The Area Planning Manager advised this is what Mid Ulster prides itself in, from quarrying, cement works to joinery.

Councillor Reid stated that PPS 21 was causing tremendous difficulties and asked if anything that could be done.

The Area Planning Manager advised that PPS21 aimed to avoid clustering of housing the countryside. Referring to the paper being presented and PPS21 elderly people with special circumstances and children with special needs could have the opportunity for an extension, but elderly people would not have an opportunity for new builds as this could result in an escalation of houses being built.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that it would be interesting to ascertain the number of lapsed planning applications within the countryside as a way of meeting housing targets to meet population growth.

The Area Planning Manager advised that he would investigate, where the information was available.

Councillor Bell enquired and raised the issue of social housing provision, especially for the elderly and young people.

The Chief Executive advised that it could take up to five years to prepare the Development Plan and enquired on the process to be undertaken by Planners.

The Area Planning Manager stated that land supply needs to be looked at for housing and businesses and involve two stages; core strategy; and land zoning. He stated that it was ambitious but felt the time frames could be met to have the plan prepared and adopted in five years.

Councillor Quinn stated he was concerned about social housing provision indicating that although there was a need for it in the rural area it was of a greater need in the urban area. He added that there was a high number of people on the waiting list for social housing in the Cookstown area, with 240 people on the waiting list 10 years ago compared to 232 in recent times. Councillor Quinn concluded that nothing had been achieved in this 10 year period to relieve the dependency.

Councillor Bell raised concern about the high volume of young people emigrating and felt that planning should be thoroughly looked to revive the construction sector.

Councillor Reid enquired how much control the Council would actually have or would other agencies still have an input in decision making.

The Area Planning Manager advised that there would be parameters to work within but the Council would have a lot of scope to do things differently. He said it would be all new but would have no doubt that Mid Ulster would be testing the boundaries.

Councillor McPeake left the meeting at 8.15 pm.

P16/14 Planning Study Visit

The Chief Executive presented a report to assist the committee on making preparations for a Planning Study visit to a local authority currently delivering and managing a planning function, to strengthen member capacity and knowledge.

The Change Management Officer outlined the proposed itinerary for the visit and recommended a two day visit to North Ayrshire Council, Scotland on Wednesday 12 November, avoiding clashes with Mid Ulster District Council business. It was agreed that the study visit be targeted at the current members of the Council's Planning Committee and relevant officers.

The Chief Executive advised that if any member could not attend another member could attend in their place.

Resolved: That it be recommended to the Council that members of the Planning Committee participate in a Planning Study Visit to North Ayrshire Council, Scotland on Wednesday 12 November 2014.

P17/14 Guidance on Planning Element of Councillors' Code of Conduct

The Chief Executive presented a letter dated 25 September 2014 from the DOE enclosing a copy of a document entitled 'Consultation on Guidance on Planning Element of Councillors' Code of Conduct' and urged members to refer to it as it would be important to all members represented on the Planning Committee. He added that the Code of Conduct used by North Ayrshire Council planning committee members could be considered as part of the Study Visit.

P18/14 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.45 pm.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

B

Subject Transfer of Planning to Mid Ulster District Council

Reporting Officer Chief Executive

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| 1 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | To update committee members on the transfer of the planning function to Mid Ulster District Council. |

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| 2 | Background |
| 2.1 | Mid Ulster Council will take responsibility for the delivery of the planning function from 1 April 2015 and preparations are underway to facilitate its integration within the new council arrangements. |
| 2.2 | Council has agreed that the planning function be initially based in and operate from office accommodation identified within the Magherafelt offices. Discussions have been ongoing between council and DoE Planning to facilitate the transfer and the council's new Area Planning Manager has been confirmed. |
| 2.3 | Confirmation has been received that the transfer will commence in early December and involve a series of activities. Please refer to Appendix A of this report. |

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| 3 | Key Issues |
| 3.1 | Mid Ulster has now been confirmed as the third council on the list for the physical transfer of the Planning Function on the basis of its IT readiness. Early transfer will facilitate an essential 'bedding-in' period and test systems from a Mid Ulster site leading to April 2015. |
| 3.2 | The transfer will involve a series of work strands all of which are integral to successful transition for future service delivery by council. Strands include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HR• Accommodation• ICT• Furniture• File Storage (off site) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Equipment • Communications • Physical Move Arrangements |
| 3.3 | Engagement on the transfer will continue and now concentrate on the physical transfer to the Magherafelt office within the timescales indicated. |

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| 4 | Resources |
| 4.1 | <u>Financial</u> |
| 4.1.1 | Resource issues have been identified as previously notified to the committee and council and are the subject of correspondence with the Department |
| 4.2 | <u>Human</u> |
| 4.1.2 | Transfer co-ordination from the Council side will be undertaken within resource under my direction in association with the Area Planning Manager. |
| 4.3 | <u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u> – N/A |
| 4.4 | <u>Other</u> – N/A |

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| 5 | Other Considerations |
| 5.1 | Although transfer is scheduled to be complete before January 2015 council will not take responsibility for planning until 1 April 2015. The function will remain the responsibility of DoE. |

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| 6 | Recommendations |
| 6.1 | Members consider the contents of the report and provide any commentary as necessary. |

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| 7 | List of Documents Attached |
| 7.1 | Appendix A: Correspondence from DoE on Roll out to Council's |

**Memo****From:** Lois Jackson**Tel:** 39408**Email:** lois.jackson@doeni.gov.uk**Date:** 21 October 2014

To: John Linden
Chris Boomer
Barbara Elliott
Ann McCullough

cc: Fiona McCandless
Project Board Members
Angus Kerr
Simon Kirk
Susan Wilkin
Colin Campbell
Joe Dolan
Dave Brittain
Terry Curran
Area Planning Managers
(other)
Transitional Arrangements
Team
Council Change Managers

Roll-Out to Councils

Following on from the Newry, Mourne and Down joint project and taking into account the lessons learnt, attention is now being focused on the roll-out to other Councils who are locating to new premises¹. The indicative timetable at this stage based on confirmation of IT readiness is as follows:

| Council | IT Readiness |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Newtownabbey and Antrim | Nov 2014 |
| Mid Ulster | Early Dec 2014 |
| Lisburn and Castlereagh | Late Dec 2014 |
| North Down and Ards | To be confirmed |

Our aim is to progress implementation for the first three of these Councils before the New Year (followed by North Down and Ards in the New Year).

For convenience and to assist with progressing preparations and arrangements for your Council, I have attached a 'General requirements' document (Annex A) which identifies issues that collectively need consideration over the coming weeks. Work Areas with lead responsibility have also been identified.

The document is structured to look at key issues associated with the following broad areas

- HR
- Accommodation
- ICT

¹ Whilst some of the outlined 'General Requirements' affect staff remaining in-situ these will be addressed separately.

- Furniture
- File Storage (off site)
- Other Equipment
- Communications
- Physical Move Arrangements

Whilst responsibility will rest largely with each Planning Manager, the transitional arrangements team will work with you to identify and address your council's site specific issues and will provide a co-ordinating role (alongside other key persons) as appropriate.

We aim to meet with you shortly to discuss your specific requirements, however if there is anything you want to discuss before then, please contact me on the above number.

Lois Jackson
Transitional Arrangements Team

Annex A
Roll-Out to Councils - General Requirements

| Project Area | Key tasks | Lead Responsibility |
|---------------|---|---|
| HR | <p>Staff FTE information will be available along with action staff numbers.</p> <p>Individual staff details will be included within relocation plan.</p> <p>Note: It is recommended that the FTE figure is uplifted by approximately 10% to enable accommodation needs to be considered.</p> | <p>DOEHR – date for release of names to be confirmed asap</p> |
| Accommodation | <p>Floor Plans: need to identify the location of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desks/pedestals/chairs/tambour units within main office space areas; ▪ Breakout areas/meeting rooms (shared or dedicated); ▪ General file storage areas (including positioning of tambour units if appropriate); ▪ Network points; ▪ Printing equipment (see minimum requirement below); ▪ Secure cabinet; ▪ Reception area requirements. <p>Security: If swipe access is required to new sites, council will need to provide staff with passes. Arrangements can be made for photographs to be provided if required for pass.</p> <p>Car parking: Local arrangements to be identified where appropriate.</p> | <p>DoE Estates management with assistance from Council and APM</p> |
| ICT | <p>General principle is that staff will transfer with the current DoE PC kit. However, Councils will need to provide PC kit in advance of 1 April 2014 as DoE Kit will be returned.</p> <p>PC Kit: comprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor/Keyboard/Hard drive/Mouse ▪ Departmental phone (and all associated cables) ▪ Laptop/docking station (as appropriate) <p>Printing equipment allocation: per council is as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AO Scanner plotter (Cannon) – separate PC (Mouse, screen and Keyboard) comes with this from Cannon but cannot be connected until 1 April 2014. Separate PC will be deployed by IT Assist until then. ▪ EPIC HP MFD - One per Council | <p>TIU with assistance from DOE IT Assist</p> |

| Project Area | Key tasks | Lead Responsibility |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| | <p>deployed (for set up pre 1 April 2014 – post April, system can connect via new gateway connection to Council printing equipment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colour Printer (1 Desk Top Printer for APM; 1 Desk Top Printer for staff) <p>Note: IT Assist will reconnect PCs, printers and establish print queues etc. when move happens. Porters will be responsible for movement of kit.</p> | |
| Furniture | <p>Individual allocation: General principle is that each individual requires the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desk ▪ Chair (specialist chairs to be identified in relocation spreadsheet) ▪ Pedestal ▪ Half tambour Unit (allocation) <p>Storage Requirements: 'Live' storage requirements is based on the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 120 files per full Tambour Unit ▪ 1 file for Public Register files ▪ 1 secure cabinet/small safe <p>Other items of furniture can be identified in relocation spreadsheet.</p> <p>Note: If furniture is cannot be provide by stock in storage, Managers may need to assist with identify items from within existing offices. (A/W clarification)</p> | DoE Estates management with assistance from Council and APM |
| File Storage (Off Site) | Storage provision for historic files held off site will need to be considered. | IMB with assistance from APM |
| Other Equipment | <p>Day One essentials: have been identified as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combination wall unit to hold safe keys etc. ▪ Petty Cash box and float ▪ DRD Manual Receipt book (all copy documents) ▪ DOE Planning Interim Acknowledgement of Receipt book (used for payments received over the counter) ▪ Lodgement book ▪ Stamps/Decision paper ▪ General Stationary ▪ General Items as appropriate and subject to council protocols (e.g. bins, fans, coat racks) ▪ Special equipment (e.g. cameras, planimeters) | APM |

| Project Area | Key tasks | Lead Responsibility |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>Note: Majority of other equipment will need to be identified from existing supplies. A record of items will need to be retained.</p> | |
| Communications | <p>Internal and External Communications: Consideration will need to be given to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media/Agent engagement ▪ Office/Council signage ▪ NI Direct (telephony script updates) ▪ Staff Induction ▪ Premises officer(s) on existing and new sites <p>Note: Consideration will need given to correspondence with Minister/Private Office</p> | <p>APM with assistance from Transitional Arrangements Team</p> |
| Physical Move Arrangements | <p>Relocation Instructions: will issue to assist staff and porters with final arrangements.</p> <p>Crates: will be delivered to sites in advance of move. Practice is that 3 crates are allocated to each individual (2 for current files and 1 for personal items). Additional crates will be made available where requested.</p> <p>Porter Arrangements: Normal practice with relocation is for business to 'stop' around lunchtime on Friday and for business to recommence in new location on the Monday.</p> <p>Note: Consideration should also be given to the needs of teams remaining before equipment is taken off site.</p> | <p>DOE Estates Management with assistance from Council and APM</p> |

Any site specific issues arising will be considered and addressed as necessary.

