

**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Development Meeting No 240, held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, Ballymoney on Wednesday 21st November 2012 at 7.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Alderman B Kennedy

PRESENT: **Aldermen**
F Campbell
C Cousley MBE

Councillors
J Atkinson
W Blair
J Finlay
R Halliday
R McAfee
P McGuigan
T McKeown
C McLaughlin
E Robinson
I Stevenson

APOLOGIES: **Alderman**
H Connolly
Councillor
M Storey, MLA

IN ATTENDANCE: Head of Corporate & Development Services
Committee Clerk

240.1 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Councillor Cavlan raised the issue of some members including comments on Council business on Facebook and expressed her view that this is not an appropriate forum to discuss Council business. Councillor Finlay, Councillor Robinson and the Chair concurred with her remarks.

240.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

240.3 MINUTES OF MEETING NO 239 – 17TH OCTOBER 2012

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 239 – 17th October 2012, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

* **Councillor McAfee and Councillor McKeown joined the meeting at 7.05pm.**

240.4 A26 DUALLING PUBLIC INQUIRY – UPDATE

The Consultant representing Councils attended the Public Inquiry on 5th November and presented verbal evidence, which was a summary of the written submission. The Public Inquiry commenced with DRD Roads Service, with the assistance of their consultants, presenting a summary of evidence. A series of clarification points were then asked by objectors, to which DRD Roads Service and their consultants responded. Council's consultant was afforded an opportunity to set out their support verbally. The Public Inquiry then progressed to consideration of the site specific objections on an objector by objector basis. The text of the proceedings is expected to be made available in the next couple of weeks. The Inspector will consider all the evidence and will report sometime within this financial year. The Inspectors report will be recommendations only and is not binding on DRD Roads Service.

240.5 NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE CAMPUS AMALGAMATION PROPOSALS

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that the Director and his management team have agreed to attend a meeting with Council. A mutually convenient date will be arranged.

240.6 INTERNATIONAL LINKS**6.1 Potchefstroom, South Africa**

An initial meeting took place between the Council delegates and the Mayor of Tlokwe to discuss the City Council's desire to continue a working relationship with Council on the common factor between the two areas in the person of K K McArthur, born in Dervock and settled in Potchefstroom, also other areas of co-operation and best practice learning. It has been suggested that that both parties express the commitment to enter into a twining partnership (co-operation) with each other and further discussion take place between The Office of the Chief Executive and the Office of the Executive Mayor with a view to developing a proposal for submission for approval by the respective Councils.

A presentation on the recent visit by Council delegation to Potchefstroom was made to Committee by the Head of Corporate & Development Services.

Addressing the Committee, the Chair said he was honoured, with his colleagues, to have the opportunity to lay a wreath on behalf of the Mayor, Members and Citizens of the borough at the municipal cemetery where McArthur, a famous sporting hero of this borough, was laid to rest. The Tlokwe City Council had organized a service, conducted by Paster Ronnie Matras.

The opportunity arose to participate in the marathon, which was very well organized and to discuss with the Mayor, their plans to grow the event and further their desire to strengthen the strong links and the co-operation which exist between the City and this borough.

The common factor between Ballymoney Borough and Tlokwe City is the person of K K McArthur, born in Dervock and later permanently settled in Potchefstroom. What is good about the unique relationship between Ballymoney and Potchefstroom is that there is no fight to claim K K exclusively.

The legacy continues to grow and the centenary festivities in this 2012 anniversary year in Stockholm, Dervock/Ballymoney and Potchefstroom raise the possibility of a continued working relationship.

Initial discussions took place with the Mayor on areas of potential co-operation and agreed that the ideas be further worked up between his office and the office of the Chief Executive and brought to our respective committees for consideration.

- The key area of co-operation is the McArthur legacy which has the potential to grow and benefit both our areas.
- Potchefstroom is a university town and the university is a key partner in the marathon. Discussions would need to take place with the Coleraine campus to explore possible links between the two universities.
- With advancement in technology there is potential for video conferencing, website links etc.
- Tourism is an area they are keen on and there is potential for geneology and other product development areas.

Other areas are:

- School links
- Sharing best practice and learning from each other, eg Potchefstroom is an area of sporting excellence

There has already been some interest expressed in the community from schools and sports clubs.

At the request of Councillor Cavlan, Councillor Robinson explained the letter of invitation to her from the Mayor of Tlokwe and the timescale of the decision to attend stating that the invitation had been specifically directed to those attending and had only been received a short time prior to the date of the event taking place, and had been dealt with at the first available meeting.

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

to recommend that discussions take place between The Office of the Chief Executive and the Office of the Executive Mayor in Potchefstroom with a view to developing proposals for future collaboration.

* **Alderman Cousley joined the meeting during the presentation at 7.10 pm.**

6.2 Visits from Twin Towns Vanves and Douglas

A request from Vanves for a further visit from a new group of pupils from St Exupery High School in April or May 2013 has been received and forwarded to the Twinning Association for consideration.

Arrangements are also in hand for a visit from a Boxing Club to the Borough

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

to recommend that Council host welcome receptions for the groups at the time of their visit.

The Mayor indicated that she would also offer Mayoral hospitality.

* **Councillor Robinson left the meeting at 7.45 pm.**

240.7 TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Town Masterplan

A timetable for meetings and public consultation prior to the launch of the masterplan document has been agreed. Arrangements have been made for a visioning workshop for business, community, tourism and other stakeholders to be held on 29th November, with presentation to Council prior to the public consultation exercise and a further presentation to

Council late August/early September to present the final version of the masterplan before moving to publication. The project steering group will provide direction to the consultations throughout the assignment. The stages of the assignment are:

1. Preparation, information gathering and analysis;
2. Vision and Objectives
3. Design
4. Implementation

The cross sector consultation event would be chaired by Development Committee Chair.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised the meeting that a 12 week public consultation process will take place following preparation of the draft plan.

7.2 Townscape Heritage Initiative

The recruitment process will commence as soon as the permission to start has been received.

7.3 Environmental Improvement Works

An assessment has been undertaken by the Council's consultants and a proposal to DSD for funding for environmental improvement of derelict properties in the Linenhall Street area is being prepared. A proposal, if approved, would be completed within the current financial year.

7.4 Pop Up Shops Proposal

A proposal for this initiative, which has been successfully delivered in Ballymena, is being explored and a further report will be brought to committee.

7.5 Christmas Programme

The Christmas programme and associated marketing campaign has been developed and is set to roll out, with the switch on event on 22nd November.

Councillor Finlay welcomed the recent advertising features in the local press promoting the borough. The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised members that additional advertising had been taken this year, some in association with Chamber of Commerce, including features on Q97 and Downtown Radio. Members indicated their support for raising the town profile through marketing campaigns.

7.6 Halloween Programme

The suggestion for a Halloween events programme to be promoted in 2013 was referred to Council for consideration by the Committee. Councillor McAfee, who had raised the matter, suggested that events involving schools in the borough could be considered. A report will be brought forward for Committee's consideration.

240.8 TOURISM MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme

A working group has been established to focus on match funding, partnership agreements, governance and project developments. The group is made up of representatives from the four councils, NIEA, NITB and CCGHT. The group will commence its work at the beginning of December. Patrick Casement of CNCC will Chair the Heart of the Glens LPS.

A copy of the report on the workshop on 29th October is attached. It is **recommended** that committee give consideration to request for contribution of £3,400 towards the delivery of year one projects. (item 3 in workshop report refers). The Officer advised that since the bid had to be completed by end of December including financial plans, funding commitments had to be settled by that date.

It was proposed by, seconded by and **AGREED:**

to recommend that Council contributes £3,400 towards the delivery of year one projects.

8.2 Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust

It is **recommended** that committee consider request to become members of the Trust and contribute towards its work (item 2 in the workshop report referred to at 9.2 above, refers).

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised members that discussions are taking place with the Trust on the delivery of a selection of programmes specifically of benefit to the borough and costs.

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

that the Officer present a report to Committee at the next meeting and that the matter be deferred to the rates setting process.

8.3 Food Tourism Project

The Causeway Food Network held its first meeting on 15th November to set about its work to develop the network and plan activities that will benefit the food producers and others on the food supply chain throughout the region. The group is made up of the six councils and one private sector representative from each area. Ballymoney's private sector representative is Sammy McMullan, Molly's Restaurant.

8.4 Tourism Marketing

A new TIC Information Tool, developed by NITB, to keep the tourism trade informed about what is on in the area has been implemented. NITB has also offered a marketing opportunity for 2013 events.

NITB is also offering for the sector facebook page/events workshop and activity tourism workshop and a masterclass on the future of events.

8.5 Tourism Product Development

Sheans Horse Farm is developing an extended offer, including tours and following an exploratory meeting, a report will be brought to Committee. The project may compliment trail proposals agreed by Council in principle following a positive feasibility study.

8.6 2012 Diamond Jubilee Events

Six Oak trees, marking the 10 decades of Her Majesty's reign were officially planted by the Mayor on 16th November. The programme of events is now drawing to a close and applications for grant aid have been processed. A full report will be brought to Committee on completion of outstanding events.

8.7 2013 Inspired Events

Committee is invited to consider a programme of events for 2013.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that there are a number of events in 2013 which Council has expressed an interest in exploring ie world Police & Fire Games and 'Legendary' UK City of Culture, The Gathering and the Coronation. Meetings were taking place with various interests and a proposal would be brought to Committee for consideration.

8.8 Drumaheglis Rivers Project (Interreg/NITB)

To satisfy funder requirements CPD selection procedures were used to compile a short list of contractors who would be invited to tender for the above scheme. The scheme was advertised locally and in the ROI using

the e-tender website. Twenty-one returns were assessed by a panel set up by Council. The process was monitored by a representative from CPD. 6 no. contractors who were the top ranked who satisfied the selection criteria: were selected. Council agreed on 1.10.2012 to appoint 6 no. contractors recommended by the assessment panel to form its select list for the Drumaheglis Access & Multi-Purpose Building Project. The Architect has issued tender documents to the Select List Contractors for return on 27th November 2012, with evaluation and report to Council on 3rd December 2012.

240.9 BUSINESS SUPPORT

9.1 IT Course

The Chair presented ICT Level One certificates to NRC students successful in the course support by Council on 5th November.

9.2 Competitiveness Programme

9.2.1 NE Region Programme

Letters of Offer have issued to the lead council for the small firms development programme and sales growth programme in a number of councils in the north east region. Scoping documents have been or are being compiled for a number of others.

The range of programmes are:

1. Raising finance for small firms
2. Now to procure public sector contracts
3. Step up to export
4. Build your business
5. Digital North East
6. International Business Linkages programme
7. Sustainable development programme
8. Family business programme
9. Small firms development programme
10. Sales growth programme
11. Business advancement programme

Council will have an opportunity to consider supporting participation in programmes in the next financial year during the rate setting process.

9.2.2 Food Sector Support Programme

Recruitment has been undertaken for the Food Sector Support Programme, led by Coleraine Borough Council. Council has

provided funding of £5,000 over two years to support participation by local companies.

The elements are:

1. SME selling to multinational
2. Retail to manufacturing
3. Branding
4. SALSA

* **Councillor Finlay left the meeting at 8.10 pm.**

240.10 VILLAGE RENEWAL/RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Dervock Community Centre Project (RDP)

All information has been supplied to allow this project to go forward for approval. Issues raised by DARD regarding timelines are being addressed.

10.2 Drumaheglis Tourist Development Project (RDP Strategic Project)

A further schedule of queries raised by DARD is being addressed and economic appraisal revised. Expressions of interest in renting activity units had been received from two organisations.

10.3 Proposal for Community Drop-In Facility in Cloughmills

The Cloughmills Action Team has expressed interest in acquiring or leasing premises in Cloughmills for provision of a drop-in facility. Arrangements are in hand to set up a meeting to explore the proposal, property and possible funding options and a further report will be brought to committee.

10.4 Cloughmills Old Mill Study (RDP)

Terms of reference have been developed and quotations invited from four consultants to undertake a feasibility study into how the Old Mill site can be sustainably reinvigorated for future community/business use whilst complementing existing facilities and utilizing existing structures. Quotations to be returned by noon on 30th November. The study will be progressed and a report brought to Committee.

10.5 Social Investment Fund (SIF)

RSM McClure Watters have been appointed by OFMDFM to conduct a number of information sessions across Council areas in relation to the delivery of the Social Investment Fund (SIF) which is an additional £80M

Executive intervention dedicated to helping to reduce poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration through area based interventions of a significant scale which will be delivered in partnership with communities. An information session was arranged for a number of locations including the Social Centre, Ballymoney on 15th November.

The four themes are: pathways to employment; systemic issues linked to deprivation; increase in community services and dereliction in areas of deprivation. The Northern SIF Zone covers the council areas of Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Cookstown, Larne, Magherafelt, Moyle and Newtownabbey. The Northern Zone Action Plan will have a maximum of 10 projects. Outline business case by promoters must be submitted by 3rd December.

240.11 NILGA CONSULTATION ON EUROPEAN UNION STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2014 – 2020

A consultation paper, copy attached, was approved by NILGA all council executive on 9th November. The paper is presented for consideration and response is sought from Council by 25th January 2013.

240.12 ULSTER-SCOTS ACADEMY – DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH STRATEGY – PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

The Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure (DCAL), the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) – Ulster Scots Academy, has prepared a consultative document containing proposals for an Ulster-Scots Development and Research Strategy. The consultation ends on 7th December. A copy is available from the Office of The Chief Executive.

The purpose of the consultation is to seek views and feedback on the content of the draft strategy and associated grant scheme which includes the rationale for Ulster-Scots Academy approach, its vision, mission and strategic objectives. The aim of the strategy and associated grant scheme is to identify financial support for discrete projects under three streams of activity: language and literature, history, heritage and culture, education and research.

240.13 FMP – FARRANS CONSTRUCTION/H & J MARTIN/DAVID PATTON & SONS (NI) LTD JOINT VENTURE

DCP Strategic Communications, on behalf of FMP, have issued the following press statement:

FMP says it's business as usual despite Patton administration.

“It’s business as usual.” That’s the message from construction industry joint venture, FMP, of which the troubled Patton Group is a part.

Other joint venture partners, Farrans Construction and H & J Martin Ltd have said that they will ensure that work continues with the minimum possible disruption on the projects they currently have underway.

The joint venture is currently building a number of schools in England and Scotland, as well as finishing off minor works on some projects in Northern Ireland, and the other partners have confirmed that they will fulfil all their obligations.

“It is one of the benefits of having a joint venture,” said a spokesman. “Our thoughts are obviously with our colleagues in Pattons at this difficult time, but we shall do all we can to ensure that our clients don’t suffer as a result.”

FMP has been a very successful joint venture, delivering a number of high profile projects such as Grosvenor Grammar, Ashfield Girls’ and the Boys’ Model Schools.

At the request of Councillor Stevenson, the Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that Council has not received any specific information relating to the nursing home currently being built in Ballymoney.

The meeting concluded at 8.25 pm.