

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council  
held on Thursday 9 July 2020 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt  
and by Virtual Means**

**Members Present**

Councillor McNamee

Councillors Ashton, Black, Burton, Clarke\*, Corry, Cuddy,  
Doris, Elattar, Kerr, Hughes, Kearney, Milne, Molloy  
(7.11pm), Monteith, Wilson

**Officers in  
Attendance**

Mrs Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation  
Mr McCreesh, Director of Business and Communities  
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 and Arts\*\*  
Ms McKeown, Head of Economic Development  
Mr O'Hagan - ICT  
Ms Forde, Member Support Officer

**Others in  
Attendance**

Councillor S McGuigan\*

\* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

\*\* Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

*The Chair, Councillor McNamee welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Cllr McNamee 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.*

**D086/20      Apologies**

None

**D087/20      Declarations of Interest**

The Chair Councillor McNamee reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest and drew particular attention to the Review of Service Level Agreement report, Community Development Report – Good Relations Grants.

*Councillor Wilson declared an interest in D095/20 Community Development Report Good Relations Grants - Mid Ulster Pipe Band Association*

*Councillor Clarke declared an interest in D092/20 Review of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation Service Level Agreements 2020/2021 – Broughderg Area Development Association*

## **D088/20      Chair's Business**

The Chair, Councillor McNamee advised Members that the Economic Development Service Plan 2020/21 had been inadvertently missed from the agenda and would be forwarded to Members for information but should anyone wish to comment they could do so at July meeting of Council.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee advised Members that the Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation would present an additional item in committee.

Councillor Burton advised Members that Carleton Cottage, Springtown Road, Augher was a Grade B1 listed building due to its links with the late poet William Carleton. She advised that prior to COVID 19 efforts had been made to secure an environment grant to repair/restore the premise however during recent heavy rain the roof had collapsed which would lead to the cottage falling into further disrepair. Councillor Burton highlighted the distress of local people and asked if even the possibility of a tarpaulin on the roof could be investigated whilst local groups endeavored to secure agreement to preserve the historic building which had great significance in the local area and contributed to the tourism product.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee asked if it was possible to weatherproof the cottage.

The Head of Tourism stated he was aware of the problem and advised that the cottage was in private ownership. He stated that there was ongoing efforts to form a Trust similar to that in relation to Killymoon Castle site. He advised that the owner had been contacted and Council would continue to encourage formation of a Trust to save the historic building.

**Resolved**      That it be recommended to Council that Head of Tourism investigate and report to committee options for preventative measures of further deterioration and also formation of a possible Trust to save the historic Carleton Cottage, Springtown Road, Augher (Grade B1 Listed Building). It was noted that the building is in private ownership.

## **Matters for Decision**

### **D089/20      Autumn Corporate Events 2020**

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to provide an update and recommendations on the Autumn Corporate Events 2020.

He advised that Halloween and Christmas events had to be remodeled due to social distancing restrictions.

Councillor Doris advised that there had been a meeting with regard to events in Coalisland at which a number of innovative ideas had been discussed.

Councillor Ashton agreed that as reported these are strange times and stated events should be in consultation with town traders and any change in costings should be brought back to committee.

In response the Head of Tourism stated that they were in consultation with town centre forums and it was hoped to sign off Halloween events in September.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the new creative formats of the Corporate Events for Halloween and Christmas 2020.

*Councillor Molloy entered the meeting at 7.11 pm*

## **D090/20 Economic Development Report**

The Head of Economic Development presented previously circulated report to update members and sought approval for the following:

- (i) TRPSI Micro Business Development Scheme (DAERA Funded Initiative)**  
Delegated authority to Senior Council Officials as outlined in Section 5.1 (a), (b) and (c) of the report

Councillor Wilson acknowledged challenging times and thanked the economic development team and officers across Council for their efforts to rejuvenate town centers. He referred to a recent town centre forum meeting at which it had been hoped that Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) would have indicated their intention on funding delivery.

Councillor Kearney also acknowledged the efforts of the economic development team and stated that Northern Ireland Local Government Association were also using Council ideas.

Councillor Molloy also concurred with regard to thanks to the economic development team.

- (ii) Mid Ulster Covid-19 Towns Recovery Plan**  
Mid Ulster Covid-19 Towns Recovery Plan and associated delegated authority approvals to progress the scheme as outlined in Section 5.2 (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the report

The Head of Economic Development drew attention to the Mid Ulster COVID-19 Towns Recovery Plan and highlighted proposals outlined in the report. In respect of proposed funding from both DEARA and Department for Communities (DfC) she advised that Council was not yet in receipt of any formal contracts/letters of offer for the scheme.

Councillor Kerr expressed disappointment in lack of progress with the DAERA grant scheme as rural communities needed to be afforded every opportunity.

Councillor Doris expressed disappointment in relation to lack of response from DAERA stating that she had been speaking to representatives from DfC with regard to boundary lines which was prohibiting businesses applying for grants as they sit just outside the predefined boundary. She advised many of these business owners would be looking to Council for direction.

Councillor Elattar thanked the economic development team for their hard work in marketing town centers especially during the current recovery period highlighting that the video messaging and good news stories being issued inspired confidence.

Councillor Molloy stated he would propose the recommendations outlined in the report to give delegated authority given that there would be no committee meetings until September and it is urgent that once funding is confirmed it can be distributed.

Councillor Molloy acknowledged that the matter had been raised at Environment Committee with regard to enforcement letters being sent out to businesses in Moy village with regard to business signage situated in grass areas which was not affecting sight lines or disability access thus Council was seen to be encouraging with one hand and inhibiting with the other.

Councillor Monteith concurred with aforementioned comments with regard to Moy and stated Council needed to be more pragmatic in its approach as to the public it was one Council not separate departments. With regard to town centre recovery plans Councillor Monteith commended the work of officers and spoke of the significant investment which would be required to deliver. He stated there was a job of work to be completed with regard to lobbying that local businesses would be afforded the same opportunities as those in England and Republic of Ireland. He stated he had no issue with the proposal but that a clear message needed to be communicated that Council would not facilitate any grant scheme that businesses are excluded from due to boundary issues. He proposed that flexibility is afforded to Council officers to indicate Council would not facilitate an urban grant which splits the community and ensure it is communicated to relevant departments. He also stated that monies had been identified within economic development budgets in June to be moved to a fund to assist businesses and this could be directed to bridge the gap.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr

Consider and provide support to applicants who may have been excluded from these grant programmes based upon existing Departmental directives reference urban and rural boundaries, utilizing any available economic development budgets to bridge the gaps.

Councillor Wilson concurred that businesses were suffering and asked that since DfC had stated their funding was ready to distribute could Council proceed with this and await DAERA funding.

Councillor Ashton welcomed the work done to date and echoed the comments of Councillor Monteith in that Council look to support people who 'fall through the gaps' in relation to funding criteria.

Councillor Doris advised that Francie Molloy MP in conversations with local newspaper had advised they would sponsor a Shop Front Window Scheme.

The Director of Business and Communities concurred with Members with regard to comments in relation to boundaries and stated that Council had made it clear to the relevant departments that Council must be afforded the flexibility to discern between urban and rural and it was hoped this would be reflected in the letter of offer.

In relation to comments regarding rolling out separate urban and rural programmes he advised it could be done but it was better for Council to work in tandem as it would be difficult for officers to differentiate and many officers had not had leave for almost a year. With regard to the flexibility in allocating grants he advised if it was not granted Council could identify the gaps and such a proposal would give officers a degree of authority to move forward.

In response to comments regarding shop front window schemes, the Director advised that Traders would be made aware of the possible newspaper sponsorship opportunities should they wish to progress a Shop Front Window Scheme independent of Council.

The Director of Business and Communities concluded referencing that issues in relation to the enforcement letters in Moy village had been brought to senior management team for discussion.

Councillor Cuddy asked if the funding would be in retrospect as although there was speculation with regard to a second wave many large businesses had already opened and Council did not want to put its name to something which was too late referencing that already there was a new normal. In relation to enforcement letters issued in Moy Councillor Cuddy expressed disappointment stating that many shops and businesses were looking for a new income stream and needed to be encouraged.

In response the Director of Business and Communities stated that central government did not permit retrospective funding but already businesses in contact with Council were being advised of this and further advised that the funding would be a rolling grant for a number of months. He further clarified that Council was lobbying the relevant departments daily insisting that the grant is paid in one tranche as the demand is there but that the department is indicating 50% until end of October and remaining 50 % post October.

Councillor Corry concurred with previous comments made by Councillors Monteith and Molloy.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor Kearney

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted to:

### **TRPSI Micro Business Development Scheme (DAERA Funded Initiative)**

- (a) Delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Director of Business and Communities to sign and accept the contract for 2020/21 TRPSI micro business scheme, subject to review by Council's solicitor.
- (b) Promotion and marketing of this scheme to commence immediately following acceptance of the contract and before the full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> July in light of the anticipated call opening of the first week of August 2020.
- (c) Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Business and Communities to sign off on letters of offer to successful participants up to a maximum grant of £4,999 with a full list of approved projects to be brought to Committee for noting.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that

### **Mid Ulster Covid-19 Towns Recovery Plan**

- (a) Mid Ulster Covid-19 Towns Recovery Plan as detailed at appendix one of the report.
- (b) Delegated authority be granted to Chief Executive and/or Director of Business and Communities to sign and accept any letters of offer/contracts received by Council offering funding for Covid19 Towns Recovery Plan actions, in response to funding bids made by Council, subject to review by Council's solicitor.
- (c) Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Business and Communities to develop and roll out a business grants scheme to urban and rural businesses, if funding is made available to Council by the Department for Communities (for urban businesses) and DAERA (for rural businesses). Also that authority be granted to the Director of Business and Communities to sign off on letters of offer to successful participants on a business grants scheme, with the list of approved projects to be brought to Committee for noting.
- (d) Existing budgets in Economic Development (which weren't required due to activities not happening as a result of the pandemic), be reassigned to assist with other Covid19 business supports as identified in the Towns Recovery Plan (on Appendix 1 of the report), and undertake appropriate procurement of schemes, as far as budgets extend.

Noted that not all the schemes may be able to be progressed in the current year (2020/21) due to budget limitations, unless further external funding is obtained.

- (e) That flexibility is afforded to Council to officers to consider and provide support to applicants who may have been excluded from these grant programmes based upon existing Departmental directives ref urban and rural boundaries, utilizing any available economic development budgets..

#### **D091/20      Play Park Annual Audit 2020/21**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought approval for the commissioning of suitable qualified independent Play Inspectorate Services to conduct annual play equipment inspection audit and report.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor Milne

**Resolved**      That it be recommended to Council to approve the commissioning the services of suitable qualified independent Play Inspectorate to conduct an annual play equipment inspection audit and report.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's enquiry as to whether the audit could be carried out inhouse the Head of Parks advised that it was best practice to have an independent inspectorate.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee drew attention to the recent incident at lands adjacent to Council play park at Orritor Street, Cookstown where a child suffered burns from an invasive species. He stated whilst Council did not own the lands the play park was scheduled to open on 10 July 2020 and caution needed to be exercised. The Head of Parks advised that staff had inspected the play park on 30 June and there had been no visual evidence of hog weed and speaking in relation to access to the adjacent lands he stated there was a 1.2 meter perimeter fence in existence. Parks and Property Services sections were looking at further options but it would be impossible to have in place for the park opening.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee stated that some preventative measure needed to be in place.

Councillor Milne suggested that signage could be erected.

The Head of Parks stated that the property owner had been informed of the incident and Council was awaiting response.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation stated that Council would erect signage as a matter of urgency at play park off Orritor Street regarding possible vegetation issue.

Councillor Kerr raised the matter of hogweed at Coalisland Canal which would need to be eradicated before anyone else received injuries.

In response the Chair, Councillor McNamee advised that the matter would be referred to the Environment Committee to deal with as appropriate hogweed at Coalisland Canal.

In response to Councillor Kearney's enquiry the Head of Parks advised that the park where the silage trailer had broken the exterior fence had now been repaired.

## **D092/20      Review of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation Service Level Agreements 2020/21**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report to view current Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for the financial year 2020/21 impacted upon as a result of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. MUDC have current Service Level Agreement commitments with nine community based organisations (within report) in support of leisure and outdoor recreations services. The value of these Service Level Agreements range from £50,000 to £2,000 dependent on the scope of the services provided.

The Council have allocated £96,916 in this financial year for the payment of Service Level Agreements associated to Leisure and Outdoor Recreation.

### Two available options for consideration:

- Option 1 -** Subject to Council approval, current Service Level Agreement payments can be adjusted on a pro rata basis to reflect the level of services provided. This approach will effect some identified service partners where services have not been possible due to the impacts of Covid-19 restrictions. Payments schedule for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June (Qtr 1) would indicate a maximum reduction on SLA payments of £18,782 across the Leisure and Parks Service. This figure may be reduced due to evidenced claims associated to overheads and utility costs incurred by some partner organisations.
- Option 2 -** Subject to Council approval, Service Level Agreements impacted upon by Covid-19 restrictions would be paid as per current terms and conditions, without pro rata reductions. This approach will reflect a nil saving to Council for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June.

The Head of Parks recommended option one.

Councillor Elattar stated that although some organisations had not been able to deliver it was through no fault of their own but due to the pandemic and in her opinion it would be an indictment on Council to restrict the service level agreement at this time and stated Council needed to be mindful of future costs such as personal protective equipment.

Councillor Elattar proposed option two,

Councillor Burton seconded option two.

Councillor Kerr concurred with the proposal of option two and stated that during recent conversations with Muintor na Mointeach Ltd he had been advised they were unaware of the evidence to be submitted in relation to performance indicators and stated that officers had not raised them at a recent onsite meeting with the group.



Councillor Burton stated that Council needed to support the community who through no fault of their own were unable to honor elements of the agreement. Speaking in relation to Fivemiletown in particular she stated that health and well being going forward was of paramount importance and community groups needed the support and partnership of Council and were desperately awaiting confirmation of the service level agreement. Councillor Burton concluded that to go forward with option one would attract bad press.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's query in relation to Fivemiletown College Youth and Community Department the Head of Parks advised that the pro rata would be applied to a quarter.

Councillor Cuddy reminded Members that they had been advised at the Council meeting that water temperature in swimming pools had to be managed carefully or tiles would come off thus it was important to treat the swimming pool in Fivemiletown the same.

Councillor Milne concurred with option two stating that there would be hard decisions in the future but asked if really a short fireworks event costing thousands was really required.

Councillor Wilson expressed uneasiness stating that it was a service level agreement and work had not been carried out. He highlighted that community groups had helped Council and expressed concerns in relation to equality.

Councillor Ashton supported option two stating that it was an exceptional time and groups would incur costs to get up and running again. With regard to Councillor Kerr's comments in relation to required information on performance indicators Councillor Ashton sought clarity on how this information was communicated to groups.

The Head of Parks advised that each service level provider signs an annual agreement of which performance indicators are stipulated. He confirmed that it is signed by two members of the group. He suggested that the information has not been conveyed to the full membership of the group if they are not aware of the requirements of the SLA.

Councillor Kerr stressed the importance of communication in relation to the matter.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to agree to the implementation of Option 2 and to note the content of the report in relation to the variation of services provided due to the impact of COVID 19 restrictions.

Option 2 -Subject to Council approval, Service Level Agreements impacted upon by Covid-19 restrictions would be paid as per current terms and conditions, without pro rata reductions. This approach will reflect a nil saving to Council for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June.

Councillor Wilson requested that it be formally noted his opposition to the aforementioned decision.

## **D093/20      Continuation of Northern Ireland Forest Schools within Council Area**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report to update on the growing success of the Forest Schools programme within the Mid Ulster District Council area and to confirm continuation of the programme from September 2020 to June 2021.

Councillor Molloy proposed the continuation of the programme and asked why it is limited to areas listed in the report.

In response the Head of Parks stated that they were actively seeking other sites for example Lissan House in Cookstown and possible sites in Clogher Valley. He advised that it was based on resources and officers needed to be trained to deliver the project but within resources it would be rolled out as much as possible.

Councillor Doris seconded the proposal and sought an update on license transfers in relation to Altmore and Drumcairn forests.

In response the Head of Parks stated that the NI Forestry Service were in receipt of the requests and Council was awaiting response.

Councillor Corry referred to forests listed but stated there were others within her area.

The Head of Service advised that consideration would be given to rotating the projects annually as resources was limited.

Councillor Burton asked if Council linked in with Castlecaulfield group which works with Ulster in Bloom.

In response the Head of Parks stated that currently Council did not link with them but in looking for opportunities could explore Parkanaur and link with the Horticultural Society. He also advised that schools were waiting to participate.

Councillor Kerr concurred with Councillor Doris' comments with regard to Altmore and Drumcairn Forest Licenses and proposed that Council seek an update and report to committee on the progress of the license transfers.

Councillor Monteith seconded the proposal stating that the transfer was too timely and further suggested that Council link with the Speedwell Trust at Parkanaur.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee asked if Council should go back to the Forest Service.

The Head of Service stated that Council would follow up.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Council to seek an update and report to committee on the progress development of Altmore and Drumcain Forests.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Doris

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to agree to the commitment to continuation with the Forest School programme within Mid Ulster for 2020-21 subject to meeting requirements of COVID restrictions.

#### **D094/20 Walk NI Consortium 2020/21**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought approval to commit to Walk NI Marketing Consortium Campaigns for 2020-21.

Councillor Doris stated she was happy to proceed with the proposal and spoke of the need for continuation of the footpath at Clonoe as there was a great stretch of road for walking but an extended footpath was essential.

The Head of Parks stated that the stretch of road and footpath was a matter for the Department for Infrastructure and advised that the Walk Ni Consortium referenced footpaths in the Sperrins.

Councillor Doris stated she would like the matter of the footpath raised.

Councillor Monteith stated that Council would need to promote walking within the district and concurred with Councillor Doris that some would need improvements. He stated that Council needed to promote and build upon walks which were a great means of attracting visitors as people would travel for a good walk. He used the example of Sligo County Council who promoted walks and had attracted over 1000 visitors across three days. He emphasized that it was a growing market and now was the time to rebrand and establish a campaign stating that Council must lead and not always wait to copy other areas. Councillor Monteith spoke of Knockmany, the Hill of The O'Neill and the possibility of grouping walks and market as for example the 'Trail of the Chieftains'. He stressed the importance of a strategy to promote walks as short trip experiences and requested that the Tourism section investigate possibilities.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to agree to the participation as a Regional Partner with the Walk NI Marketing Consortium and contribute £2,583.75\* to 2020/2021 campaign.

\*This is a reduction of 25% from previous years; the campaign to run from July 2020 – March 2021.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee spoke of the Sperrin Trekkers and concurred that Council must exploit what they have.

Councillor Corry stated that many visit Carntogher to walk the Sperrins and concurred that it does bring in day trippers.

The Head of Tourism stated that a proposal was being explored and a report would be brought to a future meeting.

Councillor Monteith requested that the Councils Communications department along with Parks and Tourism develop and promote a walking marketing plan within the district.

The Head of Parks stated that both Parks and Tourism had been liaising with regard to good quality walks and were investing through forest schemes also and confirmed there was projects in the pipeline.

Councillor Doris spoke of a community group in Derrytresk promoting walks and proposed that DEA meetings be accommodated to explore local walks.

Councillor Elattar sought an update on a forest area in Sperrins near Ballinascreen and also asked if work had been done to clear paths at the river walk.

The Head of Parks stated there was a conflict of interest with equestrian users and advised there had been discussions with property services in relation to outstanding maintenance issues.

Councillor Elattar stated that with the current pandemic people were utilizing the walkways more and asked if the walk beside the river could be cleared as soon as possible.

The Head of Parks stated he would update the Member on progress and would liaise with colleagues in property services as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Ashton stated that the walking strategy was a good idea and highlighted that over 20 walks were detailed on the website across the district but concurred this could be added to.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Doris' proposal for DEA meetings highlighting that Coalisland Canal is a prime example of walking attached to historical local industries and that there was great potential within Newmills.

Councillor Burton highlighted that safety was paramount and spoke of walks such as Roundlake, Knockmany, Riverside Walk in Caledon and emphasized that flyers promoting walks should be available in local businesses. She also asked if the Ulster Way signage was completed corroded in the district.

In response the Head of Parks stated that the Ulster Way as a continuous walk no longer existed and that quality sections had been identified but the district had not met the criteria. He also advised that Council had not experienced any reduction in footfall but part of the problem was the walks were on roads which was a weakness. He highlighted that many circular routes and community trails had been established such as Augher

Riverside Walk and Council continued to work with communities to establish for example 3k walks. The Head of Parks concluded that whilst currently there was established walks a report would be brought back to committee to incorporate all.

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that

- (i) DEA meetings be facilitated to explore promotion of walking routes throughout the district;
- (ii) A report be presented to future committee of strategy to develop and promote walking routes throughout the district.
- (iii) Promotion campaign on existing walks be commenced.

## **D095/20 Community Development**

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

Ashton good relations grant 2021/22 it is usually February and agreed by march

- **Council Good Relations Plan**

Proposed by Councillor Elattar  
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to note the alternative delivery for the agreed Good Relations Plan as per Appendix 1 of the report..

- **Community Grants – Rolling Good Relations**

Proposed by Councillor Elattar  
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to agree the grant award recommendations for Good Relations as per Appendix 2 of the report.

- **Community Development Update**

Members noted update report.

## **Matters for Information**

### **D096/20 Minutes of Development Committee held on 11 June 2020**

Members noted minutes of Development Committee held on 11 June 2020.

Councillor Monteith drew attention to *D079/20 Tourism Department Update – Davagh Dark Skies Project* and stated that Council must speak with one voice in relation to the public enquiry into Dalradian Gold Mines proposal. He spoke of the significant investment Council was making to the Davagh Dark Skies Project and stated that

Council must prepare robust opposition to present to the enquiry, that the senior management team needed to discuss and fight on behalf of the communities and protect the investment being made on behalf of the ratepayers. He also stated that the risk posed by the proposed gold mine be added to the Corporate Risk Register. Councillor Monteith stated that Council were opposed to the gold mine and that the lighting alone would destroy the Dark Skies Project.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal and stated there was over 40,000 objections and was emphatic that the residents of Greencastle deserve better and this was on Mid Ulster Council's doorstep. He stated that the light pollution would be equivalent to that of Belfast City Airport lighting if it was to proceed.

Councillor Elattar concurred with previous comments stating that the impacts on health, wellbeing and community spirit of Ballinascreen would be major. She stated that the objections were not on economic grounds but on community grounds and if it were to proceed it would have a negative impact.

Councillor Ashton asked if this could revert back regarding the Dark Sky Project as Council had been informed.

The Director of Business and Communities stated that the corporate position was abundantly clear and had been robustly reflected to colleagues in planning. He stated Council had a defined position which it would vigorously communicate in the response.

Councillor Kearney stated that the Planning Committee had communicated a strong message.

Councillor Corry stated that Councillor Clarke had highlighted at planning committee that the river from Greencastle runs into the Mid Ulster district.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

**Resolved:** *That it be recommended to Council that in relation to Public Enquiry Dalraidan Gold Mines:*

- (i) Council prepare robust opposition to present to public enquiry;
- (ii) That recommendation be referred to Audit Committee that Council add the risk posed by proposed Goldmine to Corporate Risk Register.

Councillor Doris raised the issue of complications within Coalisland Public Realm Scheme in relation to parking spaces at Barrack Street and requested that Council write the Department for Infrastructure in relation to this.

In response the Director of Business and Communities stated this was a matter for the Environment Committee and would be referred to them.

In response to Councillor Doris' query with regard to the walkway at Washingbay the Head of Parks stated that there had been a site meeting the previous week at which a

number of issues had been raised and Council was seeking to pursue improvements with local land owners and also would be speaking to the DfI in relation to signage.

Councillor Doris asked who had called the meeting and the Head of Parks confirmed he had attended at a Councillor's request.

In response to Councillor Corry's request for an update on the launch of the Davagh Dark Skies project the Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that plans were being put in place for the Autumn and it was hoped the venue would be open to the public by early October. The Director advised a report would be brought to the committee in September.

#### **D097/20      Economic Development Report**

Members noted letter issued by the Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, dated 15 June 2020, to Minister Poots, seeking urgent financial assistance from DAERA to fund a Covid-19 Rural Business Support Programme in Mid Ulster and also Response from Department for the Economy, dated 22 June 2020 regarding Project Stratum.

#### **D099/20      EBA 2020 Strand 4 Small Grants Programme**

Members noted update on the 19/20 EBA 2020 Strand 4 Small Grants Programme, in the form of an End of Year Report required by Sport NI so as to authorize the final payment to MUDC. Funding received from Sport NI 19/20 - £32k.

*Councillor Milne left the meeting at 8.32 pm*

In response to Councillor Wilson's query as to why all case studies related to the GAA and no other sport in Mid Ulster the Head of Leisure stated he would enquire from Sport NI on the selection of groups for case studies and report back.

#### **D100/20      Leisure Services – Service Improvement Plan 2020/21**

Members noted update on Leisure Services – Service Improvement Plan 2020/21.

Councillor Kerr proposed that Council consult with special needs groups especially in relation to Autism in order that they can be included in more events especially given the closure of schools.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation reminded Members of the Everybody Active programme at MUSA and coaches working specifically in the area of special needs. She further advised that prior to the pandemic there had been engagement with special needs schools.

Councillor Monteith seconded Councillor Kerr's proposal and stated that it was very much to do with families accessing leisure facilities and that many with special needs had their routines and these had been destroyed and parents really needed support as they struggled to redefine routines and this would need to be incorporated in recovery plans.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved:** That it be recommended to Council that Officers investigate further incorporation of those with special needs in recovery plan for leisure facilities use and activities.

**D101/20      Sport NI Sports Club Survey**

Members noted update on the Sports NI Sports Club Survey 2019.

**D102/20      Parks Service Improvement Plan 2020/21**

Members noted update on Parks Service Improvement Plan 2020/21.

**D103/20      Culture & Arts Service Improvement Plan 2020/21**

Members noted update on Culture & Arts Service Improvement Plan 2020/21.

Councillor Cuddy referred to the success of the bursary scheme for the Gaeltacht which supported many in their experience of language, sport and music and asked if this could be extended in relation to the 100 anniversary of the Battle of the Somme to support people making trips from the area to the historic site. He spoke of how the Somme had been a lesson for all and proposed that within the Culture and Arts a plan for a bursary for people to experience trips to the Somme be explored.

Councillor Burton seconded the proposal.

The Head of Culture and Arts stated that the current bursary scheme was a language based one and a budget would need to be identified to look at any proposed new schemes.

Councillor Cuddy stated that his proposal had been seconded and acknowledged that the Gaeltacht was a great scheme but he thought that Council should explore options and spoke of how the Belgium and French governments had invested much to expand the experience of a visit to the Somme and it would be good to support young people from all walks of life to make the visit and stressed it would strengthen the Culture and Arts Programme.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee stated that officers could explore and equality check the suggestion.

Councillor Molloy stated he had no problem with the concept but sought clarity as to whether within culture and arts or good relations currently there was a grant programme for such ventures.



The Director of Business and Communities reiterated the Head of Culture and Arts in that the bursary was a language scheme but stated that officers would explore possibilities and report back.

Councillor Cuddy stated that the bursary was a great success story and it would be good to expand it and have something in the structure for other young people.

Councillor Black concurred with Councillor Cuddy and stated that a proposal should tie in with the forthcoming anniversary.

Councillor Monteith said it was his understanding that good relations funding had supported the decade of anniversaries programme and stated that if the proposal was to fund individuals just for the Somme experience he could not support just one element of history as there had been massive investment in Dublin with regard to events in 1916 and also Croke Park anniversary to which many local GAA clubs were intending to make trips. He stated any scheme must encompass all.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee stated that any scheme would be equality checked.

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy  
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

**Resolved:** That it be recommended to Council that a report be presented to future committee on the development of a support programme to accommodate historical visitor experiences.

#### **D104/20      Tourism Service Improvement Plan 2020/21**

Members noted update on Tourism Service Improvement Plan 2020/21.

Councillor Cuddy reiterated earlier comments in relation to the promotion of walking and stated that Tourism improvement plan should make mention of this.

#### **D105/20      Community Development Service Improvement Plan 2020/21**

Members noted update on Community Development Service Improvement Plan 2020/21.

*The Live broadcast ended.*

#### **Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business**

Proposed by Councillor Black  
Seconded by Councillor Doris 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 D106/20 to D108/20.

### **Matters for Information**

- D107/20 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 11 June 2020
- D108/20 Economic Development Report – Information
- D109/20 Community Planning – Poverty Paper – ‘Towards Alleviating Poverty in Mid Ulster’

### **D110/20 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and concluded at 9.10pm

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 please raise your hand in the normal way and keep raised until advised to lower it
- 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.