

**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Development Meeting No 225, held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, Ballymoney on Monday 23rd May 2011 at 4.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: The Mayor, Councillor I Stevenson (item 1)
Councillor J Finlay (item 2 et seq)

PRESENT:

Aldermen
F Campbell,
H Connolly
C Cousley
B Kennedy

Councillors
W Blair
R Halliday
I McAfee
T McKeown
E Robinson

APOLOGIES:

Councillors
J Atkinson
A Cavlan
M Storey MLA

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Head of Corporate & Development Services

225.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Chief Executive invited members to appoint a temporary chair for the election of officers.

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

that The Mayor occupy the Chair for the election of Chair.

The Mayor took the Chair and invited nomination for the election of Committee Chair for the incoming year.

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

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

Councillor Finlay thanked members for appointing him to the office of Chair.

225.2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

The Chair invited nominations for the election of Vice-Chair for the incoming year.

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

that Alderman Kennedy be elected as Vice Chair of the Development Committee for the ensuing year.

225.3 MINUTES – MEETING NO 224 – 14TH MARCH 2011

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 224 – 14th March 2011, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

3.1 Brown Signs Audit (4.6)

In response to a question the Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that the annual audit of “brown” tourist direction signs had been completed and applications for new signs were being progressed with Roads Service and NI Tourist Board. A member query regarding visibility and adequacy of direction sign to Derrykeighan Old Graveyard and damaged postbox in the village centre will be examined.

3.2 Development Opportunities (224.6)

In response to a member question the Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that various interests were being progressed, but there was nothing substantive to report at this stage.

225.4 REGIONAL TOURISM REVIEW

An update report on the Causeway Coast & Glens Tourism Review and recommended delivery model, following a project group review meeting on 18th May, was given. It was explained that while the final draft report had been prepared by the consultants advice was awaited from the N I Tourist Board with regard to funding for regional tourism delivery and a meeting was being arranged to obtain clarity on this vital matter. The

launch by Government of the new tourism strategy and draft visitor information plan was also awaited.

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

to recommend that Council write to the Tourism Minister and encourage her to ensure continued financial support is available to support regional tourism delivery.

Councillor Robinson undertook to ask NILGA to lend their support to these representations.

225.5 TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE (HLF)

Ballymoney THI application has now been assessed and the Heritage Lottery Fund has informed us of their decision to award your Townscape Heritage Initiative a first-round pass of £1,340,700 *including development funding of up to £50,000.00* (75% of the total eligible development work cost of £66,700.00) towards the appointment of the conservation consultant team, a part-time THI Officer and related costs.

A THI first-round pass means that the scheme meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believe it has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable schemes, so a THI first-round pass is recognition that HLF value the proposals and want to have the opportunity to assess them in detail at the second round. Money has been set aside by HLF for the project but the first-round pass does not guarantee a grant for the scheme. Ballymoney Regeneration Company will now need to develop the scheme further in line with the proposals in the application and submit a fully worked up second-round submission together with any other supporting documentation that is required. The amount awarded to the scheme is fixed at the first round. Although the total costs of the scheme may change the second-round grant request may not increase during the development period. An initial meeting with the case officer and external monitoring officer has taken place. Councillor McAfee asked that a synopsis of the scheme be circulated to new members.

225.6 TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Following the retail capacity study the Department of Social Development is funding a town masterplan. An inception meeting has taken place on 17th May to consider draft terms of reference for the consultancy assignment. The Masterplan, based on the development limits of the town centre plan, will provide a strategic vision and regeneration objectives for the next 5-15 years, building on the town's key location, unique character, tourism potential and evening economy, development opportunities and aiming to improve environment quality, strengthen competitiveness, enhance entrance points, pedestrian connections and access. The plan will be managed by DSD via a steering group comprising officials from Roads Service, Planning Service and Council.

Members discussed the key areas of dereliction and the potential to extend the conservation area and The Chair undertook, in association with the Vice-Chair to arrange to meet key stakeholders to discuss these matters further.

225.7 MUSIC AND FILM FESTIVAL

The meeting received outline details of programme for proposed new music and film festival to be staged on Saturday 20th August 2011 at Leslie Hill Estate, Ballymoney, and considered application for a council contribution towards the development of this new event in the Borough. The festival, intended to attract a minimum of 800 in the first year, includes an eclectic mix of exciting R&B bands, new folk and acoustic acts and film screenings. The proposal will establish an annual music and film festival in North Antrim, provide an economic opportunity for Ballymoney, North Antrim and Northern Ireland with potential to become a prestigious national event, delivering profile for event partners and sponsors. A successful festival will open up business opportunities for the local area and its accommodation providers, restaurants, tourist trade, for providers of services etc, for media, local people involved in the organisation planning and running of the festival, for bands and musicians. There will also be opportunities for direct employment, temporary employment, volunteering and work experience. The local professional event management team have substantial experience in music, theatrical stage production, feature film design and aim to build a viable and sustainable festival over a 2-3 year period. The event is seeking to access an already proven audience from a wide age group, but will also give attention to attracting younger people through creation of a social network based viral marketing campaign.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Committee consider supporting the festival in view of its economic benefits and the marketing and tourism potential it offers.

Members discussed the growth potential of the event and its potential to contribute to the local economy, development of local arts & culture and encourage tourism development.

It was proposed by Councillor Kennedy seconded by Councillor McKeown and **AGREED:**

to recommend that in view of the marketing potential of the event to increase and visitor numbers and provide economic benefits, sponsorship of £1,000 be made available, 50% from existing event budget and the remainder from reserve funds.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services will arrange meet with the event organisers for further discussion on the sponsorship proposals and will report further to a future meeting.

225.8 TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

DRD Roads Service was scheduled to attend the meeting on 9th May, but this was postponed due to election period. Arrangements are in hand to arrange attendance at a future meeting.

It was reported that Ballymoney Chamber of Commerce has conveyed to the DRD Minister the opposition of local businesses to the proposal by the Department to introduce on-street car parking in Ballymoney. The Chamber has pointed out that while accepting there are economic pressures on government budgets in the present economic climate, to introduce on-street parking charges, on top of increased insurance, minimum wage, VAT and rates, is putting businesses under substantial pressure in a difficult economic climate and making their situation worse. There is a real fear that the impact of these charges will add further pressure on businesses already struggling in these difficult economic times and there could be business closures as a result.

Representations from members regarding timing of traffic lights and traffic congestion at Main Street/Castle Street/ Meetinghouse Street to be referred to Roads Service.

225.9 INLAND WATERWAYS PROJECT (Interreg)

The Inland Waterways project went before the SEUPB steering Committee last week and the North East Partnership has confirmed that the project was approved in principle, however this is subject to queries which the steering committee have put to Waterways Ireland.

Pending a satisfactory response the Steering Group have agreed to approve the project by post and it will not have to go back to committee. Initial meetings with the Director of Borough Services to discuss progress on the project have taken place.

225.10 BIKER TOURISM PROJECT

Terms of reference have been agreed for the consultancy assignment to review and further develop this project to be submitted under the tourism call due to open soon.

The aim of the biker tourism project is to develop the North East, North West and South and West of Scotland regions as premier destinations for motorcyclists and thereby increase income to these areas through tourism spend. The partners aim to achieve this through a programme of activity involving joint training and marketing targeted at the increasingly significant niche motorcycle tourism market sector by building on the biker road trip pilot initiative developed in 2005 under the EU Leader+ programme. The partners have been in consultation with their respective tourism authorities, NITB, Failte Ireland and Visit Scotland who have all indicated their support given its potential strategic importance.

225.11 VILLAGE RENEWAL PROGRAMME (RDP)

Claims are currently being processed in respect of Dervock, Stranocum and Dunloy. The Ballybogey & District Community Association has been successful in securing match funding from Big Lottery Awards for All. In Rasharkin the local group are seeking external support to enhance the village planning exercise undertaken by them.

The village action plans contain a collective vision of what people who live in villages would like to see as well as detailed action plan for achieving the vision. Meeting for

groups to come up with their own solutions will be held over the next few weeks. Some concern has been expressed about the level of match-funding Councils are been asked to provide in connection with community development. The need for groups to move to a management structure to develop and manage community facilities and social enterprises has been discussed and a meeting has been arranged with sustainable communities, the resource centre and the regional community network to map community services and support for the borough.

225.12 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

12.1 Cloughmills Riverside Park

Application for this project, developed by Council in association with Cloughmills Action Team, incorporating riverside park, biodiversity path and play facility, with match funding from borough services community projects capital programme is being developed for submission under RDP call which closes on 28th August.

12.2 Cloughmills Old Mill Site – Feasibility Study

Outline terms of reference for the feasibility study have been developed and the application for funding to undertake a feasibility study to examine options for the site is being prepared for submission to RDP. Match funding will be provided under the village plan budget.

12.3 Dalriada Scenic Drives Study

With the support of the Countryside Officer and NI Tourist Board draft terms of reference for a feasibility study to develop & sign scenic route(s) linked to the Causeway Coastal Route have been developed. An application for funding under the RDP is being submitted with match-funding from current budgets.

The project will determine the feasibility of the creation of a pilot project in relation to rural drives in the North East area, specifically, Ballymoney area. The aim is to investigate the provision of a unique tourism product that offers visitors to the borough an insight into the history, heritage and topographical variety of the area. This will include identifying suitable signposting to less well-known attractions in Ballymoney's hinterland with a view to increasing tourism product offering; highlighting unique features; increasing tourist numbers and spend.

12.4 Cluster Special Calls

The Senior Officers group is to consider cluster projects following the abandonment of some projects.

12.5 Progress Report

175 projects have been approved to date by the Joint Committee with 127 letters of offer being active. The total target for the year was finalised at £1.3m. This is well down on the original £2.0M proposed in the implementation plan, due to issues and barriers which the programme process has encountered. While the NE

Region will come up just short of the £1.3m it is still the highest spend of any cluster.

12.6 Support for small food producers

DARD has come up with a means of assisting small food producers, in conjunction with re-opening Axis 1. The Minister has announced that the programme for government budget for 2011-12 has now been confirmed and when this is matched by EU funding will provide available funding of £11.6m to support the agri-food sector up until 31 March 2015.

225.13 COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME

A meeting have been arranged with Invest NI Regional Officers to discuss proposals for delivery of programmes under the EU competitiveness programme. Programmes have been identified by Council and via the cluster collaboration strategy but insufficient funding is available to support the full programme of projects. Consideration is currently being given to prioritisation of projects and a further report will be made to the next meeting.

225.14 CORPORATION TAX

The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee will publish its first report of session on Corporation Tax in Northern Ireland on 24th May. Copies of the report will be available to the press and people who gave oral evidence as part of the inquiry.

225.15 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

As of 31st March 2011 Causeway Area Rural Transport (CART) ceased trading. The Department of Regional Development has transferred the contract to provide RTF transport services in the Ballymoney/Coleraine areas to North Coast Community Transport as of 1st April 2011. North Coast Community Transport will continue to provide the essential means of transport to its members residing in the council's area.

225.16 LONDON 2012 TORCH RELAY ROUTE

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games has announced the first 74 locations on the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay Route, including dates and locations for evening celebrations and island visits. Every nation and region of the UK is represented and the search has begun (on 18th May) for 8,000 inspirational torchbearers. The announcement of these events and visits is the first stage in confirming the route the Olympic flame will take around the UK. It will travel across the UK for 70 days aiming to be within a one hour journey time of 95% of the population.

Councillor Storey has advised of a workshop event on the torch route on 13th June where further information will be available. He has made representations to the DCAL Minister regarding the inclusion of the borough.

226.17 TIMING OF FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

that meetings would take place on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7.00 pm for a trial period of four months.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.