

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE OF DUNGANNON AND SOUTH TYRONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23 JUNE 2003 IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, CIRCULAR ROAD, DUNGANNON

- MEMBERS PRESENT: In the chair, Councillor Cuddy (Chairman)
- Councillors Badger, Burton, Cavanagh (7.35 pm), Currie (7.40 pm), Daly, Donnelly, Gildernew, Gillespie, Hamilton, Irwin, McGonnell, McGuigan, McIlwrath (7.34 pm), McLarnon, Molloy, Monteith, Morrow and Mulligan
- OFFICERS PRESENT: Messrs Beattie, Burke, Currie, Frazer, Mrs Hobson, Mrs Kerr, Messrs McClelland, McMinn and Mrs Smith
- APOLOGY: Councillor Canning
- IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Helen Hall, Halmark

The meeting started at 7.30 pm.

The Mayor, Councillor Mulligan, took the chair for the election of Chairman.

1.0 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Under the previously agreed d'hondt arrangement nomination was sought from the UUP

Proposed by Councillor Irwin
Seconded by Councillor Hamilton and

Resolved that Councillor Cuddy be appointed Chairman.

Councillor Cuddy took the chair and thanked outgoing chairman Councillor McGonnell for his contribution.

2.0 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Two proposals were put to the meeting

Proposed by Councillor Burton
Seconded by Councillor Irwin

that Councillor Morrow be appointed

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor McGuigan

that Councillor Gillespie be appointed

and on a vote of Councillor Morrow 7 (seven) number,
Councillor Gillespie 8 (eight) number

Resolved that Councillor Gillespie be appointed Vice Chairman.

Ms Helen Hall from Halmark entered the meeting at 7.34 pm.

3.0 PRESENTATION BY HALMARK ON HUMAN RESOURCES SOFTWARE

The following councillors entered the meeting during the presentation
Councillor McIlwrath (7.34 pm), Councillor Cavanagh (7.35 pm),
Councillor Currie (7.40 pm).

Ms Helen Hall gave a comprehensive powerpoint presentation on the software that was available for Human Resources with emphasis on e recruitment. In response to query Head of Human Resources advised that he did not see any post being re-evaluated as a result of responsibility for the package but felt it should reduce clerical work as it would minimise photocopying, save on postage, etc.

Councillor Monteith left at 7.55 pm.

The chairman thanked Ms Hall for her detailed presentation after which she left at 8.00 pm. Mr Currie left at 8.00 pm.

4.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

4.1 Letter dated 2 June 2004 from Chief Local Government Auditor re National Association of Councillors

Chief Executive advised that the last paragraph of the letter from the Chief Local Government Auditor was important ie *'based on the legal advice I have received, in my view, neither section 36 nor section 38 of the 1972 Act*

provides authority for a council to pay allowances and/or expenses to Members attending meetings of the NAC Executive'.

Members were in disagreement with the advice and felt that NAC was more than a trade union, it carried out training and kept councillors up to date on issues. Agreed that the representative(s) for Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council should make the views known to NAC.

Mr Currie returned at 8.05 pm.

4.2 Letter dated 11 June 2004 from NILGA re Amendment to NILGA's Financial Protocol on Payment to Councillors for NILGA Activity

For information - impact of the above will be claiming procedure dealt with by Finance Section.

Councillors McGuigan and McLarnon left at 8.10 pm.

5.0 HALMARK PRESENTATION

In response to query Head of Human Resources advised that Halmark currently links into the present PAM system. Head of Finance advised that the IT Manager would research if another system could be bought which would be compatible and ascertain if buying this module was the best option. Mr Currie advised that costs associated with Halmark were £2900 software, £500 configuration, £250 training and £600 annual fee.

Proposed by Councillor Daly
Seconded by Councillor McGonnell and

Resolved that it be recommended to the Council that the on line e recruitment module be purchased subject to normal procurement procedures being followed.

6.0 PERSONNEL MATTERS

The report (appendix 1) and addendum (appendix 2) of the Head of Human Resources were presented reference being made to the undernoted:

6.1 Appointments

Ms Emily Martin, Casual Receptionist (Bank Buildings) grade of pay should read scale 1/2 instead of scale 3 as listed in addendum.

6.2 Craft Development Officer

Head of Human Resources advised that he had received a request from the Director of Development to allow the Craft Development Officer unpaid leave under 'Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations' for period 26 July to 27 August 2004.

6.3 Blackwater Catchment

Director of Development advised that 11 applications had been made under Interreg with 4 approved and 2 pending approval. Programme Manager was now appointed but required assistance to deliver same.

Director of Development requested

- approval for appointment of 4 employees, all posts 100 % funded
- approval to recruit additional staff as the projects came on board

all posts being time bound by funding.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Cavanagh and

Resolved that the process to recruit staff for projects within Blackwater Catchment be actioned immediately.

Councillor asked that appreciation be sent to Mr McCartney for work involved in obtaining the funding.

6.4 Harassment

Member emphasised that if an employee had a case of harassment that person should be treated fairly with rights and the issue should not infringe in blocking their employment in the future. Mr Currie was in agreement and said that the person should not be victimised and that Carecall services were available to all employees.

6.5 Information Relating to Recruitment Exercises – Applicants and Appointees related to Members/Officers

Councillor Molloy declared an interest in one applicant.

Head of Human Resources advised that the figure appearing beside application status related to a computer code – to check if report can be printed with this figure removed.

Members felt that the requirement for casual/manual staff to have experience when applying for posts could be excessive. Alternative could be to train employees or employ on trial basis. Criteria when advertising may need more thought.

6.6 Employee Investigation

Head of Human Resources advised that he had received a forensic report yesterday (22 June) which was technical, a meeting was proposed with the consultant and the employee required time to consider the document. A report on the issue to be brought to the next meeting of the Corporate Services Committee.

Adoption of report and addendum

Proposed by Councillor Mulligan
Seconded by Councillor McGonnell and

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

7.0 ABSENTEEISM

Chief Executive advised that as a result of a recommendation from the Corporate Services Committee in April 2004 for a report to be given on the level of absence identified within departments outlining cause and solution he had a meeting with Directors and Heads of Department and all were in attendance to answer any queries. Mr Beattie advised that the Council was working towards the policy – 'Scheme for Managing Attendance 2002'.

Head of Human Resources circulated document which compared percentage lost time rate due to sickness absence for years ended 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 by department/section which showed a significant drop (ye 31.3.03 = 7.17 %, ye 31.3.04 = 4.86%) and Mr Currie felt that with the introduction of the policy from September 2003 figures would reduce further. Member expressed appreciation for work put into itemised report produced by Human Resources.

Members found the procedure of employees getting paid bonus if on sick leave hard to understand and felt that a programme should be set in place so that in 3 – 4 years time the situation regarding payment of bonus would have changed. Chief Executive advised that there is currently a NI programme been developed to deal with bonus situation.

Head of Human Resources to bring report on what other 25 Councils do in relation to payment of bonus.

Directors and Heads of Department gave a breakdown of main causes of sickness within their own department/section. Majority of sickness being attributed to post natal debility, post operative debility/hospitalisation, terminally ill and long term sick.

Councillors Cavanagh, Gildernew and McGonnell left at 9.10 pm.

Chief Executive advised that Mr Currie had mentioned that a contractual arrangement with an Occupational Practitioner may be beneficial and proposals on same may be brought forward at a later date.

Councillor Badger left at 9.15 pm.

8.0 Refurbishment of Council Offices Sub Committee

Member expressed concern that his party colleagues nor himself had got notification for the above Sub Committee meeting of 14 June 2004.

Chief Executive advised that after the Annual Meeting of the Council he had circulated to Directors points raised regarding procedures for holding sub committee meetings. The Council Business Manager had confirmed to himself that the agenda for the Refurbishment Sub Committee meeting had been sent to all 22 councillors.

Chief Executive advised members of letter received from the Council's solicitor that stated that it was their view that McAdam Design Limited have been appointed as consultants to the Council for the scheme but with the passage of time since the appointment it was recommended that McAdam Design be invited to meet the Council to begin work on formulating a detailed brief for the project.

Chief Executive confirmed that he had no objection to holding a further meeting of the Sub Committee from 14 -16 July 2004.

Proposed by Councillor Mulligan
Seconded by Councillor Morrow and

Resolved that it be recommended to the Council that the minutes of the meeting of Sub Committee - Refurbishment of Council Offices held on 14 June 2004 be approved.

9.0 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

9.1 Purchase of Council Ties

Member advised that he had received an enquiry from an independent band as to whether or not Council ties could be purchased and worn as part of their uniform. Agreed that ties could be purchased and worn.

Councillor Cavanagh returned at 9.20 pm.

10.0 CONFERENCES/SEMINARS

10.1 Confederation of European Councillors – Training Seminar, Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co Westmeath, 28 August 2004

Read

10.2 Confederation of European Councillors – Annual Conference, Gibraltar, 29 September – 3 October 2004

Read

11.0 OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Letters Of Complaint From Head Of Human Resources

Mr Beattie, Councillor Cavanagh, Messrs Currie, Frazer, Mrs Kerr, Messrs McClelland, McMinn and Mrs Smith left at 9.25 pm.

Councillor Currie declared an interest and left at 9.25 pm.

In response to query Director of Environmental Health advised that from the last update he had sent letters to the Chief Executive and Head of Human Resources on 24 May 2004. He had a reply from Mr Beattie on the 25 May 2004 who assented to the process. Mr Currie advised that he would take advice from NIPSA and to date there was no formal response.

Councillor Daly left at 9.27 pm.

Members felt that the matter should be sorted as soon as possible and indicated that they would like to see the process started by the next Corporate Services Committee meeting.

12.0 DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting was called for 7.30 pm and ended at 9.40 pm.