

Ballymoney Borough Council

Development Committee Meeting No 259 – 18th June 2014

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 259 held in the McKinley Room, Riada House, Ballymoney on Tuesday 18th June 2014 at 7.00 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Alderman B Kennedy (Item 1)
Councillor Finlay (Item 2)

PRESENT: **Aldermen**
F Campbell
H Connolly
C Cousley

Councillors
W Blair
A Cavlan
R Halliday
T McKeown
A McLean
I Stevenson

APOLOGIES Councillor E Robinson, MBE

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

259.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

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

that the Mayor occupy the Chair for the election of committee chair.

The following nominations were put forward:

Councillor Stevenson, proposed by Alderman Connolly seconded by Councillor Halliday.

Councillor Finlay, proposed by Councillor Atkinson seconded by Councillor McLean.

On being put to the meeting 5 members voted for Councillor Finlay and 3 for Councillor Stevenson, with 2 abstentions.

The Mayor declared **Councillor Finlay elected** and he assumed the Chair.

* **Councillor Stevenson excused himself from the meeting at this point. Time: 7.08 p.m.**

259.2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

The Chair invited nominations for the office of Vice-Chair.

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

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

* **Councillor Atkinson retired from the meeting at this stage. Time: 7.10**

259.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

259.4 MINUTES OF MEETING NO 259 – 27TH MAY 2014

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

that the Minutes of Meeting No 259 – 27th May 2014, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

The Chair welcomed the commencement of work on the former “Curries” property in the heart of the diamond area of the town centre and commented that this property, restored to its original form and bringing it back into economic use would be a tremendous asset to the town and hopefully would encourage further investment in the development of the town centre. The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that eight other THI properties were being advanced and that there was also substantial private investment in restoration of a derelict property at Townhead Street Car Park which was to be welcomed.

259.5 BALLYMONEY MASTERPLAN

5.1 Transportation Study

Council has agreed to act as lead authority for the study which will cover Ballymoney and Ballycastle town centres. Meetings have taken place with DSD officials to consider draft consultancy brief, DSD grant funding and LGR implications, business case, procurement and contractual issues, role of

council in monitoring consultants, project team, scoping work and time scales, reporting progress and outcomes, masterplan reviews and priority regeneration activities. Subsequent meetings have taken place with Central Procurement Directive re procurement, contract documentation etc. It is intended to appoint consultants by 1st August.

5.2 Ballymoney Revitalisation Scheme

An inaugural workshop with trade representatives giving an overview of the masterplan and revitalization scheme has taken place and a further meeting is arranged to discuss and settle the action plan. An economic appraisal of the project has been undertaken by DSD.

259.6 BALLYMONEY LEGACY FUND

This funding programme was created by Council to support the delivery of legacy projects in the Ballymoney area. Only applicants who illustrated that there would be a tangible output that would last beyond 2014 progressed to stage II. Update report on applications and issues to be dealt with was presented.

Application EDP48/04 – Ballymaconnelly Renewal Group: From The Covenant to the Somme. A response has been forwarded to the group to its representation about the failure of its application to progress to stage II. On 2nd June Council directed that any accompanying letter in support of an application be included with the expression of interest. Letter sent by the group in January to the Director of Central & Leisure Services [*letter dated 14/1/2014*] was put forward for consideration. A stage II application has been forwarded to enable the application to be progressed as directed by Council. A further report will be made in due course.

Outstanding information and queries in respect of applications EDP48/01: Ballymoney & District Cultural Heritage Society, EDP48/08 Friends of the 36th North Antrim; and EDP/14 Ballymoney District 16 had been received, necessary approvals applied for and only eligible spend would be met.

259.7 WORLD WAR ONE COMMEMORATION – SCULPTURE FUND

Give further consideration to proposal to provide a bronze statue of a WW1 soldier at the War Memorial in Ballymoney as a lasting tribute to those who lost their lives in the war. The statue project, estimated to cost £30,000, was deferred from last meeting to consider proposed arrangements for administrative and financial support for the fund.

Following the presentation made to Committee, Council received, at its last meeting on 2nd June (CM997), a letter from the Society confirming that it wished, supported by the Royal British Legion, to go to public appeal in an effort to secure funding to ensure that

the bronze sculpture is in place at the War Memorial by the end of October this year. Council agreed to act as the finance and administrative lead for the appeal fund.

It is **recommended** that approval be granted to amend the bank mandate to provide for the opening of a new account “WW1 Sculpture Fund”, operated with Council’s existing authorized cheque signatories

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

A] - that approval be granted to amend the bank mandate to provide for the opening of a new account “WW1 Sculpture Fund”, operated with Council’s existing authorized cheque signatories;

B] – that Council make a contribution of £20,000 to pump-prime the appeal fund and make arrangements for a dedication service.

259.8 GIRO D’ITALIA

A letter has been received from DoE Minister expressing thanks for the absence of campaign posters on the Giro D’Italia route and giving feedback on the event. The letter was circulated for member’s information.

259.9 SIGNAGE TO DARK HEDGES

The Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust is managing the HLF Dark Hedges project on behalf of the Dark Hedges Trust and a meeting took place recently to progress the project further. A tree survey has been completed and a contract is due to start on 1st September. An ecological survey is also to be carried out. Interpretation at the site and improvements to the layby have been agreed and a funding bid is being submitted to the NITB innovation fund. In recent times there has been increased interest in and visits to the site arising, principally, from the Game of Thrones series. The Dark Hedges Hotel is facilitating the provision of coach parking and further discussion is to take place regarding traffic and pedestrian management.

NITB facilitated a meeting with Roads Service and Ballymoney & Moyle Councils to discuss and secure movement to the issue of “brown signs”. NITB will also facilitate conversations with HBO regarding the use of Game of Thrones (GOT) material on interpretation.

The Dark Hedges brown signs project is now being progressed in collaboration with the Hedges Hotel. Budget provision is available.

The Chair welcomed the initiative which allowed the attraction signage to be progressed and also the news on the provision of coach parking facilitated by the Hedges Hotel. The Head of Corporate & Development Services acknowledged the

intervention of Mervyn Storey MLA which had advanced progress with DETI/NITB and DRD Roads Service.

259.10 TOURISM INNOVATION FUND (TIF)

This fund has now opened for applications and the deadline is 11th July. An information workshop is to be held for potential applicants.

The fund is designed to enhance the growth, quality, competitiveness and sustainability of tourism in NI by supporting the development of new tourism products and services that strengthen the overall visitor experience in NI. The budget allocation for 2014-15 is being provided through the NI Executive's Economy and Jobs Initiative strategy. A key priority is to support innovative proposals that will boost the services provided by our tourism sector and support jobs within the NI economy. NITB wishes to support innovative projects that will deliver NITB's corporate priorities under the following five categories.

- Research & Development: to assist with the development of innovative tourism ideas which will ultimately lead to the creation of new tangible products, compelling visitor experiences and services which will build on NI's strengths
- Innovative Visitor Servicing Initiatives: to improve the visitor servicing offering, including the provision of visitor information, through the implementation of innovative initiatives that reflect changing customer needs
- Innovative Visitor Experience Initiatives: to create and present new tangible products, authentic and compelling visitor experiences which build on NI's strengths.
- Innovative Projects that will provide International Standout: Innovative projects that will provide international standout for NI including the utilization of social and digital media channels.

Projects have to be complete by 31 March 2015.

It is intended to apply for funding to support Council's approved trails/interpretation projects.

Committee agreed that an application be submitted built around the history and culture of the town and surrounding area and taking account of recommendations of feasibility studies undertaken. Existing budget provision could provide match funding securing enhanced value.

259.11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM – DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

11.1 Invest NI App

In February 2012 committee considered correspondence from Invest NI about a mobile app developed by Invest NI to promote the NI sales proposition and for which Lisburn Council is piloting a sub region version. A contribution of £2,500 is being sought. Council agreed that the mobile app sales proposition should not be progressed at the present time and would best be taken forward as a cluster council initiative.

Last year Coleraine Borough Council entered into the project with INI and subsequently held discussions with INI with regard to progressing the project as a cluster and signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with INI. Limavady and Moyle Councils have agreed to contribute on an equal basis. Council is invited to consider contribution towards the cost of creating the mobile app, covering all of the new Causeway Coast & Glens District and carrying the CCG branding. Cost £3,900, with 25% being paid on sign up, with remainder on completion in December 2014. Council would have responsibility for managing and updating data/information. No budget provision is available.

Members held to the view that this initiative was best deferred for advancement by the new Council. However as a commitment had been entered into by Coleraine Borough Council on behalf of the Cluster and an undertaking had been given that this would be a CCG DC app carrying that branding, it was proposed by Alderman Kennedy seconded by Alderman Connolly and **AGREED:**

to recommend that council provide £3,900 from its reserves to cover the cost of Council's contribution, subject to the conditions outlined above.

11.2 Transferring Services

Officers in the CCG Cluster are engaging with DSD on transferring functions, including neighbourhood renewal. The outcome of the cluster study on deprivation will be available soon.

This concluded the business of the meeting the time being 8.10 p.m.