

Report on	1) Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal 2) Mid Ulster Skills Forum / Skills Action Plan 2018-21 3) Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2019 Proposal 4) Review of Northern Ireland Non – Domestic Rating System 5) Business Eye Article on Mid Ulster 6) Magherafelt Town Centre Forum Minutes 7) Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes 8) Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes 9) Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI)
Date of Meeting	3 July 2019
Reporting Officer	Fiona McKeown, Head of Economic Development

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
2.0	Background
2.1	Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal Dungannon Regeneration Partnership (DRP) submitted a proposal to Council in 2018 to support the costs of employing a Town Centre Development Manager for Dungannon over the next 2 years. On the 28th June 2018, the following recommendation of the Development Committee was approved by Council – <i>“Council contributing £30,000 per annum towards this project for a period of 2 years, providing partner funding is forthcoming from Department for Communities (minimum of £30,000 per annum), Dungannon Enterprise Centre (£10,000 per annum), and Dungannon Traders Association (£10,000 per annum)”</i>
2.2	Mid Ulster Skills Forum / Skills Action Plan 2018-21 The Mid Ulster Skills Forum has identified a number of priority actions contained within the Mid Ulster Skills Report and Action Plan 2018/2021 for delivery in the current financial year (2019/20). These include a potential Collaborative Growth

	<p>Project focused on the challenge facing local employers in relation to engaging with school career teachers and pupils, a Mid Ulster Jobs Fair event and a Careers Attractiveness Initiative focused on Mid Ulster's key priority sectors. These schemes will complement the MEGA (Manufacturing Engineering Growth & Advancement) Collaborative Programme which seeks to address skills and employability issues within the local advanced manufacturing and engineering sector.</p>
2.3	<p>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2019 Proposal</p> <p>Historically, Mid Ulster District Council has provided funding towards the Mid Ulster Business Awards, which highlight and reward those companies, large and small, which have prospered over the previous 12 months.</p>
2.4	<p>Review of Northern Ireland Non-Domestic Rating System</p> <p>On the 9th May 2019, the Permanent Secretary for the Department of Finance announced a review of the Non-Domestic Rating System in Northern Ireland would open soon to public consultation.</p>
2.5	<p>Business Eye Article on Mid Ulster</p> <p>Business Eye magazine are running a feature in the next edition on Northern Ireland's 11 local councils. They are planning a special Regional Economic Development Feature to highlight the work of Northern Ireland's 11 local councils in the business and economic development arena.</p>
2.6	<p>Magherafelt Town Centre Forum Minutes</p> <p>Magherafelt Town Centre Forum was re-established in January 2017. The forum meets on a quarterly basis to act in an advisory capacity, playing a fundamental role in the development and delivery of key town centre initiatives.</p>
2.7	<p>Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes</p> <p>Coalisland Town Centre Forum was established in March 2019 along similar lines to the Forums / Partnerships already operating in Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt and Maghera. The Forum acts as a strategic body that will provide advice and guidance to Strategic Bodies and others regarding the growth of Coalisland Centre.</p>
2.8	<p>Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes</p> <p>Cookstown Town Centre Forum was established in 2002 to develop a partnership approach for the development and delivery of key town centre initiatives. The Forum meets at regular intervals throughout the year.</p>
2.9	<p>Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI)</p> <p>The FFNI (Full Fibre Northern Ireland) Consortium is a grouping of the ten councils outside Belfast. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMD) is the lead Council of the consortium.</p> <p>The Consortium made a successful collective bid for £15m funding from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund, to support digital infrastructure development across Northern Ireland.</p>

	A capital grant of £15million to the Consortium has been approved by DCMS and a Letter of Offer and Grant Agreement received.																																
3.0	Main Report																																
3.1	<p>Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal</p> <p>Dungannon Regeneration Partnership (DRP) has submitted a new proposal to Council (dated June 2019), attached on Appendix 1 to support the costs of employing a Town Centre Development Manager in Dungannon.</p> <p>Council is asked to consider uplifting the funding contribution it previously agreed ie, £30,000 per annum for 2 years (Table 1 – DRP original proposal) to £130,000 per annum for 3 years (Table 2 – new proposal).</p> <p><i>Table 1 – DRP Original Proposal</i></p> <table><tr><td></td><td>Over 2 years</td></tr><tr><td>Mid Ulster Council</td><td>63,000</td></tr><tr><td>Department for Communities</td><td>63,000</td></tr><tr><td>Dungannon Traders</td><td>20,000</td></tr><tr><td>Dungannon Enterprise Centre</td><td>20,000</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>£ 166,000</td></tr></table> <p><i>Table 2 – DRP New Proposal</i></p> <table><tr><td></td><td>Year 1</td><td>Year 2</td><td>Year 3</td></tr><tr><td>Dungannon Traders Group</td><td>£ 10,000</td><td>£ 10,000</td><td>£ 10,000</td></tr><tr><td>Dungannon Enterprise Centre</td><td>£5,000 £5,000 in kind</td><td>£5,000 £5,000 in kind</td><td>£5,000 £5,000 in kind</td></tr><tr><td>Mid Ulster Council</td><td>£ 130,000</td><td>£130,000</td><td>£ 130,000</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL</td><td>£150,000</td><td>£150,000</td><td>£150,000</td></tr></table> <p>The proposal sets out DRP’s rationale to create a Town Centre Development Manager in the context of a 3 year pilot.</p>		Over 2 years	Mid Ulster Council	63,000	Department for Communities	63,000	Dungannon Traders	20,000	Dungannon Enterprise Centre	20,000		£ 166,000		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Dungannon Traders Group	£ 10,000	£ 10,000	£ 10,000	Dungannon Enterprise Centre	£5,000 £5,000 in kind	£5,000 £5,000 in kind	£5,000 £5,000 in kind	Mid Ulster Council	£ 130,000	£130,000	£ 130,000	TOTAL	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000
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3.2	<p>Mid Ulster Skills Forum / Skills Action Plan 2018-21</p> <p>(i) <u>Collaborative Growth Programme</u></p> <p>Following discussions with Invest NI and Mid Ulster Skills Forum, Council officers have identified an opportunity to apply for funding under Invest NI’s Collaborative Growth Programme to undertake a Phase 1 Scoping study to engage and collaborate with local employers, schools and 13-18 year olds in a co-design of the future ‘industry/education engagement’ products and services. In doing so, the outputs from such a co-design process would take into account the existing landscape, the opportunity to ensure engagement/careers advice, placement,</p>																																

recruitment processes etc. are brought in line with the 'Generation Z' requirements (the current name for the cohort born from the mid-1990s). Such a collaborative approach would also help inform existing services such as NI's 'Connect to Success' and perhaps enable all stakeholders to streamline engagement and ensure information is provided in real time, perhaps exploring options for alternative technological solutions/products. If the Phase 1 Scoping Study produces a positive outcome, this may then open up further opportunities for further funding.

(ii) Careers Attractiveness Initiative

In order to enhance the image and attractiveness of Mid Ulster's key priority sectors it is recommended to appoint a suitably qualified organisation to engage with the Skills Forum and local businesses to create appropriate content and messages which will be used to inform careers teachers, pupils and parents. The project would help to strengthen linkages between local industry and education by reflecting the offering through the use of visual storyboards, info-graphics and promotional videos etc. with a view to attracting a future pipeline of talent for each sector.

(iii) Mid Ulster Jobs Fair

It is proposed that a one-day Jobs Fair event is held in Cookstown (venue to be confirmed) as part of Enterprise week in November 2019. The event would be delivered in partnership with the Mid Ulster Skills Forum, Department for Communities (DfC) and Network Personnel. All businesses who wish to attend must operate from Mid Ulster and have live vacancies. In addition, support services will be in attendance to help attendees make the most of the event and give guidance on areas such as interview skills, CV writing etc. It is envisaged that breakout rooms will be available for employers who would like to hold interviews on the day.

3.3 **Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2019 Proposal**

Council has received a proposal from Johnston Press (**Appendix 2**) relating to sponsorship opportunities at the 9th Annual Mid-Ulster Business Awards, organised by the Mid-Ulster Mail & Tyrone Times in November 2019.

This year there will be 14 award categories that recognise a cross section of businesses who excel in their sector:

- Best Retailer
- Best Export Business
- Readers' Favourite Eating Establishment
- Best Customer Service
- SME Business of the Year
- Excellence in People Development
- Best Community Impact
- Excellence in Tourism
- Best Manufacturer
- Best Digital & Social Media Initiative
- Best Start-Up Business Award
- Excellence in Innovation
- Business Person of the Year
- Lifetime Achievement Award

Council has been asked to support the Mid Ulster Business Awards by considering sponsorship at one of the following levels;

- Headline Sponsorship £7,000 + Vat
- Associate Sponsorship £3,500 + Vat
- Category Sponsorship £1,750 + Vat
- Venue Partner £1,500 + Vat

The benefits arising from funding each of the sponsorship categories above are documented in the proposal on **Appendix 2**.

3.4

Review of Northern Ireland Non–Domestic Rating System

The first part of this review will be an Innovation Lab process at the start of July 2019 undertaken alongside Government Departments and leading experts in the field of urban regeneration, taxation and the high street.

The Innovation Lab will assess and respond to the significant changes that have taken place in relation to Northern Ireland high streets and town centres. This process will serve to guide the strategic direction of a subsequent fundamental appraisal process for the rating system conducted by the Department of Finance.

The process of stakeholder engagement will allow interested parties to engage with the Departments Rating Policy Division in order to inform its policy appraisal work in this area. Any stakeholders interested in this process are invited to register their interest with the Department. Mid Ulster District Council has registered an interest in participating in this process.

As stated, the upcoming business rates consultation is opening in July 2019 and is likely to close again in advance of the Development Committee in September 2019. As requested at the June 2019 Committee Meeting, officers will draft a Business Rates Consultation Response on behalf of Council and this will be circulated to Members in advance of the Development Committee Meeting on 3 July 2019 for discussion / approval.

3.5

Business Eye Article on Mid Ulster

Mid Ulster features in a special regional economic development article highlighting the work of the 11 local councils in terms of business and economic development. The feature is contained on **Appendix 4**.

3.6

Magherafelt Town Centre Forum Minutes

Minutes of Magherafelt Town Centre Forum meeting held on 10 April 2019 are attached on **Appendix 5**.

3.7

Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes

Minutes of Coalisland Town Centre Forum meeting held on the 11 April 2019 are attached on **Appendix 6**.

3.8	<p>Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes Minutes of the meeting of Cookstown Town Centre Forum held on the 10th April 2019 are attached on Appendix 7.</p>
3.9	<p>Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI) Council is now in receipt of the following 3 documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Consortia Agreement from Newry Mourne and Down District Council, the lead partner for the programme. • A letter of offer from DCMS • A grant agreement from DCMS <p>Council's legal team has reviewed the terms and conditions within the consortia agreement, letter of offer and grant agreement and will seek approval to accept the documents at Council's Policy & Resources Committee on 4 July 2019. Further to this, formal approval will be sought to apply the Council seal to the documents at the Council Meeting on 25 July 2019.</p> <p>The FFNI funding must be spent by 31st March 2021. It is therefore essential to proceed with the procurements to deploy the funding, in order to give suppliers the maximum time for delivery.</p> <p>The £15m grant will be divided equally between the Consortium Members, so that, after consortium costs are covered, approximately £1.473m will be spent on fibre connectivity in each Consortium Member areas. The procurements will buy full fibre connections for public sector buildings. Most buildings are Council sites, but other sites such as schools are also proposed, subject to agreement of the organisations responsible for them. The buildings in each procurement will be selected from a long list authorised by DCMS to optimise value for money from the market. Multiple procurements are necessary to ensure an effective competition that delivers best value.</p> <p>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council will operate the procurements on behalf of the consortium and other public sector bodies. Each organisation will contract with the selected supplier(s) for the connections to its own buildings. Each procurement will be carefully constructed to deliver the best value from the market, including spreading the delivery effort across multiple supply chains to reduce risk. The European Journal (OJEU) Open Procurement Procedure is planned.</p> <p>The consortium aims to procure services to as many of the sites as possible within the funding constraints. The sites eventually selected will be determined through the procurements to deliver best value based on the market response.</p> <p>Subject to agreement from each Consortium Member and from DCMS, the first of the procurements is likely to start over the summer (July/August 2019). Each procurement will take approximately 10 weeks.</p>

	<p>Approval is sought for Adrian McCreesh, Director of Business & Communities (or his nominee) to represent Mid Ulster District Council on the FFNI Steering Group. This will be the body responsible for strategic oversight of the programme and into which the Operations Group will report.</p> <p>Approval is sought for Colin McKenna (Economic Strategies Manager) and Barry O'Hagan (Head of ICT) to represent Mid Ulster District Council on the FFNI Operational Group to have responsibility for overseeing operational programme delivery, which will include participation in the procurement exercises undertaken by Newry Mourne and Down District Council, on behalf of the Consortium to deploy the funding.</p>
	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal <i>For Consideration:</i> Council is asked to consider uplifting the funding contribution it previously agreed ie, £30,000 per annum for 2 years to £130,000 per annum for 3 years.</p> <p>Mid Ulster Skills Forum / Skills Action Plan 2018-21</p> <p>(i) <u>Invest NI Collaborative Growth Programme</u> Approve match funding of 50% (up to £25,000) out of existing LED budget for a detailed Scoping study (Phase 1) into future 'industry/education engagement' products and services.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Mid Ulster Jobs Fair</u> Approve funding of up to £8,000 out of the existing LED budget to hold a Mid Ulster Jobs Fair in Cookstown during Enterprise week (November 2019) in partnership with the Mid Ulster Skills Forum, Department for Communities and Network Personnel.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Careers Attractiveness Initiative</u> Approve funding of up to £20,000 out of the existing LED budget to appoint a suitably qualified company to create appropriate content to showcase the attractiveness of jobs/careers in key priority sectors within Mid Ulster.</p> <p>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2019 Proposal <i>For Consideration:</i> Sponsorship costs are as follows: Headline Sponsorship £7,000+vat Associate Sponsorship £3,500+vat Category Sponsorship £1,750+vat Venue Partner £1500+vat</p>

	<p>Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI) FFNI has secured £15m from DCMS for this project of which £1.473million is specific to Mid Ulster. It is anticipated that this will meet all project financial requirements, however, if any additional unforeseen costs arise this will be brought back to Council for consideration.</p> <p>Business Eye Article on Mid Ulster Business Eye article costs have been included in the Economic Development Budget for 2019/20 (£800+Vat)</p> <p>Human:</p> <p>Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI) Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Procurement Team will oversee the procurement process with input from the Operations Team (with an officer from all 10 Councils).</p> <p>Risk Management:</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications:</p>
5.0	<p>Recommendation(s)</p>
5.1	<p>Members are asked to;</p> <p>Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal Consider Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal (Appendix 1).</p>
5.2	<p>Mid Ulster Skills Forum / Skills Action Plan 2018-21</p> <p>(i) <u>Invest NI Collaborative Growth Programme</u> Approval to submit an application form to Invest NI and allocate match funding of 50% (up to £25,000) out of existing LED budget for a detailed Scoping study (Phase 1) into future 'industry/education engagement' products and services. If the study produces a positive outcome, this may lead to further funding opportunities.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Mid Ulster Jobs Fair</u> Approve funding of up to £8,000 out of the existing LED budget to hold a Mid Ulster Jobs fair in Cookstown during Enterprise week (November 2019) in</p>

	<p>partnership with the Mid Ulster Skills Forum, Department for Communities and Network Personnel.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Careers Attractiveness Initiative</u> Approve funding of up to £20,000 out of the existing LED budget to appoint a suitably qualified company to create appropriate content including storyboards and videos etc. to showcase the attractiveness of jobs/careers in key priority sectors within Mid Ulster.</p>
5.3	<p>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2019 Proposal</p> <p>Consider whether Mid Ulster District Council wish to sponsor the Mid Ulster Business Awards in 2019/20 at one of the following levels;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headline Sponsorship £7,000 + Vat • Associate Sponsorship £3,500 + Vat • Category Sponsorship £1,750 + Vat • Venue Partner £1,500 + Vat
5.4	<p>Review of Northern Ireland Non–Domestic Rating System</p> <p>Approve Council's draft Consultation Response on the Review of the Northern Ireland Non-Domestic Rating System on Appendix 3 (paper to follow)</p> <p>Note that Mid Ulster District Council has registered its interest in the forthcoming stakeholder engagement sessions. If any interested member wishes to register to attend, they can do so by emailing ratingpolicy.cfg@finance-ni.gov.uk</p>
5.5	<p>Business Eye Article on Mid Ulster Members to note Business Eye article (June 2019).</p>
5.6	<p>Magherafelt Town Centre Forum Minutes Note minutes of Magherafelt Town Centre Forum – 10 April 2019.</p>
5.7	<p>Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes Note minutes of Coalisland Town Centre Forum – 11 April 2019.</p>
5.8	<p>Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes Note minutes of Cookstown Town Centre Forum – 10 April 2019.</p>
5.9	<p>Full Fibre Northern Ireland (FFNI) Note receipt of the Full Fibre NI Consortium Agreement with Newry Mourne and Down District Council and associated letter of offer and grant agreement from DCMS. Approval to accept and seal the documents will be sought from Council's P&R Committee and Council Meeting in July 2019.</p>

	<p>Approve that Adrian McCreesh, Director of Business & Communities (or his nominee) represent Mid Ulster District Council on the FFNI Steering Group, the body responsible for strategic oversight of the programme.</p> <p>Approve that Colin McKenna (Economic Strategies Manager) and Barry O'Hagan (Head of ICT) represent Mid Ulster District Council on the FFNI Operational Group to oversee operational programme delivery and participation in the procurement exercises undertaken by Newry Mourne and Down District Council, on behalf of the Consortium to deploy the funding.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix 1 - Dungannon Regeneration Partnership Proposal</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2019 Proposal</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Mid Ulster District Council Draft Consultation Response on the Review of Northern Ireland Non–Domestic Rating System (paper to follow)</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Business Eye Article on Mid Ulster (June 2019)</p> <p>Appendix 5 - Magherafelt Town Centre Forum minutes - 10 April 2019</p> <p>Appendix 6 - Coalisland Town Centre Forum minutes - 11 April 2019</p> <p>Appendix 7 - Cookstown Town Centre Forum minutes - 10 April 2019</p>