

COUNCIL MEETING THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2017

Table of Adoptions

No	Item	Summary of key Adoptions
1	Apologies	<i>Alderman S McKillop, Councillors Duddy, Fielding, Fitzpatrick, Harding, Holmes, McCaul, McGlinchey, C McShane and Quigley</i>
2	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>
3	To Consider Notice of Motion proposed by Councillors McCorkell and Clarke referred from Council Meeting held 23 May 2017 Freedom of Borough – Mr Mervyn Whyte	<i>Agreed to bestow Freedom of Borough to Mr Mervyn Whyte</i>
4	CPR 20 June 2017, L&P Sub Committee Item 7.5 - Portballintrae Legal Matters	<i>Members updated</i>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN CIVIC HEADQUARTERS, COLERAINE ON
THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2016 AT 7:00 PM**

In the Chair : The Mayor - Councillor J Baird

Members Present : Aldermen - Campbell, Cole, Hickey, Hillis, King, McKeown
and Robinson

Councillors - Beattie, Blair, Callan, Chivers, Clarke, Deighan,
Douglas, Hunter, Knight-McQuillan, Loftus, McCandless,
McKillop MA, McLaughlin, McLean, McShane P, Mulholland,
Nicholl, Stevenson and Wilson

Officers Present : D Jackson, Chief Executive
M Quinn, Director of Performance
E McCaul, Committee and Member Services

In attendance Press (1 no.)

1 OPENING REMARKS

The Mayor welcomes elected members, officers and members of the press to the Special Meeting of Council.

The Mayor reflected on those who had recently lost their lives in the fire at Grenville Tower in London and through terrorist or hate related crimes.

Members stood for a minutes silence as a mark of respect.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman S McKillop, Councillors Duddy, Fielding, Fitzpatrick, Harding, Holmes, McCaul, McGlinchey, C McShane and Quigley.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

4 TO CONSIDER NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR McCORKELL AND CLARKE REFERRED FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD 23 MAY 2017

The following Notice of Motion was discussed at the 23 May 2017 Monthly Council meeting:

“That this Council bestows the Freedom of the Borough upon Mr Mervyn Whyte MBE, Race Director of the International NW200 in recognition of his services to the NW200 race and motorsport in Northern Ireland”

Councillor McCorkell read a prepared statement of support as follows:

‘Mervyn Whyte MBE has been involved at the highest level in the Coleraine and District Motor Club’s organising committee of the International Northwest 200 motorcycle road race for the last 17 years. He has been Race Director of the event since the year 2000 and in that time he has seen it become perhaps the best known road race in the world.

44 years ago he started out on the very bottom rung of the ladder, signing up as a volunteer race marshal in 1973 along with his wife Hazel. He has since worked his way through each role the event offers, going on to succeed Billy Nutt as Clerk of the Course in 2000. As the event moved with the times, Mervyn’s role became that of Race Director and since then he has focused on improving course safety for racers and the race day experience for the fans.

His tenure has not been without adversity and he has endured a number of setbacks since becoming Race Director. The Foot and Mouth outbreak of 2007 caused major disruption as did a bomb scare in 2011; numerous oil spills and poor weather also played havoc with race plans but worse of all came in the form of rider fatalities. All these setbacks have undoubtedly had an affect on the man that is Mervyn Whyte. I have no doubt that outside of the rider’s loved ones; no one feels the pain of loss more than Mervyn does when fatalities happen. His relationship with the riders is a very personal one and it is he who is usually first on the scene of any race day accident.

Mervyn continuously strives to make the racecourse safer, making changes and improvements and working with numerous Government Departments and other bodies (including ourselves), in order to secure more funding to help reduce risk to riders and spectators alike. His attitude to health and safety improvements has thankfully been rewarded in this year’s race with a number of riders ending up with less severe injuries than could have been had course improvements not have been carried out.

*He threw his weight behind the campaign to bring an Air Ambulance to Northern Ireland, knowing only too well the benefits it would bring, not just to the NW200 race event, but to many other public events throughout the Province. When the new Air Ambulance touched down at the NW200 Paddock last year, Mervyn said, **“We have seen the importance of having an***

airborne medical service over the last two years and this new helicopter is a huge milestone for emergency medical care in Northern Ireland.”

The International North West 200 is without doubt a world renowned event which attracts all the big name racers from across the globe. Thousands of racing fans visit Northern Ireland and the North Coast year on year to see their heroes in action. It is estimated that some 80,000 fans packed around the 8.9 mile race circuit with many millions more tuning in and logging on worldwide to watch and to listen into this year’s race, which was quite possibly the most successful in Mervyn’s 17 year reign as Race Director.

I know Council is currently assessing the financial benefits that come to the Borough through the International NW200 and I’m sure that other Councillors can perhaps speak with more authority on that subject, but I think we would all agree all our local businesses receive a boost as a result of the Race Week. You only have to look at the hoards of bikers rolling off ferries and driving on our local roads to appreciate the vastness of numbers involved. Our Borough literally comes to life and I’m sure the Borough’s population goes up quite considerably over the course of Race Week

Mervyn Whyte really has become Mr NW200. His steady hand in guiding the event through good times and bad, even through our darkest days has made him one of the best known and admired figures in Northern Ireland sporting circles. He carries a huge responsibility but is the calm head on race day, the one making all the big decisions and the one who always has the racer’s, the spectator’s and the volunteer’s safety and best interests at heart.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough owes a great debt of gratitude to Mervyn, his family and to the members of Coleraine and District Motor Club Ltd. It is hard to imagine the Triangle area without the NW200 and after 44 years, it is hard to imagine the NW200 without Mervyn Whyte MBE.

The Freedom of the Borough is the highest award that we as a Council can bestow on any of our citizens. We confer it upon individuals or organisations whose contribution to the Council area is deemed worthy of official recognition. Members, I hope that you will agree with me that the contributions of Mr Mervyn Whyte MBE over the last 44 years are worthy of such recognition. Madam Mayor, I so propose the motion.”

Councillor Callan seconded Councillor McCorkell’s proposal.

Representatives from the main political parties within the chamber spoke in favour and endorsed the Notice of Motion.

The Mayor put the proposal to the meeting which was carried unanimously.

It was also agreed that options would be considered on holding an event to recognise the work of the North West 200 volunteers, who painted kerbs, erected fences and man car parks during the international bike week.

Proposed by Alderman Hickey
Seconded by Councillor Chivers and

AGREED – that Council proceed to conduct the following business ‘in committee’.

5 PORTBALLINTRAE LEGAL MATTERS

The Chief Executive updated Members on legal issues around court proceeding relating to right of way, Seaport Avenue, Portballintrae.

The Chief Executive extended an invitation to meet with any Member with regard to the case.

Proposed by Alderman Hickey
Seconded by Councillor Loftus and

AGREED – that Council would conduct the remainder of the business ‘In public’.

There being no other business, the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7:42 pm.

Mayor