

## **MAGHERAFELT DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of Proceedings of a Meeting of the General Purpose and Finance Committee of Magherafelt District Council held in the Council Chamber, 50 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2000. The meeting commenced at 8.45 p.m.

**Present:** T. J. Catherwood  
J. Junkin  
J. J. Kelly, MLA  
Miss K. A. Lagan  
P. H. McErlean  
Miss M. M. McKenna  
R. A. Montgomery

**Observers:** G. C. Shields

**Officials Present:** J. A. McLaughlin (Chief Executive)  
J. J. Tohill (Director of Finance & Administration)  
T. J. Johnston (Director of Operations)  
S. Henry (Community Relations Officer)  
M. G. Browne (Development Officer)  
C. W. Burrows (Director of Environmental Health)  
Mrs. A. Junkin (Chief Executive's Secretary)

The Chief Executive read the notice convening the meeting.

### **1. Election of Chairman:**

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor R. A. Montgomery,  
Seconded by Councillor J. Junkin,

That Councillor T. J. Catherwood be elected Chairman.

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. J. Kelly,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna

That Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna be elected Chairman.

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor P. H. McErlean

That Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan be elected Chairman.

There was no seconder and Councillor Miss Lagan declined the proposal.

On a vote being taken 3 Members voted for Councillor T. J. Catherwood, 2 Members voted for Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna, voting being by show of hands.

Councillor T. J. Catherwood was declared Chairman and took the Chair.

**2. Election of Vice-Chairman:**

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. J. Kelly,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna

That Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna be elected Vice-Chairman.

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan

That Councillor P. H. McErlean be elected Vice-Chairman

Councillor McErlean declined the nomination.

Councillor Miss McKenna was elected Vice-Chairman.

**3. Community Relations Grants:**

Submitted report prepared by the Community Relations Officer and copies of applications received for grant-aid under the Community Relations Programme.

The Community Relations Officer, Mr. Henry, stated that the total grant available was £20,000, 75% was provided by the Community Relations Unit and 25% came from the District Council. There were 79 applications this year compared to 58 applications last year. Mr. Henry said that there were nine categories for funding and he was recommending 73 applications. He explained that the applications had been fully discussed at the Recreation and Tourist Committee meeting and outlined the applications recommended by that Committee as follows:

**Senior Citizens** – 7 applications all recommended. It was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. Junkin,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 1 – 7 receive grant-aid.

**Women's Groups** – Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 15 – all recommended. Mr. Henry gave details of application No.12 Glenullin and District Women's Group which had been recommended for rejection.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor R. A. Montgomery,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 8, 9 ,10, 11, 13 and 15 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Playgroups** – Nos. 15 – 24 – all recommended. Mr. Henry explained why Ballyronan Play Group were only received half the amount allocated to the other groups.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor R. A. Montgomery,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 15 – 24 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Groups Helping People with Impairments** – Nos. 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, and 31 recommended. Mr. Henry explained that Application No. 28 from Loughshore Driving Company Limited had been rejected.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan,  
Seconded by Councillor P. H. McErlean, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 25, 26, 27, 29, 30 and 31 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Development Associations** – Nos. 32-41, and 43 recommended. Mr. Henry explained why application No.42 from Loughinsholin Tourism Association had been rejected.

**Councillor R. A. Montgomery** enquired about Application No.41 and said that two commercial stations also delivered on Radio in Mid-Ulster and asked if the Council could support Radio Mid FM.

In reply the Chief Executive stated that as the company was non-profit making and was providing a very valuable service to a very deserving section of the community there was no difficulty in supporting it.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor P. H. McErlean,  
Seconded by Councillor J.J. Kelly, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 32-41 and 43 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Resident Associations** – Nos. 45 and 46 recommended. Mr. Henry explained that application No.44 from King William III Residents Group had been withdrawn.

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. Junkin,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 45 and 46 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Youth/Sports Groups** – Nos. 47-58, 62-64, and 66 recommended. Mr. Henry explained that the Recreation and Tourist Committee had recommended that applications Nos. 59, 60, 61 and 65 be rejected as the Council's policy was that only clubs that had projects for youth received funding. Mr. Henry also explained why application No.63 from Moyola Park Football Club had been rejected.

**Councillor R. A. Montgomery** enquired about application No.64 from Burnavin Gun Club and stated that in order to hold a gun licence a person had to be over 18 years of age, therefore this was also an adult sports group.

The Chief Executive said that this was correct and it was agreed to withhold funding on this application.

On consideration, it was

PROPOSED by Councillor R. A. Montgomery,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 47-58, 62, 64 and 66 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Drama Groups** – Nos. 67-70 – all recommended.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. Junkin,  
Seconded by Councillor R. A. Montgomery, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 67 –70 receive grant-aid as set out in the report.

**Others** – Nos. 71, 75, 77-79 recommended. Mr. Henry explained why application No.72 from Mid-Ulster Cultural and Heritage Association had been rejected.

The Chief Executive explained that grant could be given to a single identity group if they aspired to be cross community. He asked Mr. Henry to read the Community Relations policy which stated that “developing opportunities for local groups to explore cultural, political and religious traditions within their own community. Grant-aid is conditional upon such a venture being part of a programme which will increase their ability to develop inter-community contact. Where no evidence exists to indicate that this activity has taken place or is likely to take place, grant-aid is unlikely to be furnished.”

The Chief Executive advised that this policy affected applications Nos. 73, 74 and 76.

Discussion took place on the work and input of Ballinascreen Comhaltas and Lough Neagh Feis Society and also the project aims of the Mid-Ulster Survivors of Terrorism (M.U.S.T.).

It was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. Junkin,  
Seconded by Councillor R. A. Montgomery, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that applications Nos. 73, 74 and 76 be included to receive grant-aid as set out in the report along with applications Nos. 71, 75, 77, 78 and 79. It was further agreed that application No.74 be monitored and looked at next year.

#### **4. Fortwilliam Park, Tobermore:**

The Director of Operations reminded the Members that the Council had leased Fortwilliam Park, Tobermore from Mr. Hugh Bradley and then sub-leased it to Tobermore United Football Club. Mr. Johnston said that some time ago the Council was asked by Tobermore United Football Club if they could lease Fortwilliam Park directly from the landowner in order to allow them as a private concern to have the opportunity to obtain funding that was not available to the Council, as a Government body. Mr. Johnston pointed out that the Council owned the assets that were on site. These included the changing rooms, recreation hall and the pitch itself, etc. If Tobermore United Football Club were to lease directly from the landowner they would have to buy these assets from the Council. In order to allow the matter to be considered, Mr. Johnston had the assets valued by the Valuations and Lands Agency. The figure quoted in their reply was £95,000 (Appendix 1). Mr. Johnston stated that he believed that this figure was much too expensive for the Football Club to consider, but to bring the matter to a conclusion he was seeking permission to advise the Club of these developments and allow them to decide whether or not they wished to continue with the proposal to lease the ground directly from Mr. H. Bradley bearing in mind that they would have to purchase the Council’s assets in the sum of £95,000.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan,  
Seconded by Councillor R. A. Montgomery, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that Tobermore United Football Club be advised by Mr. Johnston of the position and costs involved in order for them to decide whether or not the Club wished to continue to pursue the lease of Fortwilliam Park, Tobermore directly from the landowner.

## **5. Public Conveniences:**

The Director of Operations said that some time ago the Council had received a request to provide public conveniences in Upperlands by Upperlands Community Group. During discussion it was also mentioned that there had been similar requests for toilets in Bellaghy and Swatragh and it was requested that officers obtained prices and report back to the Council. Three suppliers had been approached and asked to submit quotations.

- (a) **Interpublic** quoted £74,800 for a Type 22 toilet or £94,760 for a Type 31 toilet. The difference was – Type 22 was basically a portacabin type unit and Type 31 was basically a larger brick built unit.
- (b) **Adshel** quoted £50,000 for their smallest building, model 111 which comprised of one room for disabled, one wc and one urinal. A 121 model would cost £52,000 and it had two wc's instead of one as with the cheapest model.
- (c) **Healthmetic** quoted from £46,000 for their T Box – H/matic EX to £74,000 for their '2000' model. There were fully automatic self-cleaning toilets but they required a manufacturer's maintenance schedule which would cost up to £10,000 per annum.

Mr. Johnston advised that these were estimated costs and would change in a tendering procedure. They did not include the cost of a site/s or services to the toilets, which would be additional cost. In his opinion, the overall cost of providing three additional toilets could cost £300,000 to £400,000 and further ongoing costs for maintenance. He felt that a need had to be justified in Upperlands, Bellaghy and Swatragh, and an affordable budget had to be worked out. Mr. Johnston felt that it would be more important if the Council's present toilets were refurbished before any additional ones were provided. However, if the Committee felt that there was a need for the toilets, he suggested that any decision to proceed should be delayed until estimates were being considered in January or February of next year.

**Councillor J. Junkin** suggested that signs for public toilets should be erected in Bellaghy and other villages showing directions and distances to the nearest public conveniences, for example there could be one in Bellaghy showing directions to Castledawson, etc.

**Councillor R. A. Montgomery** suggested that there could be a sign for toilets at the Bawn.

**Councillor P. H. McErlean** referred to the numbers of people who attended football matches in Bellaghy and other functions.

Discussion took place on the numbers that attended and the possible use of portable toilets.

**Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna** said that the people who lived in the village of Bellaghy did not want public conveniences even though there was a need by tourists, etc.

On consideration the Committee agreed with the decision taken by the Recreation and Tourist Committee that there was no case on need for toilets in Upperlands, Bellagh or Swatragh at present and that the Council should refurbish its present toilets before any additional ones were provided.

#### **6. Traad Park, Ballyronan:**

The Chief Executive outlined developments at Traad Park since the Council purchased the site of some 38 acres from Scotts (Toomebridge) Ltd. It was further proposed that the Council consider purchasing the University of Ulster's Freshwater Laboratory consisting of the centre and some 37 acres of land including a harbour and boathouse. In total this would give the Council a park of some 75 acres. The District Valuer had agreed a value of £240,000 including the harbour and boathouse. There was a possibility of £100,000 grant from the Environment and Heritage Service. The Chief Executive pointed out that there was already an access and car-park and recommended that the Council purchase the research laboratory and the 37 acres of land in the sum of £250,000.

Discussion took place on the size of the building, could it be rented out, the state of repair, and the access to the laboratory.

**Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna** said that it would be a good idea for the Committee to actually see the laboratory and grounds.

Mr. Browne said that this could be arranged but it depended very much on the weather and the lateness of the season.

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor J. J. Kelly,  
Seconded by Councillor Miss M. M. McKenna, and agreed to

RECOMMEND: that the Council go ahead and purchase the University of Ulster's freshwater laboratory and grounds at Traad, Ballyronan in the sum of £250,000.

**7. Ballymacombs Landfill Site:**

The Chief Executive explained in detail the recent events concerning Ballymacombs Landfill Site during the previous ten days. Members questions were answered and the legal position as outlined by the Council's legal advisers was discussed and clarified. Members noted the situation.

**8. Environmental Health Plan 2000/2001:**

The Director of Environmental Health tabled his department's Environmental Health Plan for 2000/01 together with the actual results achieved against the targets set in the plan for 1999/2000 (Appendix 2)

Members sought clarification on some issues and the plan together with the results were noted.

**Councillor J. J. Kelly retired from the meeting at 10.10 p.m.**

On consideration it was

PROPOSED by Councillor Miss K. A. Lagan,  
Seconded by Councillor P. H. McErlean, and resolved to

RECOMMEND: that the Council adopt the plan.

Mr. Burrows asked that the plan be adopted on the proviso that his department could only do what they could do within the available resources.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 p.m.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The foregoing Minutes are hereby Confirmed.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)



