

COUNCIL MEETING THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2017

Table of Adoptions

No	Item	<i>Summary of Key Adoptions</i>
3	Strike the Domestic and Non-Domestic Rate 2017/18	<i>That the budgets for 2017/18 are approved resulting in a 0% increase in the district rate; that the associated papers are approved: the adequacy of any proposed financial reserves and the robustness of the estimates; the rates estimates summary; rates estimates detail and the Prudential Indicators for 2016/17 to 2019/20.</i>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN CIVIC HEADQUARTERS, COLERAINE ON
THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 7:00 PM**

In the Chair : Deputy Mayor, Councillor McCorkell

Members Present : Alderman Campbell, Cole, Finlay, Hillis, King, McKeown,
and Robinson

Councillors Baird, Beattie, Blair, Callan, Chivers, Clarke,
Deighan, Douglas, Duddy, Fielding, Hunter, Loftus,
McCandless, McCaul, McKillop M A, Knight-McQuillan,
McGlinchey, McLaughlin, McLean, Nicholl, Watton and
Wilson

Officers Present : D Jackson, Chief Executive
M Quinn, Director of Performance
D Wright, Chief Finance Officer
S Duggan, Committee & Member Services Officer

In Attendance : R Baker, Director of Leisure & Development
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services

Press (1 no)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for The Mayor, Alderman Hickey; Councillor Holmes, Quigley and Stevenson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations on interest.

3. STRIKE THE DOMESTIC AND NON-DOMESTIC RATE 2017/18

The Chief Executive introduced proceedings, content this would be the second year where there has been a zero rates increase recommended to Council, caveat with an assumed regional rate of 1.5% - 2%. The past 3-years have enjoyed cumulative efficiencies of £5.1M, demonstrating the cost control culture Council are trying to drive, in an environment where total operating costs reach £59M.

The Chief Finance Officer presented reports regarding the adequacy of any proposed financial reserves and the robustness of the estimates on behalf of the Chief Executive; the rates estimates summary; rates estimates detail and the Prudential Indicators for 2016/17 to 2019/20.

Calculations were tabled showing indicative rates figures for homes and businesses assuming a regional rate increase of 1.5% impact for ratepayers from 1 April.

The Chief Finance Officer further stated, Council was already saving money and has been removing costs from its budget since the merger, however, other factors counter efforts and the proposed budget would not be without its challenges.

The Chief Finance Officer outlined the aspirations and the direction the Members and Officers of Council are taking, in being committed to cost controls to get the best value for ratepayers and put the recommendations to Council for its consideration.

It is recommended that the budgets for 2017/18 are approved resulting in a 0% increase in the district rate.

It is further recommended that the associated papers regarding the level of reserves, robustness of the estimates and the prudential indicators are also approved.

Alderman Finlay thanked the Officers for their work, stating he would like to see an efficiency committee established, along with a 4-year financial plan to enable all Parties to be involved in making improvements. Council was advised both requests were imminently being established.

Councillor Deighan congratulated Officers on the 0% rate recommendation, whilst being able to maintain a Capital Programme.

Proposed by Alderman Finlay
Seconded by Councillor Deighan and

RESOLVED- that the budgets for 2017/18 are approved resulting in a 0% increase in the district rate; that the associated papers regarding the level of reserves, robustness of the estimates and the prudential indicators are also approved.

Councillor Nicholl thanked the Officers for their hard work during challenging times and stated his support.

Councillor McCandless, on behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party congratulated the Officers and Senior Management Team, who, due to a concerted effort, were working hard to reduce the rate and therefore supported this. However, Councillor McCandless would have liked to have seen some reduction in the rate for retailers in Coleraine who are under severe pressure and has seen evidence of overheads increasing and profit margins decreasing, this, the same for all

towns in the Borough; there is a need for support from The Executive and Stormont who set the Regional rate.

Councillor McCandless appealed for a quarterly review by Senior Management Team of reductions and cost improvements being worked on, to enable review and monitor of progress to be undertaken; along with a major improvement in the League Table on where Council sits in relation to rates.

Councillor Watton supported the strive for efficiencies whilst maintaining frontline services.

Councillor Douglas endorsed his support for the proposal.

The Chair put the proposal to the Council to vote, Council voted unanimously in favour.

- * **Alderman McKeown arrived at the meeting at 7.08 PM**
- * **Councillor Clarke arrived at the meeting at 7.15 PM**
- * **Councillor Knight-McQuillan arrived at the meeting at 7.16 PM**

There being no further business the Deputy Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.24 PM.

Deputy Mayor