

THE ANNUAL MEETING MONDAY 7TH JUNE 2021

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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL, HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS and VIA VIDEO-
CONFERENCE ON**

MONDAY 7TH JUNE 2021 AT 7.00 PM

In the Chair : Alderman Fielding (C) (Items 1 – 4.1)
Councillor Holmes (C) (Items 4.1 – 9)

Members Present : Alderman Baird (C), Duddy (C) , Finlay (C), Hillis (C),
Boyle (R), McKeown (C) , McCorkell R, and Robinson
(C)

Councillors Anderson (C), Bateson (R), Beattie (C), Callan
(C), Chivers (R), Dallat O'Driscoll (C), Hunter (R), McAuley
(C) , McCandless (C), McCaw (C), MA McKillop (R),
McLaughlin (R), McLean (C), McMullan (R), McQuillan (C) C
McShane (R), P McShane (R), Mulholland (R), Nicholl (R),
Peacock (R), Schenning (C) , Scott (C), Wallace (C), Watton
(C) and Wilson (C)

Officers Present : D Jackson, Chief Executive (C)
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services (R)
R Baker, Director of Leisure & Development (R)
P Donaghy, Democratic & Central Services Manager (R)
S Duggan, Civic Support & Committee & Member
Services Officer (C)
I Owens, Committee & Member Services Officer (R)

In Attendance : Mr K Morgan BL (R)
J Keen, Corporate Support Officer (R)
Press (3no.) (R)

J Winfield, ICT Manager (C)
C Thompson, ICT Officer (C)

Key – C Attended in The Chamber
R Attended remotely

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Alderman McKillop, Councillors Knight-
McQuillan, McGurk and Quigley.

2. OUTGOING MAYOR'S ADDRESS

The Outgoing Mayor, Alderman Fielding addressed Council:

“Welcome to everyone tonight as we meet now for the second time this month in the Council Chamber. Last year for our Annual Meeting June 2020 it was so much different during the Coronavirus pandemic with the Meeting shared virtually on-line with a limited number of members in the Chamber. This was to become the norm until our first full meeting on the 1st June 2021.

As I reflect on the past year as Mayor, our Borough was just coming out of the first lockdown when I took up office in June 2020 and recently we are emerging from the second one. 12 months on with the role out of the coronavirus vaccination programme, we have already seen improvements and tonight is evidence of that fact. Hopefully we can all look forward to brighter days ahead.

One of the first tasks I undertook as Mayor was to visit community groups across Causeway Coast and Glens who assisted those in need during the pandemic. I was impressed by the community spirit demonstrated within our towns, villages and rural areas. This included the community groups that were already well established prior to the pandemic and the new support groups that emerged to meet the challenges faced by the restrictions.

During the past year I have got to know and see at first hand the work of communities, volunteers, sporting organisations, schools and charities in our Borough and met representatives of groups and individuals as we celebrated achievements such as heroic ones which helped save lives, special anniversaries and special birthdays.

Of course this Mayoral term wasn't like any previous one. One had to adapt to the changing circumstances. Everything was done outside with social distancing. We were fortunate that the weather on the whole was on most occasions kind to us with a relatively mild winter and I enjoyed every season of the year in photographs in the great outdoors. Virtual events became the norm and for example one missed meeting Children at the traditional Christmas switch-on of the lights at that seasonal time of the year and also missed having receptions in the Mayor's Parlour.

As Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and I can honestly say that during my term of office I as well received by the people I met from every corner of this Council area. That's why I am proud to say I am from Northern Ireland because it is the people and places that showcase what is great about Northern Ireland as we commemorate this year 2021, 100 years from its foundation. I was pleased to be involved in initiatives in its centenary year, the Centenary Church Service on the 2nd

May, the presentation of a commemorative centenary coin to those members of our community who have reached their 100th Birthday, also to present to organisations who are 100 years old this year with a centenary gift and to have planted a native oak tree in each of the seven district electoral areas which will serve as a lasting reminder of the significant anniversary for future generations. I look forward to the continuation of a programme of centenary events particularly involving community groups as we glance back and look forward to mark this historic occasion and to the next 100 years.

People will ask what was the highlight of your year. Every time I represented the Council as Mayor and met people on Council's behalf was in itself a highlight. Of course there are events which can never be repeated such as the presentation of the silver poppies to World War Two veterans, centenary events and I also visited a fit 102 veteran on his birthday. As a resident of Portstewart I was pleased that on 5 occasions at the invitation of Portstewart Royal British Legion during my term I attended significant events and anniversaries at Portstewart War Memorial. Last week also in Portstewart saw the restoration of the World War Two concrete target Arrow used by bomber crew as a training target indicator along the Port Path and part of Causeway Coast Way along with a new Information Panel.

My official Charity for my term of Office was Alzheimer's Society I was inspired in doing this by my late father who developed dementia in his later life. I was pleased to be able to raise awareness of this condition and to raise funds for Alzheimer's Society. Across the borough, many families are caring for loved ones living with this condition and the Alzheimer's Society is an important source of support for them. The pandemic had a profound effect on all our lives during the past year, but despite these challenges the public got behind my efforts and initiatives I undertook.

I ended my term visiting some of the groups I attended at the commencement of my term and also held a cream tea virtual event with volunteers for Volunteer Week. I was also pleased to visit our Council frontline staff at our Four main Depots and Parks Department to thank them on working through the pandemic and to let them know their continued efforts have not gone unnoticed. Indeed I would like to thank all frontline workers in both public and private sectors.

It is good to see our businesses open and hopefully 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.

Being Mayor would not have been possible without the support of my Party Colleagues, my very supportive wife Phyllis and family. I would like to thank the Council staff at every level of the organisation from the people at

reception to senior level. Of course there are staff that as Mayor you are in direct contact with on a regular basis which I would particularly thank - the Mayors Office, the PR and the Chief Executive.

The Monthly meetings were challenging but I endeavoured to be fair while trying to follow standing orders.

There were a few laughs along the way when I mixed my words up but I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

I would like to thank outgoing Deputy Mayor Alderman Tom McKeown, it is unfortunate because of the pandemic your engagements were very limited.

I send the new Mayor Richard, Councillor Holmes best wishes for the 2021/2022 term and also my best wishes to the incoming Deputy Mayor, Ashleen, Councillor Schenning”.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were recorded for Councillor Schenning in the Legal Opinions, regarding reconsideration of the vote on Tourism Events Recovery Fund. Councillor Schenning remained in The Chamber and did not vote on the application.

4. POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY YEAR 3

4.1 Nomination of Mayor 2021 – 2022

The Chief Executive invited the party lead of the UU to nominate the Mayor. Alderman Hillis nominated Councillor Richard Holmes, who was declared Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for the year 2021/2022.

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

The Mayor, Councillor Holmes and Elected Members payed tribute to the Outgoing Mayor, Alderman Fielding.

4.2 Nomination of Deputy Mayor 2021 – 2022

The Mayor, Councillor Holmes, invited the party lead of the SDLP to nominate the Deputy Mayor. Councillor MA McKillop nominated Councillor Ashleen Schenning who was declared Deputy Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for the year 2021/2022.

4.3 Nominations to remaining Positions of Responsibility Year 3 2021 – 2022

The Mayor 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 Darryl Wilson	UU
Chair of Finance Committee	Alderman Norman Hillis	UU
Chair of Leisure & Development	Councillor John McAuley	DUP
Vice Chair Leisure & Development	Councillor Russell Watton	PUP
Chair of Corporate Policy & Resources Committee	Councillor Michelle Knight-McQuillan	DUP
Chair of Planning Committee	Alderman Joan Baird	UU
Vice Chair of Planning Committee	Councillor Pdraig McShane	IND
Chair of Audit Committee	Councillor Dermot Nicholl	SF
Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association	Alderman Sharon McKillop	DUP

Council was advised, further Vice-Chair nominations would be made via Democratic Services.

5. INCOMING MAYOR'S ADDRESS

The Mayor, Councillor Holmes addressed Council,

"I'm deeply honoured to have been nominated by my Party Colleagues to take on the role of Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for 2021/22.

This is not a role I ever thought I would assume but God opens doors and we should make the most of the opportunities He provides.

I would echo the tributes paid by the outgoing Mayor to the work of the health service and the council staff who have kept vital functions running throughout the pandemic. We should also thank those in retail and industry who have managed to make a way where perhaps 15 months ago it seemed there was no way.

I know that in this country there is so much that we don't agree on. Northern Ireland gets called the North, Londonderry – Derry and Causeway Coast

and Glens referred to as Causeway. Somewhere someone is always feeling irritated. But I think we can all agree on one name – HOME.

Bruce Springsteen once sang the lyrics:

*“My father said "Son, we're lucky in this town,
It's a beautiful place to be born.*

It just wraps its arms around you,

Nobody crowds you and nobody goes it alone”

I know every councillor is as passionate about their home area as I am about Garvagh. We all love this beautiful place. And we all want to make it the best it can possibly be.

That means working together to ensure nowhere and no one is left behind. After the year we've just had that is more critical than ever as families, businesses and communities recover. As a council and as councillors it is our job to lead.

Our council is not perfect but it is up to us as leaders to ensure it is the best it can possibly be. Staff should be proud to work for a great organisation and the public should have confidence in our functions and our decisions. Undermining that trust helps no one.

During the incoming year I want to focus on business, communities and tourism. I want us to continue to help locally established businesses and new startups. I want us to build our communities making them strong and cohesive. We are Northern Ireland's jewel in the crown of the tourist industry and we want to see it grow once more.

A friend sent me Philippians 4:8-9, a few days ago which I'll conclude with:

“Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.”

I hope that during the next year that those verses may be a mantra for us all”.

Elected Members payed tribute to the Outgoing Mayor, Alderman Fielding.

The Outgoing Deputy Mayor congratulated Councillor Holmes on his nomination as Mayor and thanked Alderman Fielding and Council staff for their work during his term in Office.

**6. COMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS - APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES
YEAR 3**

Circulated for information.

7. APPOINTMENTS TO PARTNERSHIPS, EXTERNAL BODIES

Circulated for information.

The Mayor declared a recess at 7.31PM.

- * **The meeting reconvened at 7.58pm.**

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Alderman Finlay and

AGREED - that Council move, *'In Committee'*.

- * **Press were disconnected from the meeting at 8.00pm.**

The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Mayor stated he was inviting one vote with regards to the decision within the Legal Opinions circulated, and the final Legal Opinion on quasi partnership and quasi relationship was for information only.

8. CONFIDENTIAL COUNSEL OPINIONS

Confidential Counsel Opinions, previously circulated.

8.1 Counsel's Opinion in the Matter of a Call In Notice in respect of a motion On 30 March 2021 relating to the Tourism Events Recovery Fund

8.2 Counsel's Opinion in the matter of a Call In Notice on Section 41(1)(A) of The 2014 Local Government Act 2014 in respect of a motion on 30 March 2021 relating to the Tourism Events Recovery Fund

The Mayor advised each 'Call In' does not have merit under Section 41 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2014 and required reconsideration under Section 41 1(a) of the Act.

The Mayor put reconsideration of the decision to the Council to vote

To recommend that Council approve the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding to successful applicants as detailed in Annex A with the reductions outlined. (Annex A circulated).

32 Members voted For; 0 Members voted Against; 1 Member Abstained.
The Mayor declared reconsideration of the decision upheld.

Councillor Schenning, having declared an interest, did not vote on the decision.

There being a technical difficulty, Councillor Mulholland was unable to cast her vote.

Councillor Nicholl offered congratulations to Councillor McGurk on the birth of her new baby.

The Mayor concurred with Councillor Nicholl's sentiments and congratulated Councillor McGurk.

9. COUNSEL'S OPINION CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS COUNCIL TOURISM EVENTS RECOVERY FUND QUASI PARTNERSHIP AND QUASI RELATIONSHIP.

Confidential Counsel Opinion previously circulated.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Alderman Duddy
Seconded by Councillor Callan and

AGREED - that Council move, *'In Public*.

Councillor P McShane declared he wished to speak, *'in committee'*.

The Mayor ruled the meeting had moved, *'in public'* and closed the meeting.

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

Chair

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