

COUNCIL MEETING MONDAY 8TH JUNE 2020

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**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COLERAINE AND VIA VIDEO
CONFERENCE ON**

MONDAY 8TH JUNE 2020 AT 7:00 PM

In the Chair : Councillor Bateson (Items 1 – 5.2) **C**
Alderman Fielding (Items 5.3 – 9) **C**

Members Present : Aldermen Duddy **R**, Finlay **R**, Hillis **R**, McCandless **R**,
Boyle **R**, McKeown **R**, McCorkell **R**, McKillop S **R** and
Robinson **R**

Councillors Anderson **R**, Baird **R**, Beattie **R**, Callan **C**,
Chivers **R**, Dallat O’Driscoll **R**, Holmes **C**, Hunter **R**, Knight-
McQuillan **R**, McAuley **R**, McCaw **R** McGurk **R**, McKillop MA
R, McLaughlin **R**, McLean **R**, McMullan **R**, McQuillan **R**
McShane C **C**, McShane P **R**, Mulholland **R**, Nicholl **C**,
Peacock **R**, Quigley **R**, Schenning **R**, Scott, Wallace **R**,
Watton **R** and Wilson **R**

Officers Present : D Jackson, Chief Executive **C**
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services **R**
R Baker, Director of Leisure & Development **R**
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services **R**
P Donaghy, Democratic & Central Services Manager **R**
I Owens, Committee & Member Services Officer **R**

R – Remote
C – Chamber

In Attendance : Press (3)

WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed Elected Members, Officers and members of the public in the Chamber and attending remotely to the Annual Meeting of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was recorded for Councillor McGlinchey.

2. OUTGOING MAYOR'S ADDRESS

The outgoing Mayor reflected on his time in office and read the following address:

"Dia Daoibh everyone.

So tonight we are together for the 2020 annual meeting of Causeway Coast and Glens Council but not in the usual format, with us having to adapt to the current circumstances we presently live in virtually.

I don't think any of us could have imagined this is the scenario we would find ourselves in when we think back to last year's Annual Meeting – it certainly has been a year I won't forget in a hurry.

As a young Irish republican just elected to council, being selected by my party to be Mayor for Causeway Coast and Glens was a special and proud moment for me.

It was quite a baptism of fire but from the outset, I vowed to be a Mayor who would reach out to everyone across the Causeway Coast and Glens area, and do all I could to promote and showcase this wonderful area and all its attributes. I believe I've done that being in every inch of the council and engaging with many sporting, cultural, education, community and faith sectors.

I've had so many highlights throughout the course of my term, and I cannot stress enough just what an honor and privilege it has been to hold this position.

The North West 200 was my first official event, and sporting occasions and celebrations were a major theme throughout the year. The experience of The Open will stay with me forever, an occasion which truly highlighted the best of this area and proved our ability to host the biggest of world class events.

This Council should be rightly proud of its role in the occasion, when we welcomed over 200,000 visitors over the week for what was arguably one of the greatest Open Championships to date. As some of you will know, I enjoy a game of golf myself so I was delighted to have a chance to play Royal Portrush last summer – a dream for any golfer!

Indeed, it was one of the very few rounds I found time for during what was a hectic and busy year but hopefully I'm looking forward to fitting a few extra holes in Kilrea soon.

Other special memories were made in Cloonavin, and I was honoured to welcome so many different groups and individuals to the Mayor's Parlour.

The Comhaltas musical evening and the Council's first Seachtain na Gaeilge celebrations were certainly among the highlights. And it was very special to welcome my former primary and secondary school in Kilrea to mark their sporting successes.

At the outset of my term, I wanted to promote the importance of mental health, and I was delighted to partner with The Zachary Geddis Break The Silence Trust as my official charity for the year. The Geddis family is determined to make a positive difference to others following the untimely death of their much loved son and brother, and our partnership has helped to raise awareness and much needed funds for the charity's vital work and outreach programmes. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported our various fundraisers throughout the year as the group is wholly reliant on this type of support. Yasmin and her colleagues remain very active on social media at this time and continue to support those in need, despite the challenges of the pandemic and I'm thankful for the opportunity to work with her and her family on such an important issue.

I attended the worldwide strike for climate change at Portrush Strand with many primary schools from the local area demanding a change to our environment and planet. I marked LGBT awareness week by showing my solidarity on international day against homophobia and standing against any prejudice in our council.

However, the onslaught of coronavirus has changed so much for all of us, and as Mayor I've been privileged to witness the ongoing local response to the pandemic which demonstrates the best of our communities.

Fittingly, the annual Volunteers' Week celebration took place last week and I had the opportunity to visit a number of local groups to see for myself their work on the ground. The rapid response to ensure those isolated or vulnerable received the support needed to protect their physical and emotional well-being has been truly inspiring.

I was grateful for the opportunity from Limavady Community Development Initiative to volunteer with its telephone befriender scheme which I found to be an eye opening and uplifting experience. The community and voluntary sector have never been more important, and we should all be grateful to those who share their time and skills with others on a regular basis.

Alongside this, our own Council staff have showed tremendous resilience in the face of the pandemic, it was great engaging with our frontline workers

who have ensured that Council continues to provide first class essential services for all our ratepayers.

The establishment of the Co-Ordination Hub in Flowerfield was crucial at the outset of restrictions and helped to connect our most vulnerable residents to support in the community, with staff stepping up admirably to take on this new role.

Across the organisation, staff deserve huge credit for how they have reacted to the biggest health crisis we have ever faced, and my thanks go to each and every one of them at this time.

As I said at the beginning, I don't think any of us could ever have predicted just how quickly our lives would change from this time last year, and I think it's fair to say that we should all value our health, and that of our family and friends, more so now than ever.

In this context I want to pay recognition to all those campaigning in the Black Lives Matter movement following the brutal death of George Floyd at the hands of police brutality. Racism has never had and never will have any place in our society and from Causeway Coast and Glens I want to send my solidarity as we aim to challenge the plague of systematic racism from all quarters. As my last act as mayor I have opened an online book of condolence today on the councils website so those across Causeway Coast and Glens can pay their respects and solidarity to George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter campaign.

Throughout this year I have always aimed to represent the Council in a positive way, with passion and energy and I've very proud of what I have achieved.

I hope to be involved in politics for quite some time helping to shape and create a better Ireland for all and what an experience to enjoy in my first year as an elected rep.

I want to thank my family for all their support, which has meant so much to me, along with my party colleagues for their guidance along the way as well. A special thanks to all the backroom staff within council who assisted and kept me right along the way throughout the course of the year.

To all of my fellow elected members, as I step down from the Mayor's position I look forward to working alongside and of course proactively challenging you all in the coming years.

I wish the very best of the luck to the incoming Mayor, and I hope they enjoy the experience just as much as me.

Go raibh mile maith agat”

3. OUTGOING DEPUTY MAYOR’S ADDRESS

The Deputy Mayor requested the opportunity to reflect on her time in office and read the following address:

“First and foremost I'd like to thank my DUP colleagues for entrusting me with the esteemed position of Deputy Mayor.

I have to say I was apprehensive about accepting the position at first but I'm so glad that I overcome that.

It has been privilege and honour to have held this position.

It has been a busy year. I found it challenging at times as my role was made difficult by the short notice given to attend the required engagements, which I have to say was regrettable. However, I set out to carry out my duties to the letter and to do my utmost to represent all corners of the borough and I believe that I achieved this.

I attended the launch of events, exhibitions and booklets both council and community lead from Co Londonderry Agricultural Show to the official opening of the accessible school extension at St Mary's PS in Gortnaghey ; I marked significant commemorative occasions as pledged; supported community charity fundraising events, attended primary school prize award ceremonies including Christie Memorial PS, Millburn PS, Northern Regional College and Dunluce Primary school; attended official openings, Council's seasonal events, sporting events, festivals and receptions.

I'd like to congratulate the work of the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust who facilitated the Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme (HG LPS) and I wish the Binevenagh LPS the same success going forward.

I'd like to commend The charitable work of the Ballymoney Amateurs Swimming Club and Ballymoney United Youth Academy for their fundraising efforts in aid of the NI Air Ambulance service.

The work of our Council's Museum Services for the Stirling work on the Sam Henry exhibition. This collect was for me the epitome of what it was like growing up in rural Northern Ireland. The story telling sometimes 'imaginative', collection of artifacts, photos, poetry and songs transported me right back to my childhood and the culture of that era.

Special mention to the award winning achievements of woman in Business and the continuous work of this council in conjunction with ONUS, Woman's Aid and the PS Northern Ireland to ensure domestic violence is eradicated/stamped out in our borough and Northern Ireland wide.

And to the Riding for the Disabled Arena. I'd appeal to the incoming Mayor to pledge to strengthen our volunteer and community collaborations across the whole of the borough to ensure we achieve even greater outputs.

I was given a warm reception wherever I went and I want to extent my gratitude to all for their hospitality and kindness; it is for this reason that this year has been an extremely rewarding one for me

I'd like to thank the staff (in the Mayor's office) who supported me in carrying out my duties and I'd like to pay tribute to all the organizations and volunteers that I was fortunate to meet during my tenure. The passion and dedication of those to their projects is astounding. It was a privilege to have seen first-hand the work that they do, and there is no doubt that their efforts contribute greatly to the wellbeing of our people and economic sustainability of our borough. I wish them well in all their endeavours.

I am extremely proud of where I live and of the residents of this borough; whose contribution and love for their area make it the place where people would want to live work and visit.

I've always said that before I explore other countries that I'll do my own first and I believe we must focus our efforts on this approach. This could prove crucial in helping our society and businesses adapt and function well in the new norm which has been thrust upon us by the Coronavirus Pandemic.

I want to extend my well wishes to the next Deputy Mayor. I will be focusing my efforts this year on my Disability Champion role. I feel I'm well equipped for the job because of my first-hand experience and knowledge as a carer. I hope that I can bring something positive to the table and I ask for the continued support of members to achieve this.

Finally, the new Mayor will have his work cut out for him but I believe there's no better person for the job and under his stewardship I've no doubt that he will ensure that all those that contribute to our lives and livelihood will be given his full support and I wish him well in the year ahead."

Members sought and were given the opportunity to reflect on the outgoing Mayor's year in office.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest recorded.

5. NOMINATIONS TO POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY YEAR 2

5.1 Nomination of Mayor 2020 – 2021

The Chief Executive invited the party lead of the DUP to nominate the Mayor. Councillor Aaron Callan duly nominated Alderman Mark Fielding who was declared Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for the year 2020/2021.

5.2 Nomination of Deputy Mayor 2020 – 2021

The Chief Executive invited the party lead of the UUP to nominate the Deputy Mayor. Councillor Richard Holmes duly nominated Alderman Tom McKeown who was declared Deputy Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for the year 2020/2021.

- * Councillor Bateson vacated the Chair at this point in the meeting and Alderman Fielding assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

5.3 Nominations to remaining Positions of Responsibility Year 2 2020 – 2021

The Chief Executive referred to the schedule, previously circulated and invited each party to nominate the positions of responsibility for the Chair and Vice Chair of Committees in accordance with d'Hondt picks made at the Annual Meeting in 2019.

The nominations were confirmed by Nominating Officers as follows:-

Appointment/Committee	Elected Member	Party
Chair of Environmental Services	Councillor A McQuillan	DUP
Vice Chair of Environmental Services	Councillor O Beattie	SDLP
Chair of Leisure & Development	Councillor D Nicholl	SF
Vice Chair of Leisure & Development	Councillor C McShane	SF
Chair of Corporate Policy & Resources	Alderman N Hillis	UU
Vice Chair of Corporate Policy & Resources	Councillor B Chivers	SF
Chair of Planning	Councillor H Dallat O'Driscoll	SDLP
Vice Chair of Planning	Alderman S McKillop	DUP
Chair of Audit	Councillor I Wallace	DUP

Vice Chair of Audit	Councillor R Holmes	UU
Partnership Panel	4 year appointment made in 2019	
Northern Ireland Housing Council	4 year appointment made in 2019	
Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association	Councillor M Knight McQuillan	DUP

**6. COMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS
APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES YEAR 2**

The Chief Executive referred to the schedule of appointments to standing committees which had been previously circulated.

It was **AGREED**: that if there were any changes to the membership of the Committees Democratic Services would be informed by Nominating Officers.

7. APPOINTMENTS TO PARTNERSHIPS, EXTERNAL BODIES

The Chief Executive clarified that Democratic Services would contact Nominating Officers to confirm the remaining nominations to Partnerships and External Bodies as detailed on the schedule, previously circulated.

8. INCOMING MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Alderman Mark Fielding read the following statement:-

"I am honoured to have been nominated by my Party Colleagues as the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for 2020/2021. And also for the support of my family.

The last few months have been unprecedented and challenging times for us all.

I have known for some time that I was going to be the DUP nominee for the position of Mayor; none of us could have predicted at the beginning of the year the events that have led to the country being in lockdown as a result of the Covid Pandemic. We remember those families who have lost loved ones as a result of this disease and indeed all who have died during this period as families have had to face the challenges of the grieving process in a way that is the opposite to what are culture is used to.

I pay tribute to all key workers, and frontline staff not only in our Council and in Healthcare but to all in the public and private sector who have provided

essential services across our Borough and to those in our voluntary and community sector who have attended to those most vulnerable in our society.

Hopefully we are seeing the first steps in the path of recovery and I wish to see our businesses open and our economy return to our towns, villages and coastal resorts of our beautiful Borough. As a Councillor living in one of those resorts I am acutely aware of how vital it is in the future to see the Causeway and the North Coast once again hosting events and promoting itself as a premier tourist region.

2021 is an important year in our history, as Northern Ireland will be 100 years old. I want Causeway Coast and Glens to play its part in this significant milestone and I will be encouraging as many in our community across the Borough to get involved in events and celebrations to showcase what is great about Northern Ireland and its people in its centenary year.

I look forward to the year ahead as Mayor of our Council and working together with the citizens of our borough to help build a better future for us all.”

Members took the opportunity to wish the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor well for the incoming year.

9. Legal Opinion In The Matter of a Call In Request in Respect of a Decision of The Council dated 12th May 2020 in relation to the decision to furlough certain Council employees

It was agreed that the following item be considered ‘in committee’.

The Chief Executive referred Members to the confidential (previously circulated) legal opinion in the matter of a call in request in respect of a decision taken by Council on 12th May 2020:

“that subject to the agreement, from the individual member of staff, Council proceeds to furlough eligible employees, who are normally employed in a facility or service area that has ceased to operate, is unable to work from home and is not redeployed to another function within Council at 80% of their salary.”

The Chief Executive advised Members that Council was required to consider and re-take the decision.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor P McShane, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin:

“That subject to the agreement, from the individual member of staff, Council proceeds to furlough eligible employees, who are normally

employed in a facility or service area that has ceased to operate, is unable to work from home and is not redeployed to another function within Council at 100% of their salary.”

The Mayor put the amendment to the vote:

16 Members voted in Favour

22 Members voted Against.

The Mayor declared the Amendment lost.

* **The Mayor declared a short recess.**

* **The Mayor reconvened the meeting at 8.14pm.**

It was Proposed: *that subject to the agreement, from the individual member of staff, Council proceeds to furlough eligible employees, who are normally employed in a facility or service area that has ceased to operate, is unable to work from home and is not redeployed to another function within Council at 80% of their salary.”*

The Mayor put the decision to Council to be re-taken:

37 Members voted in Favour.

1 Member Abstained

The Mayor declared the Proposal carried.

It was agreed that the meeting would proceed ‘in public’.

There being no further business, the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 8.20 pm.

Chair