

**LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH**

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE
13 JANUARY 2009**

Minutes of a meeting of the above Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, 7 Connell Street, Limavady at 7 pm on the above date.

PRESENT:

Aldermen G. Mullan, J Rankin and G. Robinson (chair) Councillors P. Butcher, A Brolly, M Carten, B. Chivers, M Coyle, L. Cubitt, M Donaghy, B Douglas, J F McElhinney, C. Ó hOisín, A Robinson and E. Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk, Administration Officer, Director of Development and the Chief Executive.

APOLOGIES: - None.

WELCOME:

The chair welcomed Mr Mark Vinnicombe, Administration Officer within the Chief Executives office to the meeting.

MINUTES:

The minutes of meeting held 9 December 2008 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Butcher, seconded by Councillor Carten.

MATTERS ARISING:

Page 1 – Homecoming of Eoghan Quigg: Councillor Douglas stated that the minute should have reflected that the Chief Executive had advised that the costs for the homecoming for Eoghan Quigg could be in the region of £10K. Councillor Brolly pointed out that she had proposed that Council take the lead role no matter what it cost as the promotion from the event would be priceless. Members requested a breakdown of costs would be brought to Council.

Page 3 – Rural Development Programme (RDP) Update: Councillor Butcher requested that the motion regarding the RDP programme be amended to include that Council authorise the Chief Executive to sign a letter to make the Joint Committee a body corporate. Agreed.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REPORT – JANUARY 2009:

The Director of Development presented the Development Report for January 2009 and enlarged thereon. The recommendations within the report were approved subject to the following:

St Patricks Day Celebrations in Westport: It was agreed that Alderman Mullan, Councillor Butcher and the Culture Arts and Tourism Manager would attend the St Patrick's Day celebrations in Westport.

Town Twinning: The Director of Development informed Council that discussions had taken place with both the Vigneux & Westport Twinning Committees in recent months. Concerns had been expressed about the future of twinning in the lead up to and post RPA and were keen to strengthen existing links made over the years. She said at a joint meeting held in the Autumn of 2008 information had been shared on existing committee systems, together with information on twinning arrangements within the other three local authorities making up the Causeway Coast District Council. The outcome of the meeting was that it was suggested that Vigneux and Westport Twinning Committees merge to form one Twinning Association which could potentially benefit from European Tri-lateral funding opportunities and be prepared for the new Council structure.

It was agreed that a facilitated workshop would be organised for the members of both Twinning Committees.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Grants for 2009/10: It was agreed that decision on level of support for the above grants would be deferred pending the outcome of discussions on the draft budget for 2009/10.

Greysteel Play Area: Members were advised that Greysteel Community Association had offered to open and close the play area in Greysteel for a fee of £25 per week. In the discussion which followed, the overall view was that the Community Association should take this on board at no cost. It was agreed that the Director of Development would seek co-operation between the Community Association and Council on the issue.

Economic Development: The Director of Development updated members regarding unemployment figures for the Borough since the closure of Seagate and of programmes supported by Council to help start a new business or avail of training opportunities. In response to a query on the unemployment figure of 4.8%, the Director of Development confirmed that this was the official figure and was correct at the time of writing the report. It was felt that this would increase substantially over the next few months.

Request for Letter of Support: Members were informed that the Grand Lodge of Ireland had requested letter of support from Council for their plans to develop a state of the art "Interpretive Centre" at Schomberg House. The facility would enable them to promote good relations, cultural awareness and a greater understanding of their cultural heritage. It was agreed that the Grand Lodge of Ireland would be asked to present details of their plans to Council.

Forest Service Consultation Document: The suggested response to the Forest Service draft strategy document which outlined proposals to develop the recreational and social use of forest was approved by Council subject to adding the following comments by members:

1. request that motor rallies continue in local forests
2. cycling should not be restricted in some parts of the forests.

3. the forest around Banagher Dam should be opened up to tourists through partnership working between Departments.

Update – Rural Development Programme: Councillor Butcher updated members regarding the Rural Development Programme. It was noted that the assessment panel was meeting on 15 January 2009 and that the cluster should know the outcome within 2 weeks. It was also noted that the official launch for the whole of the Rural Development Programme was scheduled for 28 January 2009.

Conferences: Councillor Ó hOisín proposed that Council agree to a self regulated moratorium on attendance at conferences by members and officers, with the exception of NILGA, SOLACE and other conferences deemed necessary in the undertaking of professional duties. The proposal was seconded by Alderman Rankin and on being put to the meeting was declared carried 12 for, 2 against. Councillor Coyle objected to the proposal.

ITEMS DISCUSSED IN COMMITTEE:

Interreg IVA: It was agreed that Limavady Borough Council would not progress the development of any Interreg IV projects with Donegal County Council until the current difficulties within the North West Cross Border Group had been resolved.

Magilligan/Greencastle Ferry: It was agreed that the request from the Lough Foyle Ferry Company to be reimbursed for the loss incurred during the 2008/09 operating year and the anticipated deficit from year 2009/10 would be refused. It was also agreed that discussions should take place with the Lough Foyle Ferry Company and Donegal County Council to ascertain the scope for some flexibility for the remainder of the current contract which would assist the company.

It was stated that the total withdrawal of the ferry service would be regrettable especially as there was an expectancy of increased domestic tourism and visitors from the Republic of Ireland. Council was advised of the proposed change in approach to the re-tendering of the contract to provide the ferry service from June 2009. It was agreed that it would be sensible to seek expressions of interest for the contract. Confirmation was being sought by Donegal County Council on procurement issues around use of the existing infrastructure. In addition it was agreed that letters would be forwarded to all relevant government departments seeking support for continuation of the service in the future.

LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL – CITIZENS SURVEY:

Given the current economic climate, it was unanimously agreed that Council would not participate in the joint project developed by Banbridge Council to carry out a Citizens Survey, which would cost in the region of £6,000 - £8,000.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- It was agreed that Standing Orders would be suspended so that an emergency Notice of Motion could be discussed at the Support Services meeting on 15 January 2009.
- Concern was raised at the possible withdrawal of the Ulsterbus service from Limavady to Belfast by Translink.

- The Mayor – Brenda Chivers suggested that officers look if refreshments such as tea/coffee would be at Benone Beach.
- It was requested that Foreglen playarea be included in the budgets for 2009/10 as previous problems regarding entrance to the site had been resolved.
- A member requested that swings be provided at the playground in Feeny.
- The Director of Development answered a number of questions relating to the proposed 3G pitch at Scroggy Road.
- It was agreed that a civic reception would be held for Paul McCloskey who recently win British Welterweight title and for Eamon O’Kane who reached the semi final of the European Boxing Championship.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: - 10 February 2009.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
(The meeting ended at 9.30 pm)

Signed: _____
Chair of Meeting