

Minutes of Municipal District of Letterkenny Budget Meeting held AT 11am on Friday 6th November 2015 in Letterkenny Public Services Centre

MDL/428/15

Members Present

Cllr. C. Brogan
Cllr. J. Kavanagh
Cllr. M. Mc Bride
Cllr. J. Pat Mc Daid
Cllr. I. Mc Garvey
Cllr. G. Mc Monagle
Cllr. J. O'Donnell
Cllr. M. Quinn
Cllr. D. Shiels

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Officials Present

Garry Martin, Director of Finance, Information Systems and Emergency Services
Liam Ward, Director of Service
Eunan Kelly, Area Manager, Housing and Corporate
Ciaran Martin, Community & Enterprise
Frances Friel, Staff Officer

MDL/430/15

Apologies

Cllr. L. Blaney
Fergal Doherty, SEE/Area Manager, Roads & Transportation

MDL/431/15

Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Letterkenny for 2016

Mr. Garry Martin, Director of Finance, Information Systems and Emergency Services, briefed Members as to the purpose of the meeting which was to confirm and put on record that the approach adopted in consideration of the Draft Budgetary Plan for the Municipal District of Letterkenny for 2016 was in line with existing Regulations.

The following documents as circulated with the Agenda were noted by Members;-

1. Draft Budgetary Plan & General Municipal Allocation for 2016.
2. Circular Fin 05/2014
3. Appendix 1 – Overview of Budget Process
4. Appendix 2 – Report to be submitted to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government by 30 September
5. Appendix 3 Draft Budgetary Plan
6. Circular Fin 08/2015

7. Appendix 1 – 30 September report to Department – Preliminary estimate of capital and current income for the forthcoming financial year.

Mr. Martin advised that this was a statutory meeting required by Section 102 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) and associated regulations, including the Local Government (Financial & Audit Procedures) Regulations 2014 and the Local Government (Financial & Audit Procedures) (Amended) Regulations 2015 as advised to Members at their meeting on the 28th October 2015.

Mr. Martin informed Members that a similar approach was being taken as that of previous year and it is in line with the current legislation governing Local Authority budgets. Members were advised that it was a reserved function of the Member to either adopt the Draft Budget as presented with or without amendments and as provided in the legislation, (Section 102 (4A) (e) the Chief Executive “shall take account of any budgetary plan adopted...in preparing the draft local authority budget (in accordance with subsection (2))”).

Mr. Martin also briefed Members in relation to the sequencing of decisions as currently set out in the legislation which it was hoped would be amended in time, to allow for the Municipal Districts to adopt their budgets after the Plenary Budget Meeting, when it was clear what discretionary funding was available to the Municipal Districts. He advised that the Draft Budget for 2016 was adopted with amendments in some of the Municipal Districts and without amendments in the others.

Mr. Martin outlined that it was recommended that in line with the requirements of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and associated Regulations that the Municipal District adopt a provisional General Municipal Allocation in the amount of €100,000 at this time with the figure to be considered in the round at the 2016 Plenary Revenue Budget Meeting and with a view to assessing the capacity of the organisation to increase that, for example, to an amount similar to that included in the 2015 Revenue Budget.

A number of comments /queries were dealt with as follows;-

Cllr. D. Shiels queried why a copy of relevant Regulations was not presented to the Members outlining that he was not happy with documentation/budget presented. In response to a query from Cllr. D. Shiels, G. Martin confirmed that the Draft Budgetary Plan was prepared in line with existing Regulations.

Cllr. J. Kavanagh outlined that having made a few enquiries from other Local Authorities that he was happy that the Draft Budget as presented was as the norm in other Counties. Cllr. J. Kavanagh referred to the allocation of roads monies in 2015 and the need for the former Town Council Block Grant to be returned to the Municipal area for 2016.

Cllr. C. Brogan thanked G. Martin and his team on the preparation of the Draft Budget acknowledging that the Budget preparation was a challenging time for all. Cllr. C. Brogan referred to lengthy discussions at previous Budget Workshops and agreed with the Draft Budget as presented. Cllr. C. Brogan further outlined the need for extra funding in this area and that the Council as a team should appeal to Central Government in this regard.

Cllr. J. O'Donnell also referred to the need for extra funding for the Letterkenny Municipal District and outlined his approval to the Draft Budget as presented.

Cllr. M. Quinn formally proposed that the Council adopt the Draft Budgetary Plan for 2016 for the Municipal District of Letterkenny as presented.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. M. Mc Bride.

Cllr. D. Shiels proposed that the Members be presented with proper Budget documents prior to consideration for adoption.

As there was no seconder to the above counterproposal, on the proposal of Cllr. M. Quinn, seconded by Cllr. M. Mc Bride the Members agreed to adopt the Draft Budgetary Plan for 2016 for the Municipal District of Letterkenny as presented and without amendment.

Mr. Martin thanked Members for their consideration and adoption of the Draft Budget for 2016 for the Municipal District of Letterkenny.

This concluded the business of the meeting.