

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Development Committee Meeting No 191 - 21st February 2008****Table of Contents**

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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Meeting No. 191 held in the Borough Offices, Riada House, on Thursday 21st February 2008 at 5.00 pm.

In the Chair Councillor I Stevenson

Members **Aldermen**
C Cousley
H Connolly
F Campbell
J Simpson

Councillors
J Finlay
B Kennedy
M McCamphill
E Robinson

In Attendance Head of Corporate & Development Services

191.1 MINUTES – Meeting No. 190 – 22nd January 2008

It was proposed by Councillor Finlay seconded by Alderman Connolly and
AGREED:

that the minutes of committee's meeting, No. 190, on 22nd January 2008, as circulated, were confirmed as a correct record.

191.2 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2007-2013

The new NI Rural Development Programme (RDP) will run from 2007 – 2013. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has approached Local Authorities in Northern Ireland to develop clusters, which reflect geographical groups across the region. These clusters will take responsibility for the delivery of the new RDP. Ballymena Borough Council is part of the Cluster, which includes Ballymoney, Coleraine, Larne and Moyle, and the grouping has been awarded animation funding to: -

- Facilitate the establishment of a Local Action Group (LAG)
- Animate cluster area in terms of developing projects
- To develop cluster based strategy

At this stage it is envisaged that there will be a 2 tier administrative structure to oversee the delivery of the Rural Development Programme. Governance responsibilities will lie with the Local Authorities and a Joint committee will be established to ensure strong accountability and transparency. A LAG will be formed with member representation to animate the area and develop a cluster strategy. To adhere to the requirements of the Leader approach, axis 3 will be delivered by new LAG's. Within this partnership the Councils will assume the role of "Financial Administration and Lead Actor" and in making their application potential LAG's must acknowledge this role.

The Department of Rural Development has issued guidance for the selection of LAG's and submission of funding bids. The cluster is now at a stage where it is required to formally create a LAG for the cluster area.

Departmental Guidance

The Department of Rural Development has issued guidance with respect to the formation of LAGs and the composition of the LAG. Representative Membership of the LAG must be locally based and this will be interpreted to mean that the members of the LAG should either live or have a significant work interest in the area covered by the group. The LAG must ensure that it is representative of those groups defined under Section 75. It should be noted that promotion of equal opportunity is a major requirement of European funding programmes.

- The Department has advised that based on their experience in previous Rural Development Programmes that membership numbers within a partnership should be set at a maximum of 28.
- The partnership should be made up of 50% representation of civil society such as farmers, rural women, young people and their association and 50% representation from the public sector to include elected Councillors, MLAs, Council Officers and representative of Statutory Bodies.
- Council members on the LAG must be representative of the 5 main political parties in Northern Ireland

It should be noted that Advisory Sub-groups can be set up for additional representation and that when appointing community representatives it is encouraged to draw from the voluntary members of groups rather than the paid employees.

Proposed Structure for the North East

Directors/Heads of Service from each of the 5 Councils have discussed the potential structure of the North East LAG. This allows for 2 Council member representatives from each authority to sit on the LAG, and 3 Council members to sit on the Joint Committee. An overall representation of 5 members from each Council to be involved in the delivery structure. Ballymena Borough Council is the lead Council.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that committee nominate two council members to site on the LAG and 3 members on the Joint Committee, taking account of the need for balance on community background and gender.

It was **AGREED**:

to recommend that the positions be filled as follows:

Joint Committee (3) – 2 DUP, 1 SDLP (party leaders to advise names)
LAG (2) – 1 DUP, 1 SDLP (party leaders to advise names)

Local Consultation on Rural Development Plan

At the conclusion of the committees meeting members will join a stakeholder consultation (6.00 p.m.) on the format of the delivery of the next Rural Development Programme in the North East Region and the possible contents of an action plan for the delivery of the programme within the Ballymoney borough area.

Consultancy Tender

DARD has made available animation funding to the cluster to facilitate the establishment of the local action group (LAG), animate cluster area in terms of developing projects and developing cluster based strategy. The Cluster invited tenders for this work and 7 tenders received have been evaluated and scored and two agencies were invited to make a presentation on 21st January. Tenders ranged from £39,748 - £13,200. **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that the tender be awarded to Locus Management, based on a daily rate of £463.33, the total number of days to be finalised following discussions with the assessment panel, with a maximum cost of £34,750.

A Regional stakeholders consultation event will take place in Ecos, Ballymena on 27th February.

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

that Council endorse the acceptance of the tender from Locus Management, the assignment being managed by the lead Council, Ballymena.

191.3 PEACE III – STEERING GROUP

Chief Executives and Directors/Heads of Development are currently giving consideration to delivery mechanisms, governance issues and opportunities presented by the next round of EU funding for Peace, Rural Development and Interreg.

To date the Peace III Cluster has completed a scoping exercise which gives an overview of potential areas of engagement for the group under the Peace III programme. This involved scoping current good relations plans, community support plans and other relevant plans. A local consultation event was held in the

Town Hall on 12th December, to invite views on the possible contents of an action plan for the delivery of the Peace III programme within the borough. The results of this exercise will feed into the cluster bid for this region.

The Cluster (led by Coleraine BC) is now inviting tenders for the next phase of work, the development of strategy and action plan for submission to SEUPB. This will involve consultation with all relevant parties. A report on the tenders would be presented to Council meeting.

The Community Relations Council and Border Action have been commissioned to provide advice and support to clusters in the development of peace and reconciliation plans, consultation processes and partnership arrangements etc.

The Cluster wishes now to establish a steering group to assist and support its work and is inviting each Council to nominate two elected members and two members from the voluntary/community and economic sectors.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that Council nominate two elected members to sit on the steering group, taking account of the need for balance of community background and gender.

Ballymoney Borough LSP has also been invited to nominate from within its existing membership two representatives, one from the voluntary/community sector and one from the economic sector, taking account of the need for a balance of community background and gender.

It was **AGREED**:

to recommend that the following members be nominated:

Councillor McCamphill – proposed by Alderman Connolly seconded by Councillor McCamphill

Alderman Campbell – proposed by Councillor Robinson seconded by Councillor Finlay

191.4 COUNCIL LAND AT CASTLECROFT SQUARE

Council's planning applications has been lodged and a letter of objection to Planning Service by the adjoining owner has been copied to Council. Members noted the contents of the letter of objection and that the matter would come before Council in due course. Members also discussed the most unsatisfactory situation with regard to trespass on Council lands which had been ongoing for some 12 months.

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

[a] – to recommend that a response be made to Planning Service setting out Council's position in this matter.

[b] – to recommend that notice be served on the neighbouring property owner to take steps to remove his hoarding from Councils

lands within fourteen days, otherwise Council will instigate action to have the trespass on its lands resolved and its site boundaries secured and suitably protected, the cost of any remedial works to be passed to the adjoining site owner.

191.5 COUNCIL LANDS AT TOWNHEAD STREET, BALLYMONEY

Members are aware of plans to construct a housing scheme on lands presently within Townhead Street Car Park, including the redevelopment of former council store at the rear of the site as a car park. Council also owns lands adjoining the DRD Car Park. Roads Service has approached Council requested two options to be considered:

Option 1]. – a comprehensive layout which takes in the full area of land owned by the three parties – Council, DRD and the developer. This option would affect the Council area in that the surface levels at the boundary may change slightly, and the white lining layout would be changed to optimise the number and arrangement of spaces. No drainage from the new area of car parking will be directed across council land. An alternative outlet route has been obtained and no new services would encroach onto Council property.

Option 2]. – a condensed layout over the DRD and Developers lands, but not affecting the Council owned lands. This option is more restricted, with the DRD and developers lands treated separately from Council land. The Council lands would remain as existing. In this option some restrictions in comparison to the more comprehensive layout result.

DRD Roads Service preference is option 1.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that, without prejudice, Council agree to option 1.

DRD Roads Service may be interested in acquiring the Council lands and building at Townhead Street adjoining its car park and plans have been provided to enable them to seek a valuation from the District Valuer. This matter will be brought to Council for consideration in due course. At this stage committee may wish to take a view.

Arising from discussion on the options and the development of lands for housing it was proposed by Councillor Kennedy seconded by Councillor Robinson and **AGREED:**

to recommend Council consider disposal of part of its lands and buildings at Townhead Street at a value to be negotiated and that officers discuss with Roads Service and the Developer the optimum layout and overall benefit which could be achieved for the town with regard to housing development and car parking provision.

Committee adjourned to joint the Stakeholders workshop on the new rural development programme. The meeting closed at 6.00 p.m. and the following business was deferred to the next meeting.

- Sister Cities Conference
- North Antrim Community Network funding application