

DC187

8th October 2007

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Development Committee Meeting No 187 - 8th October 2007

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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Meeting No. 187 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney, on Monday 8th October 2007 at 7.30 p.m.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor M McCamphill (Vice-chair)

PRESENT:

Aldermen
F Campbell
H Connolly, Deputy Mayor
C Cousley
J Simpson

Councillors
J Finlay, Mayor
B Kennedy
T McKeown
A Patterson
E Robinson

APOLOGIES

Councillors:
A Cavlan
I Stevenson (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Head of Corporate & Development Services

187.1 MINUTES OF MEETING NO 186 – 10 SEPTEMBER 2007

It was proposed by Alderman Connolly, seconded by Councillor Alderman Cousley and **AGREED:**

that the minutes of Meeting No 186 – 10 September 2007, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

1.1 Northern Corridor Railways Group (186.3)

The Railway Group's "Railway Renaissance" Report, launched at the City Hotel, Londonderry, on 18th September was tabled and the Chief Executive reminded members of the second launch event on 18th October at Stormont and gave details of the arrangements.

187.2 NOTICE OF MOTION

Committee considered the undernoted motion, as submitted by Councillor McGuigan CM 867 1/10/07, and referred to Committee.

“That this Council supports the public sector proposal for a Visitor Centre at the Giant’s Causeway and recognises that any decision to hand the Giant’s Causeway Visitors Centre over to a private developer will result in a loss in public income in the medium – long term and the possible loss of World Heritage Status.”

(signed) Philip McGuigan 21st September 2007

The Briefing Note dated 26th September 2007 from the National Trust outlining the Trust’s position on the Giants Causeway was tabled.

Councillor Kennedy expressed the view that this motion should be considered by Council in view of the substantial public interest in the matter and the stated views of both Moyle and Coleraine Councils. Alderman Simpson took the view that the facility should be retained in public ownership as did Alderman Connolly who indicated that the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust, of which he was a member, also favoured the public sector proposal.

Councillor Robinson advised that she understood, as a member of the National Trust, that the planning application for the public sector proposal had been almost ready to be submitted for some months but had been delayed in order to resolve issues relating to car parking.

It was proposed by Councillor Finlay, seconded by Alderman Campbell:

that committee suspend judgement on this motion and ask Minister Foster to attend committee and give her thoughts on why she is minded to give approval to the private sector proposal.

On being put to the meeting the motion was carried, voting was recorded as follows, at the request of the Chair.

For the Motion (5)

Councillor Finlay
Alderman Cousley
Alderman Campbell
Councillor Patterson
Councillor Robinson

Against the motion (4)

Councillor McCamphill
Alderman Connolly
Councillor Simpson
Councillor Kennedy

187.3 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2007 – 2013

This matter was considered by committee at its last meeting (item 5) and for members’ convenience a copy of the committee addendum presented to Council on 1st October was circulated. Appendix 1 refers.

Subsequent correspondence from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, tabled at Council's Meeting on 1st October, provides guidance on the delivery arrangements for the rural development programme.

In view of the tight timescale imposed by DARD to settle delivery arrangements etc Council has granted Committee Council powers to make a decision on this matter.

Chief Executives and Directors/Heads of Development of Council's in the proposed regional cluster met again last week with DARD officials, but a number of issues still had to be further clarified with DARD and EU and a further meeting was to be held on 26th October. The Chief Executive advised that while SEUPB were content to await for Council's decision on clustering pending the outcome of RPA which was expected soon, DARD were pressing councils to settle clustering arrangements and would not release animation money until clusters were agreed.

With regard to preparations for **Peace III** a consortium tender for strategy development had been awarded to Mentor and work on scoping good relations and community support plans had commenced.

Committee agreed to defer consideration of the matter until the next meeting or to a special meeting of committee, if this was necessary to meet timelines imposed by DARD.

187.4 TENDER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Members will recall that a number of Tender Support Programmes have been delivered under the current development programme, with match funding from DETI.

This has proved an extremely successful Programme in this and other areas in the province and in ROI. The delivery agent proposed to deliver a major conference for all programme participants to stimulate 'associate relationships'. The conference will include a sourcing event to stimulate the potential of large companies to source products and services from the participants. It is envisaged that around 120 SME's and over 10 multinational companies will be involved and this will provide some tremendous opportunities for local SME's.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that to facilitate attendance by Ballymoney programme participants in the conference Committee provide a contribution of £1,500, subsidizing attendance of 20 participants from Ballymoney. This would be met from existing budget.

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell seconded by Councillor Kennedy and **AGREED:**

to recommend that to facilitate attendance by Ballymoney programme participants in the conference Council provide a

contribution of £1,500, subsidizing attendance of 20 participants from Ballymoney.

187.5 FUTURE FUNDING 2007-2013 - DETI

It is expected that information will be received within the next month or so from DETI regarding the availability of funding through under the new ERDF Competitiveness Programme for the period 2007 – 2013. This new local economic development measure will follow on from the Building Sustainable Prosperity Programme which ended in June 2007. As indicated to committee at its August meeting the match funding issue in respect of this programme needs to be addressed by Committee. Committee is invited to consider if it wishes to participate in the next round of local economic development funding and make match funding available for this purpose. While the details of funding requirements is not yet available, it is expected that this may be in the region of £60,000 per year.

After discussion it was proposed by Councillor Finlay seconded by Alderman Campbell and **AGREED:**

that consideration of this matter be deferred to the committee's next meeting.

187.6 REPORTS:

The following reports were tabled:

Regional Transportation Strategy for NI – Monitoring Report

The Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012 Monitoring Report for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2007 is now published and is on the DRD website www.drdni.gov.uk/rts.

This report monitors progress against the targets set in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015 and the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015. It also provides information on the Sub-Regional Transport Plan which was published on 11 June 2007 and reports on the implementation of the Accessible Transport Strategy and other significant Regional Transportation Strategy transportation-related achievements.

DSD Vital and Viable – A Good practice Guide for Breathing New Life into Cities and towns

This good practice guide provides some practical advice on potential approaches to the future regeneration of cities and towns. It is intended to be primarily for use in areas which do not have specific detailed development strategies in place and, in particular, focuses on regional cities and towns outside Belfast and Londonderry. It contains examples of the many projects that have been facilitated and supported by the DSD over the past few years.

187.7 PROGRESS REPORT

Progress report on status of ongoing projects and employment statistics, circulated, was noted.

This concluded the business of the meeting the time being 9.00 p.m.

Appendix 1 – Development Committee Addendum: 25th September 2007

Appendix 1**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – ADDENDUM : 25th September 2007****1. Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013**

I refer to item 5 in the minutes of the committee's meeting of 10th September. Following the meeting correspondence has been received from the office of the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Minister has indicated that in order to fully maximize the impact of the Programme there is need for substantially more involvement from Councils than has previously been the case. Among the benefits of increased local government involvement will be economies of scale, complementary of strategies and improved corporate governance and financial arrangements.

The new delivery model, which will retain the Leader Methodology of "bottom up" working, will involve self defining Council clusters working in partnership with new Local Action Groups (LAGs). The Council clusters (at least 3 in each cluster) will establish the LAGs by way of an open call, and together with LAGs, will be responsible for developing a strategy that will meet the needs of the area. The Council will also be charged with the accounting and financial governance arrangements for Axis 3. A budget has been set aside to enable Council clusters to undertake animation action within their area for the purpose of establishing LAGs and drawing up strategies.

The Minister is inviting Council's support and co-operation to take the programme forward in an expeditious and efficient manner. Speed will be of the essence in order to put the necessary processes in place, and the Minister has requested Council's assurances that not a day will be lost in getting these funds out to the communities most in need.

The Minister is also placing great importance on the key role of the LAGs in delivering the Programme. She considers it imperative that the LAGs are fully representative of their area, and play a full part in implementation.

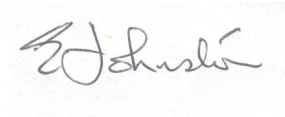
Members will recall that Council has agreed, subject to emerging issues relating to RPA and the EU programmes and the outcome of the SOLACE review exercise, to form a North Antrim Council Cluster comprising Ballymoney, Moyle, Ballymena and Larne Councils, subject to review if further requests to join the Cluster emerge. It has also taken the view that the proposed Cluster, managed by a Joint Committee, deal with all EU programmes.

(DC185/13/8/07)

In the light of the guidance from DARD the working group of Directors/Heads of Development, who have presented proposals to date on the matter, now proposed to give the delivery arrangements for the rural development programme further consideration. In view of the tight timescale imposed by DARD to settle delivery arrangements etc it is **recommended** that Council authorize the Development Committee to consider proposals by the officer group and make a decision on this matter.

2. Railways Report Launch (2)

Following on from the initial launch event the Northern Corridor Railways Group has advised on plans for the second event in the Long Gallery on 18th October at 11.45 a.m. – 1.30 p.m. the Group is planning a cavalcade by rail from all points on the line. Further details will issue shortly. Members are asked to note the date in their diary and aim to attend to lend their support to the event.



Elizabeth Johnston
Head of Corporate & Development Services