

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**Development Committee Meeting No 180 – 12th March 2007****Table of Contents**

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BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of Development Committee Meeting No 180 held in the Council Chamber, Riada House on Monday 12th March 2007 at 7.30 pm.

IN THE CHAIR: Alderman James Simpson (Vice-Chair)

PRESENT: **Aldermen**
F Campbell
H Connolly
C Cousley, Deputy Mayor

Councillors
J Finlay
B Kennedy
M McCamphill
A Patterson
E Robinson
M Storey
R Wilson

APOLOGIES: **Councillors**
I Stevenson

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Head of Corporate & Development Services
Committee Clerk

180.1 MINUTES OF MEETINGS NO. 179 – 12th February 2007

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

that the minutes of Meeting No 179 – 12th February 2007, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

180.2 BUDGET 2007/08

Council has set the budget for economic development activity in the incoming year at £100,000.

The Committee considered its position in relation to the following programmes, in respect of which no budget provision has been made, deferred from its last meeting.

[a] - New EU competitiveness and employment programme 2007-2013

The New EU competitiveness and employment programme 2007-2013 is the successor to the EU Building Sustainable Prosperity Programme, which came to an end in December 2006, with spend closing in June 2007. This will be followed by a programme evaluation and closure procedures.

The consultation process on the new draft EU competitiveness and employment programme is underway and Members participated in a consultation event organized by NILGA. A copy of a position paper produced by NILGA arising from the event is attached.

Committee **AGREED:**

to recommend that Council endorse the NILGA Response paper prepared following consultation with the local government sector.

Council is invited to make preparations for the new round of local economic development funding against the backdrop of RPA in 2009.

The development of a local economic development action plan is required for any new LED activity 2007-2013. All eligible expenditure on the new programme has to be closely aligned to the Lisbon Agenda of promoting growth and jobs. In addition the current policy on programme management costs is being reassessed with such costs only being eligible where it is demonstrably clear that they are directly related to a specific admissible activity.

- *Councillor Storey entered the meeting during this discussion at 7.40 pm*
- *Councillor Wilson entered the meeting during this discussion at 7.55 pm*
- *Councillor Kennedy entered the meeting during this discussion at 8.00 pm*

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

to recommend to Council that given budget limitations no action plan be prepared and no bid for funding for the new EU Competitiveness & Employment programme 2007-2013 be submitted.

The Head of Corporate & Development Services advised that a report on the current programme would be presented on completion and evaluation of the current programme. She undertook to provide an interim report for the next meeting.

- *Councillor Storey left the meeting at 8.30pm*
- *Alderman Connolly left the meeting at 8.30pm*

[b] - North East Partnership [NEP] - EU Territorial Cooperation Programmes 2007-2013

Committee reviewed its expression of interest in delivering or participating in programmes in the upcoming round of European 'Territorial Cooperation' (TC) Programmes 2007-2013, [as set out in table below], the programme being seen as a significant opportunity to develop joint initiatives and projects that benefit the North East e.g. involve a range of NE partners from community through to private sectors.

Council had agreed to contribute £6375 towards development of the regional programme, but no match funding was provided in the current years budget.

Theme	Project
Environment & Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Waste Management and Recycling & Energy Systems
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Delivery of superior levels of customer care in the hospitality sector
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Development of events/festivals
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Scotland & North Antrim: The Ulster Scots Connection o Product Development o Development of River Bann Corridor

Committee **AGREED:**

to defer further consideration of the proposed projects to the next meeting.

- *Councillor Robinson left the meeting at 8.35 pm*
- *Councillor Finlay left the meeting at 8.35 pm*
- *Councillor Robinson returned to the meeting at 8.40 pm*
- *Councillor Finlay returned to the meeting at 8.40pm*

[c] - Start A Business Programme

This programme has been funded by Invest NI in the current year with Council providing top-up funding. The programme has had a high success rate in Ballymoney Borough area with a significant contribution of resulting new-start businesses in the borough.

While Council has made no provision for funding in the current year the programme will continue to operate across the 25 Councils with funding from Invest NI.

It is recognized that whatever form any future Start a Business Programme may take will be the form which the new super-councils inherit when, post RPA, Councils take on a greatly enhanced economic development function, including the SABP from Invest NI.

It is imperative that in the post RPA scenario whatever Invest NI resources are to be allocated to the SABP will transfer to Councils along with the delivery function of the programme.

[d] - Programme launch/publicity events

Publicity for programmes, as required by EU programmes, will be handled in the incoming year by photocalls and press releases.

180.3 EVALUATION OF PARTNERSHIP/OTHER BODIES

Council has decided that a detailed analysis of benefits of contributions to partnership and other bodies be carried out. This task will be addressed in the current year.

As regards North Antrim Community Network who have lodged an application for funding, they have been asked to provide information on contributions to bodies within the borough, as requested by Council, prior to their application being presented for consideration.

180.4 EU PEACE III PROGRAMME

Background

- In recognition of the special effort for the peace process in Northern Ireland, the EU agreed a further PEACE programme for 2007-13. (PEACE III). It is proposed that PIII will be implemented as a cross-border programme and, in order to promote social and economic stability, will include actions to facilitate cohesion between communities.
- The EU has committed €225m (£158m) towards PEACE III over the period 2007-2013 which together with national contributions will result in a total programme budget of €300 (£210m). This funding will be additional to national spending. The Programme is supported under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective and funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This fund is significantly lower than the previous PII budget (circa 50%) but similar to the PII Ext extension fund!
- The eligible area for the PEACE III Programme is Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland to include the counties of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo in the ROI.
- In carrying forward the key objectives of PEACE I and II the overall aim of PEACE III is "*to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation*". PEACE III will consequently focus on two strategic objectives:- Reconciling Communities and Contributing to a shared society; with the following cross-cutting themes, Cross-border co-operation; Equality; Sustainable development; Impact on Poverty; Partnership
- Programmes and projects addressing core economic and social problems as generally faced across all other Member States are not eligible for PII

funding. Only those that are directly specific to the situation in NI and the border countries and brought about by the 'troubles' are eligible. This will lead to a re-think by applicants as will the need to specifically address the high priority criteria of building relationships.

Programme Priorities

In the PEACE III Programme, the two strategic objectives will be implemented by two key priorities that include:

Priority 1: Reconciling communities

Priority 2: Contributing to a shared society

Priority 1: Reconciling communities will have a budget in the range of €140m - €200m (£140m) and will focus on two key areas, as follows:

Building positive relations at the local level: this aims to challenge attitudes towards sectarianism and racism and to support conflict resolution and mediation at the local community level;

Acknowledging the past: this aims to provide advice, counselling and support services for victims, their relatives and those who care for them. In addition, it will create opportunities to acknowledge and deal with the past.

Priority 2: Contributing to a shared society will have a budget in the range of €80m (£56m) - €130m (£90m) and will focus on two key areas, as follows:

Creating shared public spaces: this aims to regenerate urban, rural and border areas that appear derelict, segregated, underused, threatening and/or unwelcoming and transform them into shared spaces;

Key institutional capacities are developed for a shared society: this aims to develop the capacity, knowledge, culture and mechanisms of key institutions (including those in the public sector) to deliver a shared society within Northern Ireland and on a cross border basis.

In addition, the Programme will contain a third priority,

Priority 3: Technical assistance This priority will have a budget of €18m/(£13m) **(6% of total budget)** and will support the management, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme as well as programme information and publicity. This is significantly below that made available for previous measures and will not provide for the level of resources currently available for the delivery of the programme.

The proposed implementation arrangements provide for a leadership role for leading local authorities and for lead partners to submit action plans for multi-annual programmes of action.

The consultation on the programme ends on 4th April with call for application in October. This requires participating authorities to commence project planning with immediate effect.

The Head of Corporate and Development Services recommended that Committee consider its approach and preparations for the new round of peace funding.

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

to recommend that Council proceed with preparations for the new round of peace funding and agree to deliver the programme on the basis that this can be done through existing staff resources and within the technical assistance available.

180.5 RPA – TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT POWERS TO COUNCILS

SOLACE and the NILGA RPA Working Group has given consideration to this matter and identified the need for a research/advisory document in relation to the development powers within Central Government, Invest NI, NITB etc which should transfer to Council.

The paper would assist NILGA and other groups lobby central government with real information and facts and a rationale for transfer based on good practice elsewhere.

Belfast City Council will take the lead in commissioning the work, which will be overseen by SOLACE, LED Forum and NILGA. The cost of the project will be circa £20,000 and each Council is requested to contribute up to £1,000.

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

to recommend that Council contribute towards this project from within existing budget.

180.6 CONFERENCES

[a] - “Vibrant and Sustainable Rural Communities – The role of Community Development – Shaping the Future”

This event will be held on 26th March 2007 in Cookstown.

Members wishing to attend the event to advise the Head of Corporate & Development Services.

[b] – Consultation on Interreg IV Programme 2007-2013

The North East Partnership was hosting, in conjunction with SEUPB, a consultation event for a broad range of stakeholders from the NE sub-region on Tuesday 3rd April at 2.30pm in the Ecos Centre, Ballymena. The purpose of the event was to facilitate discussion on proposed measures, funding levels, delivery structures etc.

The Draft Interreg IV Operational Programme is available for viewing/download at www.seupb.org and also that the Interreg IV Consultation period ends 30th April 2007.

This invite has been extended to relevant stakeholders in NEP sub-region e.g. in addition to NEP committee members and member council representatives, invite list includes relevant LEA's, RTP's, NRRTI's, Leader groups, Colleges, Rural Support Networks, Town Centre P-ships, waste management groupings.

Members interested in attend should advise the Head of Corporate & Development Services.

180.7 TWINNING – DOUGLAS BOROUGH

The formal twinning ceremony took place in Riada House on 28th February 2007 when the Twinning Agreement between Ballymoney and Douglas was signed.

Councillor Finlay informed committee that Douglas Borough Under 14 rugby Club were playing at Ballymoney RFC on Saturday morning and he would be attending to receive and welcome the visitors to the borough.

180.8 PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

A progress report at end of February 2007, together with employment statistics was circulated.

In relation to the Music Centre/Community Hub Project, which Council has decided not to progress DFP, DOE and NEELB have been advised of the Council's decision in relation to the acquisition of the property and the LSP has been advised that Council will not be taking up the offer of grant of £150,000.

Declaration of Interest

The Chief Executive, Alderman James Simpson and Alderman Cecil Cousley declared interest as Directors of Acorn The Business Centre and retired from the meeting before the next item of business was presented.

180.9 POST START A BUSINESS PROGRAMME - TENDERS

Tenders were invited for delivery of the above programme from the firms listed below, all of which are on the Council's select list of economic development consultants.

Tenders closed on Friday 2nd March 2007. The Chair of the Development Committee (Cllr I Stevenson) and the Head of Corporate & Development Services opened, date stamped and signed/initialed the 3 no. tenders received at 4.30 p.m. on Friday 2nd March 2007. Details are included in the table below.

Tenderer	10 participants	15 participants	20 participants
Envision Management Consultants	£19,884.00	£23,656.00	£27,708
Venture Int. Ltd	Letter – unable to quote	==	==
Mentor Economic Developments Ltd	£14,425	==	==
Acorn Business Centre	£20,000	£25,950	£33,900
Lestas Consulting	No Quote	==	==
MayDay Management Consultants	No Quote	==	==

Tenders have been assessed based on previous experience, understanding of the aims, scope and focus of the project, areas included in study, price, qualification of personnel, proven ability to meet specified deadlines for completion of programme and declarations and undertakings required.

Council's budget for the project is £20,000. Analysis of tenders for 10 participants are set out below.

ACORN - £20,000; average daily rate £350.00

Envision – £19,884 (£19,034 taking account of participant contribution).
Average daily rate £438.

Mentor - £14,425; average daily rate £425.

On a points scored basis only the ranking was as follows:

Envision – 136 (exceeded the threshold by 36 points)

Mentor – 113 (exceeded the threshold by 13 points)

ACORN – 90 (did not meet threshold requirements)

The project is co-funded by the EU Building Sustainable Prosperity Programme.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the tender submitted by Envision Management Consultants in the total amount £19,034 be accepted.

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

to recommend to Council that the tender submitted by Envision Management Consultants in the total amount of £19,034 be accepted and that the project be reviewed at recruitment stage with a view to including additional participants if this can be accommodated within existing budgets.

The meeting closed at 9pm