

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE OF DUNGANNON AND SOUTH TYRONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2013 IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, CIRCULAR ROAD, DUNGANNON

MEMBERS PRESENT: In the chair, Councillor McGuigan (Chair)

Councillors Ashton, Brush, F Burton, Cuddy, Daly, Donnelly, Gildernew, Gillespie, McGonnell, McLarnon, Mulligan O'Neill and Reid

OFFICERS: Mr Currie, Human Resources Advisor (HRA)
Mr Frazer, Acting Chief Executive (ACE)
Mrs Kerr, Director of Finance (DoF)
Mrs Smith, Council Business Manager (CBM)

APOLOGIES: Councillors R Burton, Cavanagh and Hamilton

The meeting started at 7.30 pm.

1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

2 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The report (appendix 1) of the Director of Finance was presented reference being made to the following:

2.1 Financial Update for 12 Months Ended 31 March 2013

The DoF advised that year-end report would come to future meeting.

STRATEGIC

2.2 Indemnities

DoF took members through the details of this section in the report. She stated that if adopted this would form Council policy on the issue. In relation to 2.6 in the report re duplication of cover where the outside body holds sufficient indemnity cover the DoF stated that exercise has been completed in relation to elected member representation on outside bodies to identify which bodies have indemnity cover and good governance arrangements in place. The information is being collated and summary will be available for the next meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Brush
Seconded by Councillor Reid and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Council that pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order (NI) 2012 (the Order), Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council agrees to provide indemnity to its Members and Officers on the terms as outlined in the report.

PROGRESS

2.3 Capital Budget 2013/14 (item 2.2)

The DoF advised that appendix 3 of report is a comprehensive list of capital projects, including what agreed to be carried forward as at 27 March 2013. At a recent meeting of the Capital Working Group agreed, in the interest of completeness, that Public Realm Scheme would be added to the list. Scheme is 100 per cent funded with the capital works managed by the Council.

In response to question the ACE advised that in relation to Clogher Primary School still waiting on SELB to transfer the property to the Council, planning application has been submitted for conversion to public toilets and report will come to future meeting re the future of the public toilets that currently exist in Clogher. When all legalities with regard to transfer of ownership are complete will be seeking expressions of interest from groups wishing to become tenants.

Regarding start date for Brantry Lodge the ACE advised that drawing up amended plans, looking at this with state of the art eco provision with toilets and hopefully will stay within budget allocation. When proposal agreed will go to tender.

DoF confirmed that 4 refuse lorries on list, budget for 2013/14 included 3 refuse lorries plus provision for 1 refuse lorry carried forward from previous year.

INFORMATION

2.4 Total Borrowings (item 3.1)

In response to question the DoF advised that what was approved for inclusion in this year's budget was two allocations from borrowing, bio mass project £500k and £500k for bin lorries therefore will be estimated increase of approximately £1m in borrowings.

2.5 Adoption of Report

Proposed by Councillor Gillespie
Seconded by Councillor F Burton and

Resolved That it is recommended to the Council that the report of the Director of Finance be adopted and that all recommendations, subject to the foregoing, are approved.

Director of Finance left at 7.45 pm.

3. PERSONNEL MATTERS

The report (appendix 2) and addendum (appendix 3) of the Human Resources Advisor was presented reference being made to the following:

OPERATIONAL

3.1 Promotions Assistant (item 2.3)

Member stated that received approval at Monday night's meeting to engage specialist marketing/PR as and when required and could the work required form part of that package.

The ACE stated that the promotions assistant post is specific for the promotion and marketing of Hill of the O'Neill and Ranfurly House while the specialist marketing/PR was to promote corporate initiatives.

In response to queries the ACE stated that post holder would return to previous job should post no longer be required and that availability of officer came about because of staff reorganisation due to closure of Killymaddy.

3.2 Casual Ushers – Ranfurly House (item 2.4)

In response to query the ACE stated that since the opening of the square box have been using a range of staff to provide cover and in the interest of efficiency and equality felt option as outlined in report was best way forward.

3.3 Funded Posts (item 2.5)

The ACE stated that, when dependent on funding from central government, this is the normal situation that we find ourselves in at this time of year. Verbal indications have been received that funding will be made available and proceeding with minimal risk.

3.4 Ulster Canal Heritage Project (item 2.6)

In relation to this item in the report the ACE stated that the two part time posts of Project Officer and Senior Clerical Officer are 100 per cent funded.

3.5 HSENI – Improvement Notice Requirements (item 2.7)

The ACE paid tribute to staff in having the necessary work completed to enable a positive report to be issued.

3.6 Deputy Chief Executive Grading (item 2.8)

HRA stated that nothing further to report as still waiting on reports from Consultant and Council's Solicitor.

3.7 Development Division Restructuring (item 2.9)

HRA stated that as this is a consultative process, report not yet complete and will bring update to a future meeting.

3.8 Restructuring Proposals Report March 2012

In response to query

Resolved That cost/savings section of above report be updated with additional column showing actual costs.

Councillor Reid left at 7.55 pm

INFORMATION

3.9 Job Evaluation Appeals – Restructuring Exercise (item 3.1)

In response to queries the HRA stated that would bring to Committee whether post went up when evaluated. He also advised that from the Restructuring Proposals Report March 2012 there is one evaluation outstanding.

3.10 Job Evaluations

Member asked how many job evaluation requests were received. The HRA stated that as directed by Councillors all employees were given opportunity to request job evaluation and requests for approximately 60 posts had been received which are currently being considered by the Strategic Management Team (SMT).

ACE stated that employee could request job evaluation where they felt that additional responsibilities of a higher level have been placed on them. A framework for considering requests had been set out and the assessment process was currently underway and should be completed by 9 May.

3.11 Statutory Holidays (item 3.2)

In response to members concerns regarding consultation regarding offices closing particularly over the Christmas period the HRA advised that statutory

holidays decided following consultation at Employee Consultative Committee (unions) and Employee working group (non-union members). There had been discussion regarding callers at the officers during the Christmas holiday period and numbers were small no matter what day open/closed in this period.

Consensus was that for the year 2013/14 Christmas holidays would be Wednesday 25, Thursday 26 and Friday 27 December 2013 with staff having the opportunity, dependent on the needs of the service, to take additional days using annual leave, toil etc.

Leisure Centre, Parks and Environmental Services holidays are subject to change dependent upon the needs of the service.

3.12 Performance Management Report (item 3.4)

Members discussed the work of Performance Management and importance of seeing tangible improvements from these areas of work.

HRA stated that officer giving guidance in relation to the implementation of the ISO 9001 into waste services unit. The implementation of this standard should ensure that a quality and efficient service is provided.

Officer also involved with carrying out base line audits following which managers should be preparing action plan of agreed action and monitoring implementation.

Members felt it important that details of baseline reports are brought to appropriate committee by managers, agreed actions listed and updated reports on implementation regularly brought through committee. HRA advised the Performance Management Officer would attend a future meeting to outline the role of performance management in the organisation.

3.13 Sickness Absence (item 3.5)

HRA stated that at the Council meeting had been tasked with bringing forward more detailed information in relation to sickness absence. Circulated addendum (appendix 3) Analysis of Sickness Absence within the Council workforce for year ended 31 March 2013. Members discussed the report and stated that sickness absence needs to be closely monitored so that target within Corporate Plan can be achieved.

HRA stated that report is produced for Local Government Auditor and for consistency across Councils calculations are based on that exercise

Councillor Daly left at 8.24 pm during above discussion.

3.14 Voluntary Transition Committee

The HRA advised that the Voluntary Transition Committee (VTC) has considered 2 options on the way forward; Option 1 included the recruitment of Change Manager and support staff while Option 2 added the employment of a Chief Executive, HR Director and Finance Director. The VTC agreed option 1. DoE has allocated money towards change management. Option 1 being adopted posts will initially be internally trawled and if no suitable officers then would be externally advertised. Cookstown has confirmed agreement with option 1 and happy with this approach and waiting response from Magherafelt.

HRA recommended that appoint change manager and support staff approximate costs, to include employer's costs, £54,167 and £32,500 respectively.

3.15 Local Government Pay 2013

The HRA advised that after 4 years there will be a 1 per cent pay award in 2013/14 for all employees on NJC conditions.

3.16 Task and Finish

HRA stated that in September last year Council had agreed that alternative working systems to replace task and finish would be implemented. HRA indicated that this would hopefully be effective from 1 January 2013 depending upon operational issues. Due to new staff and issues within the waste services unit this date had slipped and now proceeding to implement with effect from 30 June 2013.

3.17 Adoption of Report

Proposed by Councillor McGonnell
Seconded by Councillor O'Neill and

Resolved That it is recommended to the Council that the report of the Head of Human Resources be adopted and that all recommendations, subject to the foregoing, be approved.

4 MISCELLANEOUS

4.1 Severance Scheme for Councillors

Member who represents Council on National Association of Councillors (NAC) had attended meeting today and circulated copy of NAC's response to above consultation process. The NAC had been involved in the negotiations during development of the document and the Secretary of the NAC will be writing to the Chief Executive of all Councils asking the Council to support the response.

Resolved That document be circulated to all members and that item for consideration of the documentation be placed on Council agenda.

4.2 First Step Women's Centre

As instructed by Council investigation had been carried out in relation to member representation on First Step Women's Centre. Email had been received from the Chief Executive of the Centre which advised that:

- structure of centre changed approximately 2 years ago
- advisory group, which nominated Councillors and some users of the Centre served on, has been disbanded
- constitution concludes that it maintains a women only board
- Centre does not want political representation on the Board

Member expressed disappointment at the reply stating that those who had served on the Centre had regularly asked Council to support centre when lobbying on issues of concern.

4.3 Investigation

In response to why update not given tonight ACE stated that investigating officer in the disciplinary procedure has virtually completed his enquiries and should have report finalised shortly. Update was to go to next meeting of Audit and Risk Committee but as the next meeting is not to June, once report is received, will be discussing with the Chair of the Committee in relation to calling special meeting to report on outcome of investigation.

4.4 Seek Programme

In response to request for update the HRA stated that project officer appointed, processes being put in place and will be recruiting for the programme shortly.

5. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.47 pm.

MAYOR _____

CHIEF EXECUTIVE _____
(Acting)