

**CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2024**

No	Item	Summary of Key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	<i>None</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>
3.	Minutes of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 27 February 2024	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>
4.	Minutes of the Implementation Oversight Panel meeting held Monday 4 th March 2024	<i>To recommend that the Minutes of the Implementation Oversight Panel Meeting held Monday 4 March 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved</i>
5.	Minutes of the Coronation Sub-Committee meeting held on 27 th February 2024	<i>To recommend that the Minutes of the Coronation Sub-Committee Meeting held 27 February 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved</i>
6.	Revised Terms of Reference for CPR Committee to include Review period	<i>To recommend to Council that approval is granted to add a review period to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee's Terms of Reference to partially fulfil the requirements of the recommendation contained in the Governance Transformation Action Plan G11 'that a periodic review of Committees should be included in the terms of reference..' to be carried out prior to the Annual Meeting each year</i>

		and that the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee is updated in the Council's Constitution and the Scheme of Delegation
7.	Community Planning Update March 2024	to recommend that Council note the report
8.	Performance Improvement Update	to recommend that Council note the updates as set out in this report
9.	Second Quarterly Report on Planning Performance	to recommend that Council consider the content of the Planning Departments Quarterly Report
10.	Conferences	None
11.	Consultations	None
12.	Correspondence	
12.1	Anthony Carleton, Director Local Government & Housing Regulation, Department for Communities – dated 12 March 2024	Noted
12.2	Limavady High School Fundraising Co-ordinator, correspondence dated 14 March 2024	Noted
13.	Matters for Reporting to Partnership Panel	None
	'In Committee' (Items 14-17 inclusive)	
14.	Corporate Services Management Accounts Month 10	Noted
15.	Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 6 March 2024	To recommend that Council adopt the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 6 March 2024 and recommendations therein approved
16.	Transfer of Management of Cemetery Administration to Estates	To recommend that Council approve the transfer of the

		<i>management function of cemetery administration to the Estates Department within Environmental Services and approve the revised job role incorporating a 37hour Cemeteries Officer post as detailed in the Job Description and Person Specification in Appendix B, previously circulated, all as proposed and summarised in sections 3.1 to 3.6 of this report</i>
17.	Transformation Programme - Records Management and Information Management Procedures	Noted
18.	Any Other Relevant Business (notified in accordance with Standing Order 12(o))	None

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS,
AND VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCE ON THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2024
AT 7.00 PM**

- In the Chair:** Councillor Nicholl
- Present:** Alderman Callan, Coyle, Fielding, Knight-McQuillan
Councillors C Archibald, Huggins, Mairs, McAuley, McCully,
Peacock, Watson, Wallace, Watton
- Officers Present:** D Jackson, Chief Executive
J McCarron, Performance Manager
I Owens, Committee and Member Services Officer
- In Attendance:** A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer
- Substitutions:** Councillor Mairs substituted for Alderman Boyle
Alderman Callan substituted for Councillor Storey
- Press 1 no. (R)
- Key:** (C) Attended in the Chamber
(R) Attended Remotely

The Chair advised Committee of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

1. APOLOGIES

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest

**3. MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2024**

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor Peacock

AGREED – that the Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting held Tuesday 27 February 2024 are confirmed as a correct record.

**4. MINUTES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT PANEL MEETING
HELD MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024**

Copy, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Peacock
Seconded by Councillor Huggins

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Implementation Oversight Panel Meeting held Monday 4 March 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

5. MINUTES OF THE CORONATION SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 27 FEBRUARY 2024

Copy, previously circulated.

Proposed by Alderman Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor Huggins and

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Coronation Sub-Committee Meeting held 27 February 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

6. REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CP&R COMMITTEE TO INCLUDE REVIEW PERIOD

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to seek approval to add a review period to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee's Terms of Reference to partially fulfil the requirements of the recommendation contained in the Governance Transformation Action Plan G11 'that a periodic review of Committees should be included in the terms of reference.' to be carried out prior to the Annual Meeting each year.

Background

At a Special Council Meeting held on 27th March 2023 Council resolved to accept the recommendations contained within the *Independent review of governance arrangements in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council report*.

At a Special Council Meeting held on 30th October 2023 Council resolved to implement the recommendations arising from the Reviews to address the recommendations from the Extraordinary Audit and to set these out as a comprehensive Transformation Programme. The Transformation Programme Action Plan contains six themes.

The Director of Environmental Services is leading the implementation of the recommendations under the theme of Governance.

Addressing Recommendation G11

Recommendation G11 states that "a periodic review of Committees should be included in the Terms of Reference and put into practice to help Committees understand what aspects work well and what could be improved."

When the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee's Terms of Reference were adopted a review period was not included. In order to fulfil the

requirements of the recommendation it is suggested that the following is added to the Terms of Reference: The Terms of Reference are to be reviewed on an annual basis, prior to the Annual Meeting each year.

Recommendation

It is recommended that approval is granted to add a review period to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee's Terms of Reference to partially fulfil the requirements of the recommendation contained in the Governance Transformation Action Plan G11 'that a periodic review of Committees should be included in the terms of reference.' to be carried out prior to the Annual Meeting each year and that the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee is updated in the Council's Constitution and the Scheme of Delegation.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Archibald and

AGREED - To recommend to Council that approval is granted to add a review period to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee's Terms of Reference to partially fulfil the requirements of the recommendation contained in the Governance Transformation Action Plan G11 'that a periodic review of Committees should be included in the terms of reference.' to be carried out prior to the Annual Meeting each year and that the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee is updated in the Council's Constitution and the Scheme of Delegation.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING UPDATE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Introduction

The Community Plan is a long-term plan (from 2017 to 2030) based on sound, robust evidence with a focus on improving social, economic and environmental well-being and contributing to sustainable development.

The Community Plan is a strategic planning tool for the Causeway Coast and Glens area and it is the key over-arching framework for partnerships and initiatives in the Council area. It is not seen as an additional or parallel process to structures already in place.

Phase 1 of the community planning process was the development of a Strategic Framework for the Community Plan. This document was finalised in April 2017 and officially launched in June 2017. It outlines the high-level outcomes identified for the Causeway Coast and Glens area based on an extensive public consultation process and a statistical analysis of the area.

Phase 2 of the community planning process was the development of a comprehensive Delivery Plan in 2018 which put in place 44 practical actions and activities to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic Framework. This Delivery Plan was reviewed in 2022 and now contains 34 actions covering four thematic areas:

- 1) Health and Wellbeing
- 2) Community/Community Safety
- 3) Infrastructure/Environment
- 4) Economy/Education/Tourism.

Phase 3 of the community planning process put in place mechanisms to monitor and report on performance against the Community Plan objectives/outcomes. An Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) process is utilised to monitor and report on performance with Action Leads using report cards to provide information on the following areas in relation to each of the actions within the Delivery Plan:

- What did we say we would do?
- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Who is better off?

Reports on progress against the actions in the Delivery Plan are provided to the Community Planning Partnership using this process on a quarterly basis.

Progress on Delivery Plan - Quarterly Summary of Progress Report

The monitoring and reporting process used by the Partnership requires quarterly reports to be submitted by Action Leads and these are then reported on by the four thematic leads to the next Partnership meeting.

A summary report is circulated to all Partnership members on progress in relation to the 34 actions contained in the Delivery Plan and a copy of this summary report for the period October 2023 to December 2023 is attached for your information.

Presentation on Integrated Care System

Alan Marsden from the Department for Health gave a presentation to the Partnership on progress on the implementation of the new Integrated Care System and it was noted that the Council and the Community Planning Partnership would be involved as core members in the new Area Integrated Partnership Boards (AIPB). It was also envisaged that these AIPB's would be operational, potentially in shadow form, by September 2024.

Various issues were discussed with the Department in relation to these proposals including:

- The potential time commitment required of Council officers.
- Lack of co-terminosity with Council and Community Planning boundaries, ie Causeway would be involved in both the Western and Northern AIPB's.
- The potential overlap between the work of community planning on health and well-being and the work of the AIPB's.
- Community and voluntary sector representation on the AIPB's.
- How clinically driven the AIPB action plans were likely to be.
- How difficult it would be for a Council Officer to represent both Council interests and the interests of the Community Planning Partnership.
- Whether or not the AIPB's would have commissioning powers.

- The lack of Councillor representation on the proposed AIPB's.

Other Business

Dementia Safeguarding Initiative – members were made aware that PSNI representatives and the Community Planning Team were exploring the potential of working with Age Concern Causeway on introducing a Dementia Safeguarding Arm Bands scheme. This scheme had been successfully implemented by Avon and Somerset Police and Age Concern Causeway wished to work with local PSNI representatives to introduce the scheme into the Causeway Coast and Glens area.

Causeway Healthy Kids Scheme – it was noted that this project would be one of the projects used for the Café Conversation section of the Northern Ireland Leadership and Governance Conference on 6th March 2024.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Elected Members note the report.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the report.

8. PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members an update on the progress of Council's work to meet its annual Performance Duty.

Background

Council has committed to regular updates through Council Committees with regards to the ongoing work across the organisation to ensure that Council meets its annual Performance Duty.

Content

Performance Improvement Plan and Objectives 2023/24

The Period covered by the 2023/24 Performance Improvement Plan will end on 31 March 2024. Outcomes against the planned targets and indicators will be assessed, analysed on our PERFORM system and then a full report brought to Council before summer recess.

Development of the Performance Improvement Plan 2024/25

Work is ongoing with the development of the Performance Improvement Plan for 2024/25. Engagement is taking place across the Services as well as with our Community Planning Partners in order to identify areas for improvement.

The online consultation for ratepayers is currently live. Consultees have the opportunity to suggest new areas for improvement as well as commenting on the range of Improvement Objective Themes rolling forward from previous years. The survey can be viewed at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PIP24_25

Performance Benchmarking completed for 2022/23

The Performance benchmarking outcomes for Council for 2022/23 have been completed, and Services have been allocated their analysis reports. Council provided data and received benchmarked outcomes across nine separate Service areas.

The Services will now be able to report on and utilise this data to suit their specific needs and are encouraged to use this data to help shape areas for improvement in 2024/25. The focus for Benchmarking data submission now shifts to the business year 2023/24, the data for which must be collated and submitted by July 2024.

Prior Year Audit Recommendations

Council's s95 Performance Report (Nov 2023) from the NI Audit Office returned no new proposals for Improvement, which was welcomed by Council. Council has continued work to address any outstanding prior year Audit Recommendations and has successfully closed the majority of these. One area that remains, and will be a focus in the 2024/25 Performance Improvement Plan, is Council's processes for third party/independent verification of performance data.

Citizens Survey and Review of Corporate Strategy

Council is in the final stages of planning for its second Citizens Survey, coordinating the timings across our various planned communications channels to ensure the best possible uptake. The previous Citizens Survey in 2021/22 received 2,268 response and we aim to exceed that this year.

To complement this Council we be holding public engagement sessions across the Borough.

The outcomes of this survey will be used to help inform the development of a new Corporate Strategy 2025 for Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Elected Members note the updates as set out in this report.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the updates as set out in this report.

9. SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT ON PLANNING PERFORMANCE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Background

Schedule 4 of The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out the statutory performance targets for the Planning Department for major development applications, local development applications and enforcement cases. The Planning Department Business Plan 2023-24 sets out the key performance indicators to progress towards improving Planning performance against these targets.

The statutory targets are:

- Major applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 30 weeks
- Local applications processed from date valid to decision or withdrawal within an average of 15 weeks
- 70% of all enforcement cases progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint.

The Northern Ireland Planning Statistics is an official statistics publication issued by Analysis, Statistics & Research Team within Department for Infrastructure. It provides the official statistics for each Council on each of the statutory targets and is published quarterly and on an annual basis. The Second Quarter 2023/24 Statistical Bulletin was published on 14 December 2023 providing planning statistics for this period. It also provides a summary of Council progress across the three statutory targets

Details

Website link 1 <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-planning-statistics-july-september-2023> provides the link to the published bulletin.

Development Management Planning Applications

Table 1, previously circulated, provides a summary of performance in relation to the statutory targets for major development applications and local development applications for the second quarter of 2023-24 business year and provides a comparison of performance against all 11 Councils and against Business Plan KPIs.

Planning Applications

In the Q2, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council issued three major planning applications, two of which were processed within the 30 week statutory target, resulting in an average processing time of 25.6 weeks for Q2 and 25.6 weeks year to date (6 applications decided/withdrawn) meeting both the Statutory and Business Plan targets for major planning applications. This was the second fastest processing time out of all 11 councils year to date. During Q2, we received the highest number of major applications, similar number to 5 other councils and 5th highest received year to date.

Over the same period 249 local category applications were decided or withdrawn, exceeding the number of applications received and reducing the total number of live applications from end of Q1. Although not meeting the statutory target, the Business Plan target of 25 weeks for Q2 was met with 56 local applications in the system over 12 months concluded, 114 year to date. Of note, this Council was one of only 2 councils that received an increase in the number of planning applications received in Q2 when compared to the same period last year.

Although a total of 114 applications in the system over 12 months were concluded year to date, the number of applications within this time category rose by 38 applications since the beginning of this Business year, thereby not meeting the Business Plan target. This is a similar issue in 9 out of the 11 councils who experienced an increase in over 12 month applications at end of

Q2 compared to the position at the beginning of this business year. This is largely due to the high caseloads of staff and the number of applications delayed due to awaiting statutory consultation responses. Focus in Q3 will be to reduce the number of over 12 month applications in the system which may have a negative impact on the average processing times for local category of planning applications.

Enforcement

Table 2, previously circulated, shows statistics in relation to enforcement for Q2 of the 2023/24 business year. The statutory target for bringing to a conclusion enforcement cases is not reported on at this time due to inability to extract the accurate information from the system; work is ongoing to resolve this issue. Progress has been made in terms of increasing the number of cases concluded, moving closer to a position where cases closed exceed cases opened in order to reduce live cases to a manageable level. This is a similar position to 9 out of the 11 councils when compared to the position at the beginning of this business year. At this time, at end of Q2, the Business Plan target to reduce live cases has not been met.

Of the cases closed in Q2, 22% were remedied/resolved, 20.3% received retrospective planning permission; 20.3% were closed as not expedient; and 25.4% had no breach identified.

Stable Staff Resource and Reduction in Staff Caseloads – Business Plan KPI - Not Met

Work continues to decrease case loads of staff to a manageable level. The 2no. vacant Planning Officer posts have been filled on a temporary basis and staff are being trained in these roles. The high case loads of the Enforcement Team and the Single Rural Dwellings Team remain a concern and will continue to be monitored.

Reduction in vacant posts – Business Plan KPI – on target to be met

The vacant posts were filled by end of Q2. This Business Plan KPI has been met.

Training Plan - Business Plan KPI – Met

In additional to mandatory training for all staff, in Q2 the following training was attended by staff:

- Neighbour Notification
- RTPI NI Annual Planning Conference 2023
- NI Active Travel Plan
- Planning for Biodiversity in post Brexit NI

Draft Plan Strategy – Business Plan KPI - on target to be met

Workshops with Party Groups were held in Q2. A full member workshop is scheduled to be held in Q3. Other KPIs in relation to the draft Plan Strategy will follow the completion of these workshops with Members.

Number of cases where Ombudsman determines maladministration is less than 0.4% of all decisions made - Business Plan KPI – on target to be met.

There have been no cases in the Q2 period of cases where the NIPSO has determined maladministration on planning decisions made. There have been no decisions by NIPSO during this period.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Planning Committee consider the content of the Planning Departments Quarterly Report

AGREED – to recommend that Council consider the content of the Planning Departments Quarterly Report.

At the request of Alderman Fielding the Chief Executive confirmed that in future those applications which had been in the system for over 24 months will be included in reporting.

Alderman Fielding also raised concern regarding high case load for the Enforcement team and that fact that Single Rural Dwellings applications were taking a long time to process.

Alderman Callan asked for an update of the ongoing live survey involving users and agents, in order that feedback can be considered and a perspective given on the system effectiveness.

Alderman Callan said that also not included in relation to enforcement was the number of live cases for which the target was not met.

Alderman Callan asked for an update on the appointment of a Senior Planning Officer for minor applications and enquired how workflow would be processed over the next few months.

Councillor Huggins ask how case load was dealt with in the absence of the overseeing Officer.

The Chief Executive advised that for the first couple of weeks the case load would be static after which it would be allocated to another Officer. The Chief Executive advised that after 3 months a case officer would be appointed to the position.

Alderman Callan asked for an update on the planned workshop for all Elected Members at which the whole planning process would be considered.

The Chief Executive advised that at the next Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting an update would be provided in respect of the above queries raised by Elected Members.

10. CONFERENCES

There were no Conferences.

11. CONSULTATIONS

There were no Consultations.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence has been received:

12.1 Anthony Carleton, Director Local Government & Housing Regulation, Department for Communities – dated 12 March 2024

(draft The Local Government (Remote Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.

Extract

My letter of 1 March 2024 refers.

Minister Lyons is committed to giving councils the flexibility to hold meetings by remote/hybrid means and will be bringing forward regulations, as soon as possible, using the powers in the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Act (NI) 2021. The Minister considers this to be more appropriate than continuing to use powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020, which was intended as emergency legislation, and will ensure that councils will have powers for remote/hybrid meetings but based upon more regularised legislation.

A draft of the proposed regulations has been sent to the Department's solicitors for scrutiny. In order to keep the gap in legislative provision for remote meetings to a minimum, the Department, in parallel with obtaining legal scrutiny of the draft regulations, is seeking your input. A first draft of the regulations is attached for your information and comment.

The proposed regulations are very similar to the previous regulations, the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020. The Department had previously carried out a public call for evidence on remote meetings (from December 2021 to February 2022) and the responses indicated general support for the arrangements made by the 2020 Regulations and for permanent provision on remote meetings being made.

Please examine the draft regulations and respond by 26 March 2024 with any comments you may have.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Corporate Policy and Resources Committee consider the correspondence.

The Chief Executive advised the Legal Departments for the 11 Councils met with the Department yesterday and no issues had been flagged in relation to the draft legislation provided. The Chief Executive advised that the decision in relation to hybrid meetings will sit within the Council Chamber for Elected

Members to reach a decision. The Chief Executive advised that it was expected that final legislation would be available by the end of April or beginning of May and that the matter could be brought back to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting, Council meeting or a Special Council meeting, if required.

Alderman Callan said he hoped the process could be expediated.

12.2 Limavady High School Fundraising Co-ordinator, correspondence dated 14 March 2024 (Air Ambulance Fundraising)

Extract

I am a teacher at Limavady High School and I am the school's fundraising co-ordinator. Our school's chosen charity for the year is Air Ambulance NI. This is a charity close to our hearts with both current and past pupils closely affected by Air Ambulance NI.

Air Ambulance costs approximately £7000 per day to run, we as a school have set ourselves a huge target of £35000 to raise this year which would be enough to fund the Air Ambulance for one full school week.

We have had many fundraising events so far including a Christmas Draw, Non-uniform days, Cookie Sales, Guess the sweets in the jar and we have many more planned such as the Belfast City Marathon, A sky dive, A hike up Slieve Donard and A 100 mile cycle. It is clear to see we are truly trying our best.

Our finale event is our "May Ball" on Saturday 25th of May at the Roe Park hotel in Limavady. We would like to invite Causeway Coast and Glens council to take a table at our event. Tickets cost £60 pp. If this is something you feel you could support us in then please respond and I will send you more details.

Any support would be greatly appreciated.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Corporate Policy and Resources Committee consider the correspondence.

Councillor Watton suggested that this charity event in support of the Air Ambulance would be supported by Council or Elected Members.

The Chief Executive suggested that given the function was in Limavady the Mayor may wish to support this by his attendance and fund from his Mayoral budget.

At the request of Alderman Callan the Chief Executive agreed that an email would be sent to all Elected Members extending an invitation for them to support this cause personally, if they so wished.

13. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to Partnership Panel.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Councillor Peacock
Seconded by Alderman Knight-McQuillan

AGREED – to recommend that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee move ‘*In Committee*’.

* **Press/Public were disconnected from the meeting at 7.15 pm.**

The information contained in the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Chair advised Committee of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded, and with the remote meetings protocol.

14. CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS MONTH 10

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Confidential by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report to provide Members with information on the current financial position of Corporate Services Directorate at the end of Period 10. .

Background

Council has approved the annual budget for Corporate Services and delegated authority to officers to utilise this budget in the provision of services to the rate payers. Corporate Services budget for 2023/24 is **£ 5,869,506**, and the Planning Budget is **£1,468,846.00**.

Detailed Analysis

The Corporate Services position at Month 10 shows a **£251,810** positive variance, as a result of **£224K** under budget in expenditure and **£28K** over budget in income.

Table 1, previously circulated shows an analysis of expenditure – Corporate services Months 1-10

Democratic Services (DS)
Land and Property
Human Resources
ICT
Contributions to other bodies
Internal Audit
Centrally Managed
Policy & Community Planning
Planning

Recommendation

That Council considers the information presented.

AGREED – to recommend that Council note the information presented.

15. MINUTES OF THE LAND AND PROPERTY SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH 2024

Confidential by virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Copy minutes previously circulated, presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Proposed by Alderman Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Alderman Callan

AGREED – to recommend that Council adopt the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub Committee meeting held Wednesday 6 March 2024 and recommendations therein approved.

16. TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT OF CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION TO ESTATES

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Confidential by virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

Approval is sought to transfer the management of the administration function associated with Burials and Cemeteries from Democratic and Central Services within the Corporate Services Directorate to the Estates Department of Environmental Services Directorate and revise the current role to that of one full time equivalent Cemeteries Officer.

Background

An internal audit of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnership was completed in accordance with the Council's approved annual Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23.

Accountability and reporting arrangements for cemetery administration and registration services within Council was one area identified where controls could be enhanced and better efficiency, control and delivery of functions could be realised. (See Appendix A, previously circulated, Except from Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships Internal Audit Report dated June, 2022).

The recommendation arising from this finding was for the legacy arrangements in relation to the management of cemetery administration and its staff to be reviewed to ensure it is best placed within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

All recommendations were accepted by management.

Officers carried out a review of the provision of Cemetery and Burial services and offer the following proposals for consideration.

Proposals

To achieve a highly efficient and effective Cemeteries and Burials service it is recommended that the management of cemetery administration should sit within the Directorate that holds responsibility for the operational delivery of that function.

The Estates Department within Environmental Services has operational responsibility for cemeteries and burials and is the relevant department and Directorate.

Management of cemetery administration should be transferred to The Estates Department within Environmental Services and report to the Estates Manager.

The existing staff resource of 20hours is insufficient to provide front line administration and business support cover for this critical function over normal office hours and there is no contingency within Environmental Services Business Support Function or Estates Staffing Structure to accommodate this.

To ensure continuity of service delivery and provide an acceptable level of service to the public, the role should be revised to a full time 37 hour Cemeteries Officer post as detailed in the Job Description and Person Specification in Appendix B. This will enable particular expertise and a professional knowledge of the function, associated record keeping and relevant software combined with coordination of the operational delivery of burials with Undertakers, Memorial Sculptors, Bereaved Families and other stakeholders so enabling a more efficient high quality service.

It is anticipated the existing budget associated with the current management of, and the existing administration post itself will transfer to the Estates Department and any additional costs incurred by the above proposal (estimated to be no more than £7.5K) will be more than compensated for by the additional £62,920 in Cemeteries and Burials Fees Income predicted to be realised from the recent uplift brought to *Environmental Services Committee 9 January 2024 item 23c* and ratified at the Council Meeting held on 8 February, 2024. This uplifted schedule of Fees will come into effect on 1st April, 2024.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Council approve the transfer of the management function of cemetery administration to the Estates Department within Environmental Services and approve the revised job role incorporating a 37hour Cemeteries Officer post as detailed in the Job Description and Person Specification in Appendix B, previously circulated, all as proposed and summarised in sections 3.1 to 3.6 of this report.

As a result of Audit recommendations – better alignment – commence sense.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor McCully and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the transfer of the management function of cemetery administration to the Estates Department within Environmental Services and approve the revised job role incorporating a 37hour Cemeteries Officer post as detailed in the Job Description and Person Specification in Appendix B, previously circulated, all as proposed and summarised in sections 3.1 to 3.6 of this report.

17. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Confidential by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 & 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present an update on the Transformation Action Plan.

Background

At its meeting in January 2024 the Corporate Policy and Resources (CPR) Committee recommended approval of the Transformation Programme (TP) Record Keeping and Information Management and was ratified by full Council on Tuesday 6th February.

Members were informed that monthly updates would be provided on progress to ensure the CPR Committee can oversee and monitor the progress of the work to complete the recommendations for which it is responsible.

Action Plan Progress - Record Keeping and Information Management

The Action Plan has been updated to reflect the current status of each of the recommendations and is attached at Appendix A, previously circulated. Members are asked to note the update provided.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Action Plan Update is considered and noted.

AGREED – that Committee note the Action Plan update.

Councillor Watton said he was still waiting on a response to his query raised at the February Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting in relation to General Operative job descriptions within Council prescribing the ability to drive. Councillor Nicholl concurred with Councillor Watton's remarks. The Chief Executive confirmed at the request of Councillor Watton that Trade Unions are involved in the process of confirming Job Descriptions.

17. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS (NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12(O))

There were no items of Any Other Relevant Business.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Councillor Peacock
Seconded by Alderman Callan and

RESOLVED – that Council move *'In Public'*

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting concluded at 7.25 pm.

Chair

UNCONFIRMED