

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Thursday 13 February 2020 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,
Magherafelt**

Members Present

Councillor Wilson, Chair

Councillors Ashton, Burton, Clarke, Corry, Cuddy, Doris,
Elattar, Kerr, Hughes, Kearney, McNamee, Milne, Molloy,
Monteith

**Officers in
Attendance**

Mrs Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Mr McCreesh, Director of Business and Communities
Mr Browne, Head of Tourism
Mr Hill, Head of Parks
Ms Linney, Head of Community Development
Mr McCance, Head of Culture and Arts
Ms McKeown, Head of Economic Development
Ms Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

**Others in
Attendance**

Agenda Item 4 – Boom Foundation
Leona Rankin

The meeting commenced at 7.02 pm.

D024/20 Apologies

Councillor Black

D025/20 Declaration of Interests

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

D026/20 Chair's Business

The Chair advised that there were two matters to be raised tonight under Chair's Business.

Councillor Kerr thanked the Chair for allowing him to raise this issue tonight as he had originally intended to bring it too the full Council Meeting.

He advised that Helen Sweeney had been in contact with him, she originally was from Coalisland but was residing in England. He said that due to the highly unfortunate circumstances she had lost her father Noel to an accident involving a tree hitting his car just before Christmas which ended Noel's life, which left Helen and her family naturally devastated. He stated that a few weeks later another tree had fallen on the same stretch of road which greatly concerned Helen and she contacted all the

relevant agencies, but she was told that responsibility with potential liable trees on a road was down to the owner's discretion to remove them.

Councillor Kerr advised that Helen and himself had several conversations about highlighting her campaign and she has now launched an online petition for people to sign and share their concerns about the lack of clarity regarding her issue. She also spoke to local and national media organisations regarding her campaign.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr

To issue an invitation to Ms Sweeney to a future meeting to help highlight her campaign and to educate Councillors throughout the district about this potential life changing ordeal.

Seconded by Councillor Monteith

Councillor Burton said that she would fully support Councillor Kerr's proposal as this was a very important issue. She said that if concerns were raised about overgrown trees and hedges on privately owned property with the DfI Roads they write to them but unless the landowner is willing to co-operate nothing happens.

The Chair said that the occupants of a car in Cookstown had a lucky escape after a tree fell on their car before Christmas. He said that the landowner was very proactive as he had all the trees removed the very next day.

The Head of Economic Development advised that the circulated Response to Consultation on the New PEACE PLUS Cross Border EU Funding Programme for the period 2021-27 was being brought tonight for decision.

The Director of Business and Communities updated members on the contents of the report and advised that this had to be submitted by 24 February 2020. He said that Mid Ulster Council welcomed the opportunity to respond to SEUPB's consultation exercise with respect to the plans for the new PEACE Plus Programme which would succeed both of the current 2014-20 PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Programmes.

He said that the combination of the PEACE and INTERREG type activities in a single programme was reflected in the name of the programme where "PLUS" represents the inclusion of wider economic, social and environmental activities. He said that the PEACE PLUS Programme would be delivered within a significantly changed landscape in NI with Brexit, new Stormont agreement and the implementation of Council led City/Growth Deals aimed at super changing economic growth.

The Director of Business and Communities advised members that this was the last chance to avail of hundreds of thousands of Euro funding. (appendix 1)

Councillor Wilson advised that he sits on PEACE IV and was a great opportunity.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy

Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to proceed with the submission of the response to SEUPB consultation exercise in respect to plans for the new PEACE PLUS Programme as at appendix 1.

Councillor Wilson referred to the closure of Dungannon Leisure Centre last Sunday and enquired what was the reason for doing so.

He also referred to the re-opening of the new look Dungannon Leisure Centre and said that he was very unhappy regarding the short notice Councillors received in relation to this.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that last Sunday was a stormy day with wind and rain, resulting in a sheet around the skylight being blown off and water getting into the electrics in the communications room and alarms constantly going off. She said that management had made the decision to close the building for safety reasons until the roof was repaired. She stated that this was down to the consequences of the weather and no other reason.

She referred to the invitation to Councillors for the re-opening and said that she was aware that invitations should have been issued within a reasonable timeframe which was an admin error and would ensure that this does not happen again.

Councillor Molloy said he was a user of Dungannon Leisure Centre and felt that there were still a lot of teething problems as there were long queues at reception and issues around swimming lessons etc and advised that there should be procedures in place to handle these types of concerns. He also stated that there were a number of pieces of gym equipment out of use and felt that this was a poor reflection as these items were all newly purchased.

Councillor Cuddy agreed with Councillor Molloy's concerns and said that he had also been contacted by members of the public about long queues amongst other things and felt that this was unprofessional but hoped that these types of issues would ease off in time.

He said that he would have a real concern about the lift in Dungannon Leisure Centre as it was very old and not fit for public use. He felt that money should have been put into installing a new one as customers will go elsewhere where there are modern facilities.

The Chair asked that a report be brought back to the next meeting on concerns raised tonight.

Councillor Ashton said that management made the right call to close the leisure centre last Sunday due to health and safety concerns but felt that members should have availed of an email advising them of the situation to keep them up to date on matters before being contacted by the public.

Councillor Monteith said that he agreed with previous members comments as the public were of the opinion that Dungannon Leisure Centre was going to be a state of the art, with a 2020 swimming pool and it's humiliating for this Council that this was

not the case. He felt the Council should have been at the top of their game and better prepared as it was anticipated that a large crowd would be arriving to view the new look Leisure Centre. He also agreed with comments regarding the closure last Sunday and said that Councillors had got it in the neck about how the public felt that they were being treated like second class citizens in Dungannon.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation to bring a report back on concerns raised by members tonight and the issue regarding invitations being issued at short notice to members for the reopening.

D027/20 Deputation – Boom Foundation

The Chair, Councillor Wilson advised that a presentation was being made tonight on behalf of the Boom Foundation, but firstly he wanted to acknowledge that the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Kearney had hosted a reception for Ms Shannon Whitehouse and her family regarding their fundraising for the organisation. He said that Shannon was an inspiration and that off her family also.

The Chair welcomed to the committee Ms Leona Rankin and invited her to make her presentation on behalf of the Boom Foundation.

Ms Rankin thanked the committee for giving her the opportunity to address the meeting tonight and wanted to firstly say how grateful she was to Shannon and her family as they were so inspirational and said that the organisation would support them every step of the way.

Ms Rankin said that the Boom foundation was set up in memory of her fiancé Philip Wilson who lost his battle from sarcoma on 8 March 2013. She said that Philip sadly passed away only 7 weeks before his wedding day and following a ten-year battle with sarcoma. Without complaint, Philip lived with sarcoma and the side effects of the countless periods of treatment and surgery.

The impact of losing Philip has been unimaginable but despite his passing, Philip's presence is as strong as ever through the Boom Foundation. The word 'Boom' was always used by Philip when he was enjoying something (most likely on the golf course, his favorite place) and it was never without a high five (hence their hand logo)! Boom was the perfect name because it will forever link the charity with this outstanding person whilst also signifying the impact the charity will make on the lives of those living with sarcoma every day.

She said that the money raised by Boom would be split between practical help and vital research, 50% will remain in Northern Ireland to be used by us here at Boom for the benefit of sarcoma patients in NI, whilst the remaining 50% of our funds will be sent to Sarcoma UK to try to achieve the best possible standard of treatment and care for patients with sarcoma.

She stated that sarcoma was uncommon cancers which affect any part of the body, on the inside or outside, including the muscle, bone, tendons, blood vessels and fatty tissues.

Ms Rankin provided a breakdown of issues relating to sarcoma (appendix 2):

- 15 people are diagnosed with sarcoma every day in the UK
- 100 cases in Northern Ireland each year
- 100 different sub-types of sarcoma
- Almost 8 in 10 people (78%) diagnosed with sarcoma in the UK will live up to a year
- The average percentage of people living 3 years after being diagnosed with sarcoma in the UK is 64.5%
- The five-year survival rate for sarcoma is 55%

The Chair thanked Ms Rankin for such an informative presentation and said that by watching Councillors around the room tonight, this had struck a chord with everyone and felt that this Council lobby the Health Minister on behalf of the Boom Foundation. He said that if a Notice of Motion was brought to the Council to seek a meeting with the Health Minister that consideration be given to issuing an invite to Ms Rankin also.

Councillor Kerr said that firstly he would like to thank the Whitehouse family and Leona for accepting the Council's invitation. He said that he would like to pay extreme high regard to Shannon, Pierce, TJ and all the Whitehouse family for the charity work they have carried out raising a great deal of money in such a short space of time. He stated that their noble, selfless actions and particularly Shannon thinking about others before herself was something that should be commended. He said that he would also like to praise Maurade and all her friends for the great work they have done in helping Shannon organise the recent event.

Councillor Kerr said that he would also like to thank Leona for attending tonight to make her presentation and travelling all the way to highlight the Boom Foundation to help highlight the Foundation.

He said that he would like to propose that Mid Ulster Council writes to every other Council in the North of Ireland highlighting the work carried out by Leona and the Boom Foundation and to ask each of them to consider issuing an invite for a deputation to meet them to publicise the fantastic work that is being carried out by Boom Foundation and the possibility of running a themed week on behalf of Boom.

Councillor Ashton thanked Ms Rankin for her presentation and said that she would have no difficulty bringing this forward as she wasn't aware of the issue and would certainly support the major concerns patients face in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Kearney said that everyone was humbled by Shannon and also by Ms Rankin as the Boom Foundation had achieved so much in the last 7 years and wanted to wish them well in the future.

Councillor Milne said that he wanted to wish everyone every success going forward in this campaign and enquired about the issue regarding concerns around Mobility car modifications for patients and the matter of the car being used for the carer of the dependent.

Ms Rankin referred to a patient that the organisation was currently working with and said that this patient took sarcoma in her fingers but when she went to Birmingham for

surgery, they removed her arm. This patient was a classroom assistant and has a young son and when she applied to get a specially adapted car, she was refused by PIPs system because she could walk unaided and ineligible for the mobility element. She currently drives a manual car as she cannot afford an automatic one and by the time you pay for modifications it would be impossible. Ms Rankin said that it was bazaar that a person who has lost their complete arm was deemed unsuitable to receive an specially adapted car even though she had prosthetic hand and arm and very frustrating as she wished to return to work to support her young son.

Councillor Monteith said that it may be worthwhile contacting the Law Centre as they would be only too willing to take on this kind of challenging case. He stated that the PIPs system was a complete farce which didn't show any empathy towards the vulnerable people within our society.

Ms Rankin said that it was a difficult situation for this lady as she was told that if she appealed the decision, she may lose all her benefits.

Councillor Monteith said that the Law Centre should be an option for this lady to try and seek a way forward.

The Chair thanked Ms Rankin for her attendance tonight and said that the Council would try and support the Foundation in any way they could.

He said that Shannon was an inspiration and was a very brave girl and wished to thank her and her family for attending tonight. He also wanted to thank Councillor Kearney for hosting the reception and to Councillor Kerr for suggesting the invite.

The Chair said that although he acknowledged what Councillor Kerr had previously proposed, he felt that it may be more beneficial if the proposal was brought forward as a Notice of Motion to the full Council as he didn't foresee any objections being made and would like to include that an invite be issued to meet the Health Minister or a delegation to meet him.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr

Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to provide a Notice of Motion to full Council after tonight's deputation of the Boom Foundation, that Mid Ulster Council writes to every other Council in the North of Ireland to highlight the good work they carry out, and ask for each Council to extend an invitation to the Boom Foundation for a presentation to raise awareness around Sarcoma.

That Mid Ulster District council also provides further ways of Highlighting the Booms Foundation tremendous work to the wider public.

Matters for Decision

D028/20 Draft Response to Foras na Gaeilge Consultation Document – Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020 – 2025

The Head of Culture & Arts presented previously circulated report and sought approval to issue previously attached submission (appendix 2) to Foras na Gaeilge in response to the Public Consultation on the Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020-2025 (draft document).

Councillor McNamee said that he was aware of an increase in Irish Language speakers but a decline in teaching in mainstream schools and was glad that this was being highlighted within the response.

Councillor Monteith referred to the response at C2 of the document and said that he welcomed the increase in Irish language but felt that Foras na Gaeilge should have a more strategic focus in this regard. He said that within his own area the local GAA was developing the language. Consideration should be given to the support of urban Gaeltachts and to signposting within the Irish Language Sector. He felt that there needs to be a more strategic direction provided by Foras na Gaeilge, towards something more stable and sustainable.

Councillor Monteith also referred C5 of the document regarding courses/classes and said there was a need for a more strategic approach, to make it easier for people to avail of refresher courses as there seemed to be a flatline once you go so far and no further option or no easily identified option for progression. There was a need for an easier identified path to follow for this wishing to develop their Irish language.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council, subject to the above amendments, to approve the draft response to the Strategic Direction for Foras na Gaeilge 2020-2025 (Draft) on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council.

D029/20 Heart of Ancient Ulster Landscape Partnership Update

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to update on the Heart of Ancient Ulster Landscape Partnership project and sought approval to submit a Stage 1 development application to Heritage Lottery Funding.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to contribute a maximum of £3,000 to Fermanagh and Omagh Council towards the preparation and submitting a stage 1 development application to Heritage Lottery Fund.

In response to Councillor Clarke's query regarding Future Search Programme, the Director of Business and Communities advised that he had been in discussions with

the Director of Derry City Council regarding the recruitment of an Officer which was unsuccessful. He said that it was anticipated to re-advertise for a candidate one last time, but it could be difficult as staff wouldn't want to give up their job for a seconded post for a year. He concluded by saying that Causeway Coast and Glens, Derry City and Strabane, Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh made a commitment to this but if needs be it may be an issue of moving forward without certain Councils.

D030/20 Economic Development Report – For Decision

The Head of Economic Development presented previously circulated report which provided an update on key activities as detailed below:

- **Business Improvement District Feasibility Study (Final)**

Councillor Molloy said that the recent engagement with Reval 2020 and the impact for businesses within Mid Ulster, he would be happy to support the recommendation of not proceeding.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Mid Ulster 5 Towns BIDS Feasibility Study (Executive Summary) recommending that Council do not pursue BIDs in any of its 5 towns at this juncture.

- **Renewal of Membership with NI Chamber of Commerce**

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Corporate Membership of NI Chamber of Commerce costing £2,500+Vat for the period of 1 January to 31 December 2020.

In response to member's query, the Head of Economic Development advised that within item 3.2 of the report, it highlighted a variety of supports provided by the Chamber to organisations who subscribe. She said that Council Officers are in regular engagement with the Chamber to promote events and programmes that are available to businesses in Mid Ulster. Council also works alongside the Chamber every year to host a large business event in Mid Ulster which draws upwards of 100 business briefings and updates Council on upcoming funding opportunities.

Councillor Molloy referred to an email from traders in Moy in relation to the lack of carparking facilities which was having a major impact on the village. He stated that Moy was one of the busiest villages within Mid Ulster and was outstripping other small towns by 95% and said that it was up to us to try and help with this issue.

He proposed that the Council request that engagement takes place with Department of Infrastructure and CAMDA group within the village to try and find a favourable outcome.

Councillor Monteith seconded Councillor Molloy's proposal and said that it was important to take the lead and a launching pad as DEA Councillors. He said that Moy needed urgent attention as the village had received little to nothing from this Council and needed a long term vision as this would create an opportunity to try and move things forward, otherwise it would just seem as if the village was being left behind and an afterthought. He said that this was also failing strategic transport groups also.

Councillor Cuddy said that he supported the comments from the previous two Councillors and stated that Moy had great character and was a very attractive village which was always at the front within the previous Dungannon Council. He stated that it was up to this committee to try and get the issue of appropriate carparking facilities out of the starting blocks as Moy was a village to be proud of and deserved all the help it required.

D031/20 Community Development Report

The Head of Community Development presented previously circulated report and provided an update on the following:

- **Rolling Grant Awards – Good Relations and Local Community Festivals**

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Rolling Grant Awards – Good Relations (£960) and Community Local Community Festivals (£3,460) as per grant recommendations at Appendix 1 of report.

- **Community Support Plan 2020 – 2021**

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Community Support Plan 2020 - 2021.

- **Good Relations Plan 2020 – 2021**

The Chair, Councillor Wilson declared an interest as Chair of Mid Ulster Pipe Band Association.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Good Relations Plan 2020 – 2021.

- **Community Development Update**

Members noted the Community Development update.

Councillor Monteith advised that there was a need for further follow through for larger grants that include support for facilities, and to look at pricing structures for user groups which the Council is indirectly contributing towards. He said that it was vital that pricing for community usage was within a reasonable cost comparable between community locations/facilities.

The Chair agreed with Councillor Monteith's comment and said that it was important that there was equality for community accessing facilities supported by Council and pricing provided for value for money.

Councillor Milne left the meeting at 8 pm.

D032/20 Leisure and Outdoor Recreation Service Level Agreements 2020/21

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought approval to agree proposals on Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for the financial year 2020/21.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the:

- 1) Proposal to extend the scope of Muintor na Mointeach Ltd current Service Level Agreement and associated payment increase of £2,000 per annum.
- 2) Proposals on Leisure and Outdoor Recreation SLAs for the 2020/21 financial year only.

Councillor Ashton left the meeting at 8.01 pm.

Matters for Information

D033/20 Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 January 2020

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 January 2020.

Councillor Kerr referred to item D011/20 – Cappagh issues and enquired if there was any further update regarding discussions with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and if not, could a meeting be set up with them and make it a DEA wide meeting, with consideration being given to Councillors working full time.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that Officers had met with 3 official representatives from the Water Service who agreed that it would be good to work together to develop the area to include recreational activities. She said that over the next few weeks it was anticipated to organise a meeting with DEAs and

Fermanagh and Omagh Council to take this issue forward. She stated that the Water Service would not commit to handing the reservoirs over to the Council due to new legislation around reservoirs and the management around water matters. Councillor Cuddy advised that there was a short distance between the two reservoirs and enquired if funding was available, could consideration be given to turning them into a hydroelectric facility. He said that it was disappointing that this initiative was never progressed as it was discussed at length in the legacy Dungannon Council and was seen at the time as having great potential to generate free electricity.

D034/20 Mid Ulster District Tourism Development Group

Members noted previously circulated report which provided Minutes of Tourism Development Group meeting held on 20 November 2019.

D035/20 Economic Development Report – For Information

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on matters related to Mid Ulster Skills Forum Update, Mid Ulster Skill Forum – OECD Workshop, Cookstown Bypass Scheme Minute 07.01.20, Chinese Consul General's Visit to Mid Ulster, Cypriot Business Delegation Study Visit to Mid Ulster, US Consul General's Visit to Mid Ulster, Christmas Trade in Mid Ulster Towns.

Councillor Monteith requested that a DEA meeting in relation to Ann Street Development be facilitated as a matter of urgency as this was raised before Christmas by Councillor Molloy.

The Director of Business and Communities agreed that this would be arranged.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items D036/20 to D043/20.

Matters for Decision

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| D036/20 | Review of Culture & Arts Facility Hire Charges |
| D037/20 | Development of Business Plan and Branding Review at Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre |
| D038/20 | Regional Minority Languages Bursary Programme 2020/21 and Irish Language Activity Funding Programme 2020/21 |
| D039/20 | Provision of Seasonal Security Guarding Services at Dungannon Park and Additional Sites as Required |

Matters for Information

- D040/20 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on
16 January 2020
- D041/20 Dark Sky Observatory Davagh – Brand Update
- D042/20 Seamus Heaney HomePlace International Linkages
Update
- D043/20 Procurement of a Contractor to Deliver the Mid Ulster
Gearing for Growth Programme

D044/20 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.30 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____