

COOKSTOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Proceedings of a DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 18th January 2011 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Cassidy (Chairman)

Councillors: Baker, Clarke, Glasgow, Greer, Lees, McAleer, McCartney, McFlynn, McNamee, Molloy, Quinn and Wilson

Officers: Adrian McCreesh Director of Development
Emma Bell Administrative Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of Councillors McCrea, McGarvey, McIvor and Mr Michael McGuckin.

2. FUNDING TO EXTERNAL BODIES PROPOSAL FOR 2011/2012

The Director of Development advised Members that a report outlining funding projections for a range of external bodies which are currently funded by Council has been circulated for their consideration. He recommended that Council maintain their annual contribution of £74,927 to CAB for the financial year 2011/2012, in addition to continuing to commit £6,500 each to the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) and the Irish Football Association (IFA) which is part of Council's overall annual contribution to both organisations of approximately £13,500 each.

Councillor Clarke highlighted that other Councils are currently in discussions regarding their financial commitment to Sperrins Tourism Ltd and he raised concerns that the proposed 20% reduction in funding for the financial period 2011/2012 may communicate the wrong message. The Director of Development advised that each department has been asked by the Chief Executive to assess their annual contributions with a view to reducing expenditure. Therefore a contribution of £17,200 for Sperrins Tourism for the financial year 2011/2012 is quite substantial especially within the current economic climate.

Councillor Cassidy advised that Councillor Clarke's concerns are NOTED.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
 Seconded by Councillor Greer and AGREED

To accept the recommendations outlined in the Funding To External Bodies Report for 2011/2012, as outlined below:

	2011/2012
Community Services	
CAB	£74,927.00
GAA	£6,500.00
Cookstown 100	£5,000.00
Milk Cup	£1,000.00
Community Festivals	£9,000.00
Voluntary Contributions	£6,000.00
Senior Citizens Christmas Dinners	£2,500.00
Group/Individual	£2,000.00
<i>Total</i>	£106,927.00
Tourism	
Sperrins Tourism Ltd	£17,200
Town Twinning	£10,000
Lough Neagh Partnership	£6,720
WRTP	-
Davagh Forest	£30,000
<i>Total</i>	£63,920
Economic Development (2601)	
ICBAN	£12,500
Lissan House	£30,000
Council Initiatives	£5,000

Sports Services	
IFA	£13,500
GAA	£7,060 (+£6,500)
NP Physical Activity	£1,500
Youth Sport	£1,000
Southern Sports Partnership	£2,000

It was further AGREED to transfer expenditure contained within the Economic Development budget from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012:

- £25,000 from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012 for Waste Minimisation Programme.
- £5,000 from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012 for a Business Plan for Traded Services.

3. SPERRINS TOURISM LIMITED

3.1. Members NOTED the letter, dated 5th January 2011, from Ms Elaine Donaghy, Sperrins Tourism Limited providing an update on Sperrins Tourism Limited's current promotional activity.

3.2. The Director of Development advised Members that a letter had been received from Sperrins Tourism Limited, dated 26th November 2010, requesting a reduced financial contribution of £20,425 which equates to a 5% reduction. He reminded Members that within item 2 they agreed to provide Sperrins Tourism Limited with a financial contribution of £17,200 for the financial year 2011-2012.

3.3. Members were advised that Sperrins Tourism Ltd have secured funding from the Rural Development Programme to deliver a two year intensive marketing and promotional campaign to the value of £157,000. However in order to secure the funding they require a minimum commitment of £5,106 for 2012-2013 from Cookstown District Council. The Director of Development advised that he has discussed this request with the Corporate Services Department and Council can provide Sperrins Tourism Ltd with an "Anticipated Letter of Support" which will assist them to secure the funding. He further advised that Strabane District Council and Omagh District Council have also agreed to this approach.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and AGREED

That Council issue a Letter of Support to Sperrins Tourism Ltd for a minimum commitment of £5,106 for the financial year 2012-2013.

4. IRISH CROSS BORDER AREA NETWORK

4.1. ICBAN Draft Corporate Plan 2010

Members NOTED the Draft ICBAN Corporate Plan for 2011-2013, dated November 2010.

4.2. ICBAN Member Councils Annual Contributions

The Director of Development advised that a letter, dated 25th November 2010, has been received from the CEO of ICBAN requesting an increased contribution to £13,400 for the financial year 2011-2012. The Director of Development recommended that Council maintain their current level of funding of £12,500 for the 2011-2012 financial year.

It was proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Baker and AGREED

That Council maintain the current level of funding towards ICBAN of £12,500 for the financial year 2011-2012 to be paid in two instalments and subject to the following conditions:

- (i) ICBAN provides written confirmation of all other funding committed to the organisation by Councils and other bodies;
- (ii) ICBAN provides Council with its financial projections for 2011-2012, and
- (iii) Council receives all requested documentation.

5. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.1. Cookstown Multi-Sectoral Tendering Programme

The Director of Development advised that Council is delighted with the feedback received from businesses who have engaged on the Cookstown Multi-Sectoral Tendering Programme. He advised that the progress report, dated 11th January 2011, provides a comprehensive update on the programme to date. Members will be kept informed of businesses progress and achievements throughout the programme and business successes will be profiled in the local press within the next few months. In addition a new recruitment drive will commence for the second phase of the programme later in the year.

Members NOTED the progress report on Cookstown's Multi-Sectoral Tendering Programme, dated 11th January 2011.

6. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

6.1. Town Centre Retail Development Programme

The Director of Development reminded Members that it was agreed at the Development Committee Meeting on 21st September 2010 *“that Council issue a press release to the local media highlighting the full range of projects and financial investment which Council has directed towards local businesses and the town centre.”* He advised that it is anticipated that it will be completed and issued in the very near future.

Furthermore at the Development Committee Meeting on 16th November 2010 it was agreed *“to extend the tender submitted by Lestas Consulting (in association with Brilliant Red Consulting and Spotcheck N Ireland) until 31st March 2011, to deliver a Retail Development Programme in Cookstown Town.”* As a result an advert was placed in the local newspapers and a total of six businesses registered an interest in the programme. Of these six, three have previously participated in the programme and three are new, namely Sheehy's, The Royal Hotel and Cookstown Over Night Accommodation.

Members AGREED that the three new businesses, namely Sheehy's, The Royal Hotel and Cookstown Over Night Accommodation, who registered their interest in the 2010-2011 Retail Development Programme, be accepted on to the programme. Lestas Consulting in association with Brilliant Red Consulting and Spotcheck Northern Ireland be appointed to undertake the assignment on a pro rata basis, for a fee of £3,060 +VAT (comprising of a Council contribution of £3,000 and a combined contribution from the retail sector of £60).

Members AGREED that a letter is issued to the three businesses, namely Falls Pharmacy, Drum Lighting & Home Accessories and Cookstown Tourist Information Centre, who previously participated on the 2009-2010 Retail Training Programme, advising that the 2010-2011 programme will contain the same content as the previous year's programme and therefore it is not appropriate for them to undertake the programme again.

Councillor Wilson raised concerns regarding the money which was ring fenced for this programme and said that in his view Members need to examine Town Centre programmes. He referred to a New Age Marketing event on 12 January 2011 in the Burnavon Arts Centre, which was organised by Cookstown Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with Cookstown District Council. Councillor Wilson recommended that a small Councillor Sub Group is created to explore the wider benefits of promoting Cookstown Town Centre for all businesses.

The Director of Development advised that significant funding has already been committed to delivering Cookstown Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and Cookstown Shop Improvement Scheme for 2011-2012. Work has commenced on developing the terms of reference and marketing campaign for the Cookstown Shop Improvement Scheme which has a budget of almost £90,000 for 2011-2012. The Director of Development indicated that it may be opportune for the various Town Centre Programmes to be discussed at the next Town Centre Forum meeting so that the traders are made aware of them. Councillor Wilson advised that he is satisfied with the programmes which Council has already committed to, however Members need to examine the wider benefits of promoting Cookstown Town Centre.

Councillor Cassidy advised that it would be more advantageous if a meeting of the Town Councillors was convened.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and AGREED

That a meeting of the five Town Councillors be convened to examine the wider benefits of promoting Cookstown Town Centre for all businesses. It was also AGREED that the current President of Cookstown Chamber of Commerce be invited to meet with the Town Councillors to discuss town centre issues and Council's efforts towards implementing the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy over the last ten years. Councillor Quinn proposed that the Director of Development deliver the 'Ten Year Achievements' presentation at the next Town Centre Forum meeting as it was very informative and well received when delivered recently to Mr Alex Attwood, MLA, Minister for Social Development.

6.2. Shop Mobility

Councillor McNamee advised Members that following a Shop Mobility Meeting today, Mark Farquhar, Project Co-ordinator, Shop Mobility has noted concerns regarding the sourcing of supplies.

Councillor McNamee advised that the Department for Regional Development (DRD) has advised that funding cuts will be made to Shop Mobility Schemes within the next five months, however it has not been indicated which schemes are at risk. He further advised that Cookstown Shop Mobility has agreed to forward letters to all six MLA's and MPs' to obtain support to maintain the service within Cookstown, as Scheme usage is continually growing. The assessment of each Scheme by DRD has not yet commenced.

Councillor Wilson expressed concern regarding the potential reduction of Shop Mobility Schemes throughout Northern Ireland, especially Cookstown.

It was proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and AGREED

That Council forward a letter of support for Cookstown Shop Mobility to the Department for Regional Development.

Councillor McNamee highlighted that at today's Shop Mobility Meeting a trader had raised concerns regarding the introduction of on-street parking charges. The Director of Development advised that Council is in the process of examining the "Draft Budget for 2011-2015 Spending and Saving Proposals within the Department for Regional Development" and the document has indicated that twenty towns maybe required to introduce on-street parking charges. Council will co-ordinate a response to the Department for Regional Development (DRD) on this issue.

Members NOTED minutes of Shop Mobility Meeting held on 19th October 2010.

7. TOURISM

7.1. Lough Fea Project

The Director of Development provided Members with an update on the development of the Lough Fea Project and advised that a funding application will be submitted to the Rural Development Programme in the very near future in a bid to secure funding for the development of the project. Following meetings with representatives from Peter Quinn Consultancy Services and Mid-Ulster Angling Club delegates have identified the following key priorities to be provided:

- A boat storage building/area (due to vandalism etc)
- An electric battery recharger (due to the requirement that only electric powered boats be used on the Lough)
- A jetty (for disabled access which can be covered by club insurance). The preference is for this to be on the Forest Service side (next to the western car park)
- Extra fishing points

The Director of Development advised that should the funding application to the Rural Development Programme be successful then it is anticipated that 25% match funding will be required to enable the 75% funding to be secured from the Programme.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and AGREED

That Council submit a funding application to the Rural Development Programme for the development of the Lough Fea Project.

7.2. Tourism Innovation Fund

Members NOTED minutes of Tourism Innovation Fund Meeting held on 9th November 2010.

8. THE NIAMH LOUISE FOUNDATION

Members NOTED a letter received from Ms Eimear McKearney, Niamh Louise Foundation inviting representatives to attend their “Grand Dinner” in Armagh City Hotel in association with Marks and Spencer’s on Saturday 5th February 2011.

9. PIGEON CLUB

The Director of Development reminded Members that the Pigeon Club request regarding a suitable location for their mobile unit was previously discussed at the Development Committee Meeting on 16th November 2010. Initially the Pigeon Club chose the Mid Ulster Sports Arena (MUSA) as their preferred location, however after factoring in the costs of siting the mobile unit at MUSA they have found it to be financially unsuitable. Therefore the Pigeon Club have proposed siting the mobile unit just inside the entrance to the Station Yard amenity site in Molesworth Street. Members were advised that this may impact upon Council’s future plans for this location.

Councillor Wilson highlighted that MUSA continues to be an option for the Pigeon Club.

10. COMMUNITY SERVICES

10.1. Good Relations

Members NOTED minutes of Good Relations Sub Committee Meeting held on 1st December 2010.

10.2. Senior Citizens Christmas Events

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Baker and AGREED

That Council provide £2,300 Community Services funding for Senior Citizens Christmas Events for 2010, as outlined below:

Coagh Community Crossroads Club
Cookstown Gardening Club
Cookstown History Group
Cookstown North Community Group
Derryloran Parish Church
Desertcreat Senior Citizens Group
Gortalowry Park Tenants Ass.
Insight
Kildress Parish Church
Kinturk Cultural Centre
Lissan Parish Church
Moneymore Activity Group
Moneymore Community Group
Opportunities for Older People O4O
Orritor Street Community Group
Ratheen Greenvale and Sullenboy Residents Group
Riverside Drive and Blackhill Ass.
St Patricks Church Ballinderry
St Vincent De Paul Society
St. Coleman's Parish Community Group
Stewartstown Community Group
The Monday Club
The Tuesday Club

10.3. Peace III

Members were advised that the update received from the Community Services Manager with regard to Peace III has been superseded by a meeting of the Joint Council Committee on Monday 17th January 2011.

Councillors Wilson and Baker congratulated the Community Services Manager and her team for securing Peace III funding for the Cookstown District.

11. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

11.1. Members NOTED minutes of South West Local Action Group meeting held on 6th October 2010.

11.2. Members were advised that SWARD is currently progressing the Village Regeneration initiative, which was previously agreed by Members.

Members NOTED minutes of Rural Development Programme Joint Council Committee meeting held on 18th October 2010.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1. Cookstown Ulster Strongman Competition 2011

The Cookstown Ulster Strongman Competition 2011 report from Tourism Advisor, M McKeown was circulated for Members approval. Members were advised that a few weeks ago Council was informed that the Ulster Strongman Competition for 2011 was seeking a suitable location. A meeting was held with Mr Glen Ross, Daddy Promotions Ltd on Wednesday 12th January 2011 to discuss the opportunity to host the event in Cookstown and for Mr Ross to put forward his proposals. It is proposed the competition will be held on Monday 2nd May 2011 commencing at 12 noon and finishing at 4.00pm on a 400m length of Cookstown's Main Street. The event will coincide with the annual Cookstown 100 motorcycle race. Six competition events have been identified as outlined below:

- 1.** Arm Over Arm Truck Pull
- 2.** Log Lift for Maximum
- 3.** Hercules Hold (Grip Test)
- 4.** The Viking Crucifix Axe Hold (New Event)
- 5.** Beaghmore Atlas Stone Lift
- 6.** The Cookstown 100 Strongman Medley

The competition will enable the top 5 competitors to qualify for this year's Ireland's Strongestman Competition followed by qualification for the televised UK Strongest Man.

The Director of Development advised Members that the event will cost £4,000 which is available within the Town Centre budget. Mr Ross has advised that he has suitable banners for the event which he will amend to profile the competition as “Cookstown District Council Ulster Strongman Competition.” It will be Council’s responsibility to provide the following:

- Suitable venue area - 25 metres by 50 metres
- Barriers
- Forklift
- Marshalls for outside the arena
- First Aid
- Marketing

Members were advised that many spectators are expected to attend this hugely significant event.

Councillor Quinn advised that it is a good opportunity to showcase Cookstown, which may encourage tourists to remain in the district for the weekend. Members also agreed that such events in the town centre would help reinforce and build upon the retail offer available in Cookstown.

It was proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and AGREED

That Council host the Cookstown Ulster Strongman Competition for 2011 on Monday 2nd May 2011 at 2pm in Cookstown Main Street at a cost of £4,000.

12.2 Joey Dunlop Exhibition

The Director of Development advised that approval is sought also for Council to host the Joey Dunlop Exhibition in the Burnavon Arts Centre for 6 days commencing on Thursday 26th April 2011. He further advised that Council's Tourism Advisor, M McKeown has been in discussions with Mrs Linda Dunlop to register Council's interest in hosting the exhibition. The Director of Development advised that should approval be granted then a meeting will be convened with representatives from Cookstown Motorcycle Club to package and market these key events, designed to attract visitors from afar and once more focus profile upon Cookstown Town Centre.

AGREED.

12.3 Planning Meeting

Members were reminded that at the Statutory Meeting on Tuesday 14th December 2010 it was agreed that a meeting would be convened with Planning Officials to discuss the guideline for planning deferrals. This meeting was scheduled for Thursday 20th January 2011, however the Senior Planning Officer was unable to attend and the meeting was postponed until Wednesday 26th January 2011. Agreement is sought for the meeting to be held on Wednesday 26th January 2011 or rescheduled for another more suitable date.

Councillors Clarke and Cassidy advised that they are unavailable to attend the meeting on Wednesday 26th January 2011. Councillor McNamee proposed rescheduling the meeting.

Councillor Wilson recommended that a meeting of Members is convened prior to a meeting with the Senior Planning Officer.

Councillor Clarke proposed that a meeting is convened prior to PR&S meeting on Tuesday 25th January 2011 to enable Members to discuss the relevant issues, strategy and approach after which a meeting with Senior Planning officials will be convened.

AGREED.

12.4 Local Government 2012 Engagement Event

The Director of Development advised that a letter, dated 14th January 2011, has been received from Councillor Maurice Bradley, Chair, Local Government 2012 Olympic Committee inviting four Members to attend the first engagement event on Thursday 27th January 2011 at 2pm in the Banqueting Hall, Belfast City Council. The event will enable Members to discuss the opportunities and benefits to local government from the Olympic Games being held in London 2012. He further advised that four nominations are sought in total, which should include a minimum of two Members of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).

Councillor Wilson proposed that Mr Oliver McShane, Sports Services Manager be nominated.

Councillor Glasgow confirmed that he would attend this event.

Councillor McAleer agreed to attend this event on the condition that he has no other diary commitments at 2pm on Thursday 27th January 2011.

It was AGREED that Councillors Glasgow and McAleer, along with the Sports Services Manager, be nominated to attend the Local Government 2012 Engagement Event on Thursday 27th January 2011 at 2pm in Belfast City Hall. Details are to be forwarded to all nominees.

The meeting ended at 8.48pm.

Chairman

Clerk/Chief Executive

Date

TABLED FOR INFORMATION

1. Enterprise Northern Ireland 2009/2010 Annual Report and Northern Ireland - The Case for Enterprise.
2. Sperrins Tourism Visitor Guide 2011.