

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Development Committee Meeting No 196 - 15th September 2008****Table of Contents**

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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Meeting No. 196 held in the Borough Offices, Riada House, on Monday 15th September 2008 at 5.00pm.

In the Chair Councillor I Stevenson

Members

Aldermen

F Campbell
H Connolly
C Cousley
J Simpson

Councillors

J Finlay
B Kennedy
M McCamphill
T McKeown
E Robinson

Apologies:

Councillor

A Patterson

In Attendance

Trevor Neilands, Director/Chief Executive, NRC
Ian Houston, Deputy Director, NRC
Clare O'Neill, Head of Economic Engagement, NRC
Chief Executive
Head of Corporate & Development Services
Committee Clerk

Chief Executive welcomed everyone to the meeting.

196.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

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

***that the Deputy Mayor be nominated to conduct the
election of Chair.***

The Deputy Mayor invited proposals for the position of Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

that Councillor Stevenson be re-elected as Chair of the Development Committee for the ensuing year.

The Deputy Mayor declared Councillor Stevenson elected as Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

Councillor Stevenson took the Chair and thanked members.

* **Councillor Robinson joined the meeting at 5.05pm.**

196.2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor Stevenson invited proposals for the position of Vice Chair of the Committee.

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

that Councillor McCamphill be elected as Vice Chair of the Development Committee for the ensuing year.

The Chair declared Councillor McCamphill elected as Vice Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

196.3 PRESENTATION BY NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

The Chair welcomed Mr Trevor Neilands, Director/Chief Executive, Mr Ian Houston, Deputy Director and Ms Clare O'Neill, Head of Economic Engagement, Northern Regional College (NRC) to the meeting.

* **Alderman Connolly and Councillor Wilson left the meeting at 5.06pm. Councillor Kennedy left at 5.08pm.**

Mr. Neilands introduced the NRC presentation. Mr Houston provided details on the role of NRC whilst Ms O'Neill outlined the economic engagement structure and the college's opportunities – copy of presentation attached, Appendix 1.

After the presentation the Chair invited questions from members. These included NRC's role in the Business Start Programme, how the needs of the local businesses are assessed and the future of the Ballymoney Campus. Ms O'Neill informed members she was happy to meet members re needs of local businesses etc. The representatives also advised on establishment of workforce forum,

partnership arrangements with LEAS, access needs and skills gaps in the local community.

* **Councillor Finlay joined the meeting at 5.45pm.**

The Chair expressed his appreciation for their work, wished them success in future and thanked the representatives for the presentation.

196.4 MINUTES – Meeting No. 195 – 16th June 2008

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

that the minutes of committee meeting, No. 195, on 16th June 2008, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

196.5 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Rural Development Strategy was presented to stakeholders at a workshop on 4th July, following which the NE Joint Committee and Local Action Group approved for submission the draft strategy by the 31st July deadline. DARD permitted the cluster additional time until early September and the strategy was circulated for consultation with comments by 1st September.

Craft NI, the lead body for the development of the craft sector in NI will promote the RDP as a resource for the sector among craft makers and businesses and have invited local authorities and others in the public realm to develop their role in providing opportunities for SMEs in the craft sector and to join Craft NI in building supportive partnerships and to this end include the craft sector in the RD Strategy.

Members were informed of DARD Rural Champion:public participation events, detailed.

196.6 PEACE III PROGRAMME

Due to a poor response to the call for social partners a second call is being made through public advertisement next week. Arrangements are being made for shortlisting and interview process. Applications close on 8th October. Unfortunately this will delay the setting up of the partnership.

Over the summer an issue was raised relating to application of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings [Protection of Employment] Regulations). Legal advice is being sought on behalf of the Cluster by Coleraine Borough Council on whether or not this applies to the new Peace III delivery structures. When this advice is received a further report will be made to Committee. Until this is settled staffing plans and budgets to be included in the bid to SEUPB cannot be finalized.

An advance notice of proposed SEUPB Information Roadshows for the new Peace and Interreg programmes in November had been circulated to members. Concerns have been conveyed to SEUPB about hosting roadshows in the region before having structures and support in place. SEUPB have now confirmed to postpone the proposed forthcoming roadshows until January 2009 to enable a longer lead-in time. Due to the size of the NE region two roadshows have been requested.

196.7 BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY PROGRAMME (DETI)

[a] – Inspire Programme (post start-up support for businesses)

The final evaluation of this programme has been received. This highlights the difficulties experienced with recruiting and the relatively low level of take-up of the extended mentoring. However the overall outcome showed significant benefit for the participating businesses with 55% increase in sales and marketing activity being recorded and 38% in such activity leading to business growth; estimated turnover increase of 60% on average being recorded and 89% of the original issues identified by the companies at the start of the programme being directly improved as a result of the programme. 15% of the businesses indicated that they would be recruiting additional staff while there was a 13% decline in the number of companies saying that they could not recruit.

[b] – Post Programme Evaluation – ERDF Measure 1.4

DETI has published a post evaluation report of the programme, carried out on their behalf by a public sector consultancy. A copy of the report is available. The following recommendations were made:

- **Targets and Monitoring:** Recommend that DETI decides on a range of key metrics for the next competitiveness measure and collects this information annually from each council in a standardized electronic format.
- **SMART Targets:** Recommend specifying SMART targets for all future programmes
- **Outcome based targets:** Recommend that future targets are SMART and outcome focused
- **Scale of Activity:** Recommend that future projects could focus on larger scale, more strategic projects or suggest that neighbouring councils work collaboratively on certain projects to enjoy economies of scale in delivery.
- **Continuous professional development:** Suggest that DETI could facilitate regular training events to increase the consistency of reporting and monitoring

196.8 COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME (DETI)

The closing date for stage II applications has been put back to 19th September. The selection panel will meet in early October with a decision, subject to an independent evaluation, in November/December. The selection panel will meet four times a year. The next closing date for stage II applications is likely to be December 2008 with a selection panel meeting in January 2009. It has been pointed out that Councils must not duplicate any existing programmes which are

already government funded and must not target Invest NI clients as they are able to source funding from existing expenditure streams within the agency. DETI are looking for strategic economic initiatives which will deliver long term economic benefit to the region. In their view projects which are in the £50K bracket or less are unlikely to deliver this as an outcome. They suggest projects should be grouped together to give the type of impact and results they are looking for.

It is anticipated that each of the Council's in the cluster will lead on one programme. Council's bid for delivery of the Tender Support Programme across the cluster has been submitted.

196.9EU INTERREG PROGRAMME

NEP gave consideration to the NE partners becoming involved in a proposed cross border e-government initiative – closing date for application 5th September. On reading the project brief it was considered that the borough did not have the same need for the project as those areas close to or neighbouring the border who have residents commuting across the border for work, services etc.

A number of projects submitted under the Multi-Annual Plan have not been successful. The group has decided to appeal and has sought support from political representatives for its representations to SEUPB to ensure that the North East region gets a fair share of interreg funding.

196.10 NORTHERN CORRIDOR RAILWAYS GROUP

The Railways Group over the summer period sought input from councils on potential development opportunities which could have an impact on rail services and vice-versa for the paper being prepared for submission to the DRD study announced by the Minister. This approach was well described in the Railways Review 2003:

“rail should not be assessed as an isolated form of transport, but rather as a key component of a roader framework including integrated transport, land use planning, economic development and tourism and other related areas of social policy”

The Chief Executive has identified and submitted information on areas where development opportunities and strategies could be integrated with the railway network and where significant mutual benefits could be realized. The Railways Group will integrate all the data into a paper to be presented to the Group in September, prior to the submission to the departmental study.

Correspondence from a Dunloy resident regarding the reinstatement of the railway halt at Dunloy has been received. It stated that a petition of 1,000 signatures was presented to the Ministerial Office at the end of June. A letter from Mr Declan O'Loan, MLA indicated that the Minister was now prepared to give consideration to the issue.

It was proposed by Councillor McCamphill seconded by Alderman Campbell and
AGREED:

to recommend that Council lend its support to the petition for the reinstatement of Dunloy halt and the representations to the Minister.

196.11 INTERNATIONAL LINKS

□ **Sister Cities**

Following a meeting with Benbrook City Council about its participation in the Sister Cities Program and the twinning relationship with Ballymoney the Mayor has now been formally advised that Benbrook City Council, by a vote of 3 to 3, reaffirmed its decision to not participate in Sister Cities International Programs and did not reinstate the twinning relationship with Ballymoney. The Benbrook Mayor has indicated in his communication to the Mayor that the City of Benbrook appreciates and admires Ballymoney's citizens and elected officials and that the decision was based on programmatic priorities and in no way reflects negatively on Ballymoney.

Correspondence from Happening has been received, inviting delegates involved in the Sister Cities Programme to a review meeting of the conference on 18 September 2008. In addition Mr Peter Madden and three members will be visiting Northern Ireland in preparation of the next conference in Belfast and Council were asked to invite them to the local area. There was an opportunity for Councils to host the delegates.

Councillor Finlay expressed his sadness at the end of the official link with Benbrook City Council. The Chief Executive informed members that casting votes are not used and there will not be a bye-election following the retirement of a Councillor. There will be elections in May 2009.

The Mayor and Councillor Robinson expressed the hope that those attending next year's Sister Cities' Conference would visit Ballymoney.

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

to recommend:

- (i) that the delegates who attended the Sister Cities Conference in Kansas, attend the review meeting on 18 September 2008 at NITB offices, Belfast***
- (ii) that the Mayor host the visiting delegates during their visit to Northern Ireland***

□ **Vanves**

A Civic Delegation (5) from Vanves, France will visit the Borough 10-15 October 2008. Council will provide accommodation for the visit and an itinerary is being developed in consultation with the Mayor's Office. The Head of Corporate and Development Services informed members that travel arrangements for the visit have been confirmed.

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

to recommend that Council provide accommodation for the Civic Delegation's visit in accordance with the usual arrangements

196.12 COMMUNITY SUPPORT/SERVICES

Arising from discussion on this matter a paper is being prepared for RTG to consider. An update will be presented in due course.

In response to Alderman Simpson, the Head of Corporate and Development Services gave a brief overview of the support currently available.

196.13 INI SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME

INI has produced proposals on how to take forward the Social Entrepreneurship Programme which was launched in 2006. A paper (produced by INI) outlining a fresh approach for consideration by stakeholders was attached to the report. A workshop was held in early September for officers in the region. The new rural Development Programme offers community enterprises an opportunity to access substantial grant assistance. However, there is a capacity problem in rural areas in particular where groups either do not yet exist or need developing. The SEP might provide valuable assistance in bridging these gaps. Committee will be kept informed as to progress.

196.14 FIRMUS GIVEAWAY TO LOCAL GROUPS

Following last year's successful event Firmus Energy is again this year offering charity, church and community groups in the area a chance to apply for share of a £3,000 giveaway. OCE has agreed to lend their support to the initiative as last year. Committee is invited to nominate a member for the judging panel.

It was **AGREED:**

to recommend that Councillor Stevenson be nominated to sit on the judging panel.

196.15 NEW DEAL

The following extension of DEL's letters of offer to Elle Enterprises (NI) have been signed on Council's behalf as a partner in the consortium:

- New Deal for 18-24 year olds & New Deal 25+ contract for the period 1 September 2008 – 28 September 2008
- Contract from 29th September 2008 to facilitate residual New Deal Participants.

In response to Alderman Simpson, Head of Corporate and Development Services advised following a tender process Elle Enterprises had been awarded the New enhanced contract from September 2008 and opportunities for the Council to be further involved would be examined.

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor Robinson and
AGREED:

to recommend that Council endorse the extension of the New Deal contracts and continue its involvement in the consortium.

196.16 MID YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATES

Mid-year population estimates published in August 2008 by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency have indicated that once again the population of the borough of Ballymoney has increased by just over 1.7%. Latest figures show that the increase of 516 in the population of the borough over the past year has come about through a number of factors. The population increased by 150 as a result of natural change, that is the difference between births and deaths, with a further 53 people coming to live in the borough from somewhere else in the UK, 44 migrating to the borough from other international locations and 269 moving into the borough from elsewhere in the province.

Population growth in Ballymoney in the twelve months ending 31 July 2007 was twice that recorded for Northern Ireland as a whole and equal second highest in the province behind Dungannon where 72% of the increase recorded there was due to the inward migration of internationals. The latest population statistics were publicized in the local and national press and the Mayor provided comment in relation to Ballymoney's position as a destination of choice for people to live.

It was estimated that Ballymoney's population is under 30,000. Further information is available on request.

196.17 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT – August

For completeness of committee record an extract from the consultation committee, meeting No. 29 on 18th August which dealt with the following items of business was circulated, attached to Appendix 2.

- [a] North Antrim Business Awards**
- [b] Food Tourism Development Programme**
- [c] DETI Competitiveness Programme Application**
- [d] Tourism Marketing**

196.18 NON-DOMESTIC REVALUATION

Land and Property Services (LPS) is conducting a revaluation of all non-domestic properties in Northern Ireland this year. Many businesses within our area will be

affected. LPS are working at the moment to ensure that businesses understand their legal obligation with regards to the revaluation. To assist local businesses information has been placed on the business section of our website and information has been included in *Townscene* which is circulated to town businesses.

196.19 AGE CONCERN

Age Concern NI and Help the Aged NI have been engaged in discussions about creating a new charity which will bring the two organizations together. Although the existing charities in England and NI will not make a final decision until the autumn, there is a decision in principle. Their vision is to create a new organization which will champion the needs of older people in NI, the UK and internationally, through campaigning and by working with Government and policy-makers to effect change which will benefit older people and ageing societies. It will also be a major provider of services to older people both directly and via local partners. The aim is to get the new charity off the ground in 2009. The work of both Help the Aged and Age Concern will continue as normal in the meantime. Committee will be updated in due course.

196.20 PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Information on public sector employment figures in the borough, requested by the Chair are provided hereunder. [*most recent available 2005*]

	Public	Private	Total	%
Ballymoney	2,077	5,152	7,229	29
NI	219,403	463,651	683,054	32

The Chair expressed his concern should there be reduction in public sector employment in Ballymoney and indicated that he would keep this matter under review.

196.21 SMALL AREA INCOME DEPRIVATION ESTIMATES

NISRA have published, 28 August, small area income deprivation estimates, providing estimates of income deprivation for each super output area [SOA] in Northern Ireland for the years 2003/05 and 2004/05. the estimates are a result of research commissioned by NISRA and carried out by Dr Ben Anderson from the University of Essex. Outputs include estimates of the proportion of households with less than 60% of the UK median income and an estimate of income inequality in each SOA. An extract of some information relative to Ballymoney was circulated. The information can be viewed on www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk

196.22 ANNUAL NI ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

The 13th Annual Conference will be held on 1st October in Belfast, providing a forum for leaders in both public and private sector to evaluate the current

performance of, and prospects for the local economy. Fee £255+VAT. Details included in weekly conference schedule.

196.23 REPORTS

The following minutes/reports were tabled:

- North Antrim Community Network
- 5 Year Review of the Regional Development Strategy – setting out the changes which have been made
- Invest NI Annual Report and Accounts 2007-08

The Chair thanked members and officers for their work and attention. Alderman Campbell congratulated the Chair on his re-election.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 6.33pm.

Appendices attached:

Appendix 1 – Northern Regional College Presentation

Appendix 2 – Development Report Addendum

APPENDIX 1

Northern Regional Council Presentation

DC 196

15th September 2008



Northern Regional
College Presentation

APPENDIX 2

Development Report Addendum

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT - August**Extract from Consultation Committee No. 29 – 18th August 2008****[a] North Antrim Business Awards**

Council, with Moyle District Council, last year co-sponsored these awards. A number of business sponsors also supported the awards. This year, the awards are being organised by Moyle Enterprise Company and Moyle District Council have again agreed to be a Principal Sponsor. Council is invited to participate in the 2008 awards as a principal sponsor at a cost of £4,000.

Last year's event was very successful and gained high profile publicity for the two areas and for the businesses who achieved awards. A number of Ballymoney businesses were recipients of awards. It is **RECOMMENDED** that Council contribute £2500 and provide contribution in kind through officer support for shortlisting and judging.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Alderman Cousley:

that Council contribute £2500 and provide contribution in kind through officer support for shortlisting and judging.

Alderman Simpson and Councillor Robinson requested that their opposition to the motion be noted.

The Chair put the motion to the meeting. 4 members voted for and 2 members voted against. The Chair declared the motion carried.

[b] Food Tourism Development Programme

Members may be aware of the Menu of Moyle initiative, managed by Moyle District Council, aimed at developing and promoting the use of quality local produce. The district-wide competition sees many local restaurants, Pubs & Inns and Coffee Shops & Brasseries competing to showcase their creative skills by offering imaginative, locally inspired dishes which feature at least 60% of local produce. Arising from a meeting of Officers from the North East Cluster Councils to review the proposed Food Project which had not been successful in gaining Interreg Funding it was recommended that the Menu of Moyle, with other food initiatives alongside, be rolled out across the cluster to promote the region as a good food destination, with potential to increase tourism, develop new businesses and jobs, strengthen and develop local food markets, strengthen existing businesses, develop new products. There is potential for funding from the rural development programme to deliver a range of food sector initiatives.

To enable other councils in the cluster to undertake research to identify local producers and collate and publish a local produce directory for their area, in line with that produced by Moyle District Council and to facilitate the development of a regional branded food initiative around the rationale for the Menu of Moyle initiative, some resource input will be necessary.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Council provide a contribution of £5,600 to fund a Development Officer for a three month period to undertake the research to identify local producers, to compile a local produce directory and to develop the funding bid to DETI and other relevant funding bodies for a regional branded food initiative on behalf of the Council's in the North East Cluster, Moyle District Council being the employer Council, providing office space and management support.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services responded to a number of questions relating to the research and development of the initiative, the value of the initial research work and the successful pilot initiative delivered by Moyle District Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevenson, seconded by Councillor Wilson and **AGREED:**

that the Council provide a contribution of £5,600 to fund a Development Officer for a three month period to undertake the research to identify local producers, to compile a local produce directory and to develop the funding bid to DETI and other relevant funding bodies for a regional branded food initiative on behalf of the Council's in the North East Cluster, Moyle District Council being the employer Council, providing office space and management support.

[c] DETI Competitiveness Programme Application

The Business Plan adopted by committee 2008/09 included proposals for business mentoring and continuation of the successful tender support programme. Initial discussions have taken place with officers in north east cluster councils on collaborative working under this programme. It is **RECOMMENDED** that a stage one application be submitted to DETI for co-funding under the Competitiveness Programme Priority 2 – Sustainable Enterprise & Entrepreneurship, for a Council led Tender Support Programme, open to Councils in the Cluster area, targeting 38 businesses, at a net cost of £45,220 and Council consider opportunities to become involved in programmes let by other councils in the cluster, achieving economies of scale in the delivery of programmes.

It was proposed by Councillor Finaly, seconded by Councillor Stevenson and **AGREED:**

that a stage one application be submitted to DETI for co-funding under the Competitiveness Programme Priority 2 – Sustainable Enterprise & Entrepreneurship, for a Council led Tender Support Programme, targeting 38 businesses in the North East Cluster at a net cost of £45,220.00.

It was reported that all Councils in the North East Cluster had signed up to participate in the programme and agreed local targets. The Head of Corporate and Development Services clarified funding arrangements and background advising that this is a repeat of a previous, successful programme delivered by Council.

Alderman Simpson requested that detailed consideration take place regarding future programmes and raised concerns, particularly with regard to implementation of community development and social enterprise programmes previously delivered by the LSP. The Head of Corporate & Development Services welcomed members input on future

programme development and advised of the consultation which had already taken place to formulate strategy and operational plans for the new Peace III, rural development and interreg programmes.

[d] Tourism Marketing

Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism Partnership is producing its 2009 A4 promotional guide which is globally distributed to target markets. Costs range from £475 (1/4 page) to £1225 (full page). In addition to the print run the guide will be available through their website. Members noted this marketing opportunity. This marketing opportunity has been supported by Councils under its tourism marketing budget. Additional marketing of the town as a tourism product had been undertaken under the three year DSD town marketing programme.

..end.