

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF DUNGANNON & SOUTH TYRONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2006 IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, CIRCULAR ROAD, DUNGANNON

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** In the Chair, Councillor Monteith (Chairman)
- Councillors Brush, F Burton, Hamilton, McGonnell, McLarnon, Molloy, Mulligan and O'Neill
- OTHERS:** Councillor McGuigan
- OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr Beggs, Mr Murphy and Mrs Smith

The meeting started at 7.30 pm

1 UPLIFT AND HUMAN BREAST MILK BANK

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Blanaid Bruce and Mrs Vera Kelso representing the above two organisations and invited them to address the members.

Mrs Bruce stated that Northern Ireland has the lowest breast feeding rates in Europe and this has a proven link to the health of the adult population. In order to counteract the low uptake of breastfeeding Uplift was founded by midwife Mrs Vera Kelso in 2001 and was formally constituted in 2005. Eleven mums were recruited from breastfeeding support groups and are undergoing training by the NCT to become breastfeeding counsellors. The course is approximately three years long, is entirely voluntary and all expenses ie tutorial, travel, books etc met from each individual's resources. These Counsellors will take over the running of the breastfeeding support groups and develop and nurture them to become the life support of the breastfeeding community.

As no statutory funding is received a number of fund raising and awareness activities have taken place and local businesses have been approached to sign up for breastfeeding welcome here scheme.

One reason for the lack of breastfeeding is the social stigma and for future projects it is hoped to get into schools to educate children and into maternity wards to help mums.

The Group is dependent on donations and sponsorship and anything the Council can provide would be welcome. Also any support the Council can give to getting businesses to sign up to the breastfeeding welcome here scheme would be helpful.

Members spoke of personal experiences and commended the group on this voluntary work. They also suggested that the Group should work with the Dungannon Regeneration Partnership who has close contacts with urban businesses. Members also discussed the possibility of the Council declaring the area a breast feeding friendly zone.

In relation to Human Breast Milk Bank Mrs Kelso stated that established in Irvinestown in 2000, has the highest output of donor milk in the UK and is the only milk bank covering the whole of Ireland. The Milk Bank works similar to a blood bank. All donors must be in good health, non-smokers and have never had a blood transfusion. Donations can be left at South Tyrone Hospital. A total of 160 donors have been recruited so far in 2006. Human breast milk contains substances that cannot be synthesized, which help babies fight viruses and bacteria. Mrs Kelso outlined that how through partnership with Translink and Iceland the milk is distributed to hospital units across the province.

Councillors spoke of the need in both these areas to get a positive message out to the community and one suggestion was an awareness article in the Council's update magazine.

The Chairman advised that the Council within the next two to three weeks will be launching a new fund, on a pilot basis, aimed at Community/Advice/Service Providers and the group should make application for support through that channel.

The Chairman thanked the representatives for their attendance following which they left the meeting at 7.55 pm.

Following discussion

Resolved That it be recommended to the Council that the Borough be declared a breast feeding friendly area.

2 ULSTERBUS STRATEGIC REVIEW

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Kidd District Manager Dungannon and invited him to introduce his colleagues. Mr Kidd introduced Mr Jeff Knox Ulsterbus Strategic Review Co-Ordinator, Mr David Cowan Southern Area Manager and Mr Noel McGear, Duty Scheduler.

With the use of a powerpoint presentation (appendix 1) Mr Knox and Mr Kidd outlined the Ulsterbus Strategic Review and the Dungannon District Local Plan.

Members welcomed the revision but expressed concern in relation to lack of prior consultation.

The representatives were questioned on:

- changes to stops in Ballygawley village having been moved out of village to Tullyvar Road and Grange Road, the lack of bus shelters at this exposed hazardous location and the need to have the two stops on Grange Road further apart
- safety of school children travelling on buses
- introduction of seatbelts
- regeneration of Coalisland and the need for Translink to be on board
- how this review will effect rural areas
- need for review of stop at Newell Road to encourage school children to use crossing provided
- need for park and ride facility at Tamnamore roundabout
- alleviation of traffic around Dungannon and the use of Old Eglis Road by express buses to Belfast, Enniskillen etc.

In response the representatives stated that:

- Revision is not a finalised product but is an ongoing process and any comments welcomed at any time.
- Changes to Ballygawley village introduced on health and safety grounds, top of village dangerous access. Distance between stops on Grange Road as a result of consultation with Roads Service. Manager of Omagh has been spoken to in relation to provision of bus shelters at this location.
- At the moment more than meeting the conditions as laid down by Department of Education. There is to be a change in legislation that by 2009 every child will have seat. Already responding to that and have introduced a number of measures including double deck buses.
- Seat belts being targeted on buses used in rural and higher speed areas.
- In relation to Coalisland happy to be consulted on proposals.
- Review does not have detrimental effect on rural areas but helps to create some improvements.
- Bus serving primary school children turns into Lisnahull estate with children from second level schools disembarking at layby in Newell Road. Undertook to investigate stopping in front of Springdale.
- Translink has identified need for park and ride facility at Tamnamore and has conveyed this to Roads Service and would

be happy to make provision if land can be identified. Also intend to increase car parking facility at bus depot in Dungannon.

- If investment in road improvement Translink would be happy to use old Eglisk road as appropriate.

Councillors Brush and F Burton left at 8.28 pm.

Councillor O'Neill left at 8.35 pm.

The Chairman thanked the representatives for their attendance and presentation following which they left the meeting at 8.38 pm.

3 AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

The Chairman welcomed Ms Moninne Dargan representing Amnesty International and stated that a number of months ago the Council passed a motion in relation to fair trade and is also investigating economic links with China and is interested to hear of the human rights issues in China.

Ms Dargan stated that she was a voluntary member of the Mid Ulster Amnesty Group which was part of Amnesty International a world wide voluntary movement involving people who campaign for human rights.

Ms Dargan stated that Amnesty International is profoundly concerned about the continuing and extremely serious violations of human rights being committed in China. These violations include torture, execution, excessive use of force in policing labour and rural unrest, repression of dissent and the free exchange of information, especially through the internet and forced repatriation of North Korean asylum seekers without recourse to a refugee determination procedure. Ms Dargan highlighted the plight of a number of people imprisoned, tortured or executed. She stated that Amnesty International is increasingly concerned that the timing of executions is being orchestrated to meet the needs of the lucrative organ transplant industry. Ms Dargan highlighted one individual whose plight was taken up by the local group. Over three hundred letters had been sent to various agencies within China with not one being acknowledged.

Following the presentation members discussed the severe discrimination against women, the role large commercial enterprises can play in this issue and how the China government recognise Amnesty International. Ms Dargan to come back to the Council in relation to this issue.

Ms Dargan spoke of the Council visit to China and stated that any opportunity to raise the case of the individual supported by the local group would be appreciated and in this respect agreed to provide information to those going to China.

Following further discussion

Resolved That it be recommended to the Council that through the Mayor's office and in conjunction with local group of Amnesty International that some sort of awareness event be organised to link in with International Human Rights Day in early December.

4 DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting was called for 7.30 pm and ended at 9.15 pm