

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 16 September in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor Molloy, Chair

Councillors Ashton*, Black*, Burton, Clarke*, Corry*, Cuddy, Doris*, Hughes*, Kerr, McNamee*, Milne*, Monteith, Quinn*, Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Ms Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Mr Browne**, Head of Tourism
Mr Gordon**, Head of Leisure
Mr Hill**, Head of Parks
Ms Linney**, Head of Community Development
Mr McCance, Head of Culture & Arts
Ms McKeown**, Head of Economic Development
Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT
Mrs Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

Others in Attendance

Councillor Gildernew*
Councillor Bell*

Deputation – Achadh Lú Ui Neill CLG (Aghaloo O'Neills)

Mr Felim Óg Gildernew***
Mr Stephen Donnelly***

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes Others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Cllr Molloy in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee in the chamber and by virtual means, by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D149/21 Apologies

Councillor Elattar.

D150/21 Declarations of Interest

The Chair, Councillor Molloy reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest highlighting agenda items 11 and 17 which dealt with grants.

Councillor Monteith declared an interest in agenda item 11 – Community Development – Good Relations Grants – An Seansiopa, Ballysaggart Community Association as involved with the project.

Councillor Gildernew advised that although he wasn't a member of the Development Committee he wished to declare an interest in agenda item 4 - Deputation – Achadh Lú Ui Neill CLG (Aghaloo O'Neills).

D151/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Burton advised that she had been contacted by a number of expectant mothers regarding their hopes to avail of the birthing pool facility at Craigavon Area Hospital. She advised that the birthing pool had been removed from the room that was normally used due to Covid and the need for more space and she was aware of some expectant mothers being given the option of delivering their child in a bath which was not safe. She asked that the issue be raised and a letter issued to the Executive Director and Interim Assistant Director for Maternity Services in Craigavon.

Councillor Burton sought committee's approval for Council to follow this matter up as a lot of women found this resource very useful at a stressful and trying time and felt that the option should be there.

All members were in agreement.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that a letter be issued to the Executive Director and the Interim Assistant Director for Maternity Services at Craigavon Area Hospital on concerns regarding the removal of the birthing pool for expectant mothers.

Councillor Corry wanted to wish Mid Ulster Pride all the best for their 2nd parade on Saturday in Cookstown. Pride was an opportunity to showcase our area as welcoming and inclusive and she for one cannot wait to attend as anyone who has been to a Pride parade will know that they are full of vibrancy, colour, fun and with a great carnival atmosphere of love and celebration. She said that she would like to take this opportunity to encourage people to attend the event, stay safe and to have fun at it.

Councillor Cuddy entered the meeting at 7.05 pm.

Councillor Doris proposed to invite Coalisland Development Association to present to the next Development Committee. She said that lately they embarked on the Great Place Scheme which was hugely successful and carried out a number of different projects i.e. reopening of the weaving factory in Coalisland and was the first time she had been to it which was really outstanding and would encourage anyone to attend. They also ran an event last weekend in regards to Tyrone Crystal where people could come and see how the crystal was made and some people were fortunate to take a piece of crystal home with them. She advised that over Covid the group had started a podcast on local history and heritage of the area and a lot of work has been carried out which was too much to mention here tonight.

She advised that the Great Place Scheme was now coming to a close shortly and the group were keen to continue on the good work that they have done already and asked that they be invited to the next Development Committee so that they can explain to the rest of the Councillors the good work that they were doing and how the Council could assist them going forward.

Councillor Cuddy advised that there had been a night at the start of the month where 4 deputations were scheduled to take place but on the night 3 had turned up. He said that there were deputations and standing orders and felt that the Chair had done a good job on the night but felt that Councillors had to realise that these meetings were for asking questions and not making a commitment for funding. After one of the presentations an email was issued to members indicating that Senior Officers would be going down to visit a site and whilst this was fair enough, felt that this should be done outside the meeting. He said it seemed to be if a member wished to make a proposal that this had to be done during a meeting and if a member didn't shout whilst the delegation was here, then there didn't seem to be any progress and sought clarification. He also felt that some refresh was needed for members on what they were allowed and not allowed to ask.

The Chair took on board Councillor Cuddy's comments but felt this was a way of finding out what these groups were doing, their ambitions and what they were delivering within our district across the board. He said that he would temper any Councillors from giving any kind of assurances that the Council would be funding anything or becoming involved in a presentation as this was for Officers to decide and for Councillors to take through the process. He advised that purely on the night it was to hear from the groups on their ambitions and what they were doing.

Councillor Wilson said that maybe a suggestion which had been the case in the past, was to listen to the presentation, ask specific questions relating to the project and when the group withdraws from the meeting or virtually, then a discussion can ensue on how to move forward rather than the group listening in on the conversation as well.

The Chair said although this may be easy in a room environment, it would be much harder to control within a virtual environment.

Councillor Monteith said that he totally understood what Councillor Wilson was alluding to but within the new way that this Council operates it would be difficult and he would not be supportive of the old closed committee system. He said that these were public meetings and he had raised before his concerns about the complete nonsense asking someone to come in to make their presentation, then asking them to leave the room whilst the committee discuss what the Council was going to do for them whilst the public can sit there and listen to the full proceedings. He felt that it was useful for groups to hear that the Council were proposing something and not unreasonable for them being in the room or in touch virtually where Councillors were able to propose that Senior Officers meet with them to discuss opportunities and should be the standard response that things should be at. He said that the way meetings were run it would be pretty silly to ask groups to leave the room as they have every right to walk straight back in and there would be nothing that could be done about it.

The Chair concurred with Councillor Monteith about meetings being open to all and said that if anything was needed to be discussed in confidential business then this should be at the Chair's discretion.

Councillor Monteith concurred with member's comments regarding refreshing and felt that it would do no harm to keep members reminded but felt that the standard response which was going to be given to everyone and their entitlement to hear it was that it be recommended that Senior Officers work with them and bring back a report.

Councillor Cuddy advised that Councillors were there to ask questions and for anyone bringing forward a presentation 99.9% of members were broadly in agreement. He referred to Coalisland district which had numerous parties like independent, Sinn Féin and SDLP who were trying to outshine each other and all trying to get to the front of it and said that they were each doing great work but the problem was that there was a need to be responsible as there was a whole area from Swatragh to Fivemiletown and there was a requirement to balance the resources right the whole way through. He said that there was a need to get a right way forward as there was going to be more of these delegations and members wanted to do their best for each one.

The Chair said that he fully accepted the member's point and hoped that all DEA Councillors when these groups come together would work in conjunction with each other and has seen evidence of this in the Torrent DEA as Councillors all work together with the groups.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to invite Coalisland Development Association to present to a future Development Committee on their good work to date and how the Council could assist them going forward.

D152/21 Deputation - Achadh Lú Ui Neill CLG (Aghaloo O'Neills)

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed Mr Felim Óg Gildernew and Mr Stephen Donnelly from Achadh Lú Ui Neill CLG (Aghaloo O'Neills) and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr Gildernew and Mr Donnelly thanked Council for allowing them the opportunity to make a presentation tonight.

Mr Donnelly provided a brief overview of their club and their ambitions for the future (appendix 1).

He advised that Achadh Lú Uí Neill CLG were seeking support in their aim to enhance their club through Phases 1 – 5 of a five phase capital development plan:

1. Refurbishment of existing pavilion;
2. Spectator Stand to main pitch;
3. Gym/Health and Wellbeing centre;
4. Community walking track around the perimeter of the club grounds;
5. A covered AstroTurf games and training area.

These five capital developments incorporate all of the primary areas identified through the community consultation.

The Chair thanked the representatives for their impressive presentation and said that being involved with a club himself it was an ongoing continuing development of facilities and that related to all sports clubs and community associations and commended the club so far and their plans for the future.

Councillor Monteith wished Aghaloo club all the best and was aware of the group being out in Dungannon before Covid and similar to his club who were also in the middle of a huge fundraising drive which wasn't easy as it takes a lot of knocking doors and a lot of dedication from a lot of people and shared the pain of any club which was at it. He said that he was delighted tonight to have them here tonight making their presentation and wished Aghaloo all the best in the future and hoped that the Council could help them in any way they could.

Councillor Kerr concurred with previous comments on a very ambitious programme and agreed that it was a monumental effort to gather funds and said that being involved himself with the Coalisland Fianna committee there was major plans but unfortunately it takes a bit of time.

Councillor Clarke thanked the group for their presentation and said that he had been involved with a club a long time himself which went through a lot of development over the years and was aware what the club were up against and what they had to do. He said that knowing Aghaloo and their background and competing with the club many a time, the club will get there and would be fully supportive of the Council including them in the organisations that can avail of the £50k to make up the shortfall in their funding package.

Councillor McNamee echoed the sentiments of the committee to Aghaloo and asked if the Club had been directed towards the Council's Sports Capital Grant.

Mr Gildernew advised that the Club hadn't been directed towards this yet but were keeping an eye out on any potential funding which became available, but agreed that they would keep any eye out for the grant mentioned.

The Head of Community Development confirmed that the Sports Capital Grant was closed at present but they were being supported for the discretionary.

Councillor Quinn also echoed the previous comments and thanked Felim Óg and Stephen for the presentation and advised that he had scored his finest goal down in Aghaloo many years ago. In referring to his own club in Derrytesk, he was aware how hard it was to fundraise and commended the group on an excellent presentation.

Councillor Cuddy referred to the £210k Aghaloo had raised and felt it was a great achievement for a Club of 200 to 300 members. He enquired if the Club had received any funding from the Department for Communities or anything else or was it purely raised through the local community.

Mr Gildernew confirmed that the £210k raised was purely through ticket sales and from the local community and no funding received to make up the figure of £210k. He advised that there was a team of nearly 80 club volunteers who were out selling tickets 4 to 5 nights per week from October 2019 to March 2020 when Covid hit.

The Chair said that this was a fantastic effort and was sure that the Club would have their ear to the ground in relation to all the funding streams which may become available like DAERA or any other different bodies that may avail of bringing funding. He thanked Felim Óg and Stephen for their impressive presentation and wished the Club well in their future endeavors and hoped that the development was up and running very soon.

D153/21 Visitor Safety Group Membership

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought approval to become a member of the Visitor Safety Group (VSG). The VSG provide a focal point of knowledge, expertise and proven good practice for managing visitor safety.

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the annual membership to the VSG for one year at a cost of £1,000.00.

D154/21 Forest Recreation Development Programme 2021-2030

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report:

- To present for Council approval completed Forest Recreation Scoping Studies for Drumcairne, Altmore and Dunmoyle Forests.
- To seek Council approval to progress with the phased recommendations presented and to seek all necessary Licence and Lease Agreements with relevant stakeholders in order to progress development plan outcomes for Drumcairne, Altmore and Dunmoyle Forests, subject to available funding.
- To further, progress the approved Action Plan of Mid Ulster District Council Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan, March 2020.

The Chair advised that this was a very comprehensive presentation for the 3 proposals and very well done.

Councillor Doris said that she was delighted to see this report coming to Council and was aware of the huge amount of effort which went into it and thanked all the staff involved. She said that it was important to keep the momentum going on this and would be happy to propose the recommendations but due to the importance and the amount of detail that were included in the documents, it would be essential that the relevant Council Officers set up a meeting to engage with Cappagh Village Regeneration Group and Stewartstown Community Group to go over the plan in detail as a number of relevant concerns had been raised with her. She stated that overall

she was very happy to see it and was excited to see such hard work being put into it and cannot thank the communities of Stewartstown and Cappagh enough as there were over 1,000 responses to the consultation and was a community project led by the community so was fantastic work.

Councillor Kerr reflected Councillor Doris' comments and agreed that it was a hugely comprehensive report with a lot of work and detail instilled in it but due to the magnitude of significance for other areas and agreed with previous comment on the importance of including the relevant stakeholders and community groups. He referred to a few observations relating to Altmore:

- The costs for the playpark identified as around £25k and felt that this was a very conservative figure for what was needed as an investment for the scale and regeneration of the overall recreation area
- Community Facility Provision – water based activities and provision and asked for on top of toilets/training room/changing provision/catering a multi-usage room for different ideas
- Lighting provision – no real mention of this as the proposed development was not fully utilised in darker evenings as can be seen in this time of year – Autumn/Winter time and also for safety in a rural perspective which will help with greater accessibility opportunities
- Altmore/Forest Area (Fermanagh & Omagh District Council Boundary) is outlined, only has basic signage and some furniture, with existing paths provided highly functional facilities for purposeful exercise. He enquired if there was a guarantee the site would be suitable for existing paths for families with pushchairs and wheelchair users, particularly with the coarse gravel.
- Toilet Provision – no reference to toilet provision in Altmore Forest Zone 1 area, with a 7.6 km route and the potential for organised events such as running and a lot of local running groups existing in the locality. If development in Zone 2 Cappagh Reservoir this might alleviate this issue.
- Connecting links proposal is fundamental to link the projects all together and ensure that Riverside Walk and each of the zones are brought together to maximise the project development.

Councillor Ashton referred to item 4.1 and sought clarification on the recommendation in the paper to look for the capital funding out of the P&R for match funding. She sought clarification from the Officers on projected costs of 4.1 figures and asked if we were looking for Council to support it 50%, 30% or even 20% and enquired if some of the Departments were contacted first to see what funding was available to us or was there a possibility that we were going to be left with 100% funding.

The Head of Parks said that this stage a letter of offer would not have been received from the funders and obviously the Officers would be pursuing the different streams of funding for each of these projects as done with previous and current Forest Development Proposals and would be brought to committee on whatever package funding would be required at that particular time. He said that this was depend on available funding but in relation to previous projects funding had ranged from 50% to 70%, but whether we will be able to achieve that level of funding remains to be seen but would be an objective to try and ensure to get as much maximum funding for these

projects. He advised that these would be brought at the appropriate time to P&R as each individual projects was developed.

Councillor Ashton stated that there was a need to be prudent, especially listening to the two previous speakers who were obviously looking more community consultation and would be important that this doesn't come to the P&R committee until after this was completed and the true total cost known as there seemed to be a long list of requirements coming forward and already a long project which was already over £1.4m. She felt that the total costs at the finance end needed to be brought forward as complete.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation wished to reassure members that the concepts which were in front of them tonight were essentially that, high level concepts. She advised that no reports would be brought forward to P&R committee until we were further down the design route and know exactly what was included in it and appropriate funding sourced to allow the projects to progress. She stated that no report would be brought forward to committee next month as time was needed to get further details on design and some of the requests coming from the community through members tonight would be incorporated into the next stage of the development with the costs being reviewed and revised at that point and time. She confirmed what was in front of members tonight were high level concepts with the next stage to work up the detail of exactly what was to be included within each of the specific elements.

Councillor Cuddy said that it was his understanding more work needed to be done to get to the stage and enquired if Officers were actively looking for funding and when it was anticipated to be brought to P&R committee as the Altmore Project was 2021-2130 and could be 10 years before it may be completed. He stated that if there was extra money in the reserves that this could be brought but would like to think that Officers were talking about 50% funding or possibly more as he had a feeling that this could turn up some night at P&R which Councillors outside the area not being made aware resulting in a huge decision to make as there was £2.5m proposed at the moment. He said that he would be keen to know exactly how much funding was available because at the end of the day it was the Forestry Service who owned the site and would like to think that they could also source some money towards the project.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that Officers would be seeking as much funding as possible and was pleased to say that the Council were pretty successful in getting funding for these types of projects, but a lot of the times there was a requirement to have the project shovel ready for when the funding was there. She stated that there was a need to progress with the development and a more detailed design and proactively looking all the time and it there may be an instance where a programme opens quite quickly and Officers needs to be ready to avail. She wished to reassure members that funding was being sought with the possibility of getting as much as possible as some of the projects had generated funding of 70 – 75% in the past. She cannot say whether this kind of funding would be available in the future or not, but usually if there was a good project, then funding could be found somewhere which Officers were actively doing as these were really good projects and were something that benefits the local areas as well as Mid Ulster district. She reiterated her confirmation that these projects would not be brought to P&R seeking

100% funding without sourcing match funding and the requirement to have agreement from stakeholders and landowners in place which would take time.

Councillor Burton said that by listening to the whole debate around these projects it would be important to have the money in place but agreed that there was a requirement to have it as near shovel ready if funding becomes available. She referred to past experiences with the Brantry and Round Lake with Council being very successful in getting money but may come when we run out of steam and unable to allocate money to that area and this may be the one caveat. She said that whilst reading the report she would be a bit concerned about some of the projects ranging from 7 to 10 years and the absence of Lumfords Glen yet again and was aware of this work for these projects solely in mind. She wished to remind Officers that it was not so long ago where a meeting was held with Councillors right across Mid Ulster asking them to bring projects they wished to see going forward and this saddened her as this was somewhere in the Clogher Valley that the local people wanted to see utilised and some people chance going into the site even though it was not safe. She stated that if this site was enhanced then it would really open up tourism for the Clogher Valley area the same as the aforementioned projects also but would really like to keep it on the agenda and she never missed an opportunity to raise it.

She referred to previous comments made regarding when works were completed and referred to upgrades at White Lough by the Rivers Agency and said that it was a wonderful place to have and being really well utilised, with pressure being taken away from the Brantry Lough as it was really oversubscribed during Covid period resulting in some people being afraid to go near it due to the large crowds. She said that metal frames had been erected around White Lough and agreed with Councillor Kerr's comments about restricting mothers who wished to walk around it with their children in possibly a double buggy and yet if someone goes in with a quad bike or a bike and should not be solely down to what suits the anti-social behaviour to block it out as quite often it also blocks out people who really needed that facility who really needed to get out to have a piece of headspace with their young children. She said that it would be useful if Officers could progress this matter and look at alternatives so families can avail of these sites along with all forestry projects.

The Chair stated that any funding which could be garnered from external bodies should be pursued.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve:

- 1) To adopt the broad recommendations presented in the scoping studies for Drumcairne, Dunmoyle and Altmore Forests and to progress a phased approach to the devolvement objectives subject to stakeholder approvals, partnership agreements and successful sourcing of capital match funding streams.
- 2) To procure and appoint suitably qualified Integrated Consultancy and Supply Teams (ICT and IST) to develop all necessary designs, specifications, procurement documentation and project manage agreed

- schemes associated to Drumcairne, Altmore and Dunmoyle Forests, subject to available funding.
- 3) All identified capital expenditure associated to the Drumcairne, Altmore and Dunmoyle Forest development proposals, subject to sourcing available match funding.
 - 4) Relevant Officers to set up a meeting to engage with Cappagh Village Regeneration Group and Stewartstown Community Group to go over the plan in detail.

D155/21 Sperrin Partnership Project

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to provide Council with an update on progress of the Sperrins Partnership Project and seek approval for future support funding.

Councillor Clarke said that it was unbelievable to think it was 4 years exactly since the conference was held and two and half years from any spend at all and would be happy to propose the recommendation.

He said that the Dark Skies was a component part of this and was saddened to see forestry work ongoing in Davagh in the last few weeks with tree-felling going right into the edge of the archeological site which was part of our archeological walk. He said that this was a very risky business as that site may extend as previously identified by surveyors approximately 15 years ago that some of the features in place extended through the trees. He stated that the machinery which cuts the trees were up to 30 to 40 ton and leave the site like a moonscape because the trees were stripped and a bed made with the branches which were removed and haul out the trunks. He said that he would be afraid that there could be irreparable damage done at the site as this was actually the Davagh Eskers which was a very important heritage site as it was site of the Battle of Esker McLaughlin which was a major event back in the 1200s.

He said that he was fairly confident that this was around the site of Loch Beigfhine where O'Neill stayed on the 12th September 1607 during the Flight of the Earls and this was beside Davagh Eskers also. He also referred to Templemoyle which also sits in that site somewhere more than 80 yards from the County boundary and must be somewhere around where the archeological site was. He concluded by saying that all of those features were there under trees amongst other things and requested that Council contact Forest Service to ensure that these sites were protected and suggested that a meeting be arranged on site due to the amount of hidden heritage within the area which was unique and one chance of saving it and would be terrible to lose something which was irreplaceable.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McNamee

Resolved That it be recommended to Council agree:

- 1) To continue to offer financial support for the continuation of the Sperrins Partnership Project at a cost of £22,000 annually. This

funding will be vital to ensure that the Sperrins Partnership Project can deliver on its vision as outlined at the Sperrins Future Search Conference. Subject to all Councils agreeing.

- 2) That Council contact Forest Service requesting an onsite meeting regarding concerns around possible irreparable damage to archaeological sites around Davagh.

D156/21 Blackwater Study

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report and sought approval from the Council to carry out a study on the economic, recreational and environmental benefits of reopening water access to the Backwater River.

The Chair stated that this was something close to his heart and had raised it a number of times and said that this scoping exercise was very welcome and would be happy to propose the recommendation.

Councillor Kerr said that he would be happy to second the proposal.

He commended the Head of Tourism and his team on a very good report and some very positive actions being carried out, especially in reference to the dredging of the Lough. As previously mentioned at earlier meetings he had met with Lough Neagh Rescue and local Fishermen who organise the boat Flotilla and was glad to see affirmative action being carried out and hopefully this was the beginning of solving this long term issue. He also believed there was a lot of potential with the Lough Neagh, accessibility to local sources including Coalisland Canal which was exciting and something he was looking forward to seeing.

He said that he had a slight issue regarding 2nd point on item 3.2 *“Identify and engage with all relevant statutory bodies which identify all legal responsibilities for boating, tourism, navigation, water quality, flooding, dredging, waste disposal and funding”* and asked that Lough Neagh Rescue be included in that engagement as they would be better aware than the Council about safety issues at Lough Neagh as dredging of the Lough would be one of them as it slows the team down when they are trying to rescue people in distress.

The Head of Tourism agreed to take this on board and apologised to members as Lough Neagh Rescue should have been included in the report front and centre.

Councillor Cuddy concurred with the previous two speakers but sought clarification on whether consent was needed from the owner of the Lough to proceed.

The Head of Tourism advised that the responsibility for the bed of the Lough was the Shaftsbury Estate and part and parcel of the consultation and anything the Council proceeded to do would be done through their permission.

Councillor Quinn said that he welcomed the report and sought clarification on the £12k from the tourism bridge and enquired if DfI had been approached about the funding they were allocating towards the Blueway/Greenway Project and funding towards

feasibility studies and whether they were approached in regards to that. He noted that the project had to be completed by 30th November 2021 and enquired if this was a bit ambitious and hoped that the feasibility study would be done for the Coalisland Canal and was aware that a clean out was currently being done on the canal in the town and hoped that this would really pick things up. He said that he could not underestimate the potential of opening up the Blackwater for Moy and the Mid Ulster area and referred to the £12m which was allocated to the Ulster Canal and the real effort which was being put in by Dublin to get this opened up and hoped that this would be extended up through Mid Ulster in the years to come.

Councillor McNamee enquired if this would link into ICBAN work which was taking place.

The Head of Tourism advised that agreed that this would link in and when you take Ulster Canal, this would be start of the process.

In referring to Councillor Quinn's query about achieving the completion by 30 November 2021, the Head of Tourism advised that he would ideally like to see this completed by that date at the very latest and agreed that it was a tight turnaround but at the same time given its potential and the potential for opening up for next season and would be keen to get it done and in the event of not being completed by the end of November, certainly December. In regards to contacting DfI, confirmed that they hadn't been approached but would endeavor to do this.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to procure a company to produce a feasibility study and recommendations report to assess the potential of opening the Blackwater River.

D157/21 Market Led Product Development Programme

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to:

- Inform members of the Tourism Northern Ireland Market Led Product Development Programme and details of application to TNI for funding.
- Seek approval from Council to deliver the outputs of the application if application is successful

Councillor Cuddy said that it was great to see the funding but was disappointed that Hill of The O'Neill wasn't included and seemed to miss the opportunities for funding every time in last number of years and hoped that going forward a set of proposals could be drawn up to get them over the line as the area had such potential which wasn't being fully utilised.

The Head of Tourism advised that under the Living History Programme, the living scripts, costumes and actors at £50K, Hill of The O'Neill was included in there and

was pleased to say that it had been included in that section. He said that he was also disappointed that the Hill of The O'Neill wasn't eligible for funding but it was in there.

The Chair said that he was confident that some of the other programmes could be facilitated at the Hill of The O'Neill.

Councillor Kerr referred to item 3.6 point 4 – Feed and Watered Programme and said that he was disappointed that only Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt towns would be included and not Coalisland or any other areas across the Torrent District electoral area including Donaghmore, Stewartstown, Ardboe etc. and asked if this could be relooked at.

The Chair said that it was his understanding that this was not exclusive to the three towns.

The Head of Tourism agreed that it wasn't exclusive and assured Councillor Kerr that his request could be included at this stage as Officers hadn't got to the stage of detailing the development of the programme and would relative to the entire district.

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that if application to Tourism Northern Ireland is successful, to deliver the outputs of the programme.

D158/21 Corporate Events – Halloween and Christmas Update 2021

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to:

- Update members on the proposals for both Halloween and Christmas 2021, as the district continues to move out of restrictions being mindful of the fluid environment
- Seek approval to move forward with the recommendations.

Councillor Doris referred to the budget for Coalisland particularly Halloween where there was specific issues during that period and enquired if the budget had decreased from 2019 for events.

The Head of Tourism advised that all budgets had changed from 2019 as Coalisland and Maghera would have been greater and also Dungannon, Magherafelt and Cookstown having a greater budget. Fireworks displays would have been included which were quite costly and it was felt that £5,000 should animate the town centres, excluding the fireworks displays and going forward allocate an even funding to each town in terms of their size and budget. He concluded by saying that the budget had been decreased due to no fireworks display taking place as this could cost up to £3k on its own.

Councillor Corry said that it may be beneficial to look at the possibility of having a vaccination clinic running alongside some of these events. She said that it may be worthwhile inviting some of the Trusts to host close by and do it as a joint initiative.

The Head of Tourism agreed that this could be investigated.

Councillor Monteith said each year correspondence was received from animal lovers in the community who continually raise the issue of fireworks causing much stress to pets, wildlife and farm animals. He suggested that it would be beneficial to investigate pet friendly light shows in place of fireworks displays. This could be laser displays around towns or on huge screens as there was a need to reinvent ourselves going forward.

He proposed that Officers investigate pet friendly light shows going forward in place of fireworks i.e. laser displays to protect pets, wildlife and farm animals.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council -

- 1) With restrictions remaining in place the primary focus in planning for this year's Halloween and Christmas Events will be a programme comprising multiple sites that accommodate footfall and social distancing while enabling people to enjoy a variety entertainment and experiences safely.
- 2) Develop a programme of events both live and online events to enhance the customer experience when visiting the town centres during last weekend of October to celebrate Halloween and the four weekends prior to Christmas.
- 3) To investigate pet friendly light shows going forward in place of fireworks i.e. laser displays to protect pets, wildlife and farm animals.

D159/21 Community Development

Councillor Quinn declared an interest in Community Festival Grants – Derrytresk Community Projects.

The Head of Community Development presented previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

- Community Grants - to agree the rolling grant awards - Local Community Festivals, Good Relations, and Decade of Anniversaries
- Mid Ulster Advice Service – to agree to go to tender
- Community Development - to update on Community Development
- Community Planning; Response to the Department for Health Consultation on the Integrated Care System – to agree a Council response

(i) Community Grants - Local Community Festivals, Good Relations, and Decade of Anniversaries

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve grant award recommendations outlined in Appendix 1.

(ii) Mid Ulster Advice Service

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to proceed to tender for Mid Ulster Advice Service.

Councillor Burton enquired who monitored the advice.

The Head of Community Development advised that there was two parts to the recommendation, the first part was the tender for the Council advice provision and Officers monitor this element. The second part of the recommendation was to release the funding that DfC give directly to the Advice Services outside of the Council's contract, but allocate through Council, and they carry out the monitoring on the element of delivery.

(iii) Community Development

Noted.

(iv) Community Planning; Response to the Department for Health Consultation on the Integrated Care System

Councillor Monteith welcomed the response and commended Officers on a good piece of work following on from other good pieces of work coming out of the Development Department. He said that he shared the Head of Community Development's concerns relating to administrative boundaries proposed which would be similar in Cookstown and Magherafelt, but not Dungannon and its wider hinterland, which had always suffered due to this boundary issue with Southern Trust and the former old Education & Library Board. Dungannon has lost out due to it being within a different boundary with the focus being on *Craigavon and/or Newry*. He also stated that although he had no difficulty with partnership in principle, his concern would be if the Council become involved there was a danger that it could get the blame if difficult decisions were required and they have no say in the outcome, but would be used as a consultee. He would like assurances that there was input to decisions and new ways of working and not used for community led consultation which resulted in a deterioration of services, rather than an enhancement of services.

He concluded by saying that it was a good piece of work but there was a need to be cautious as the Council could be used by Officials from the Department of Health as they could say that we were in agreement and this would result in our Council getting the blame. If Council does get involved heavily we could be classed as being part of the problem rather than the solution.

The Chair shared Councillor Monteith's sentiments.

Councillor Burton concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments and said that she couldn't have said it better herself and commended the Community Development team on the report. She stated that she used to sit on the South Tyrone Hospital Forum and at the end of its existence the group felt it was being used as a consultee for difficult decisions such as closure of key services when they did not agree with these and their involvement was more of a tick box exercise. She felt that there was an onus on Council to take a hard look at this.

She also advised that she was part of NILGA and she had raised the issue of the differences between the Northern Trust and the Southern Trust and the need for one overall approach and process.

The Chair said that the sooner we get rid of bureaucracy and levels of administration within Trusts that exist we will have a better health service. We have all seen the issue with GP's especially in the Dungannon and South Tyrone area this last while and this has been extrapolated across. He asked that the Head of Community Development take on board members concerns and iterated previous comments regarding a good piece of work.

The Head of Community Development stated that in light of concerns raised by members and the lack of detail in the document there was a need for further engagement and discussion. Whilst it does state that Specialist Regional Services would not be part of the discussion of the proposed groups further clarity on the remit of discussion would be helpful. She said that it may be beneficial to get a meeting with the Trust to identify what the basis of decision making and via what partnerships and receive more information in a proposed Terms of Reference for the groups.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council:

- 1) To issue response to Department for Health Consultation on the Integrated Care System.
- 2) To request that a meeting be arranged with the Department of Health to discuss the future model and how it will work in terms of decision making and real influence of future health outcomes, and its representation and links with community planning.

D160/21 Economic Development Report - OBFD

The Head of Economic Development presented previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

(1) Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme

Proposed by Councillor Burton
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to:

- 1.1.1** Note Evaluation Report for Phase 2 of Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme (2020/2021)
- 1.1.2** Approve to ring-fence funds in the economic development budget in 2022/2023, totalling £148,484, to fund the remaining successful businesses in Phase 4, currently held on the ranked reserve list.
- 1.1.3** Approve for officers to seek quotations to appoint an independent Chartered Architect to manage the delivery of the scheme for the final year (Phase 4 - 2022/2023).

(2) Future Business Start Provision Research

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve a financial contribution from Mid Ulster District Council of £1,735 (excluding Vat) towards the costs of undertaking an options analysis to inform the potential delivery of business start-up support post 2023 using Belfast City Council's Consultancy Framework to appoint a service provider on behalf of the 11 Councils.

(3) NI Chamber of Commerce: Regional Networking Event 2021

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve request from NI Chamber of Commerce to fund a Mid Ulster Regional Networking Event on 8 November 2021 at Hill of the O'Neill, Dungannon, for a fee not exceeding £700 (excluding Vat) for catering and room hire, subject to the alignment of attendee numbers being in accordance with government guidelines.

(4) DAERA Rural Policy Framework for NI – Consultation

Proposed by Councillor Corry

Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to retrospectively approve Council's consultation response to DAERA's Rural Policy Framework, which was submitted to DAERA by the deadline of 6 September 2021. If any member wishes for additional comments to be forwarded to DAERA to supplement Council's consultation response, these should be forwarded to the Head of Economic Development by 22 September 2021.

(5) Skills Strategy for NI – Consultation

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to retrospectively approve Council's consultation response to the NI Skills Strategy: Skills for a 10x Economy, which was submitted to the Department for the Economy by the deadline of 19 August 2021. If any member wishes for additional comments to be forwarded to DfE to supplement Council's consultation response, these should be forwarded to the Head of Economic Development by 22 September 2021.

(6) MEGA Strategic Review and 3 Year Action Plan

Councillor Monteith said that this covered in the last point, this point and the one coming up in point 9 and would be happy to propose and move forward with this particular project now that the trade unions were involved. He said that there was the MEGA proposal and then the LMP's later on in the recommendations regarding working and skills within an area and was conscious that MEGA were concentrating on manufacturing and engineering. He said that that it had been raised with him in the last few weeks about the lack of opportunities for training for young people in the construction industry. He stated that there were courses at SWC and again down to boundary nonsense as East Tyrone College suited this a lot better as it was more local and more susceptible to needs, with SWC now indicated that if they provide the course it doesn't matter where it is, might be in Enniskillen or Omagh and that was them covered and not good enough in the local community. He advised that he had been approached by a number of parents and young people who wished to be trained as bricklayers and had a lot of difficulty in trying to access this locally, but thankfully it was resolved eventually. He felt that a commitment was needed that these essential skills and trades were going to be available locally for people to avail off and would be happy to propose the recommendation to accept MEGA, but the Council mustn't lose sight that there were other industries out there and may be better suited to LMP as it was more of a wide ranging remit. He said that it would be beneficial for Officers to sit down with the skills providers and was aware of some community providers delivering these courses also, but this needed addressed and reassure people that these courses were going to be put on locally especially when young people were trying to pick a career and no point in picking a trade if there was no access to it. He felt that this could be a vicious circle as Colleges could say that there was no demand for

these essential trades like construction, bricklaying, plumbing, and electrician etc. and up to us to make sure that these trades can be accessed locally.

Councillor Kerr concurred with previous comments and said that when he was growing up and talking to local young people and who wanted to learn the trade of plastering they had to travel to Omagh which was quite ridiculous. He said that this could be costly for a young person who may be only earning an apprentice wage and from a low income family and may depend on a generous employer or different streams of funding available. He referred to the low number of lorry drivers in the area and had read an article where one lorry driver's wage went up 40% overnight and welcomed comments made especially relating to the construction industry.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve Council's match funding contribution of £5,000 is released to the MEGA Network for the preparation of MEGA's Strategic Review and 3 year Action Plan.

(7) ESF Call 3 Match Funding Requests (2022-23)

Councillor Wilson declared an interest as Chair of Cookstown Enterprise Centre and as part of Enterprise NI.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to defer consideration of match-funding requests from Enterprise NI, NOW Group and Specialisterne Northern Ireland, until further information on match funding is received from the Department for Economy and Department for Communities. A further report will be brought to committee once the outcome of match-funding is known.

(8) Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2021

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the appointment of "ND Events" to co-ordinate, manage and organise all virtual events and promote and evaluate Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2021 at a cost of up to £8,000 (including expenses and excluding vat) subject to the completion of all contract requirements.

(9) Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs)

The Head of Economic Development referred to previous comments made by Councillors Monteith and Kerr and advised that these would be taken on board and passed on to the Consultant. She stated that this particular initiative included all sectors and would welcome any comments back from members.

The Chair said that by working in the food industry he was very aware of the acute shortages by providers in the area which seemed to be a Brexit effect where a number of people have moved out of the area and employers were struggling to provide and had to downscale their operations accordingly. He said that there was a dearth of labour there which Councillor Kerr alluded to regarding the lack of HGV drivers getting food out and in and products to the shelves and said that it would be useful for comments to be taken on board on how these companies were going to resolve this.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the appointment of “Food for Thought” to prepare an Interim LMP Action Plan for 2021-2023, at a cost of up to £14,900 (including expenses and excluding Vat).

(10) Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2021

Councillor Monteith advised that he had raised this issue in previous years and found it a bit rich for Bank of Ireland sponsoring Mid Ulster Business when they have closed their premises in Dungannon. He raised concern regarding Dalradian and the category they used the last time was ‘Best Community Impact’ and although this was sitting as unconfirmed, he stated that he certainly would not want to be connected with any events that particular company was associated with. He said that he had no difficulty in agreeing to the Council sponsoring the ‘Business of the Year’ award which was the perfect one for us and propose to proceed with this but make it clear to JPI that this was conditional and even at the last minute that Dalradian were confirmed as sponsor that Officers would have the authority to pull our sponsorship from the event.

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to second the proposal as long as Dalradian weren’t connected to the event.

Councillor Kerr concurred with previous comments and said that Dalradian was like a bad smell that will not go away as seen in Ballinascreen where they were looking to take soil samples. He said that he looked forward to the day that the company leave the area and small actions like this show them that they are not welcome on the shores of Ireland.

Councillor Burton sought clarification on last sentence on item 2.10 within report where it states that it was going to send a team of people into the Clogher Valley area to promote the awards and her issue in the past was that a person had to vote for their favourite chippy or whatever was being voted for and to be fair one of the local restaurants did win in the past. She said that her concern was how the voting was carried out and it was her understanding that the paper carries the voting slips and with the paper not widely purchased in the Clogher Valley area and reduced the chances of having potential winners and yet there were businesses in the area who were also ratepayers to our Council. She felt that this should be an opportunity where everyone gets a fair chance and if the whole event was sponsored, she felt it shouldn’t be about the newspaper but about the businesses and this was where this all falls down. Looking back to how long this was going on and now only at this stage they were thinking about sending a team of people out when they were about to have another award ceremony which said it all really. She didn’t think that there would be many people rushing out from the Clogher Valley area to support it either.

The Head of Economic Development said that she would go back and enquire if there was other means of voting i.e. through their website as well as through the newspaper slips.

Councillor Corry agreed that if there was a facility to vote online it would allow to reach a wider audience.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council:

- 1) To sponsor the 'SME Business of the Year' category at the Mid Ulster Business Awards 2021 at a cost of £1,750+Vat, subject to the following two conditions being met;
 - (i) Dalradian not being connected in any way to the Mid Ulster Business Awards 2021 and if there is evidence that they are, then Mid Ulster Council will withdraw its offer of funding.
 - (ii) Readers Voting Categories - JPI media to make available and promote two options for the public to vote for these categories – these being a new online voting option (via JPI's website) and the existing option of completing the form in the newspaper.

D161/21 Leisure Participation

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to advise Members on the Council's Participation team activity year to date, to provide information on the intended active lifestyle plan for October 2021 – 31st March 2022 and to seek approval for a new pilot programme of activities to be delivered within the leisure service.

Councillor Monteith said that this was a good initiative to reach out to people who were not usually targeted like over 50's, physical or learning disabilities etc. and an ambitious plan to meet as many of these targets as possible. He said that some of these groups were hard to reach at the best of times and may be a lot harder during these unprecedented times of the pandemic and may not work out successfully the way it was wanted due to vulnerable groups being extra cautious. He asked that this initiative be continually worked upon and urged Officers to stick with this and commended them on their fantastic work.

He said that he had raised this issue before about the opportunity to take this forward, funding for external sporting groups who carry out fantastic work across a wide range of different sports and felt there was a need to try and tailor some funding to encourage them to target over 50's, people who had learning disabilities, physical disabilities. He said that there was a need to encourage the view that sport was life long and may be a smaller window in life where a person may have done competitive sport, then this doesn't mean that sport doesn't remain part of a person's life.

He proposed that a paper be brought to a future meeting on incentives to encourage external sporting organisations to target groups that this Council was about to target.

Councillor McNamee seconded the proposal to include a paper being brought on incentives for external sporting organisations. He also commended Officers in bringing forward a good report.

Councillor Corry concurred with previous comments and commended the Head of Leisure and his team on preparing such a comprehensive report which was well thought through on reaching out to hard to reach groups.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council:

- 1) To note the Council's Participation team activity year to date, to note the intended active lifestyle plan for October 2021 – 31st March 2022 and to approve a new pilot programme of activities to be delivered within the leisure service.
- 2) That a paper be brought back to a future meeting on funding for external groups i.e. sporting groups to target over 50s, people with learning and physical disabilities etc. to encourage people that sport is life-long for everyone.

Councillor Wilson left the meeting at 8.56 pm.

D162/21 Sports Representative Grants

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to present to Members the proposed community grant allocations for the range of:

- Sports Representative Grant - Team and Individuals (February 2021 – August 2021)

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the sports grant allocations as recommended within this report.

Matters for Information

D163/21 Minutes of Development Committee held on 7 July 2021

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 7 July 2021.

D164/21 Mid Ulster District Tourism Development Group

Members noted update on progress in Tourism Development Projects, Funding, Visitor Information and Business Engagement across the Tourism Section.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that an update be forwarded to Councillor Kerr tomorrow or at the earliest opportunity regarding Washingbay Walkway.

D165/21 Economic Development Report – OBF1

Members noted update on key activities as detailed below:

- Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update
- TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22
- Department for Communities Funding Immediately after Public Realm Schemes

Live broadcast ended at 8.59 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 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 D166/21 to D169/21.

Matters for Decision

D166/21 Brookmount to Spring Road Alleged PRow
D167/21 Mid Ulster Gift Card Tender Report

Matters for Information

D168/21 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 7 July 2021
D169/21 Leisure Facilities Café Operations

D170/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 9.16 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Dungannon/Magherafelt] and virtually.

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I let you know before this happens.

Just some housekeeping before we commence. Can I remind you:-

- If you have joined the meeting remotely please keep your audio on mute unless invited to speak and then turn it off when finished speaking
- Keep your video on at all times, unless you have bandwidth or internet connection issues, where you are advised to try turning your video off
- If you wish to speak please raise your hand in the meeting or on screen and keep raised until observed by an Officer or myself
- Should we need to take a vote this evening I will ask each member to confirm whether they are for or against the proposal or abstaining
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- For any member attending remotely, if you declare an interest in an item, please turn off your video and keep your audio on mute for the duration of the item
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- Lastly, I remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted

Thank you and we will now move to the first item on the agenda - apologies and then roll call of all other Members in attendance.