

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

To: Council Meeting

Date: 27th October 2015

Correspondence report

For Decision

1. **Belfast City Council Resolution re Animal Cruelty**

Correspondence has been received from Belfast City Council informing that at its meeting on 1st October 2015, Belfast City Council passed the following resolution:

“This Council regards cruelty against animals as a despicable crime; believes that more could be done to protect animals from cruelty and prevent reoffending. Therefore, this Council calls on the Minister for Justice to work with the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development and local councils to make it compulsory that those convicted of animal cruelty be prohibited from owning animals for a minimum period of time, establish and place those convicted of animal cruelty on a central register and outlaw the transferring of any animals to anyone on this register.”

Belfast City Council requests that Council support the stance which Belfast City Council has taken on this matter.

2. **Guidance on Effective Complaints Handling and the Principles of Good Administration**

Correspondence has been received Northern Ireland Ombudsman following up on correspondence sent to Causeway Coast & Glens Shadow Council dated 29th January 2015, offering training on complaints handling. They apologise for the delay are now in a position to commence this training.

If any members wish to avail of this opportunity please contact Democratic Services.

For Information

3. Balnamore Post Office, 74 Balnamore Road, Ballymoney, BT53 7PT

Correspondence has been received from the Post Office, confirming that they will be restoring Post Offices services at 74 Balnamore Road, Ballymoney, BT53 7PT at 09:00 on Tuesday 3rd November 2015. The branch closed temporarily in July 2015 following the resignation of the Postmaster. A new agent has been appointed to operate the branch and the facilities will remain the same as before the temporary closure.

4. Bellarena Post Office, 436 Seacoast Road, Limavady, BT49 0LD

Correspondence has been received from the Post Office with reference to making some changes to the Post Office at 436 Seacoast Road, Limavady and are inviting elected members to provide feedback before they finalise their plans (correspondence attached).

5. Northern Ireland Water

Correspondence has been received from Northern Ireland Water thanking Council for the opportunity to present at the Council Meeting on 22nd September 2015. A number of outstanding points were raised by various Members and responses to these points are detailed in the correspondence (correspondence attached.)

6. Recent Ombudsman Case – Enforcement Case and Maladministration

Correspondence has been received from the Department of the Environment in relation to a recent Ombudsman Case – Enforcement and Maladministration.

Following a recent investigation into the processing of a Departmental enforcement case, the Northern Ireland Ombudsman has found evidence of a number of instances of maladministration by the Department in the handling of the case (copy of correspondence attached).

7. Transport NI – Adoption of Streets

Correspondence has been received from Transport NI with reference to the adoption of a street Off Bann road (Bann Meadows), Ballymoney, Plan Reference No D/2005/0992/F.

8. Homelessness: Breaking Barriers to Health and Social Care

An invitation has been received from The Patient and Client Council and Council for the Homeless Northern Ireland inviting Elected Members to Homelessness: Breaking Barriers to Health and Social care on Monday 30th November 2015 at Belfast City Hall at 10am (flier previously emailed).

If any Members wish to attend please contact Democratic Services no later than Wednesday 25th November 2015.

9. Minutes of the Partnership Panel Meetings

Minutes from the Partnership Panel Meetings held on 2nd December 2014, 3rd February 2015, 28th April 2015 and 23rd June 2015 (copies attached).



Mr David Jackson MBE - Chief Executive
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
66 Portstewart Road
COLERAINE
BT52 1EY

15 October 2015

Dear Mr Jackson

Bellarena Post Office®
436 Seacoast Road, Limavady, BT49 0LD

Changes to your Post Office® - tell us what you think

We're talking to the Postmaster about making some changes to the above Post Office and we'd like you to tell us what you think about the changes before we finalise our plans.

What's happening?

There's an exciting programme of investment and transformation taking place across the Post Office network, helping to make our branches more modern and convenient for you and for the Postmasters who run them. We're talking to the Postmaster about changing to one of our new-style local branches and if the change goes ahead:

- Post Office services would be offered from a low-screened, open plan style service point, integrated into the retail counter
- The branch would be open for longer:
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu & Sat 07:30 – 19:30, Fri 07:30 – 21:00 & Sun 07:30 – 13:00.
(Current opening times are: Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri 09:00 – 12:30 & 13:30 – 17:30, Wed & Sat 09:00 – 12:30 & Sun Closed)
- Customers will still be able to get most of the Post Office products and services you're used to however for a small number of services you may need to visit an alternative Post Office, go on-line or, telephone our customer helpline. Details of product availability are provided overleaf
- To get the new branch ready, it may need to close for up to seven days during March/April 2016 for refurbishment

What's next?

We want to know what's important to you and would like you to tell us what you think, particularly on the following areas:

- Why you use this Post Office and what you like about it
- What you think about the proposed new-look Post Office. For example the Post Office service point would be on the retail counter, so is there anything you'd like to ask us or would like us to take into consideration about the proposed location of the Post Office till or the queuing area
- What you think about any changes to the opening hours
- If you have any comments about how you will access the Post Office products and services that won't be available at the branch if the change goes ahead
- If you have any comments about the potential closure period during the refurbishment or access to other branches in the area

There's also a list of frequently asked questions provided at the end which you may find useful.

It's easy to let us have your feedback by completing our convenient online survey via the following link postofficeviews.co.uk and entering the unique code for this branch 15271199

If you have a QR scanner on your mobile phone, all you need to do is scan here:



Customer information materials are also being displayed in branch and details are published on our website too at postofficeviews.co.uk

We'll be accepting comments up to and including 13 November 2015.

You can also let us have your comments in the following ways:



postofficeviews.co.uk



FREEPOST Your Comments
**(This is the full address to use.
No further address or name details are required)**



comments@postoffice.co.uk



Customer Helpline: 03457 22 33 44
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

Please note that items sent by Freepost take 2 working days to arrive and don't include Saturday or Sunday. Therefore please do allow sufficient time for your comments to arrive before the end of the consultation period, as we are unable to consider feedback received after the deadline.

We won't be responding to you individually however the feedback received will be taken into consideration as we finalise plans with the Postmaster. We'll write to you again outlining the main comments received and our response to these and also to explain the final plans for the branch. All of the responses received will be provided to the independent statutory consumer watchdog, which in Great Britain is Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, and in Northern Ireland, the Consumer Council.

When would the changes happen?

We're planning to make these changes in March/April 2016 and we'll put a poster up in branch at least two weeks before to let customers know the exact date and to tell them how we've considered the feedback. We'll make sure any disruption caused by the refurbishment is kept to a minimum.

The following branch will be happy to provide customers with Post Office services during this period.

- Limavady Post Office, 38-40 Main Street, Limavady, BT49 0EU

We'll also be asking customers for their feedback once the changes have taken place and details will be available in branch shortly after the new look branch opens.

Yours sincerely

Damian Mulholland
Area Manager

To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille please contact the Customer Helpline on 03457 22 33 44 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.

This communication process has been agreed with the independent statutory consumer watchdog, which in Great Britain is Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, and in Northern Ireland, the Consumer Council, and is being carried out in line with our Code of Practice for changes to the Post Office network, which we have agreed with them. If you'd like copies of the Code they are available in branch, or by contacting us or on our website at: www.postoffice.co.uk/transforming-post-office. If you think that the process has not been properly followed and wish to make a complaint, then please write to us or email us via the contact details included in our posters and letters and let us know why. We'll examine your complaint and respond to you as soon as we can. We will provide you with the relevant contact points for the consumer watchdog, so if you are still not satisfied when you have received our response, you can ask them for their assistance.

Bellarena Post Office® services available

Your Postmaster or our Customer Helpline on 03457 223344 will be happy to help you with any queries about product availability or provide you with details of maximum value of transactions. Customers can also shop online at www.postoffice.co.uk

	Current branch	New branch
Mail		
First & Second Class mail	✓	✓
Stamps, stamp books (1 st class 6 & 12 only, 2 nd class 12 only)	✓	✓
Special stamps (Christmas issue only) & postage labels	✓	✓
Signed For	✓	✓
Special Delivery	✓	✓
Home shopping returns	✓	✓
Inland small, medium & large parcels	✓	✓
Express & contract parcels	✓	✓
British Forces Mail (BFPO)	✓	✓
International letters & postcards (inc. signed for & Airsure)	✓	✓
International parcels up to 2kg & printed papers up to 5kg	✓	✓
Parcelforce Worldwide International parcels	✓	✓
Articles for the blind (inland & international)	✓	✓
Royal Mail redirection service	✓	✓
Local Collect	✓	✓
Drop & Go	✓	✓
Withdrawals, deposits and payments		
Post Office Card Account	✓	✓
All personal and business banking cash withdrawals, deposits, balance enquiries & enveloped cheque deposits (card, barcoded or manual)	✓	✓
Postal orders	✓	✓
Moneygram	✓	✓
Change giving	✓	✓
Bill payments		
Bill payments (card, barcoded or manual)	✓	✓
Key recharging	✓	✓
Transcash (without barcode)	✓	✓
Travel		
Pre-order travel money	✓	✓
On demand travel money	Euros/Dollars	Euros/Dollars
Travel insurance referral	✓	✓
Payment by cheque		
Alternative access to Post Office services available at Limavady Post Office, 38-40 Main street, Limavady, BT49 0EU	✓	✓
	Opening times: Mon – Fri Sat	09:00 – 17:30 09:00 – 12:30

Frequently Asked Questions.

Why are you looking to make this change?

This change is part of major programme of modernisation taking place across the Post Office network, the largest in the history of Post Office Limited. The Programme is underpinned by Government investment which will see up to 8,000 branches modernised and additional investment in up to 3,000 community and outreach branches.

Will my transactions still be private?

In most cases Post Office and shop customers queue together but the Post Office service point will be clearly signed. A low level serving screen helps to aid privacy and there would be enough space for people to wait back from those being served. Post Office training also covers the protection of confidential information and personal data.

What about security?

We can't go into detail about specific security arrangements in order to safeguard those people working at and using Post Office branches but there would continue to be appropriate security measures in place, as well as robust procedures and guidelines which postmasters and their staff are required to follow. All of which helps contribute to a secure environment.

Will people still be properly trained?

Our customers deserve to receive the best possible service. Post Office training packages are provided to postmasters so that any person they employ who would be handling Post Office transactions is trained to Post Office standards, just as you'd expect.

Will there be enough space?

To make sure any changes meet with Post Office accessibility standards, an assessment is carried out on what the proposed layout might look like following conversion. This includes having space to wait for service, adequate turning circle space for wheelchair users where appropriate and keeping entrance areas and shopping aisles free of any obstructions, so people have a clear access route to the Post Office service point.

Can I see the floorplans?

The feedback we get from customers and local representatives helps us to deliver the change with the postmaster, including the final layout. Once the change takes place, will be asking customers for their feedback on how they are finding their new style service.

Will I have to wait longer to be served?

The new style branch is designed to handle straightforward transactions which can be carried out quickly and efficiently. Post Office services will also be available whenever the shop is open so customers can choose to visit the branch at a time more convenient to them.

Will I still be able to do business banking?

Staff at the branch will be happy to speak to customers about their individual requirements and transaction limits for their specific transaction.

Will I still be able to leave my mail securely?

Mail will be held safely at the branch ready for collection by Royal Mail.

Northern Ireland Water
Westland House
40 Old Westland Road
Belfast
BT14 6TE

Tel: 0345 3006461
www.niwater.com

Mr David Jackson MBE
Chief Executive, Causeway Coast and Glens
Borough Council
Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine
BT52 1EY



Date 8 October 2015

Dear David

I write on behalf of NI Water to thank you for the opportunity to appear before Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council on Tuesday 22 September 2015 in order to update members and officials on our activity within your council area. It is our hope that this session has proven to be useful to the council.

A number of outstanding points were raised by various councillors on that occasion, and I enclose responses to those points below. I would be most grateful if you could convey these responses back to the councillors in question.

Alderman Cole enquired about our response to recent 'no water' complaints affecting the Grove area, near Garvagh. I can confirm that NI Water is aware of only one water supply incident affecting customers on Grove Road over the last 12 months. This occurred on 8 July 2015, as a result of a burst watermain in the area. A total of 13 customer calls were received and supplies were restored within a six hour timeframe. There is no history of bursts in this area, and NI Water is therefore content with our response in relation to this incident. However, if Alderman Cole has other incidents he would like to bring to our attention, I would be content to investigate further.

Councillor McGuigan enquired if NI Water has any plans to adopt the Harbour Road area of Ballintoy as part of a wider wastewater upgrade affecting the village. I can confirm that at this point in time, NI Water cannot commit to the inclusion of the Harbour Road area, as any proposed solution would prove to be economically unviable. However, we will keep the situation under review.

Alderman Mullan raised queries about sewage waste in the Benone area – we are aware of a situation affecting properties at Seacoast Road, Benone which suffer out of sewer flooding during periods of extreme weather. NI Water is currently considering options to upgrade the wastewater pumping main and the pumps within the pumping station.

Northern Ireland Water
Westland House
40 Old Westland Road
Belfast
BT14 6TE



Tel: 0345 3006461
www.niwater.com

Councillor Fitzpatrick asked about extreme rainfall affecting a wastewater pumping station in Coleraine. This problem is associated with Riversdale wastewater pumping station.

NI Water is aware of previous concerns about this facility discharging into the River Bann, largely from boat users on the river. No complaints have been received recently. The station has a storm discharge which is above the water level and will be very visually evident when discharging. The performance of this facility was investigated approximately two years ago, with the result that it was shown to be fully in line with the design and relevant Water Order Consent as approved by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. The Riversdale facility is one of our largest wastewater pumping stations and is relatively new, with storm tanks, a back-up generator, screening capacity, etc. NI Water will continue to monitor the situation closely.

I hope you and the members noted above will find this response helpful. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our Elected Representatives Line on 0345 3006461.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean McAleese".

Sean McAleese
Director of Customer Service Delivery
NI Water

Your ref:
Our ref: OM/003/2014
Date: 16 October 2015



Chief Executives of District Council
(by email)

Chief Planner's Office
71 Ebrington Square
Derry~Londonderry
BT47 6FA

Tel : 028 71314136

Dear Chief Executive

Recent Ombudsman Case – Enforcement Case and Maladministration

Following a recent investigation into the processing of a Departmental enforcement case, the Northern Ireland Ombudsman has found evidence of a number of instances of maladministration by the Department in its handling of the case. These were:

1. failure to issue an enforcement notice in a timely manner;
2. failure to keep proper records and give reasons for decisions in relation to issuing an enforcement notice; and
3. failure to afford priority to an enforcement case in accordance with policy.

The Department has accepted the findings and has provided the complainant with a written apology and made a payment as redress for the injustice caused. The Ombudsman has asked that we share our learning from this case with councils.

The first failure occurred when there was a 10 month delay in issuing an enforcement notice following authorisation at an enforcement group meeting. No explanation for the delay could be provided and the Ombudsman found this to be inaction by a public body, constituting maladministration. Had an explanation or mitigating factors been provided it is possible that the Ombudsman could have come to an alternative view. In the absence of an explanation it was clear that the Ombudsman could only reasonably reach a conclusion of maladministration.

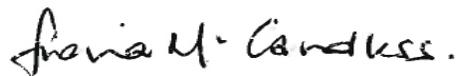
The second failure was the very brief written records of the enforcement group decisions. There was no detail of the discussion or consideration that was given to the decision making. It was the Ombudsman's view that the issuing of enforcement notices warrants focused attention within an organisation. There was no record of the rationale behind the decision making that informed the enforcement decision. In the absence of recorded evidence it was not clear why a decision was made to issue an enforcement notice. The Ombudsman found that the failure to keep proper records and to explain the reasons for such an important decision to be

contrary to the third principle of Good Administration which requires a public body to be open and accountable by keeping proper and appropriate records and to give reasons for decisions. The Ombudsman considered this failure to constitute maladministration.

The third failure was the lack of priority afforded to the case when judged against the Department's published Enforcement Strategy (2009). The case had been opened before the Strategy was published but the Ombudsman considered that when the Strategy was published the Department should have reviewed the case and given it a priority to ensure that it would be processed in accordance with the new internal targets identified in the strategy. The Ombudsman considered that the Department's failure to comply with its own policies to be contrary to the first principle of Good Administration which requires a public body to 'get it right' by acting in accordance with the public body's policy and guidance. The Ombudsman considered this failure to constitute maladministration.

I trust you find this helpful and if you have any queries, please contact Eamon Lynch on 028 71314134 or eamon.lynch@doeni.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona M. McCandless." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

FIONA MCCANDLESS
Chief Planner