

Ballymoney Borough Council
Development Committee Meeting No 261 – 15th October 2014

Table of Contents

261.1	Declarations of Interest	<i>None</i>
261.2	Minutes – Meeting No 260 – 17 th September 2014	<i>Approved</i>
261.3	Tourism	<i>For information</i>
	3.1 NITB Visitor Experience Development	
	3.2 Causeway Coastal Development Study	
	3.3 Croaghan Way Trails	
	3.4 Northern Ireland Golf Strategy	
	3.5 Airport Visitor Information Points	
	3.6 Drumaheglis Marina Project	
	3.7 Brown Tourist Signs	
261.4	Town	<i>For information</i>
	4.1 Linenhall Street Virtual Shop Scheme	
	4.2 Townscape Heritage Initiative	
	4.3 Town Masterplan	
	4.3.1 Transportation Study	
	4.3.2 Revitalisation Programme	
	4.4 Music Centre	
261.5	World War One Legacy Programme	<i>For information</i>
261.6	International Events	<i>For information</i>
261.7	Local Government Reform	<i>For information</i>

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 261 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, Ballymoney on Wednesday 15th October 2014 at 7.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Councillor J Finlay

PRESENT: **Aldermen**
F Campbell
C Cousley

Councillors
W Blair
R Halliday
T McKeown
A McLean

APOLOGIES **Alderman**
H Connolly
Councillor
J Atkinson
A Cavlan
E Robinson

IN ATTENDANCE: Head of Corporate & Development Services
Chief Executive

261.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

261.2 MINUTES - MEETING NO 260 – 17TH SEPTEMBER 2014

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 260 – 17th September 2014, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

261.3 TOURISM

3.1 NITB Visitor Experience Development

Based on the five themes, experience pillars, coast and lakes, unique outdoors, living legends, naturally NI and culture and creative vibe, discussions have taken place with NITB officers and Causeway Coast & Glens Tourism Partnership Operational Executive. Discussions centre around links between destination and experiential themes/pillars, potential for the current Assembly department funding pressures to have a serious impact on future tourism provision.

3.2 Causeway Coastal Development Study.

NITB have approved funding of £20,000 for the Causeway Coastal development study to identify sites/attractions for potential infrastructure development. All local authorities on the Causeway Coastal route and Mourne coastal route have been asked to participate and contribute £5,000 and draft Terms of Reference are being developed.

3.3 Croaghan Way Trails

Following serious damage to the Croaghan Trail arising from the landslide at Altarichard in early August 2014, discussions took place to explore if a new trail could be formed. As a result of works carried out, the Millburn and Breen Forest trails, collectively known as Croaghan Way, walkers can enjoy the challenging, circular upland walks taking in the summit of Croaghan from which magnificent panoramic views to Rathlin Island and Scotland can be seen. Members welcomed this development.

3.4 Northern Ireland Golf Strategy

In order to generate more real economic benefit from golf, NITB commissioned BTS and IAGTO to develop a Golf Strategy for NI to 2020. The aim is to identify the way forward and precise actions to support existing commitments (the golf events for instance), the further development and promotion of golf within Northern Ireland, working with and aligning with golf authorities and other stakeholders. A workshop was held recently in the region to consult stakeholders and a resume will be circulated by end of October.

The Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland highlighted the opportunity for growing golf tourism nationally and internationally and positioning as a golf destination. The recent heightened interest and publicity from the successes of Northern Ireland's three Champion golfers has elevated Northern Ireland on the international golf map. It is vital that this growing demand in Northern

Ireland as a golf destination is converted into an accurate evaluation of current golf business.

A new Golf Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland being developed aims to grow golf tourism over the next 5-6 years. An increased profile for the game in NI should mean that many more visitors will want to visit and play Northern Ireland's golf courses

3.5 Airport Visitor Information Points

As part of a major relocation project at Visitbelfast, changes are being made to visitor information held at Belfast City and Belfast International Airports by relocating to smaller, manned pods incorporating an interactive touch screen and with a small reduction in hours. It is intended to have the new operation up and running by the end of October. As a result, racking and display space for tourist literature will be limited to key regions and will be used for display of key gateway and destination points. Staff will also direct visitors to the information screens where visitors will be able to download details of key products to their smart phones. To this end, Councils have been asked to cease literature deliveries to both airport TIC's and suppliers and brochures will be requested when required.

3.6 Drumaheglis Marina Project

The project completion evaluation report for the Drumagheglis Marina Project has been submitted to NITB in respect of the funded project. Of the three project objectives, three were fully achieved with the fourth, Visitor Targets, partially completed and due to be fully achieved by the deadline of March 2016. Works were progressed through the 2013 season and completed at the beginning of the 2014 season. It will therefore be 2015 before the full impact of the works can be ascertained.

The project also provided the catalyst for a number of other projects at Drumaheglis Marina including a new outdoor activity building, new floating pontoon with canoe steps with disabled access and new outdoor gym/play areas. The Chair recorded thanks to the funders and expressed pleasure at the substantial enhancement of this key tourism facility.

3.7 Brown Tourist Signs

A follow up meeting supported by NITB has been held with Transport NI to discuss and agree locations for signs to the Dark Hedges to be delivered jointly with the Hedges Hotel. A further meeting will be held at the end of October. Members expressed concern at the delay in installation of the signs and the difficulties this was causing for visitors.

261.4 TOWN

4.1 Linenhall Street Virtual Shop Scheme

All claims to DSD for payment have now been made on this project and paid.

4.2 Townscape Heritage Initiative

One property at a key site is due to for completion and commissioning in mid-November. The 2014-15 capital programme initially had eight schemes identified to commence, subject to statutory consents and match funding. Six schemes were submitted for planning permission and planning has been secured for two prior to 1st June THI deadline. Three, for which planning permission and match funding has not been secured, have been deferred to 2015-16 year.

There are some funding issues:-

- DSD Town Centre Living Initiative (TCLI) /Living Over The Shop (LOTS)

NIHE have now confirmed that no LOTS/TCLI grant will be available for the current financial year. Discussions are on-going with NIHE, concerning re-introduction of LOTS/TCLI and NIHE is now looking to commit £500,000 over the next 3 financial years on LOTS/TCLI to act as match funding for the active THIs. NIHE are currently drafting the Business Case for the reintroduction of the grant at the start of 2015-2016 financial year. Twelve priority Ballymoney THI buildings have been identified as being potentially eligible for LOTS/TCLI:

- DSD Urban Development Grant

DSD has announced that its UDG budget for 2014-2016 has been fully allocated and no more applications will be accepted. It is not known at this stage whether this grant programme will be reopened post 1st April 2015. Five schemes in Ballymoney THI are potentially eligible for DSD UDG funding. The Chair expressed concern at the difficulties caused to applicants due to withdrawal of funding streams and the consequence impact on scheme delivery.

4.3 Town Masterplan

4.3.1 Transportation Study

Following the commitment of Ballymoney and Moyle Councils to meet the cost of the Transportation Study, the tender document will now be issued to enable the project to progress.

4.3.2 Revitalisation Programme

The Steering Group has met and completed its first tranche of assessments. Three letters of offer have issued and the first scheme is nearing completion. A planning workshop, facilitated by Planning Service, was held and all applicants given the opportunity to discuss their proposals and obtain guidance on design, planning and conservation issues. Twenty applicants took up the opportunity to participate in the planning clinic and a number of revised proposals will follow as a result. The target is to have the programme of works completed by end of January 2015.

4.4 Music Centre

Committee to review progress at next meeting.

261.5 WORLD WAR ONE LEGACY PROGRAMME

As this programme ends at 31st December, a progress report has issued to obtain information on the status of projects. A final report on projects will be produced.

The public appeal for a WW1 bronze soldier has reached its target and arrangements are in hand to hold a dedication ceremony on 1st November. The Mayor commended the Ballymoney Cultural and Heritage Society on this project particularly Project Co-ordinator Sammy McClements.

261.6 INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

A visit from the twin town of Vanves will take place from October 24th – 26th, when a business meeting to discuss exchanges will take place. The chair advised that representatives from Council and Twinning Association would participate.

261.7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Development Services strategic frameworks for community, economic and tourism development and leisure services and facilities have been commissioned and are

being taken forward with the support of working groups drawn from the four Councils. Contributions and grants policies are also being developed.

A Tourism Officers Group is taking forward plans for production of a tourism activities guide, what's on publication and web promotion and an accommodation guide in preparation for distribution by January 2015. Arrangements are also in hand to plan and co-ordinate promotions for early 2015.

A tourism literature review is also looking at way of delivering visitor information as well as digitally.

A visitor information plan for Causeway Coast & Glens destination with input from organisations in the region, as well as Causeway Coast & Glens Tourism Partnership and Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust, is being developed and a first draft produced.

This concluded the business of the meeting the time being 7.40 pm