

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

SPECIAL MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING

22 JULY 2008

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

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Chivers

Aldermen J Rankin and G Mullan. Councillors A Brolly, P Butcher, M Carten, M Coyle and C Ó hOisín,

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk, Director of Development, Development Services Manager and Acting Project Officer.

APOLOGIES:

Alderman G Robinson. Councillors L Cubitt, M Donaghy, B Douglas, J F McElhinney, A Robinson and E Stevenson.

DRAFT NORTH WEST RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

The chair welcomed Mr Mark Conway, Venturei to the meeting.

Mr Conway provided an overview of the basics of Axis 3 of the Rural Development Strategy, including the development & management by the 32 member Local Action Group (LAG), delivery of the £22.5 million budget using the leader methodology, whilst adhering to the core principles of accountability, transparency and integration.

He said that a scoping exercise of the North West cluster area of Derry, Limavady, Omagh and Strabane pinpointed that there were 94,250 residents living in rural areas, 39% of which were aged 25 or under and although the population was growing in urban areas, migrant workers contributed to the overall figures.

Mr Conway explained that the North West cluster had a small business economy, with a heavy reliance on public sector jobs and whilst manufacturing & construction jobs remained strong, the cluster had a low female economic activity rate. He said that there were 4,400 farms engaging 8,000 people in the area and 75% of the labour was conducted by farm family members. He added that 5% of income came from tourism, mainly through visits by friends & family and that Derry City was an important visitor attraction to the North West region.

Members noted that deprivation was acute in Derry & Strabane and that 28% of rural people were income deprived, with one in five having limiting long term illness and one in nine on benefits. It was also noted that 10% of the population provided unpaid care and woman were particularly disadvantaged.

Mr Conway outlined that the two strategic themes of Axis 3 were helping people to work better and helping place to work better and that Axis 3 measures included:

- ◆ farm diversification and non-agricultural activities (£4.45m)
- ◆ business creation and development (£4.45m)
- ◆ encouragement of tourism (£2.84m)
- ◆ basic services for the economy and the rural population (£2.84m)
- ◆ village renewal and development (£2.84m)
- ◆ conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage (£1.5m)
- ◆ making it all happen (£3.6m).

Members welcomed that the focus would be on renewable/alternative energies; woman/young people; migrants; using IT/ICT; poverty & the disadvantaged and by networking & collaboration. Mr Conway confirmed that grant levels of a maximum of 50% or up to £50k would be available to those within the private sector and to a maximum of 75% or up to £250k within the public, voluntary or statutory sector.

In the discussion which followed Mr Conway answered a number of queries in relation to marketing of the programme, expertise to identify need in rural villages, help in completion of applications, impact of PPS14, right of appeal and collaboration with groups.

Mr Conway left the meeting at 6.25 pm.

IN COMMITTEE: Councillor Butcher proposed that Limavady Borough Council endorse the Rural Development Strategy for the North West subject to the oversight committee being made up of independent members and not by the Local Action Group. Councillor Coyle seconded the proposal and suggested that Councillor Butcher include in his proposal that Council delegate authority to the 4 Councillors nominated to the LAG. Agreed. **OUT OF COMMITTEE.**

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

NITB Learning Journey: It was agreed on the proposal of Alderman Rankin, seconded by Councillor Coyle that 2 officers attend the NITB Learning Journey event to be held 25 – 27 September in Cornwall/Devon area at a cost of approximately £200-£240 per person.

Dungiven Sports Pavilion – Review of Prices: The Director of Development outlined that Dungiven Sports Pavilion had been given a deep clean and a low level of maintenance would be being carried out. She tabled a revised pricing list for use of the facility effective from 1 August 2008 for member's approval. The revised pricing list was approved on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor Ó hOisín subject to the Director of Development agreeing to regularly review use of the hall and to ensure that local residents got value for money.

Benone Café: The Director of Development agreed to review entrance criteria for use of the playarea at Benone.

THE BUSINESS CONCLUDED AT 6.35 PM.

Signed: _____ Chair of Meeting