

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 15 January 2015 in Magherafelt District Council Offices**

**Members Present:** In the Chair, Councillor McEldowney (Vice Chair)

Councillors Dillon, Elattar, Forde, Mallaghan, McNamee, Monteith, O'Neill, T Quinn, G Shiels, J Shiels and Wilson,

**Officers in Attendance:** Mr Tohill, Chief Executive  
Mr McCreesh, Acting Chief Executive (CDC)  
Ms Campbell, Director of Policy & Development (MDC)  
Mr Browne, Head of Development Services (MDC)  
Ms Girvan, Corporate Health & Safety Manager (DSTBC)  
Mr Glavin, Head of Leisure Services (CDC)  
Mrs Forde, Mayor's PA/Member Support Officer (DSTBC)

The meeting commenced at 7pm

**D1/15 Apologies**

Apologies received for Councillor Burton, Molloy and Reid. Apology was also received for Councillor McAleer due to adverse weather conditions.

**D2/15 Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility with regards to declarations of interest.

**D3/15 Receive and confirm minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 4 December 2014**

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan  
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

**Resolved** That the minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Thursday 4 December 2014 (items D52/14-D60/14 and D68/14), were considered and signed as accurate and correct.

**D4/15 Deputation on Proposals for a Skateboard Park, Cookstown**

The Chair welcomed Stuart McMullan, Cameron Anderson and Mr I McCrea MLA to the meeting. Mr McCrea MLA thanked the Council for the opportunity to make a presentation, introduced Stuart and Cameron.

The presentation outlined the viability of a public skate board park in Mid Ulster listing the advantages in relation to health, community relations, activity for young people and keeping money in the local area. Potential sites suggested included those adjacent to Cookstown Leisure Centre, the former skip site at Railway Yard, Cookstown, the Mid Ulster Sports Arena and Meadowbank Arena, Magherafelt. The

representatives emphasised that a public skate board park would serve the up and coming sports trend of 'scootering', 'BMX biking' and roller blading and be a huge benefit to the Mid Ulster area advising that currently those involved in the sport travelled to Carrickfergus, Belfast, Letterkenny and Dublin. Acknowledging the safety and insurance issues connected to the unusual sport the representatives suggested volunteers could assist with warden duties, wearing of safety helmet and disclaimer notices that those entering the park do so at their own risk. The representatives highlighted the passion for the sport, the economic advantages it would bring to Mid Ulster as local people would not have to leave the area and visitors would be attracted. In conclusion, the representatives thanked the committee for the opportunity to present, again emphasising the numbers involved locally in the sport.

The Chair, Councillor McEldowney, thanked the boys for their presentation stating that a skate board park had been suggested for Maghera in the past, thus indicating the wide interest in the sport.

Councillor Wilson thanked the representatives for the informative presentation and asked how many people are involved in the sport in the Cookstown area.

In response the representatives advised that numbers at first were small but that they had built up, as nearly all primary six and seven school children participated.

Councillor Mallaghan thanked the representatives for the excellent presentation and advised that Council would task officers with exploring possibilities.

Councillor Forde stated that the presentation was excellent, that it was fantastic to have young people informing Council what they were interested in as they were the future and Council would look favourably at the request.

Councillor Elattar thanked the representatives for the presentation stating there was demand in Draperstown so somewhere in the middle of the two towns would be apt.

In response to a questions from Councillor Elattar the representatives advised that the indoor sites at Dublin and Belfast were approximately £10 entry fee for all day which was 8am to 10pm.

Councillor T Quinn thanked the representatives for the informative presentation and in response to his question as to whether the boys travelled to other sites alone or in groups the representatives advised they would go as groups, for example birthday celebrations.

In conclusion Mr I McCrea MLA stated that the Councils often heard requests for other sporting facilities and requested that serious consideration be given to this one.

*The delegation withdrew from the meeting at 7.20pm*

## **D5/15            Deputation from Dungannon First Steps**

The Chair welcomed Michael McGoldrick, Chief Executive of Dungannon First Steps to the meeting.

Mr McGoldrick introduced colleague Ms Claire Henry and advised that the First Steps Women Centre was formed out of the Dungannon Development Association in 1998 bringing women throughout the community together during the peace process. Now in its 18<sup>th</sup> year the centre had a staff of 16 and a £400k budget, raised through funding application annually.

Mr McGoldrick outlined the work of the centre which included education, training, essential skills, health promotion, ICT course with childcare and transport provision.

Stating that 600 women per year used the centre with an average of 450 per week Mr McGoldrick in referring to the Maslow hierarchy of needs emphasised that the centre looks after the whole person, mentioning the new benefit checker which had resulted in £150,928 unclaimed benefits being accessed since September 2012. Emphasis was also drawn to the uptake in essential skills in literacy courses, ICT courses and the fact that at least seven different nationalities used the centre.

Referring to health promotion and life skills Ms Henry advised that often women attending had a lot of internal barriers and thus services offered included personal development, stress management, healthy eating, dressing on a budget, crafts and recycling.

Mr McGoldrick also made reference to counselling services advising that demand had rocketed since Christmas when the centre had assisted people in purchase of oil, money and counselling funded through Neighbourhood Renewal thus emphasising the dire austere times being experienced. Stating that the First Steps Women Centre was a community based highly professional organisation he advised it had an Investors in People Silver accreditation.

The Chair, Councillor McEldowney, thanked Mr McGoldrick for the presentation acknowledging that it is difficult to get people back into work again after rearing families, and suffering illnesses, and commended all who achieved it. She added that austerity was a major issue.

Councillor J Shiels thanked the representatives for the presentation, made reference to a video clip showcasing their work stating that it was great to see the migrant population integrating in the local area and asked if users had to pay for the courses.

In response Mr McGoldrick advised that the centre was funded through DEL and that 99.9% of courses were free but that users participating in for example flower arranging courses would have to buy their own flowers. Clarifying the budget Mr McGoldrick stated £409k, which includes running the centre together with childcare provision.

Councillor Dillon referring to the Neighbourhood Renewal element of funding asked if this was withdrawn would it have a major impact on the centre. Mr McGoldrick advised that Neighbourhood Renewal funding was minimal and although the centre

would still function without it, Dungannon Town and Coalisland would feel the loss keenly.

Councillor T Quinn thanked the representatives for the very informative presentation and sought clarification as to whether the travelling community used the centre.

In response Mr McGoldrick advised that some members of the travelling community had participated in literacy courses and had availed of counselling but there was not a big uptake. Councillor T Quinn stated that it was unfortunate that little had been done with the travelling community for a number of generations and commended the centre on being an unofficial St Vincent de Paul type organisation.

Mr McGoldrick commended the work of the local St Vincent de Paul emphasising that together with them and the Citizens Advice Bureau they all worked hand in hand.

*The representatives withdrew from the meeting at 7.40pm.*

#### **D6/15            Proposals for Skateboard Park, Cookstown (refer to D4/15)**

Councillor McNamee stated that he had no doubt regarding the recreation activity skateboarding parks provide but stated that Cookstown had investigated such provision in the past and issues regarding insurance and liability had been raised stating that few Councils had opted to provide skate board parks.

Mr McCreesh advised that Cookstown had investigated such provision in the past but had committed funding elsewhere to facilities such as Davagh Forest, stating that the Council had to work within limited resources. He added that liability and insurance were concerns but added they would not be used as barriers. He added that the facility would have to be serviced by staff but it could appeal to a certain amount of young people but with resources and an appropriate site it could be considered in more detail in the future.

#### **Matters for Decision**

#### **D7/15            Opportunity to Apply to the EU Erasmus+ Programme**

Mr Browne drew attention to the detail in the report stating that the purpose was to apply to the EU Erasmus+ Programme for funding to deliver a series of Junior International/European sporting events that would increase the profile of Mid Ulster Council, enhance local sporting clubs and attract and increase the tourism sector creating an economic benefit to the area.

Outlining the background to the project Mr Browne explained that the paper is a result of six months background work by officers who had attended ICBAN and explored how they could avail of the opportunities presented. Emphasising the excellent facilities the area boasted eg Davagh Forest, Glenone Fishing coupled with the excellence in sport naming Darren Clarke, Aaron Hughes and Wendy Houvenaghel all household names from the new district an application had been put together with the aim of showcasing the new district at its best, leaving a legacy for

existing sporting clubs and improving potential for future international events in the form of Mid Ulster European Junior Games similar to Milk Cup format. Mr Browne advised that the timescale would be Mid Summer 2015, with the introduction of new sporting events across four junior cross gender events involving four disciplines such as sailing, boxing, hockey and cycling. Criteria for the funding stated 12 countries should be involved and it was proposed to have four festival events. Highlighting examples and existing links Mr Browne stated already Cookstown was twinned with Plerin in France home of the junior dinghy team, the Olympic success of Katie Taylor in the boxing fraternity, Cookstown with its exceptional 3G pitch for hockey and the increased interest in cycling since the Giro.

In the short term Mr Browne advised that resources would be required to work up an application but limited to Mid Ulster District Council Staff in association with ICBAN. He sought approval for £10k contingency funding which may be required. He added that in the long term the application would be €500 with 20% match funding required.

### **Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in the project as his son played hockey for Cookstown. He indicated that an application should be progressed. He advised that some home internationals had been hosted and it had been a showcase for Cookstown.

Mr Browne declared an interest in the Sailing Club.

In response to Councillor Dillon's question on possibilities with sporting bodies Mr Browne said he had spoken to a sailing club and Mr Donnelly, Neighbourhood Renewal Manager in Dungannon had spoken with a boxing club. Councillor Dillon stated that Clonoe Boxing Club would soon be without premises and asked if there was an opportunity to assist in such circumstances.

Mr Browne advised that the programme would allow funding to bring boxing to a required standard but advised it was thought that the boxing would take place at Meadowbank, Magherafelt.

*Councillor Wilson left the room at 7.55pm*

Councillor Dillon advised that Clonoe had a great history and that there would be no boxing fraternity without them. Stating that thought should be given as to how Council could assist Clonoe boxing club she emphasised that the loss of the facility would be massive and boxing was the only sport in the area that the travelling community participated in and some of the young people were now coaching.

Councillor Monteith stated he was wary of bringing competition in from further afield as sometimes other countries did not participate, that it resulted in a few photographs in the paper and that his preference would be to encourage groups in the development of their own facilities and that he would prefer officers to concentrate on helping local clubs advising that Dungannon town boxing club had disappeared due to lack of facilities. Stating that he was not opposed to the project

Councillor Monteith emphasised that he wanted to see concentration on assisting local clubs.

*Councillor Wilson returned at 7.58pm*

Mr Browne sought approval to present a paper to Council and submit an application to Erasmus+ programme by May 2015 (a financial commitment will not be required in 2015-16 but delivery of a successful programme will be subject to approval of match funding via rates setting process for 2016-17, should external funding not be available to meet the required 20%).

*Councillor G Shiels left the room at 7.59pm*

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor T Quinn and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council

- (i) to grant approval to present paper to Council and submit an application to Erasmus+ programme by May 2015 (a financial commitment will not be required in 2015-16 but delivery of a successful programme will be subject to approval of match funding via rates setting process for 2016-17, should external funding not be available to meet the required 20%)
- (ii) To approve £10k contingency funding if required.

## **D8/15 Health & Safety Audit on Leisure and Sport Services**

Ms Girvan stated that the purpose of the report was to advise of the outcome of an analysis of the Occupational Health and Safety Management systems across Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt Leisure & Sport Services.

Ms Girvan advised that the aim of the report was to establish:

- Responding to the requirements of relevant legal requirements;
- Identifying and anticipating the significant hazards, assessing risks to health and safety arising from the work environment and work activities;
- Developing and implementing effective risk controls to eliminate hazards and minimize risk to health or safety;
- Consultation and reporting arrangements;
- Identifying the documentation and forms that each Council used; and
- Measuring performance including the reporting and investigation of accidents and incidents

*Councillor G Shiels returned at 8.03pm*

Ms Girvan outlined the recommendations as undernoted:

- 1 That the draft Mid Ulster Health and Safety Policy and Committee Terms of Reference included as Appendix 1 to the report be considered at the next available Policy & Resources Committee meeting of Mid Ulster Council. Subject to Policy & Resources Committee consideration consultation should take place with relevant stakeholders.
- 2 Recommend Safeguarding arrangements are aligned with identified officers responsible in facilities to ensure compliance with Section 12 Safeguarding Board (Northern Ireland) Act 2011.
- 3 That a documented Control of Legionella Bacteria procedure be prepared for Mid Ulster Council for introduction 1st April 2015. The alignment of the Mid Ulster Councils monitoring arrangements for Control of Legionella Bacteria is a priority and should be explored at an early stage. That when clubs have complete use or part use of Council's facilities and equipment, that a SLA is put in place.
- 4 That common processes and documentation are agreed and put in place for Mid Ulster relating to risk assessment and the management and control of maintenance and service works, done by both direct labour and by external contractors. Where various clubs have complete use or part use of Council's facilities and equipment, we recommend that a SLA is put in place.
- 5 That a Role Specific, Health and Safety related, Training Needs Analysis is put in place, as soon as structures are embedded in the Mid Ulster Council.
- 6 The expanding of the existing IT accident/incident management system to cover all 3 Councils and new Mid Ulster Council in the short to medium term. In the longer term a more comprehensive IT based Health and Safety system be introduced that would encompass all aspects of Leisure and Sport.

Councillor Wilson stated that when he had read the report without the recommendations he had been very concerned regarding the flaws in present policy referring in particular to one council having significant gaps in risk assessment emphasising that he did not know which existing Council it was but it was poor management. Councillor Wilson asked if the issue regarding contractors coming in without risk assessments was dealt with in the recommendations.

Ms Girvan stated that a consistent approach and management was required. Councillor Wilson stated that the report spoke of major inconsistencies and significant gaps in process stating that it was a poor indictment on the Council concerned.

Ms Campbell stated that there were issues in the report that needed addressed and thus she had met with Heads of Service to look at risk assessments and that they would be reporting back with a plan. Ms Campbell advised that she was endeavouring to ensure standards would be as they should be as soon as possible.

The Chair, Councillor McEldowney, stated that Council could not do much about the past and needed to focus on moving forward and the future. Councillor Wilson concurred and again stated that the findings in the report was a poor indictment on Council concerned.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Council that the recommendations aforementioned be progressed.

*Ms Girvan left the meeting at 8.07pm*

**D9/15            Progress Report on the Development and Regeneration Forward Work Plan**

Ms Campbell advised that the purpose of the report was to provide an update on progress on the Development and Regeneration Forward Work Plan previously presented. Ms Campbell drew attention to key issues in the report advising that the Local Economic Development Plan (2014-2015) was being progressed in tandem with the community planning process, that further input from social economy businesses would be available early January 2015 and that the additional inputs would augment the work already completed and that a draft interim economic development strategy for the district would be presented in February.

Ms Campbell further advised that officers were progressing the review of financial assistance policy and process for the community and voluntary sector. The Social Economic and Environmental Data Analysis work was on schedule and that it was hoped to receive commissioning letters from OFMDFM in January and officers were currently drafting the plan for Council consideration.

Members noted progress.

**D10/15            Update on the new Local Action Group Formation Process**

Mr McCreesh drew attention to the report regarding Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 and the formation of the LAG stating that 12 Members would be directors of the new board. Mr McCreesh drew attention to the 30 January when social partner appointments to the LAG would be announced and issued to all LAG members.

Members noted progress.

*Councillor Monteith left the meeting at 8.16pm*

**D11/15            Progress Report re European Funding Opportunities for Mid Ulster**

Mr McCreesh advised that the purpose of the report was to provide an update on European funding opportunities for Mid Ulster.



Mr McCreesh reminded Members that the Council had decided not to submit a direct application to the European Social Fund (ESF) but to link with its new community planning partners in relation to maximisation of funding in the Mid Ulster area.

Advising that ESF lends itself to a co-ordinated approach he stated that the three women's groups were working in synergy and a proposal was going forward to ESF regarding Dungannon Women's group.

Mr McCreesh advised that discussion was still ongoing to bring other agencies together such as South West College, North Regional College and Health and Education Boards. Stating that a substantive bid had been prepared for a major programme in relation to preparing for employability and improving careers options Mr McCreesh advised that it was a significant initiative that would require joint support from Mid Ulster and Omagh and Fermanagh Councils.

He advised that the Council would be continually updated regarding plans to maximise EU funding such as ERASMUS targeted at youth engagement and development, INTERREG, LIFE+ , ERDF Economic Development Funding, Rural Development Funding and Peace IV.

Members noted progress.

*Councillor Monteith returned at 8.19pm*

## **CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

Proposed by Councillor T Quinn  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved** That item D12/15 – D15 /15 be taken as confidential business.

## **D16 /15 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 8.35pm.

CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_