

**Minutes of Inishowen Municipal District
Draft Budgetary Plan Meeting
Held on the 05th November 2015 at 3pm in the Council
Chamber, Carndonagh PSC.**

Members Present

Cllr Paul Canning, Nicholas Crossan, Albert Doherty, Rena Donaghey, Martin Farren, Martin Mc Dermott, Bernard Mc Guinness, Jack Murray and John Ryan.

Officials in Attendance

Mr John G. Mc Laughlin, Mr Garry Martin, Ms Aideen Doherty, Mr Seamus Hopkins, and Ms Marie Mulhern.

Apologies

MINUTES

Cllr Donaghey opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Garry Martin advised that this is a statutory budget meeting to discuss the draft budgetary plan for 2016. In order to clarify the situation he advised that the executive is wholly satisfied that the budgetary process is in line with the legislative process and this has been confirmed independently via legal advice. The process is in line with section 102 of the Local Government Act 2001.

There is no prescribed format in the legislation and it's the executive interpretation of the procedure outlined in circular 05/2014 – section 2, page 5. The template may be customised as appropriate.

The Council is happy to use the discretionary form and the draft budget plan is presented in is the discretionary form.

He indicated that it is premature to attempt to know what the intentions of members are or what priorities will be set, prior to the plenary budget meeting. The budget will be presented on the 18th November 2015 and at that stage amendments can be made. The budgetary process does follow the requirements as set out in the legislation.

The members have the right to amend the draft budget plan as they see fit and the only limiting factor is the finance available.

It's a reserved function of the members and it's not outside the scope of the members to amend the plan, however the current position is the most realistic and practical solution available.

Cllr Murray advised that it is good to have the situation clarified and asked if there was a problem with the legislative process. He suggested that "would it not make more sense to have the plenary budget meeting then the municipal district meeting". Garry Martin advised that that would make sense and the current process is impractical, if not impossible, when we don't know what we are prioritising.

Cllr Mc Dermott suggested that the employment of a gardener for the Barrack Hill should come out of the main council budget and not form part of the strategic funds. Cllr Mc Guinness concurred. Garry Martin agreed to look at alternative options for funding.

Cllr Canning enquired about funding for Inch Level project.

Cllr Mc Dermott suggested that funding should be given to the smaller towns, to level the playing field, in the context of the tidy towns.

Cllr Canning enquired if the budget figure was the same as last year or are there any add on's and how is the budget distributed.

Garry Martin advised that the budget book is built on last years figures, with consideration given to any additional areas and outputs. The income and expenditure is reviewed and broken down into service areas. It's only when it comes down to the final allocation that the specific projects are looked at.

The strategic development fund is apportioned by the number of members per municipal district, the total budget is €740,000 with €180,000 for Inishowen.

Funding is allocated based on the services areas, for example, the fire stations, it's per location of station and budget is not divided per municipal district. It's important to note that the total cost of pensions has to be covered by the Council in the budget. The level of discretionary spending is very limited.

Cllr Canning enquired if the pensions for the water service are being passed on to Irish Water. Garry Martin advised that the issue has been raised and the position needs to be clarified.

Cllr Farren enquired if the strategic development fund and the members development fund would be the same this year.

Cllr Farren supported the funding for a gardener for the Barrack Hill. He enquired if funding/support could be made available for the clean up of the Merville area. Funding of the tidy towns should be included in the main budget.

Garry Martin advised that perhaps the Bundoran model could be looked at, using a blend of Tús Scheme, Tidy towns and the Council, also incorporating the Gateway scheme.

Cllr Farren enquired if anything could be done about the Class K stamp, it's not a budget issue but it would be good to have it clarified.

Cllr Murray enquired if funding could be provided for

- Community assisted schemes.
- Single street lighting
- Funding for footpaths to be provided from the County wide budget.
- Grianan an Aileach to be looked at as an area for tourism development.

Garry Martin advised that this could fit into a European funded project.

Cllr Doherty supporting the funding for the Barrack Hill, Carndonagh.

In relation to appendix 3 – Is €100,000 to be filled in there and the rest left blank. Could areas be missed?

Cllr Doherty enquired as to how the council can compliment the funding, that is the CEDRA funding of €250,000 for Inishowen and Leader funding. Will the Council be seeking funding under EU opportunities?

Cllr Doherty enquired

- About the funding of Cockhill Bridge and if it could be prioritised for funding.
- Enquired if the St Louis trip will be funded centrally
- Funding for LIS instead of slicing off the top
- Funding of public conveniences – Irish Water, the council is responsible for the funding of the public convenience
- North West Region - The region needs to be given priority.

Garry Martin advised that the local property tax is there as well as various funding initiatives. The department has advised the council as to what funding is available from the local property tax for 2016, €22,720,760, the same figure as for 2015.

Cllr Mc Guinness

- clarification as to what the municipal district can and cant do
- Need to ensure that housing roads etc, that Inishowen is getting the same funding as the other areas.
- Tourism should be a county wide issue, will Malin Head be prioritised the same as Slieve League
- Ferry should be funded under a 5 year programme
- Funding for Barrack Hill, Carn

Cllr Crossan concurred with Cllr Mc Guinness and

- Enquired as what can be done to save money for a rainy day
- Provision of a Gardener in Bunrana
- Are we making any head way with the collection of rates
- Cost of postage
- Community composting for grass cuttings

Cllr Farren

- Provision of a planner in Inishowen for 1 day a week

Cllr Ryan

- Provision of extra staff for Planning

Cllr Mc Guinness

- Who is dealing with Community and Enterprise at the moment for the Inishowen area
- What can be done at budget time to improve the service

- Comparison of staffing levels in the services in the other municipal areas
- Who does what in PSC's, corresponding numbers

Cllr Donaghey

- Update on the ferry
- Funding for Swan Park and Carn Park
- Funding to tidy towns
- Funding for St Louis trip
- Funding for the Tip O' Neill
- Extra funding for the adaptation grants for the elderly
- Buncrana leisure centre
- More use needs to be made of the Buncrana Town Council office
- Carbon monoxide detectors for the fire service
- Increase in the number of blue flag beaches
- Adequate funding for gritting
- Public lighting
- Purchase of land for social housing
- Allocation of funding for the two tier towns
- That all water customers in Inishowen are provided for before the water from the Fullerton Polan Dam goes to Letterkenny

Garry Martin advised that efforts are ongoing to create efficiencies across the Council and this will continue. Measures are in place to deal with the collection of outstanding rates including the legal process. The town council's rates will increase this year and county council rates will reduce as part of the harmonisation process. In relation to staffing, a work force plan is in place and decisions regarding staffing will be updated at plenary level. The 3 year capital plan for 2016 – 2018 will be considered, with a meeting being held at the end of November 2015.

Demands for additional monies have been noted and this will be fed back to the centre. The community composting issue will be forwarded to the environment section.

It's a formal requirement to adopt the draft budgetary plan with or without amendments.

On the proposal of Cllr Mc Dermott and seconded by Cllr Farren the draft budgetary plan was adopted unanimously with the following amendments

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- That provision is made for adequate Planning resources in the Carndonagh PSC.
- and that provision is made for adequate Community and Enterprise resources in the Carndonagh PSC.

Area Manager
Housing & Corporate Services

Cathaoirleach
Inishowen Municipal District