

**Ballymoney Borough Council  
Development Committee Meeting No 251 – 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

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| <b>251.22</b> | Business Meeting  | <i>Meeting arranged</i>  |
| <b>251.23</b> | Rural Development Council   | <i>Appointment of Chief Executive</i>  |
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**BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 251 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House, Ballymoney on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 6.30 pm.

**IN THE CHAIR:** Councillor Storey, MLA

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

**Councillors**  
J Atkinson  
W Blair  
J Finlay, Mayor  
R Halliday  
R McAfee  
T McKeown  
E Robinson, MBE

**APOLOGIES:** **Alderman**  
B Kennedy

**Councillors**  
T McKeown  
I Stevenson, Deputy Mayor

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Head of Corporate & Development Services  
Business Support Officer

**Translink (Item 1)**  
Mr Arthur Hamilton (North Eastern Area Manager)  
Jane Kerr (Regional Services Manager)

**251.1 PRESENTATION – TRANSLINK**

The Chair welcomed representatives from Translink to give members an update on the services provided by Translink, particularly in the Ballymoney area.

Ms Kerr advised on performance of Gold Line service and improvements in the rural rail timetable summer service to the North Coast. She advised that Translink's seasonal service has grown 100% overall with the 218 service to Belfast offering savings of up to £200 compared to car travel and that the bus lane into Belfast is working well. Referring to connections to the Causeway Hospital,

Mr Hamilton said that there are now 17 services from Monday to Friday which have been welcomed by service users and events such as the Milk cup, World Police and Fire Games and Royal Black Preceptory brought in excess of 100 buses to the Ballymoney area.

The representatives responded to questions relating to:

- Increase in designated bus stops on Gold Line route after 9.30 am to reduce the need for customers to travel to Ballymoney or Logan's
- Retention of service depot at the station
- Town Centre Plan and bus station provision in the town
- Disability issues on the new bridge
- Need for more park and ride facilities
- Reduction in the level of antisocial behavior on buses due to installation of high quality CCTV
- Number of school bus connections in Ballymoney and lack of passenger facilities for same.
- Rules relating to standing on school buses.

Mr Hamilton advised that 2012/13 proved positive despite operating in difficult circumstances and business has continued to grow at 7% overall. Despite being under pressure to reduce costs, there were no increases in fares for two years prior to May 2013 and Ulsterbus is maintaining growth with passenger journeys up 2-3% from April to August.

Translink are committed to maintaining services and will be looking at a bus business plan, with stakeholder support, to see how passenger numbers can be increased from 67.5 million passengers per year to 80 million between now and 2021 along with commitment from Government to look at public transport and priority measures for buses in the future.

The Chair thanked the representatives for their presentation which concluded at 7.20 pm. The representatives left the meeting at this time.

- \* **Alderman Cousley and Councillor McAfee joined the meeting during the presentation at 6.35 and 6.40 pm respectively.**

## **251.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **251.3 DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 249 – 19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013**

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

***that the minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 249 – 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013, as circulated, be agreed as a correct record.***

#### **251.4 DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 250 – 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2013**

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

***that the minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 250 – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013, as circulated, be agreed as a correct record.***

### **TOWN DEVELOPMENT**

#### **251.5 TOWN MASTERPLAN**

The consultation on the draft Masterplan, which has been on exhibition in the Council Offices since 20<sup>th</sup> June, closed on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Recently shoppers and visitors to Ballymoney had the opportunity to view the plan proposals and engage with officers from the plan team when Council set up shop in the Main Street. Positive feedback was received.

Responses are now being considered and the final plan, which will set the direction for economic regeneration and development of the town over the next 15-20 years, is expected to be published within the next month or so. Draft improvement and marketing initiatives are being developed with a view to securing funding.

Councillor Finlay thanked the Head of Corporate & Development Services for her work in promoting the plan to members of the public.

#### **251.6 TOWN MARKETING AND EVENTS**

The Head of Corporate and Development Services outlined events taking place in the town over the coming months including a 'Toon Taster' event taking place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September when local butchers, bakers and greengrocers will be offering taster portions of produce and cafés offering special menus. The event is an opportunity to promote the town's unique and distinct food, excellent local produce, the welcoming service and encourage visitors to the town. Such marketing events have been well received to date.

Councillor Finlay advised members of an opportunity for Council to lend support to secure an event in the town to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World War I in 2014. The event, on the weekend of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> August, will showcase displays of World War I vehicles, memorabilia and stories in addition to military displays, a family fun day and a memorial service and parade with the promoter, Ballymoney

& District Cultural & Historical Society, providing all support necessary to stage the event. The event will cost up to £20,000 and the group has requested financial assistance from Council in the form of match funding.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services responded to queries from members relating to organisation, progression and publicity for the event. She advised that a sub group of key partners will be established to take the event forward.

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

***that Council provide financial assistance of up to £10,000 to Ballymoney & District Cultural & Historical Group to promote the World War I commemoration weekend in August 2014, budget provision for which has been identified in the 2014/15 Tourism Event budget.***

#### **251.7 “LIVING SPACES” – AN URBAN STEWARDSHIP AND DESIGN GUIDE FOR NI - PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Department of Environment has published a draft “Living Places” – An Urban Stewardship & Design Guide for NI. The closing date for responses is 31<sup>st</sup> October.

This supplementary planning guidance aims to clearly establish the key principles behind good place making. It seeks to inform and inspire all those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across NI. The consultation can be accessed on the Planning NI Website at: <http://www.planningni.gov.uk/livingplaces>

#### **251.8 DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS, NEGLECTED SITES AND DEFECTIVE PROPERTIES**

The DoE Minister has written following a blight summit, chaired by the Minister, earlier this year. He is keen to encourage Councils to adopt a more proactive approach in tackling dilapidation in all its forms and to conduct a street by street audit of its district to identify dilapidated buildings, neglected sites and defective structures. This would facilitate prioritisation of those buildings, sites and structures for action in terms of impact on local amenity, with a view to deploying existing legislative powers against the owners of such properties or secure their upkeep and take whatever remedial action, such as repair or removal, as Council deems necessary. The Minister is also seeking political buy-in, in terms of support and resources, for the process.

This would seem to be a shift in the department's attitude, from funding the tackling of dereliction to taking the enforcement route. Action in this regard would fall within the Borough Services Directorate. The deadline for responses is end of October 2013.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services referred to the requirement for 'before and after' survey on Linenhall Street project and advised that the 'before' result has been received which indicates, as expected, a negative view of the area. The 'after' survey will now be carried out to establish the perception of the area. She also advised that work is progressing towards the development of the DOE Intervention Bid and a special meeting will be arranged to consider report on tenders and implementation of the programme of work. Council has granted Committee powers to make a decision on this.

\* **Councillor Finlay left the meeting at 7.35 pm.**

#### **251.9 URBAN REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Department of Social Development has published an Urban Regeneration and Community Framework Policy Framework. The purpose of the Framework is to create an over-arching context within which the Department's urban and community development policies and programmes will be formulated, monitored and evaluated.

The Framework is based on four objectives which aim to provide the foundation for addressing the underlying structural problems of urban areas and help in the creation of connected, cohesive and engaged communities and four supporting actions which will help develop a more conducive policy and financial environment.

In addition to the policy objectives and supporting actions a key component of the Policy Framework is the decision to move operational activity both now and after the Reform of Local Government to an outcomes-focused approach which measures impact rather than activities funded or associated outputs. A copy of the Executive Summary was circulated. The Framework can be viewed on DSD website [www.dsdni.gov.uk/ur-community-development-policy-framework.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/ur-community-development-policy-framework.htm).

#### **251.10 LICENSING OF PAVEMENT CAFES BILL**

The Department of Social Development has written regarding proposals contained within the Pavement Café Licensing Bill on which consultation closes on 13<sup>th</sup> September.

The Bill, incorporating a statutory licensing scheme to be administered by district councils, was recently approved by the NI Executive and introduced into the

Assembly. The bill can be viewed on the NI Assembly website. [www.niassembly.gov.uk](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk)

In summary, the Bill allows district councils to:

- Authorise a person carrying on a business involving the supply of food or drink (from premises), to place tables, chairs etc in a public area;
- Require the applicant to fix a notice to premises and submit a plan of the proposed pavement café area;
- Impose conditions on the licence;
- Vary, suspend or revoke the licence;
- Charge a reasonable fee; and
- Take enforcement action, including removing the facilities in certain circumstances.

The licensing function falls within the remit of Borough Services Directorate.

A copy of paper prepared by NILGA, with support from the local government licensing officers' forum, the Institute of Licensing and officers from councils, as a draft submission to the Assembly was circulated. The comments and general tone of the response are supported from a town development perspective.

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

***that Council endorse NILGA's response to the consultation.***

## **251.11 BIDS**

The Social Development Minister launched the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) Bill in June 2012. A Business Improvement District (BID) allows businesses within a defined area to vote for collective investment in specific additional services in order to improve the commercial environment within that area. If the majority of businesses in an area vote to become a BID, a mandatory levy is placed on every business (in addition to their rates) and the money saved is spent on improvement initiatives of the business collaboration's choosing. Proposals are developed by local business-led partnerships, usually in co-operation with the local council. The current legislation under consultation is for draft regulations, that will provide the detail for the legislation passed in 2012.

This legislation will directly affect communities across Northern Ireland, from the corner shop owner to the 100 top businesses. To compliment the consultation process events have been held to inform participants on both the detail of the draft Regulations and the opportunities that BIDs present. This has given participants an opportunity to share their concerns and views with the Department.



## **TOURISM**

### **251.12 BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES (NRC)**

Northern Regional College are, as of September, offering local businesses the opportunity to receive one to one mentoring sessions with lecturers from the college to help them find new and exciting ways of marketing and growing their businesses.

The project involves working with small and medium sized private sector businesses that operate in the 'Food, Drink & Tourism' industries. The project is entirely funded through the Department of Employment and Learning and all of the support which is provided to the businesses is free of charge. Information has been circulated to the sector.

### **251.13 TOURISM MARKETING**

#### **13.1 GB Marketing Campaigns**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the GB Rural Development Marketing Campaign has now been completed. The campaign focusing on Behavioural Targeting and Advertising on 3<sup>rd</sup> Party websites generated 2,187 bookings which equates to 18,972 bed nights and £942,920 of revenue for the region, greatly exceeding the target of £200,000.

#### **13.2 Game of Thrones**

The Causeway Coast & Glens has been featured in two recent Tourism Ireland trade ezines in GB and Scandinavia. The ezines focused on the Game of Thrones itinerary providing an overview of what there is to see and a link through to the CCAG website. As a result of the interest Game of Thrones is now the 4<sup>th</sup> most popular page on the CCG website. Commenting on the increased profile of the Dark Hedges due to the Game of Thrones, the Vice Chair said Northern Ireland was now one of the most popular film locations, with a Dracula film also being produced recently, filming in the town and at Leslie Hill. Councillor Atkinson reported on recent visits to the Dark Hedges when he had witnessed huge numbers of foreign visitors and tour buses.

The Vice Chair advised that plans are being progressed on the Dark Hedges Preservation Trust project, including brown signage and interpretation panels funded by Heritage Lottery Fund. He said a survey of the trees has been undertaken.

The Hedges Restaurant is re-opening followed by the opening of a 16 bed hotel at the site and this facility in the area was welcomed.

### **13.3 Police & Fire Games**

During July the 2013 Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics visited Ballymoney and the Mayor joined Special Olympics athletics and representatives from the World Police and Fire Games and sponsors, Firmus Energy at the Dark Hedges, to welcome the torch to Ballymoney Borough. The run was an integral part of the World Police and Fire Games (WPFPG) being held in Belfast. The Flame of Home's journey through Ireland, organized by PSNI and An Garda Síochána, began in Dublin on 26<sup>th</sup> June and travelled to Newry, Armagh, Enniskillen, Cookstown, the Peace Bridge in Derry City, Antrim and Belfast. A television production company followed the flame through every leg of the journey and the footage was shown as part of the World Police and Fire Games opening ceremony at the Kings Hall on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

## **251.14 FOREST SERVICE**

Following on the NI Executive's announcement of the Economy and Jobs Initiative, Forest Service has been allocated £4M to enhance and develop supporting infrastructure for recreation and tourism within the Forest Service estate, subject to business case approval. Their strategy is to work in partnership with local government and other bodies making sure that forests support regional and local recreational and tourism agendas. Several councils have been able to use Forest Service land to develop facilities such as play parks as well as walking and cycling trails. The Forest Service are seeking approval for their business case and, in anticipation of that approval, has begun a process of informing and consulting with councils about their plans.

Any initiatives in this regard will be taken forward by Borough Services Directorate under their countryside access remit.

## **ENTERPRISE**

### **251.15 INNOVATION AND GROWTH PROGRAMME (NEP)**

This programme is recruiting businesses across partnership councils – Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Larne, Newtownabbey and Moyle. Details have been forwarded to members under OCE memo 335-2013 of 9 August with details of referral arrangements.

### **251.16 EU STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2014-2020 - PIPELINE PROJECTS**

At the request of NILGA and SOLACE, the LED Forum agreed to co-ordinate an exercise to reconfigure the existing list of priority first phase local economic

development projects for the EU Structural Funds 2014-2020. DFP have requested that the existing pipeline projects be reconfigured along the 11 Council cluster lines as an integral component of the lobby work to secure a plan-led approach to the implementation of the new round of Structural Funds. A template from DFP was provided outlining the information required for each of the projects to be submitted as the first stage proposals.

Timeline is as follows:

- September 16<sup>th</sup> – Submission of the templates for all prospective ERDF, ESF, Interreg, Peace IV and Rural Development Projects;
- September 20<sup>th</sup> – Meeting of the working group Representatives;
- October 4<sup>th</sup> – Formal submission of the revised proposals from LED Forum to SOLACE/NILGA;
- October 11<sup>th</sup> – Formal submission of the proposals and any associated required revisions to DFP;
- October 21<sup>st</sup> – Deadline for responses to the consultations on Jobs and Growth (ERDF & ESF) and the NI Rural Development Programme.

To this end a nominee was sought from each of the 11 Council clusters in order to co-ordinate the compilation of the template for the respective Council clusters. These nominees will be responsible for liaising with colleagues from the amalgamating Councils and compiling the information that DFP have requested in the template provided and also attending the Working Group meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup> in order to work through the templates provided in order to identify potential regional or sub-regional themes and trends that could be developed into larger scale projects and proposals. DFP, through SOLACE and NILGA, have been very clear that projects need to be viable and feasible, consistent with the identified priority themes in the draft operational programmes and be realistically capable of attracting the necessary funding, particularly from Council resources. Therefore it will be necessary to remove significant numbers of the projects that do not fit within this criteria. These projects are indicative at this stage and do not commit individual Local Authorities to the projects identified.

In respect of Causeway Coast and Glens District the agreed officer nominee is Ms Moira Mann, Head of Development, Coleraine Borough Council

A copy of the Draft NILGA Position Paper on the Pipeline Projects was circulated for information.

## **CONSULTATION**

### **251.17 INVESTMENT FOR GROWTH & JOBS PROGRAMME 2014-2020 (DETI CONSULTATION)**

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) is seeking your views on the activities proposed for inclusion in the 2014-2020 ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme for Northern Ireland. The closing date for comments is 21<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

The proposed activities focus on strengthening Research, Technological Development and Innovation; enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs and supporting the shift towards a Low-Carbon Economy.

DETI is keen to receive comments on the focus of the proposed Programme, the activities identified for inclusion, and the proposed delivery arrangements.

The consultation document can be viewed via the link below:

<http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-euro-prog-consultations.htm>

A copy of response drafted by NILGA was circulated.

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

*that Council endorse NILGA's response to the consultation.*

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **251.18 COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR NI**

A copy of NILGA's response, prepared in liaison with community development and policy officers from councils was circulated for information. The consultation closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **251.19 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2014-2020**

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has launched a consultation on the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014 – 2020.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views and comments from individuals and organisations on the proposed content of the RDP 2014 - 2020.

Like its predecessor, this Programme will be part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and is aimed at improving competitiveness in the agriculture and forestry sector, safeguarding and enhancing the rural environment and fostering competitive and sustainable rural businesses and thriving rural communities.

The consultation will last 16 weeks and responses should arrive with DARD not later than 5pm on Monday 21 October 2013.

North East Region of Rural Development Partnership in conjunction with GROW South Antrim and the Community Networks are holding a consultation event on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 Ballymena. The purpose of this event is to: look at elements in new RDP (2014-2020); look at delivery of programme and issues in particular for LAGs/Councils and Community Networks; and help put together a response to DARD.

#### **251.20 WEEK OF COMMUNITIES**

Officers from North East Community Network have arranged meetings to celebrate the Rural Development Programme (Week of Communities), details of which were circulated to members.

#### **251.21 THE FUTURE OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING SERVICES IN NORTHERN IRELAND (DVLA) CONSULTATION**

Councillor Storey advised members that an all-party motion had been put to the Assembly on the proposed closure and a debate secured. The DRD Minister had visited County Hall recently to speak to staff and MP's for the area about the proposed plans to move the Service to Swansea, an issue which has been raised at the Northern Ireland Select Committee and a meeting requested. He had also been in contact with the Equality Commission in relation to concerns highlighted by Alderman Kennedy (Min Ref CC88 18<sup>th</sup> August) relating to terminology used in the consultation document. He has received a response advising that they have raised their concerns about the inference in the consultation document of bias in Northern Ireland. Councillor Storey expressed the view that this matter should be taken further and that the whole consultation should be scrapped. He called on the Northern Ireland Executive and Government at Westminster, to do everything they could to secure the jobs in Northern Ireland.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that NIPSA are in the process of forming a small group of elected members and officers to progress work in securing jobs in Coleraine and have requested Member and Officer nominations from Ballymoney. The Chief Executive nominated the Head of Corporate & Development Services as the Officer representative.

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

***that the Mayor, Councillor J Finlay, and the Head of Corporate & Development services be nominated as representatives on the group.***

#### **251.22 BUSINESS MEETING**

The Mayor is expecting a delegation from the Isle of Man to his charity dinner on 1<sup>st</sup> November. To take advantage of this opportunity, a business meeting is being arranged in conjunction with the Chamber to explore potential areas for sharing experience and collaboration on town developments following on from preliminary discussions on the last exchange visit.

#### **251.23 RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Teresa Conavan has been appointed following a recruitment exercise, as Chief Executive of the Rural Development Council.

#### **251.24 EU CAPACITY BUILDING AND AWARENESS SEMINAR**

Advice has issued to members regarding a NILGA seminar on shaping Future Local Communities and Economies on 24<sup>th</sup> October in Craigavon. Anyone wishing to attend should contact the Office of the Chief Executive.

**The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.**