

**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL****Development Committee Meeting No 201 - 16th February 2009****Table of Contents –**

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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Meeting No. 201 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 3.30pm.

**In the Chair**                      Councillor I Stevenson

**Members**

**Aldermen**  
F Campbell  
J Simpson

**Councillors**  
J Finlay  
M McCamphill  
A Patterson  
R Wilson

**Apologies:**                      Councillor E Robinson

**In Attendance:**              Chief Executive  
Head of Corporate & Development Services  
Committee Clerk

**201.1 MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 200 - 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2009**

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

***that the minutes of Committee meeting, No. 200 on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009,  
as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.***

**201.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

A Programme update is attached as Appendix 1.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services discussed with members the impact on programmes of the reduction in project budgets at the recent meeting which settled all council services budgets for 2009-10. There had not been an opportunity as yet to consider the implications in detail, but following review and consultation with Councils within the Cluster regarding participation in joint

programmes a further report would be made to committee. However there were two matters which required committees attention at this stage;

- NEP Membership for the incoming year allowing endorsement of participation in Interreg programmes Council had signed up to (programmes 100% funded);
- Ballymoney Streetscape Scheme, now at an advanced stage of planning and requiring a financial contribution from Council to allow the DSD bid for funding to be finalized.

\* **Alderman Simpson arrived at 3.40 pm**

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

***to recommend that Council approved contributions from existing budgets for (a) NEP Membership 2009/10 £5,000; and (b) contribution of £5,000 to Ballymoney Streetscape Scheme, the elements to be funded to be agreed in consultation with DSD/DRD/Borough Services Director.***

**Peace III**

Committee was advised of the establishment of a cross-department steering group, led by the Development Unit, to facilitate establishment of an integrated strategic approach and to co-ordinate monitoring of Council participation in bids being developed for submission under the Peace III programme. A further report would be made to committee.

It was noted that opportunities existed for participation in a range of programmes across the cluster area, eg:

1. Cross Council/Cross Border Leadership, Citizenship & Good Relations Programme for political and community based leaders;
2. Cross Council Inter Church/Interfaith confidence building programme;
3. Cross Council/Border Youth and Schools Programme
4. Cross Council community and ethnic minority capacity building, engagement and sharing programme;
5. Cross Council/Cross Border community dialogue and exchange programme including a breaking the cycle of fear initiation and interfaces programme
6. Community Engagement and Visible Manifestations of Conflict Programme
7. Cross Council & Cross Border Public/Private Interagency cultural diversity awareness, respect and enriching programme
8. Cross Council Ethnic Minority employment programme in association with local employers;
9. Cross Council/ Cross Border indigenous and ethnic minority sports, cultural, arts, language, drama, music, media sharing programme including a resource allocation to participating groups.
10. Cross Council victims development programme.

The programmes were now open for registrations of interest and registrations of interest had been lodged on Council's behalf for relevant programmes. Public awareness sessions had been held. The animation programme is due to commence in March 2009 when calls for phase 1 programmes will be made with programmes implemented by May 2009. Phase 1 programme activity ends September 2009 and phase 2 programme activity ends December 2010.

- \* **Councillor Wilson left the meeting at 3.45 pm.**

### **201.3 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2007-2013**

In response to Council's representations about the delay in the implementation of the new Rural Development Programme the Minister has advised that while she shares member's frustrations in getting funding on the ground, it is, however, important that the delivery mechanism is robust. In this respect it has been important to work closely with lead councils in addressing issues of concern to both them, their partner councils and their appointed Local Action Group. She advised on the introduction of joint committee legislation to provide improved governance of public funds, and to afford protection to councils and members of Joint Committees. However some clusters had queries regarding legal interpretation and liabilities and were reluctant to engage in body corporate arrangements and this had a delaying effect on progress within the programme. In this regard the Joint Committee for this area did not respond to the Department's request of 29<sup>th</sup> October to formally ask to be formed into a Joint Committee Body Corporate until 14<sup>th</sup> January.

As regards the delay occasioned after 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008 this was largely due to all clusters being afforded the opportunity to review their respective strategies and re-submit if considered appropriate, an offer taken up by the cluster for this region. In October to maintain momentum the Department offered all clusters an extension to their animation contracts to allow them to develop their administration units and to implement the programme up to the opening of calls and assessment of applications. In essence anything short of issue of letters of offer. Two clusters have already sought expressions of interest and one has opened calls.

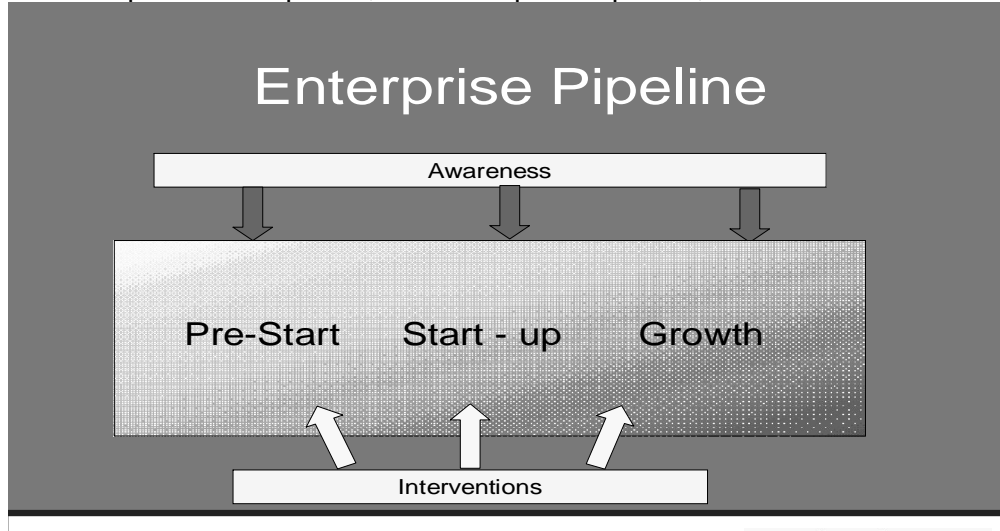
As regards award of budgets, all strategies have been assessed and the Minister will shortly be notifying all Joint Committees of their potential allocations. The Joint Committee legislation will come into operation on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2009 after which contracts will be offered to all joint Council Committees.

### **201.4 NEW DRAFT NI ENTERPRISE STRATEGY 2009 – 2012**

DETI is preparing a new 'Enterprise Strategy' for Northern Ireland and it is anticipated that a draft will be put out for consultation before April 2009. It has already been suggested that the content will focus on productivity, which has been identified in the Programme for Government 2008-2011 (PfG), as Northern Ireland's key economic challenge.

There are 5 priorities listed in the PfG and under these there is a total of 23 Public Service Agreements (PSAs). Priority one is 'Grow a Dynamic Innovative Economy' and PSAs 1- 5, which are listed under priority one, have been highlighted in terms of key economic goals; they are Productivity Growth, Skills for Prosperity, Increasing Employment, Supporting Rural Businesses, and Tourism. This will therefore be the focus of the new Enterprise Strategy.

The strategy is to be designed to provide a co-ordinated framework of support to tackle underperformance on the four drivers of productivity, i.e. enterprise, innovation, skills and infrastructure, as NI (despite relatively recent economic growth) remains at around 80% of the UK average (based on Gross Value Added (GVA) per head). The strategy will therefore be developed to manage the model for enterprise development, i.e. "Enterprise Pipeline", as illustrated below.



#### **201.5 COUNCIL PROPERTY – CASTLECROFT**

The Chief Executive updated committee on progress as regards protection of Council's property and development of adjoining. A further report will be made to Council at its next meeting.

#### **201.6 VISIT TO BALNAMORE MILL**

The site visit to Balnamore Mill to inspect the Mill building in connection with the Environment Service proposal to list as a building of historic merit and development plans for the site, took place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Councillor Finlay and Alderman Campbell reported on the visit and said they were reassured that Council had made the right decision not to support the listing of the building whilst encouraging the applicant's efforts to retain features of interest and sympathetically develop the site.

#### **201.7 ROLE & ACTIVITIES OF JOBS & BENEFITS**

The Head of Corporate & Development Services reported on meetings with Jobs and Benefits regarding response to redundancies and support available to unemployed with regard to job opportunities, careers advice etc, New STEPS to work and pathways to work initiatives and what supporting role Council might play was explored. A meeting had also taken place with the new contractor delivering the Steps to Work Initiative. Following consideration of options a further report will be brought to committee. Arrangement would also be made for Jobs and Benefits to make a presentation to committee on their role and activities.

## **201.9 RURAL COMMUNITY NETWORK**

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that the Rural Community Network planned to publish details of community venues to include contact information available meeting rooms and catering facilities on a county basis. This publication would be available to groups, government departments, educational establishments and any other organisations or contacts who wish to avail of a community venue for meetings, conferences and training. The publication will be available on the RCN website and will be widely promoted through other websites and appropriate newsletters. The cost of advertising is £200 or those in membership of RCN (membership fee £250) will get venue(s) included automatically at no additional cost. It was noted that Council had decided to withdraw from membership of RCN and in the absence of budget the correspondence was noted.

## **201.10 NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAY CORRIDOR GROUP**

The Chief Executive advised that correspondence has been received from Northern Corridor Railways Group advising that the Department for Regional Development has appointed PWC to undertake a study 'to consider the possible long term social, physical and economic development which could be achieved by the enhancement of the railway on the Northern Corridor' (Terms of Reference for the study are included as appendix 2.)

The Group will be making a formal submission to the study based on the development data supplied by the seven Councils and, in addition, have invited the consultants to a meeting of the NCRG. Dates of the meetings are:

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 10.30 am – Studio 3, Flowerfield Arts Centre, Coleraine**

This meeting will consider and hopefully approve a response to the study.

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 1.30 am – Conference Room, Flowerfield Arts Centre, Coleraine**

PWC consultants will attend this meeting and report on their work to date.

The Chief Executive and elected members are invited to attend.

**The meeting closed at 4.12 pm.**

Appendix 1 - Programme Progress Report  
Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference Railway Group Study

## APPENDIX 1

PROGRAMME UPDATE @ 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Programme	Status
Peace III	<p>Manager recruited and in post.            Information Roadshows delivered during February            Register of Interest for Delivery Agents advertised.            Initial meeting of GRO and EDO of Councils in the cluster has taken place.</p>
Rural Development	<p>Manager Recruited            DARD has confirmed that the 2<sup>nd</sup> and final stage of strategy assessment has now be completed by a broad based quality assessment panel and that the North East JC has secured a further budget of £6,969,309, bringing the total allocation to £13,181,300. This will be offered to the JC once the Local Government (Constituting a Joint Committee) Order (NI) 2009 is made on 14/2/09.            Consultant commissioned to assist in preparing bid for Drumaheglis Scheme. - deferred            Facilitated member workshop on possible rural development schemes to be arranged. - deferred</p>
EU competitiveness programme (DETI)	<p>Coleraine led, Think Big Think Trade, cluster-wide programme, stage 2 application has been submitted to DETI.</p>
Town Centre Programmes	<p>Town Streetscape (Main Street) – work ongoing on plans &amp; costings (consultation meeting pending)            LOTS scheme ongoing            Property Regeneration Scheme for Old Church School (community use) being assessed.            Linenhall Street Service Area – proposals to rationalise the site management progressing. Meetings to resolve current parking and land issues being facilitated.            Food and Craft Fair Evaluation being considered by TCM            Trade consultation on marketing programme arranged – deferred.            Easter Event in Riverside Park arranged.</p>

**NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STUDY****Introduction**

The Department for Regional Development (DRD) wishes to engage consultants to undertake a study to consider the possible long term social, physical and economic developments which could be achieved through the enhancement of the Northern Corridor Railway in the NW of Northern Ireland focusing on Ballymena and Derry.

**Context**

The strategic context and importance of a Development Study for the rail corridor is demonstrated by the following extract from the Terms of Reference which were established as the shared understanding of the Railways Review Group set up by DRD in July 2003:

*'Rail should not be assessed as an isolated form of transport, but rather as a key component of a broader framework including integrated transport, land-use planning, economic development and tourism and other related areas of social policy.'*

Since 2003 there have been a number of key events namely:

- (i) the official launch of Northern Ireland Railway's new rail service in June 2005;
- (ii) the launch of the *'Northern Corridor Railways Renaissance Report'*, which first proposed a Railway Corridor Development Study, by the Northern Corridor Railways Group (NCRG) at Stormont in October 2007;
- (iii) the Minister for DRD's announcement in November 2007 which lifted the restriction on investment in the Derry line north of Ballymena;
- (iv) the NCRG's Renaissance report was debated in a Private Members Business Motion on 8 April 2008 and the Minister agreed to advance their proposal for a development study.
- (v) the announcement at the North/South Ministerial Council in May 2008 that DRD would undertake the development study;
- (vi) the commissioning of the *'Infrastructure Capacity Study'* by Translink for the Belfast to Londonderry line with estimated completion in Autumn 2008.

Further development of the Northern railway corridor must be considered in the context of the Regional Development Strategy and its current review (including the Regional Transportation Strategy). The financial context including Northern Ireland Railway's Public Service Obligation (PSO) is also an important factor. As is the medium term regeneration perspective on the redevelopment already in place for specific locations in the area.

**Key Tasks**

It is expected that the Consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- 1. *Update existing reports to reflect the latest position and use this as a baseline to examine the impact on the Northern Corridor railway line of recent investment in the railways network.***
2. Consider existing developments and areas of interest along the Northern Corridor to:
  - identify shortcomings of the current service; and
  - identify potential opportunities for enhancement



3. Assess the role which the railway network can play over the next 20-30 years as a key component in the broader spatial planning framework to deliver a range of social, physical and economic objectives and benefits. These may include:
  - ***the contribution to sustainable regional development;***
  - ***the environmental and health benefits, including safety;***
  - ***the impact on business activity and trade;***
  - ***the contribution to reducing social inequality;***
  - ***the resource cost savings or wider economic benefits;***
  - ***the image of public transport;***
4. Identify strategic development opportunities along the corridor (public and private sector) and consider how these can be related to possible infrastructure capacity, timetable and fleet improvements to achieve the maximum mutual benefits.
5. Determine the mechanisms and processes required to deliver a long-term integrated approach to development and railway investment including the identification of selected, relevant best practice examples and the achievement of 'planning gain' for investment in the railway network.
6. Recommend a range of prioritised strategic actions to ensure co-ordinated actions by key stakeholders.

### **Review & Consultations**

The Consultant will be expected to make maximum use of current and completed studies and undertake selected consultations with officials in DRD, the Department of Environment (DOE), the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI), the Department for Social Development (DSD), the Strategic Investment Board (SIB), Translink and NCRG.

DRD will facilitate communication with key officials from DRD, DOE, DSD and SIB – particular areas of interest will include the major review of the Regional Development Strategy currently underway, the Area Plan process and growth areas, urban regeneration initiatives and surplus land disposal and development. Translink will facilitate communication with Translink officials – particular areas of interest will include investment in infrastructure, fleet enhancement, the infrastructure capacity study, journey patterns and passenger catchment areas. The NCRG will facilitate communication with Local Authorities – particular areas of interest will include urban development opportunities (e.g. Derry and Portrush, links to wider strategies (e.g. tourism development), social inclusion matters and links to major 'people attractors', employment areas and new growth areas. It is expected that other consultations will be required during the Study to inform the findings and recommendations.

### **Reporting**

The consultant will report to a small steering group comprising of DRD, Translink officials and other interested stakeholders to be determined by DRD.

It is envisaged that the assignment will be completed within 3 months and will take in the region of 30 working days to complete.

The required output is a concise report providing a high level overview on the strategic contribution of the Northern Railway Corridor which aligns to the regional development and planning strategy.

A formal presentation will be required on completion of the study.

**Note**

**The Railways Review Group** was established in July 2003 and comprised senior officials within the Department for Regional Development with responsibility for transport policy and several of the Senior Management Team within Translink. The work programme of the Review Group was focused on providing a framework within which decisions could be reached on the future development of the railway system in Northern Ireland.

**The Northern Corridor Railways Group** was established in 2000 when the rail network north of Ballymena was the subject of scrutiny by the Government-appointed Railways Task Force. The Group is a consortium of seven local authorities, representing some 400,000 citizens, namely Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Moyle, Coleraine, Limavady and Derry. The Group has consistently pressed for the retention and enhancement of the rail network north of Ballymena and views rail as a key component of a broader framework to deliver integrated land-use/transport planning, social development, regeneration, and economic development. The Group welcomed the official launch of N.I. Railway's new rail service in June 2005 and the outstanding results which have been achieved with the introduction of the new trains.