

**CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2019**

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of key Recommendations</b>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<b><i>Councillor Callan, Councillor Knight-McQuillan</i></b>
3.	Minutes of Meeting held Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2019	<b><i>Confirmed</i></b>
4.	Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Holmes, seconded by Alderman McCandless, supported by Alderman Hillis referred From 5 November 2019 Council Meeting (Freedom of The Borough arrangements)	<b><i>Support The Notice of Motion; the relevant 'sub-committee' being the Governance Working Group</i></b>
5.	Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure	<b><i>Defer to January Corporate Policy &amp; Resources Committee meeting</i></b>
6.	Harbour Commissioners	<b><i>Withdrawn from the Agenda</i></b>
7.	Council Constitution - Review and Amendments	<b><i>Approve as set out</i></b>
8.	Statement of Progress - Causeway Coast and Glens Community Planning Strategic Partnership	<b><i>Information Quarterly update to CPR in future</i></b>
	<b>IN COMMITTEE (Item 9)</b>	
9.	Structural Support Works to Portstewart Town Hall	<b><i>Place safe zone around Portstewart Town Hall;</i></b>

		<b>Council does not proceed with the hire of scaffolding until exact costs and timescales are known</b>
<b>10.</b>	Prompt Payments	<b>Information</b>
<b>11.</b>	Transactional Banking Services	<b>Approve extension for 2-year period</b>
<b>12.</b>	Correspondence	
	<b>12.1</b> Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Local Government Training Group	<b>Pay £14,568.00 net</b>
	<b>12.2</b> DfI Public Appointments Unit – Appointment of Councillors to the Board of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland	<b>Party Leaders to forward nominations</b>
<b>13.</b>	Matters for Reporting to Partnership Panel	<b>Nil</b>
	<b>IN COMMITTEE (Items 14-15)</b>	
<b>14.</b>	Debt Management	<b>Information</b>
<b>15.</b>	Minutes of the Meeting of The Land and Property Sub-Committee Wednesday 8 November 2019	
	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	<b>15.1</b> Requests for use of Council land (Item 6) Appendix 1 (118/18) Portstewart community Association, The Crescent, Portstewart (Item 6.1)	<b>Verbal Update</b>
	<b>15.2</b> Approval of the Minutes	<b>Approve</b>
<b>16.</b>	Any Other Relevant Business (Notified In Accordance With Standing Order 12(O))	
	<b>16.1</b> Soft opt-out Organ Donation (Councillor Peacock)	<b>Support</b>
	<b>16.2</b> Proposed Closure RBL Bennet House (Councillor Callan)	<b>Respond to Consultation opposing proposed closure</b>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CORPORATE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS  
TUESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7:00 PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor C McShane
- Present** : Alderman Hillis, McCandless, Duddy  
Councillors Callan, Chivers, Dallat O'Driscoll, Knight-  
McQuillan, McCaw, McGurk, McLean, Mulholland,  
Peacock, Scott and Wilson
- Non-Committee Member** : Councillor Holmes (Item 4)
- Officers Present** : M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services  
D Wright, Chief Finance Officer  
B Lofthouse, Head of OD/HR  
S McMaw, Head of Performance  
S Duggan, Civic Support & Committee & Member Services Officer
- In Attendance** : Press (1 No.)

**SUBSTITUTIONS**

The Chair advised Alderman Duddy was substituting for Alderman McCorkell; Councillor Mulholland was substituting for Councillor Quigley.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded for Alderman Fielding.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of Interest were recorded for:

Councillor Callan in - Transactional Banking Services, Councillor Callan left the meeting during consideration of the Item;

Councillor Knight-McQuillan in - Any Other Relevant Business - Bennet House, Councillor Knight-McQuillan left the meeting during consideration of the Item.

### **3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2019**

The Minutes of the Meeting held Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

**AGREED** – To Change The Order of Business.

### **4. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR HOLMES, SECONDED BY ALDERMAN MCCANDLESS, SUPPORTED BY ALDERMAN HILLIS REFERRED FROM 5 NOVEMBER 2019 COUNCIL MEETING**

#### **FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH ARRANGEMENTS**

*Council notes the existing arrangements for Freedom of the Borough.*

*Council proposes that in future:*

*A single event is held in the latter part of Year 4 of the Council term.*

*Up to 4 FOB's may be bestowed on worthy citizens or organisations.*

*Recommendations for FOB's will go forward to a sub-committee established for the purpose.*

*The Committee will also establish basic criteria upon which to determine whether a FOB has been met.*

*The Committee will put forward the 4 names to CPR/Full Council.*

Councillor Holmes spoke in support of the Notice of Motion, he advised the Freedom of the Borough was the highest award Council could bestow, and currently there was neither a process nor criteria applied. Previously, Council had proposals honouring multiple recipients, organisations and individuals, events may run at a cost of £10,000-£20,000. Councillor Holmes advised the Motion would seek to bring some clarity to the arrangements, Council should not be in a position where an individual or organisations' suitability for an award was debated in the public domain.

Councillor Holmes drew on an example of Blue Plaques, whose awards have both criteria for recipients and a process.

Councillor Holmes outlined his Notice of Motion:

- that Council limit the number of recipients to four individuals, organisations or teams, that a sub-committee of Corporate Policy and Resources assess nominations against criteria;
- that a criteria for the Award would be drawn up and agreed by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, names would be submitted via the general public;

- that a single event would be held at the end of each Council term where the recipients and their guests attend.

Councillor Holmes concluded this would create a process, with criteria, reduce costs and create a Signature Council event for each outgoing Council term.

Alderman Duddy felt a single event would take away from Council's recognition to showcase an individual or organisation, receiving the Freedom of the Borough; that tying four Freedom of the Borough events into one may cause some problems, whilst not disagreeing with a sub-committee looking at application of criteria. Alderman Duddy considered leaving nominations open to every individual may result in everyone wishing to put someone forward for the Award.

Alderman Hillis supported the Notice of Motion, which would bring structure to the process whilst not wishing to diminish the highest Honour Council could bestow.

Councillor Knight-McQuillan cited concerns having a single event in the latter part of Year 4, should a worthy recipient arise within the first Year, and the shine gone from the Honour.

Councillor Callan stated the Governance Working Group, reviewing Standing orders, Annex B, was the best forum for consideration and asked the proposer, Councillor Holmes whether he would amend his Notice of Motion with this in mind. Councillor Callan disagreed with an end of Term event.

#### Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Callan

Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan

- to recommend that Council refer reviewing the Freedom of the Borough arrangements to the Governance Working Group.

Councillor Holmes advised he was in agreement with the Governance Working Group as the forum to look at the criteria, however, the specific nature of his Notice of Motion had been set out and that was his proposal.

The Chair put the amendment to the Committee to vote.

5 Member voted For; 7 Members voted Against.

The Chair declared the Amendment lost.

The Chair put the Notice of Motion (defining the Governance Working Group as being the relevant ‘*sub-committee*’) to the Committee to vote.

10 Members voted For; 0 members voted Against.

The Chair declared the Notice of Motion carried.

\* **Councillor Holmes left the meeting at 7.30PM.**

## **5. SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Report, previously circulated, to present a new draft policy for managing sickness absence for all employees of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

**It is recommended** that the Corporate, Policy and Resources Committee approves the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure.

Members voiced their dissatisfaction with the Policy having been tabled without having had prior sight. The Director apologised, noted the comments, and explained the Policy had been tabled as soon as possible after consultation with Trade Unions, in light of available resources, and that it was part of the Performance Improvement Plan. In order to assist Members, she asked that they contact the Head of ODHR in the interim with any queries/concerns regarding the Policy in advance of the next meeting, so that these could be addressed.

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor McLean and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council defer consideration to the January Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

## **6. HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS**

The Director of Corporate Services advised the Item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

## **7. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION - REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS**

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Corporate Services with proposed amendments to the Council Constitution.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Proposed Amendment</b>
Part 1 – Articles of the Constitution	Insert new monthly schedule for Council and Committee meetings and include the new Finance Committee in this schedule.

Article 6 – Decision Making Structures	
6.1 Form	
Part 1 – Articles of the Constitution	Replace paragraph 9.3 with the following wording:
Article 9 - Officers	<i>The Chief Financial Officer to the Council is the officer appointed by the Council to that position and, under current arrangements, is the Chief Executive officer of the Council. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs and for execution of all duties of the Chief Financial Officer as set out in the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.</i>
9.3 Functions of the Chief Financial Officer	
Part 2 – Responsibility for Functions (Annex 2)	Remove reference to Governance Sub Committee as this Sub Committee as this is now a Working Group.  Include Terms of Reference for the new Finance Committee and amend terms of reference for Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.
Part 2 – Responsibility for Functions (Annex 3)	Remove reference to Legal Services as a joint arrangement with Derry City and Strabane District Council.
Part 3 – Rules of Procedure (3.3 Contracts Procedure Rules)	Replace link to Procurement Policy with link to revised Procurement Policy.
Part 3 – Rules of Procedure (3.4 Standing Orders)	Replace link to Standing Orders with link to revised Standing Orders.
Part 5 – Members Allowance Scheme	Replace Scheme of Allowance Payable to Councillors with revised Scheme of Allowance.

**It is recommended** that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommend to Council approval of the proposed amendments to the Council Constitution as outlined.

Councillor Callan welcomed the update.

Proposed by Councillor Callan

Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council approve the proposed amendments to the Council Constitution as outlined.

## **8. STATEMENT OF PROGRESS - CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

Information report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

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 which put in place 44 practical actions and activities to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic Framework.

### Statement of Progress

The legislation (Local Government Act NI 2014) requires that the Community Planning Partnership must make arrangements to monitor progress against meeting the objectives/outcomes of the Community Planning and the effectiveness of actions taken to achieve those objectives/outcomes.

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 was 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 44 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?

The legislation also requires that the Community Planning Partnership reports to the public by way of a published statement, highlighting progress on outcomes achieved and actions taken. This Statement of Progress has to be published once every two years with the first of these required within two years of the publication of the Community Plan. The Department for Communities decided that it would be appropriate for the first Statement of Progress for each Community Plan to be published in November 2019.

A full Statement of Progress has now been prepared and approved by the Community Planning Partnership for the Causeway Coast and Glens area. It has been published via the Council's website.

A leaflet giving a synopsis of the Statement of Progress is also currently being prepared and this will be circulated widely within the Causeway Coast and Glens area to provide the public with information on progress on the Community Plan.

Councillor Callan was pleased to receive the information, he stated Community Planning did not receive the promotion within Council that it deserves, given its importance in the Community, and in addition, a similar lack of promotion was given to the Local Development Plan.

The Director of Corporate Services agreed with the comments made and advised that Community Planning would be reported in future in a quarterly update to Committee.

Councillor McGurk advised the Local Development Plan was reported monthly to the Planning Committee.

Councillor Mulholland sought information relating to community planning engagement workshops, and what methods are used to publicise these to ensure as wide an audience as possible. Alderman Duddy advised a community engagement platform already existed and provided the detail of the representatives. Councillor Peacock concurred with Alderman Duddy's remarks and provided further details.

The Chair advised all Councillors would be circulated information on Community Planning engagement events.

## **9. STRUCTURAL SUPPORT WORKS TO PORTSTEWART TOWN HALL**

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Performance, to seek approval to undertake emergency interim remedial works to Portstewart Town Hall in order to secure the front façade to the inner skin of the building.

Portstewart Town Hall is a listed building and this has placed limitations on the Council with regard to the work that can be undertaken to modernise and protect the structure. Council has attempted on a number of occasions to have the building delisted but this has not been successful. Part of the building is leased to the Library Board although the lease has expired and a new lease has been requested.

Ownership of the building is unclear and the Council's Solicitors are investigating to seek clarity on this.

In July 2019 the Council's Infrastructure Team commissioned Nicholas O'Dwyer to carry out a structural survey of Portstewart Town Hall, copy circulated. Previously in 2015, following concerns regarding structural stability, wall ties were installed along the front façade. This was deemed a temporary measure to allow the Council time to decide on a longer term strategic approach to the future of the building.

The report carried out in July 2019 notes many areas of structural concern such as inadequacy of cavity ties, corrosion to galvanised ties, corrosion to support stanchions, rusting of steel lentsils and cracking of walls and cills. There has been a general deterioration in the condition of the front façade since 2015.

The Council's Infrastructure Team has assessed the report and believe the building now presents a Health and Safety risk to staff and users of the building, a view also expressed by the Structural Engineer.

On receipt of the report the Head of Performance instructed the Council's Health and Safety staff to carry out a site visit and a meeting was arranged with those managing the Library. It was agreed that the current condition of Portstewart Town Hall poses an unacceptable risk to the safety of anyone in close proximity to the building. The front of the Town Hall was secured with fencing and a recent communication from the Structural Engineer has directed that the complete building should be closed. A meeting was arranged with the Parish Priest from the adjacent Chapel as there are concerns that should the façade collapse, debris could land in the Chapel grounds. Additional safety actions are being considered.

On closure of the building, bookings taken for Portstewart Town Hall were programmed into other Council facilities and the Library staff erected signs to immediately inform users of the situation. The Library Board has taken the decision not to relocate as an interim action

given cost implications and is awaiting the decision of Council regarding remedial works to the building.

As an interim measure it is proposed that the Council take action to make safe the front façade thereby removing the potential for collapse. In line with recommendations set out in the Structural Engineers Report, this will involve constructing a purpose built scaffolding structure along the front of the building which will be tied into the front façade. Heavy weights will support the scaffolding preventing the facade from moving. The Council's Infrastructure Team has been developing a plan for this work which will require appointment of a suitably experienced Contractor. Any work to the building will require consultation with Statutory Bodies to include Building Control, Planning and the HED (Historical Environment Division).

It is estimated that the cost of this interim work will be £25k plus scaffolding hire costs. The timescale for the work is likely to be four to six weeks from appointment of the contractor, subject to consultation with the relevant Statutory Bodies. The proposed work is an interim solution and a report will be brought to Council to consider the wider issues associated with Portstewart Town Hall and options regarding its future. On completion of the work re-opening of all areas of the building will be dependent upon certification from a Structural Engineer. The scaffold support structure will be subject to on-going inspection and maintenance and will continue to stabilise the front façade until removed.

Should the Council decide not to approve the interim work, additional secure fencing will be erected around the building and the Town Hall will remain closed. It may be necessary to shore up the front façade with wooden props similar to that undertaken at the gable end of buildings. Building Control will provide direction regarding actions to be taken in such circumstances. The Library will then look at relocation options. Their costs to relocate are estimated at £20k which includes their IT infrastructure.

**It is recommended** that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council that approval is given for the cost of interim emergency works to Portstewart Town Hall as set out in this report.

Alderman Duddy requested clarity on the ownership of Portstewart Town Hall.

#### **MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'**

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

**AGREED** – that Committee move '*In Committee*'.

\* **Press left the meeting at 7.53PM.**

The Director of Corporate Services provided outline detail of the complexities of the legal issues surrounding the ownership of Portstewart Town Hall. She further advised a report was due to be brought to Council for consideration surrounding the issue.

The Director of Corporate Services advised of Council's obligations as a landlord to Libraries NI. She advised further interim measures had been explored by Officers in conjunction with Libraries NI, to find suitable alternative accommodation, if the work was not completed within a 3 months timescale, and contingency plans were currently being explored and considered.

During discussion, it was proposed by Alderman Duddy and seconded by Councillor Callan to recommend that Council approve the cost of interim emergency works to Portstewart Town Hall as set out in the report.

Councillor Wilson stated determination of the ownership of Portstewart Town Hall should be made sooner rather than later. Councillor Wilson proposed a separate motion in relation to the Item being considered, to assist progressing the matter. It was proposed by Councillor Wilson and seconded by Alderman Hillis, to recommend that a report is brought to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in February 2020, with options regarding the ownership of Portstewart Town Hall.

In response to a request for clarification from Councillor Mulholland, the Chief Finance Officer advised Council's Repairs and Renewals Reserve could be used for the maintenance work required. He further advised that a major project would be a Capital scheme.

Councillor McGurk stated concern at the £25,000 estimated remedial works quoted, she stated there would be additional ongoing scaffolding costs, especially given the current legal issues.

The Head of Performance advised scaffolding costs would form part of any tender exercise and a report brought back, if the costs were excessive.

Alderman Duddy withdrew his original proposal, with the agreement of his seconder.

The Director of Corporate Services advised she would bring a report and options analysis on the ownership of Portstewart Town Hall to the Land and Property Sub-Committee. Councillor Wilson, being

content with the direction given, withdrew his proposal, with the agreement of his seconder.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Callan and

**AGREED** - to recommend that Council place a safe zone around the affected area of Portstewart Town Hall; that Council does not proceed with the hire of scaffolding until exact costs and timescales for the duration of its erection are established.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Callan and

**AGREED** – to recommend that a Special Council meeting to progress any of the above issues is held, if necessary.

#### **MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’**

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council move ‘*In Public*’.

The Chair declared a recess at 9PM.

\* **The meeting reconvened at 9.15PM.**

#### **10. PROMPT PAYMENTS**

Report, previously circulated presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Department for communities (DfC) requires Council to record and publish statistics regarding the payment of supplier invoices with specific reference to two distinct measures namely invoices paid within 10 working days and invoices paid within 30 calendar days.

These figures are published on a quarterly basis by DfC with Councils required to do likewise. The purpose of the statistics is to encourage Councils to support businesses especially those local and/or small businesses for whom cash flow is of vital importance to their continued survival. In addition as part of Council’s performance improvement plan for this year the payment of our suppliers has been identified as one of the performance improvement objectives with a target of 90% of suppliers being paid within 30 calendar days. The tables circulated detailed Council’s performance since April 2017 the latest data being for quarter 3

of 2019/20 being up to and including early October 2019. Q2 performance has improved from the previous two quarters' figures which is encouraging albeit the improvement is small and the initial part of Q3 appears to continue this trend.

The small improvement would indicate that previously reported actions continue to have a positive impact although it may be too early to tell if this is either significant or permanent. As reported previously Council staff have been working on improved systems to assist with the purchase ordering and invoice payment processes. Once all staff have been trained Council can progress to the second phase which will allow for electronic authorisation of invoices and this should commence in the new year.

The Chief Finance Officer responded to a query from Councillor Scott in terms of progress regarding coding issues.

## **11. TRANSACTIONAL BANKING SERVICES**

- \* **Councillor Callan, having declared an interest, left the meeting at 9.15PM.**

Report, previously circulated presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council currently operates within a five year agreement for day to day banking services with Bank of Ireland.

The current arrangement was setup in 2014 for an initial three year period with the potential for a further two year extension. The extension option has been exercised but the current agreement will expire on 31 March 2020. Council therefore needs to ensure banking arrangements are in place from 1 April 2020.

In August, Corporate Policy and Resources committee approved that a tender be advertised for this purpose.

Subsequent to that decision Council's current provider have indicated that they are prepared to offer a further two years on the current charging basis. The current cost of our transactional banking is approximately £18,000 per annum.

Some market research has indicated that this is a very reasonable offer therefore the cost of a tendering process and the time it would require outweigh any potential savings that could be made against the estimated cost of extending our current arrangements.

**It is recommended** that council approve extending the current contract for transactional banking services with Bank of Ireland for a two year period.

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

**AGREED** – to recommend that council approve extending the current contract for transactional banking services with Bank of Ireland for a two year period.

Councillor McGurk requested that a full tender exercise would be carried out for the next period.

\* **Councillor Callan re-joined the meeting at 9.20PM.**

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

Report, previously circulated presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

### **12.1 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council – Local Government Training Group**

SOLACE has agreed the continued delivery of the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) shared service by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council for the 12month period April 2019-March 2020.

Council subscription rates to LGTG have remained the same as last year. Enclosed is Council's invoice for its contribution for the current financial year.

LGTG contribution 2019/20 - £14,568.00 NET

### **12.2 DfI Public Appointments Unit – Appointment of Councillors to the Board of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland**

Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has started the recruitment process to appoint ten Councillors to the Drainage Council. Council is invited to submit nominees to be considered by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for appointment to the Drainage Council.

The Appointments are not positions of responsibility as defined under the 2014 Act, which require to be shared across the

parties using d'Hondt or Saint-Lague formula of the Single Transferrable Vote method.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments also requires that public appointees should serve no more than two terms in the same position and no more than ten years in total. Council is asked to ensure that those who it is considering nominating will not have served more than one term on the Drainage Council. Councillors who have already served two terms, of whatever lengths, will not be eligible to be interviewed.

DfI wishes to improve diversity on its Boards and would welcome Council nominations from the following under-represented groups; women, younger people, people with disabilities and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

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

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council pay LGTG contribution 2019/20 £14,568.00 net.

The Chair invited Committee to forward nominations to the Board of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland.

### **13. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO PARTNERSHIP PANEL**

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

#### **MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'**

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor McLean and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council move '*In Committee*'.

### **14. DEBT MANAGEMENT**

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented by the Chief Finance Officer, to inform members of the current position surrounding debt owed to the Council by its customers.

Council implemented a revised Debt Management Policy in February 2017.

Committee was provided with aged debt analysis as at 30 September 2019, as at 30 September 2019, Over 90 Days Analysis and the status of any debt which is over 90 days in excess of £10



In accordance with Council's debt management policy the Chief Finance officer is required to report to Council any debts under £1,000 which the Chief Finance Officer has the authority to write-off. There were no such debts this month.

In accordance with Council's debt management policy, the Chief Finance Officer is required to seek Council approval in order to write off any debts in excess of £1,000. There were no such debts for recommendation this month.

The Chief Finance Officer agreed to look at the formatting of the presentation of the data going forward.

## **15. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LAND AND PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2019**

Confidential minutes, previously circulated.

### **15.1 Matters Arising**

#### **Requests For Use Of Council Land (Item 6) Appendix 1 (118/19) Portstewart Community Association, The Crescent Portstewart (Item 6.1)**

The Director of Corporate Services provided a verbal update on behalf of the Head of Sport and Wellbeing, she advised a report would be brought to the December Leisure and Development Committee on the following:

- the Head of Sport and Wellbeing was working on a Tender exercise for the provision of a Panoramic Wheel and/or associated children's amusement equipment (proportionate to a designated area on the site);
- the Head of Service was engaging with the Head of Infrastructure to consider the potential for a Licence agreement for the café building.

Councillor Knight-McQuillan expressed her disappointment a summary report had not been circulated.

Alderman Duddy stated that in his view it would be beneficial for one overarching body to look after all Property.

## 15.2 Approval of the Minutes

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

**AGREED** – to recommend that the Minutes of the Land and Property Sub-Committee meeting held Wednesday 8 November 2019 are approved and recommendations therein adopted.

### **MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’**

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council move ‘In Public’.

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

In accordance with Standing order 12(o) the following gave notice of Items of Any other relevant business.

### 16.1 Soft opt-out organ donation (Councillor Peacock)

It was proposed by Councillor Peacock and seconded by Councillor McGurk to recommend that this Council will support the introduction of soft opt-out organ donation legislation here in the North which will follow the example led by the introduction of the same legislation in Wales (2015), Scotland and England (2020) and support the calls from the Minister of Health in the South of Ireland, Simon Harris TD, for the same to be introduced there.

Councillor Peacock read a statement in support:

*“The North is the only area across the island of Ireland and Britain that isn’t working towards the introduction of soft opt out organ donation legislation. Soft opt out organ donation is a system where it is assumed everyone has given their consent to be an organ donor, unless otherwise stated. Currently, we only have the opt in system.*

*In the event of death with the soft opt out system, next of kin do have the final say whether or not organs are donated but I do believe it’s a conversation that we need to be having with our loved ones in terms of what our wishes are.*

*Research shows that countries with a soft opt out system in place leads to a higher number of organ donations.*

*I think now is the time again for us as a Council to call for the introduction of this legislation here in the North.*

*And it's not just a call for legislation to be introduced but for a high profiled communication and awareness raising strategy to begin pre and post introduction*

*It would also be a call for further investment in our health system to bring about the recruitment of specialist organ donation nurses and for further invest in our intensive care units. Whilst this is a legislative issue which needs to be addressed if and when the institutions get up and running again, I'm asking that we, across all our parties encourage our members, support base and wider society to register themselves as organ donors in the absence of soft opt out legislation and begin to have those sensitive conversations.*

*The significance of organ donation is that one organ donor could potentially save up to 9 lives.*

*Here in the North, 45% of the population are registered organ donors. Figures also show that there are approx 133 people waiting on the transplant list at this present time.*

*Last year, unfortunately; 14 people died before they could get a transplant.*

*This campaign has raised significant public interest in recent times with the case of Daithí Mac Gabhann and his parents; Mairtin and Sef who is on the transplant list for a heart.*

*3 year old Daithí is one of 15 people awaiting a heart transplant here in the North.*

*Let's as a Council work towards increasing the number of people who are registered as organ donors and increase the chances of the likes of young Daithi and others to get the much needed organ donation that they need.*

*This is a very emotive and sensitive topic that we are talking about and it is unfortunate that it needs to result in the death of someone for an organ donation to come forward but when there is an organ donor, life springs from death, sorrow turns to hope and a terrible loss becomes a gift.*

*Daithí and his family are spearheading this campaign and we could be the last council to have this issue before us as part of this campaign.*

*I passionately implore members to show their support for this item and for this campaign”.*

Alderman Duddy advised Council had received many presentations regarding organ donation, it was an emotive issue, and proposed the motion was amended to read ‘*Northern Ireland*’ and not ‘*the North*’.

Councillor Peacock, with the agreement of her seconder, Councillor McGurk accepted the proposed amendment to read ‘*Northern Ireland*’, given the spirit of the motion to support the campaign and soft opt-out organ donation legislation.

The Chair put the amended motion to the Committee to vote.

Committee voted unanimously in favour.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

- \* **Councillors Dallat O’Driscoll, McGurk and Peacock left the meeting at 9.40PM.**

## **16.2 Proposed Closure RBL Bennet House (Councillor Callan)**

- \* **Councillor Knight-McQuillan, having declared an interest, left the meeting at 9.41PM.**

Councillor Callan submitted the following Item - *In light of the recent proposed closure of RBL Bennet House in Portrush, can this council respond to the consultation - opposing the closure of this vital resource - and encourage the other 10 councils to do likewise?*

Councillor Callan read a statement of concern:

*“It has recently come to light that the Royal British Legion has issued a proposal, in the form of consultation, to close all 4 of their Break Centres in the UK including Bennet House in Portrush. This proposal does not outline what they plan to replace this service with and this proposed closure. Bennet House serves the veteran community of not only this council area but the whole of Northern Ireland and further afield, including the ex service community of the Republic of Ireland. This will have a profound impact on the veterans and their families of not only this council area but the whole of the island of Ireland.*

*These Break Centres provide a welcome respite break for serving and ex service personnel and their families. It is a safe environment where they*

*can relax and recharge among people who have a similar past or experience. This service provides a lifeline to many people who may not ever get a break and would not feel safe or comfortable going to a regular hotel. This break service has a profound positive impact on mental health and a recent study by Liverpool John Moores University has highlighted this positive result”.*

Proposed by Councillor Callan  
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council responds to the consultation and oppose the closure of RBL Bennet House, a vital resource for Northern Ireland and the Island of Ireland.

The Chair invited further consultation responses to be sent to Sinéad Duggan by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 9.50PM.

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Chair