

COOKSTOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Proceedings of a DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber on Tuesday 20th March 2012 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor McAleer (Chairman)

Councillors: Clarke, Glasgow, Kelly, Lees, Mallaghan, McCartney, McCrea, McElhone, McFlynn, McGarvey, McNamee, Quinn and Wilson

Officers: Adrian McCreesh Chief Executive (Acting)
Emma Bell Administrative Officer

Councillor Lees extended her condolences to Ms Carmel McCann on the recent death of her father.

Councillor McAleer requested that all Members stand for a one minute's silence.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of Councillor McIvor.

2. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2.1. INTERREG IVA Applications

The Chief Executive (Acting) reminded Members that in January 2012 INTERREG and the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) invited applications for funding under a range of 'Priorities within the INTERREG IVA Programme and he advised that a number of Councils were planning to avail of this funding opportunity. He advised that Council in conjunction with other member Councils and partner organisations have submitted five applications to INTERREG IVA Programme as outlined below:

Councillor Mallaghan left the meeting at 7.02pm.

- I. Manufacturing Innovation Programme (MIP)
- II. Irish Central Border Food Innovation Programme (ICBFIN)
- III. Town Promotion, Public Realm Investment, Development and Enhancement (PRIDE)
- IV. The O'Neill Trail
- V. Mountain Bike Project

Councillor Mallaghan entered the meeting at 7.05pm.

Members NOTED report on five new INTERREG IVA Applications submitted in February 2012 in which Council is a partner.

2.2. SME Export Development Programme

The Chief Executive (Acting) reminded Members that at the Development Committee Meeting on 15th March 2011 they gave approval for Cookstown's Local Economic Development Department to work up a collaborative Sub-Regional Small Business Export Programme in conjunction with Magherafelt, Dungannon, Omagh and Fermanagh Councils for submission to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) and Invest NI. Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council will assume the role as lead partner on this programme which will provide practical assistance to one hundred and five small businesses (twenty one from each Council area; seven per tranche), to assist them to prepare for export, undertake visits to meet key buyers in the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain, and provide follow up work afterwards. He advised that the combined contribution from the five Councils equates to 25% of the costs towards this Export Programme and also that 50% funding is sought from DETI (via EU Competitiveness Programme) and a further 25% is sought from Invest NI. A Letter of Offer, dated 9th January 2012, has been received by Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council from Invest NI advising the award of funding to be as follows:

Costs for 3-Year Small Business Export Programme (Per Funder)

	TOTAL PROG BUDGET	BUSINESS FEES	LETTER OF OFFER		
			EU COMP PROG 50%	INVEST NI 25%	5 COUNCILS
105 BUSINESSES	£324,150	£10,500 (£100 per business)	£156,825	£78,412	£78,413 (£15,682 per Council over 3 years)

Councillor Wilson raised concerns regarding the one year period which has lapsed between the application being submitted and a Letter of Offer being received, especially in times of austerity when unemployment is high. The Chief Executive (Acting) advised that the funding application process has changed during this time with administrative responsibility for the local economic development measure transferring from the Department of Enterprise and Investment to Invest NI, which may have delayed the process. Councillor McCrea concurred with Councillor Wilson and the Chief Executive (Acting's) comment and he advised that Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment may be unaware of this issue, therefore he recommended that after the Letter of Offer is signed Council should forward a letter to Minister Foster raising concerns in reference to the extended time lapse between an application being submitted and a Letter of Offer being received.

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

That Council forward a letter to Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) to raise concerns regarding the time lapse between a programme application being submitted and a Letter of Offer being received, especially within the current economic climate. It was further AGREED to adopt the following recommendations:

- Accept the Letter of Offer and work with the partner Councils to develop Terms of References to publicly advertise and procure:
 - (a) a suitably qualified organisation(s) to deliver the programme and

(b)a suitably qualified organisation(s) to carry out independent interim and final evaluations of the programme.

- Commit £15,682 from Council's Local Economic Development budget over the next 3 years to contribute towards the delivery of the Programme.

The Chief Executive (Acting) advised that he will circulate a programme timetable for the SME Export Programme for all Members information.

AGREED.

2.3. Lissan House Interpretation Materials and Visit

The Chief Executive (Acting) advised that a number of Members attended a host visit to Lissan House on 15th March 2012 which was organised by Council's Tourism Department for Council Members and Tourism Officers from other Northern Ireland Council areas. He also advised that the official opening of Lissan House will take place on Tuesday 24th April 2012, however no further details are available at present though he urged all Members to attend.

Councillor McGarvey highlighted that he did attend the host visit on 15th March 2012 which was very interesting, however he did discover that Board Members of the Friends of Lissan Trust were unaware that Mr Robert Staples had forwarded a number of items, including estate maps and letters sent from India, to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland for preservation before he passed away. Councillor McGarvey recommended that Council write to the Chairperson of Friends of Lissan Trust to advise of this valuable fact so that this information may be encapsulated and made available to visitors to Lissan House and Demesne.

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

That Council write to the Chairperson of Friends of Lissan Trust advising that Mr Robert Staples forwarded a number of items to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland for safe historical retention.

3. THE WILLIAM KEOWN TRUST

Members NOTED letter, dated 7th March 2012, from Mr Bill Keown, Chief Executive, The William Keown Trust with regard to lobbying Central Government for a reduction on fuel duty in Northern Ireland.

4. COMMUNITY SERVICES

4.1. Good Relations

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of the Good Relations Sub Committee Meeting held on 25th January 2012.

5. BURNAVON

5.1. Arts & Cultural Sub Committee

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of Arts & Cultural Sub Committee Meeting held on 16th February 2012.

Councillor Wilson advised that at the Arts & Cultural Sub Committee Meeting held on 15th March 2012, Committee Members discussed plans to refurbish the bar area within the Burnavon Arts & Cultural Centre. The Committee is also exploring the possibility of extending the building and/or changing its layout to provide additional disabled toilets and office space, in addition to generally updating the centre. Councillor Quinn enquired if the café will be reopened at a later stage. Council was further advised that the Committee and staff are considering the possibility of utilising the café area to provide additional office space and rest room facilities.

6. TOURISM

6.1. Tourism Sub Group

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of Tourism Sub Group Meeting held on 6th March 2012.

7. TOWN CENTRE FORUM

7.1. Cookstown Town Centre Masterplan

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of Cookstown Town Centre Masterplan Meeting held on 29th February 2012.

Councillor McCrea advised that the final draft of the Cookstown Masterplan has recently been received by Officers and he commended the Town Strategy Manager and all staff associated for their hard work and continuous efforts to ensure the longevity of the Masterplan.

The Chief Executive (Acting) advised that a meeting of the Town Centre Forum will be convened in the very near future to profile the Masterplan and also progress town centre issues.

7.2. Shopmobility

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of Shopmobility meeting held on 13th December 2011.

8. LOUGH NEAGH ENVISIONING DAY SUMMARY REPORT

Members NOTED summary report for Lough Neagh Envisioning Day held on 9th December 2011.

9. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

9.1. South West Local Action Group

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of South West Local Action Group Meeting held on 7th December 2011.

9.2. Joint Council Committee

It was proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McGarvey

That Council ADOPT the minutes of Rural Development Programme Joint Council Committee Meeting held on 12th December 2011.

10. RURAL NETWORK PUBLICATIONS

Members NOTED letter, dated 20th January 2012, from Ms Teresa Canavan, Rural Network for Northern Ireland with regard to Rural Network Publications.

11. SUBSCRIPTION

11.1. Action for Market Towns

The Chief Executive (Acting) advised that approval is sought for Council to renew its annual subscription to Action for Market Towns. The subscription enables Officers to obtain valuable information and ideas for the future development of Cookstown Town Centre thus encouraging Officers to network with other Councils in England, Scotland and Wales.

It was proposed by Councillor McGarvey
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and AGREED

That Council renew its annual subscription to Action for Market Towns for the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013, at a cost of £380 +VAT.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1. A29 Cookstown Bypass

The Chief Executive (Acting) advised that a letter, dated 15th March 2012, was received from Ms Máire Cairns, Private Secretary to Mr Danny Kennedy, MLA, Minister for Regional Development in response to Council's letter regarding the A29 Cookstown Bypass. Ms Cairns acknowledged that Council has also wrote to Mr Peter Robinson, MLA and Mr Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA in reference to this issue and she advised that Minister Kennedy has read Council's letter and asked Ms Cairns to reply on his behalf. Ms Cairns further advised that the preferred route for the A29 Cookstown Bypass was announced in June 2010 and since then the Department for Regional Development (DRD) has been carrying out design work, geotechnical investigations and a detailed topographical survey through its consultants, Mouchel. Delivery of the scheme will depend on progress through statutory processes and availability of funding. The Chief Executive (Acting) reminded Members that Council contributed significantly to the consultation process.

Members NOTED receipt of letter, dated 15 March 2012, from Ms Máire Cairns, Private Secretary to Mr Danny Kennedy, MLA, Minister for Regional Development in response to Council's letter regarding the A29 Cookstown Bypass.

The meeting ended at 7.28 pm.

Chairman

Clerk/Chief Executive (Acting)

Date