

## **Derry City and Strabane District Council**

**Minutes of Meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Committee (Open)  
held in the Council Chamber - Strabane Council Offices on Wednesday 18 April  
2018 at 4.00 pm**

**Present:- Members of the Committee - Councillor Dobbins (Chair); Aldermen ;  
Councillors Tierney, Campbell, Bresland, Hussey, Warke, C Kelly, D Kelly,  
Duffy, Hastings, R McHugh and Reilly.**

**In Attendance:- Mrs k Phillips (Director of Environment and Regeneration),  
Mr F Morrison (Head of Capital Development and Building Control), Ms M  
Edwards (Acting Heritage development Officer), Mr T Monaghan  
(Regeneration Manager) and Ms N Meehan (Committee Services Assistant)**

### **ER70/18 Notice and Summons of Meeting**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration read the Notice and Summons for the Meeting.

### **ER71/18 Apologies**

There were no apologies.

### **ER72/18 Declarations of Members' Interests**

Councillors Campbell and McCauley declared an interest in Item 12 – Heritage Development Officer – Work Programme 2018.

### **Chairperson's Business**

#### **ER73/18 Traffic Calming Scheme- Moss Park**

With the permission of the Chairperson the Director of Environment and Regeneration advised Members of correspondence which had been received from the Department for Infrastructure on 11 April which was too late to be incorporated in the report. She stated that comments were being sought by the Department by 30 April regarding

a Traffic Calming Scheme at Moss Road, Derry details of which were included on an attached map. She ensured that the correspondence would be emailed to Members and any comments received would be collated and forwarded to the Department prior to April 30.

**ER74/18 Confirmation of the Open Minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on Wednesday 14 March 2018**

Minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on 14 March 2018 (ER44/18-ER63/18) were confirmed and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

**ER75/18 Matters Arising**

There were no matter arising.

**ER76/18 Annual Service Plan - Environment and Regeneration Directorate**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report a copy of which had been previously circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to seek Members' approval to adopt a Service Plan for 2018/19 for the Environment and Regeneration Directorate and to consider some of the achievements from 2017/18.

Members from all Parties thanked the Director for her report and commended her on its content.

Councillor Reilly stated that overall this was a very positive report with a number of excellent programmes having been delivered and a considerable number nearing completion. He referred to 4.1 of the report which referred to the Directorate's budget and the proposed capital development programme which signified the importance of this Directorate for both Council and the ratepayers. He said that much of the work of elected representatives derived from this Directorate and those issues most pertinent to ratepayers more often than not related to Environment and Regeneration. He concluded that there was a genuine willingness within the Directorate to ensure that work was carried out and services delivered for ratepayers.

Councillor C Kelly commended staff from the Environment and Regeneration Directorate on their achievements. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the major projects he said it was the everyday issues which were of greatest importance to ratepayers. He referred to the good rapport which existed within the Directorate which was evident through team working. He referred to a meeting he had attended a

few months previously which highlighted the work carried out by each Directorate on a daily basis and provided information on the various points of contact for specific issues.

Alderman Ramsey welcomed such a positive report however he expressed concern at complaints received on a weekly basis regarding difficulties being experienced in relation to the black/brown bin household waste collection. He acknowledged that this had previously been as a result of inclement weather but pointed out that this was no longer an issue. He requested that a report thereon be presented to a future Meeting of the Committee.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration requested that any complaints received by Members regarding household refuse collection be forwarded to her directly in order that these could be addressed.

Alderman Ramsey stated that staff had been made aware of complaints which had been received and reiterated the need to review the situation.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration undertook to follow up on this.

Alderman Hussey welcomed the report and the extensive work carried out by the Directorate. He expressed concern that a number of projects which he assumed to be pending had not been included in the year ahead Service Plan, namely the provision of play facilities at Magheramason. He said it was frustrating that this had not been referenced specifically in the Plan particularly given the impact this would have on residents of that area. He stated that there were a number of community issues within this area which must be addressed and anticipated that the provision of play facilities in Magheramason would be progressed by Council.

Alderman Hussey referred to previous concerns he had raised regarding the lack of response from NIEA on planning applications regarding agricultural buildings some of which were subject to ammonia pollution. He stated that the issue which had raised initial concerns remained ongoing and must be addressed. He said he had been advised that the Department had undertaken to examine ammonia levels and referred to the need for this to be pursued. He referred to the excellent work being carried out by Council's Planning Officers which could not be overshadowed by this lack of input from NIEA.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that Officers had been working on a number of projects including the provision of

play facilities at Magheramason which were included on the Capital Projects list and which would be presented to the Capital Projects Working Group the following week when a list of priorities would be agreed by Members.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration undertook to raise the issue regarding the lack of response from NIEA. She understood however that this had been raised at a senior level and undertook to investigate what response, if any, had been received.

Councillor Hastings referred to the outstanding progress which had been made in terms of greenways and the tremendous success which had been achieved across a number of areas. He suggested that a number of the issues raised by Alderman Hussey were legacy issues which should have been dealt with by the former Strabane District Council. He continued that the Park at Strathfoyle which was now in use was outstanding and beyond the expectation of many. He commended the Directorate on their work in relation to greenways and the riverine project which reflected the ethos of the Environment and Regeneration Directorate.

Alderman Bresland anticipated that Donemana and Artigarvan playing fields were included on the list of Capital Projects.

Subsequently the Committee

**Recommended that Members adopt the attached Service Plan for 2018/19.**

**ER77/18 Top of the Hill - Removal of Play Area**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to seek Council authority to remove the disused play area at the Top of the Hill Park.

In response to a query from Councillor Reilly, the Director of Environment and Regeneration confirmed that the long-term plan was to retain this area as an open space.

Councillor C Kelly welcomed the recommendation contained in the report which was in accordance with the wishes of local residents and would help to alleviate ongoing social problems being experienced in the area.

The Committee

**Recommended that Council authorise the removal of the dilapidated play provision at the Top of the Hill Park.**

In response to a query from the Chairperson, the Director of Environment and Regeneration said she was not aware of any outstanding health and safety issues at any of the Parks within the Council area.

**ER78/18 Street Naming and Property Numbering - Development of 14 New Dwellings at Coolafinny Road, Derry - Request for Development Name**

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to gain Members' consent to name a new development of fourteen dwellings at a site on Coolafinny Road Eglinton, Derry.

The Committee

**Recommended that the new development on Coolafinny Road, Eglinton be named Coolafinny Meadow as this complied with policy as it pertained to the name of the townland and access road of where the development was situated.**

**ER79/18 Street Naming and Property Numbering - Requests for Installation of Bilingual Signage**

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of the outcome of recent applications to provide bilingual signage at Blackthorn Manor and Woodbrook, Derry.

The Committee

- Recommended**
- (a) that the application to erect bilingual signage at Blackthorn Manor, Derry be rejected and the plebiscite did not achieve the minimum consent of 66% of returns required; and**
- (b) that the application to erect bilingual signage at Woodbrook, Derry be approved as the plebiscite achieved the minimum consent of 66% of returns required.**

**ER80/18 Live Here Love Here Project Funding**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to seek Members' approval to provide funding in the sum of £27,000 per annum over the next year 2018-2019 to the LIVE HERE LOVE HERE project managed by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB).

Alderman Hussey expressed his support for this tremendous scheme which would assist the entire community. He referred to 3.4 of the report which was worthy of note as it contained an acknowledgement of issues such as littering on rural roads. He welcomed Council's support for this most worthwhile project.

Councillor Tierney stated that the benefits of this scheme had been evident across all communities.

Councillor D Kelly referred to the need to effect behavioural change among those who are causing the problem. He queried if there was any evidence to suggest that there had been noticeable change in behaviour among offenders. He said he did not favour the current advertising campaign which did not highlight the problem of littering along roads. He stated that litter remained a serious problem throughout the Council area.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration agreed with the previous speaker's comments and advised that discussion had taken place regarding Council's increased resources for campaigns surrounding environmental issues. She stated that Officers were

currently considering more bespoke methods around addressing littering and recycling. She stated that a number of recycling campaigns had been carried out together with short videos. However, resources had now been secured within Environment and Regeneration Directorate to concentrate on this issue in the coming months in an effort to effect change at a local level. She said that it was discouraging to observe these continuing behaviours. She stated that currently a number of possibilities were being considered eg CCTV together with relevant requirements and Members would be updated in the coming months on the agreed approach. She concluded that given the additional dedicated resources available it was anticipated that the work would become more localised and effective.

### **ER81/18 Update on Un-adopted Roads Working Group**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the workings of the Member/Officer Working Group set up with regard to un-adopted roads issues across the district.

Councillor Reilly expressed his appreciation for the work carried out to date and thanked Members of the Working Group for their participation. He referred to discussions which had taken place with residents to advise them of the legalities regarding their property which he said was key to achieving a satisfactory outcome. He stated that the ratepayers concerned correctly assumed they were entitled to services similar to those which they had received in their previous dwellings and were experiencing difficulties accepting that they were unable to access certain services in their new property most notably the refuse collection service. Reference was made to specific developers who were keen to work with Council to have the situation resolved which was encouraging. He said it would be reassuring if Council and developers could actively seek a solution.

Alderman Hussey referred to a number of issues which needed addressing including some legacy matters. He said the longer the process took the less viable it became to intervene as the bond would not be sufficient to cover the cost of the works required to bring the road up to a standard suitable for adoption by the Department. He thanked Council for the work carried out particularly during the period following application for adoption and the subsequent probationary period. He stated that there were many potentially detrimental issues which impacted on Council services.

In response to a query from Councillor C Kelly, the Director of Environment and Regeneration confirmed that the Working Group met on a quarterly basis.

In response to a further query from Councillor C Kelly, the Director of Environment and Regeneration suggested that Councillor McCauley could replace Councillor Hassan on the Working Group.

Councillor C Kelly suggested that the timeframe set out by the Department in relation to the adoption of roads was unacceptable and expressed concern that it was ratepayers who were being most detrimentally impacted upon.

In response to a query from Alderman Warke, the Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that the Department were in possession of information regarding the current number of un-adopted roads. However, she undertook to request that this be made available to Members.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration referred to the importance of prospective buyers ascertaining if a development had been adopted by the Department. She stated that Council was endeavouring to develop, through its legal services, a system to encourage solicitors to bring this to the attention of their clients during the conveyancing process, together with the practicalities attached. Prospective buyers may not question if a development had street lighting and whether or not the road has been adopted by the Department and the consequences thereof. She reiterated that Council was endeavouring to encourage solicitors to raise this issue with potential buyers during the conveyancing stage. Councillor Reilly stated that it was key to have this matter raised at the conveyancing stage. He stated that if it was possible to ensure that solicitors raised such issues at the conveyancing stage it would assist in addressing this problem.

Alderman Warke suggested that following the completion of a development, developers should be provided with a timeframe during which the site must be brought up to a standard suitable for adoption.

Alderman Ramsey referred to an issue in terms of consistency and the need to strive for a phased approach. He referred to a number of developments outside Dublin all of which were being developed on a phased basis where each phase was completed prior to beginning work on the next phase. This would ensure that developments were of a



standard suitable for adoption prior to the developer leaving the site. In line with the Working Group's efforts to achieve consistency he felt that adopting a phased approach would prove successful in addressing this problem.

The Committee

**Recommended (a) that Officers develop a Guidance document for developers outlining the circumstances under which Council could provide collection services on un-adopted estates and engage with local developers to seek views in relation to this following which an updated report will be brought back to Members for consideration; and**

**(b) that Council write to the Law Society advising them of the situation being experienced in this Council area in terms of un-adopted and highlighting the role Solicitors could play in addressing this problem.**

**ER82/18 Heritage Development Officer - Work Programme 2018**

The Regeneration Manager presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update in relation to the role and proposed work programme for the Heritage Development Officer within Council.

Members noted the content of the report.

**ER83/18 DfI Proposed No Waiting Restriction at Aberfoyle Crescent**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of a letter dated 22 March 2018 received from Transport NI, Network Development Section regarding a DfI proposal to introduce a no waiting at any time restriction on Aberfoyle Crescent.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration said she was not aware of any other consultation which had been carried out. However, she undertook to address this with DfI Roads.

**ER84/18 Proposed Disabled Parking Bays**

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of correspondence dated 28 March 2018 from Transport NI, Network Development Section, regarding proposed disabled persons' parking bay at Mountjoy Street, Derry.

Members noted the content of the report.

**ER85/18 Applications Processed Under Building Regulations (NI)**

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of applications processed under Building Regulations (NI) between 1 February 2018 and 28 February 2018.

Members noted the content of the report.

**The meeting ended at Time Not Specified**

**The Meeting went into Confidential Business**