

Derry City and Strabane District Council

Open Minutes of Health and Community Committee of Derry City and Strabane District Council held in the Chamber, Strabane Council Offices, on Thursday 19 April 2018 at 3.00pm.

Present: - Councillor R McHugh (Vice-Chairperson); Aldermen R Hamilton and McClintock; Councillors Campbell, Carlin, Cusack, Duffy, Gallagher, Gardiner, Hastings, Jackson, McGinley and Tierney.

Non-members of Committee:- Councillor P Kelly.

In Attendance: - Director of Health and Community (Mrs K McFarland), Head of Community Development and Leisure (Mr B O'Hagan), Head of Health and Community Wellbeing (Mr S Donaghy), PA to Health and Community Director (Mrs L Shields), Principal Officer Licensing and Safety Advisory Group (Mr D Meenan) Environmental Health Team Leader (Licensing and SAG) (Mr P Rafferty) and Committee Services Assistant (Mrs T Johnstone).

HC67/18 Notice and Summons for Meeting

The Director of Health and Community read the Notice and Summons for the Meeting.

HC68/18 Members Attendance and Apologies

The Director of Health and Community recorded Members attendance. Apologies were received from Alderman Thompson.

HC69/18 Declarations of Members' Interests

Councillor Carlin declared an interest in the following agenda item:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19.

Councillor Hastings declared an interest in the following agenda item:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19.

Councillor Gallagher declared an interest in the following agenda item:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19.

Councillor Jackson declared an interest in the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19
- Agenda item 11 – Community Support Fund 2018/19.

Councillor McGinley declared an interest in the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19
- Agenda item 11 – Community Support Fund 2018/19.

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19
- Agenda item 11 – Community Support Fund 2018/19.

Councillor Duffy declared an interest in the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 10 – Good Relations Grant Aid 2018/19
- Agenda item 11 – Community Support Fund 2018/19.

Councillor Tierney declared an interest in the following agenda item:

- Agenda item 22 – CCTV Contract.

Open for Decision

Chairperson's Business

Matters Arising

HC74/18 Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Report: 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Travellers' Accommodation in NI'

The Head of Health and Community Wellbeing presented Members with the above report, a copy of which had been previously circulated. The purpose of the report was to seek Members' approval for Senior Council Officers to meet with the Commission in the near future to discuss the implementation of the relevant recommendations outlined in the report.

Councillor Carlin endorsed the recommendations within the report which addressed the issues faced by the Traveller community in the City and District. She added that she welcomed the work of the Commission which gave great insight and authority in relation to the steps that Council would embark on in addressing issues such as housing.

Councillor Tierney seconded the recommendations. He stated that the report contained issues that had previously been raised in Council. He referred to the classification of Traveller sites and stated that it was important that individual sites held the correct licence and classification. He reported that Ballyarnett site was registered as a transient site,

however it is not used as one. He stated that residents at the site were meeting with Elected Representatives and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to have the classification on the site upgraded. He stated that there were issues between the sites at Ballyarnett and the Daisyfield which had to be resolved and the correct classification for these sites put in place. He referred to refuse collection at Ballyarnett and stated that through the Environment and Regeneration Directorate and the NIHE, proactive steps had been taken to ensure that there would no longer be an accumulation of rubbish at the site. He stated that it was important that Members work with the Human Rights Commission and proposed that Committee invite representatives from the Commission to speak to Elected Representatives regarding the Travellers accommodation in the City and District.

Councillor Gallagher welcomed the report. He stated that some of the findings in the report regarding Traveller sites across the City and District should raise concern as Council were responsible for some of the issues that had been outlined. He stated that the right to a proper home was at the centre of the culture of the transient community and by not having that right had affected other aspects of their lives. He referred to the site at Greenbrae, Strabane and stated that it was not fit for purpose and that families had been forced from the site. He further stated that the transient community could not settle into permanent housing and being forced to do so was eroding their culture. He stated that it was important for Council to recognise the large Traveller community within the City and District and the importance of implementing the findings within the report.

Councillor Hastings indicated that the responsibility for providing sites and accommodation for the Traveller community was the responsibility of the NIHE who had continually failed to meet the needs of the Traveller community. He stated that the Northern Ireland Travellers Advisory Group had invited the Human Rights Commission to carry out the study into Traveller accommodation. He reported that the Commission had indicated that standards at the sites had not been met and that the Equality Commission should have made a ruling at an early stage. He added that the Traveller community wished to have the option of moving from site to site or settling into permanent accommodation. However, there was insufficient houses available for travellers who wished to settle.

Councillor Gallagher stated that a number of issues had been raised regarding sites across the City and District, where Council had a responsibility regarding maintenance and refuse collection.
The Committee

Recommended **that (i) Members approve for Senior Council Officers to meet with the Commission to discuss the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the report; and (ii) invite representatives from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to speak to Elected Representatives regarding Travellers accommodation in the City and District.**

The Meeting terminated at 5.45pm

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____