

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 14 March 2024 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

Members Present	Councillor McNamee, Chair Councillors Bell, W Buchanan, F Burton, Clarke, Corry, Gildernew, McQuade, Molloy, Quinn, Wilson (7.05 pm)
Officers in Attendance	Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) Ms McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) Mr McCreedy, Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer
Others in Attendance	Agenda Item 5 – Deputation – Benburb Priory Professor Gerry McKenna Kevin Boyd, Board Member of Benburb Priory Carmel O'Kane, Coordinator of Marketing and Fundraising

- * 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 McNamee welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor McNamee in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D036/24 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

D037/24 Apologies

Councillors Black, Forde, McLernon, Milne and Monteith.

D038/24 Declaration of Interests

The Chair, Councillor McNamee reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

Councillor Clarke declared an interest in item 7 – Service Level Agreements 2024/25

- Broughderg Area Development Association (BADA) – Davagh Forest MBT Trailhead
- Slieve Gallion (PSG) - Sperrins Partnership

D039/24 Chair's Business

The Chair advised that he had received three items to be raised under Chair's Business.

Councillor Clarke said that he wished to raise the issue of two broadband developments which were operational for a number of years, Project Stratum and another provider. The connection between Cookstown and his area including Dunamore, Blackrock Road and Davagh Road right up to OM, at the time it was assured that any residents that lived along the route could be served and be able to buy into the connection through BT. Fibrus had done most of the heavy lifting throughout most of the area and recently it was discovered that a number of houses in Davagh Park were able to avail of BT fibre connection and was quite certain that OM could also. During the time of the Project Stratum project there were some addresses missed and a huge campaign to get these addresses added on, which happened. It's the case now that there are routes within Council areas which could be available through different funding mechanisms. There was a scarcity of supply and if addresses were not on then it was the case that they were not going to get on through Project Stratum, but felt that there must be spare capacity if that was the case and enquired if Council could delve into this to see what the status of those connections are as Mid Ulster is our focal point, but was the same across other Councils also. He said that other areas are provided in some cases like Omagh, but knowledge is not there, and local people may not be aware that this service is available and as far as he was concerned, this was a very confusing situation. The member enquired if it was possible for Officers to carry out investigations to see what the status is regarding these projects.

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) advised that the issues raised by Councillor Clarke will be investigated. She added that if a report is ready, the matter would be reported back to the next meeting of the Broadband Working Group on Monday 8th April, but noted any delays in obtaining the necessary information could mean the report would have to be brought to a future meeting. The AD: EDT&SP advised the member that Officers would liaise with him directly on the matter to obtain more details.

Councillor Quinn concurred with Councillor Clarke's comments and said that it was no secret of the criticism he had with Project Stratum over the years. The member advised that there were waves of houses which were not added to the project over the years, including mistakes with Land Registry or homes being built too late in the day, including his own home. The member did note that however when BT had offered him broadband connection, Fibrus were very quick to offer him fibre broadband connection

within 2 to 3 weeks when previously he was left off. The member enquired if the houses which were left off originally have been looked into, but later added possibly a year or so later, was there any idea how many were left off and how many have been re-added since BT decided to roll out their scheme.

Councillor Wilson entered the meeting at 7.05 pm.

The AD: EDT&SP advised the member that she did not have the relevant figures with her this evening and again added that Members would be updated on the matter at the next scheduled Broadband Working Group meeting on 8th April 2024. She noted the Working Group normally only consists of those Members nominated to serve on the Group, but on this occasion the invitation is open to all 40 Councillors as Fibrus is attending to deal with some of the issues that arose during the recent storm.

Councillor F Burton enquired if there would be any advantage with joining other Council areas as she was aware of other families experiencing the same issues. The member advised that she had contacted a former Officer from this Council who was now working in another Council area to seek advice and stated that this was not just relative to Mid Ulster. The member advised that Wi-Fi going to people's homes was as important as electricity for home, working and school children's education and may strengthen the argument. The member said where this person is concerned No.s 1 and 2 can acquire Fibrus, No's 3 and 4 cannot and seems to be an issue right across Northern Ireland and may be beneficial to have strength in numbers. The member recalled the Chief Executive stating that if you do not get it now, you would not be getting it for a very long time and felt it was very important to ensure that people across Northern Ireland can acquire this service successfully.

The Chair advised members that the AD: EDT&SP was hopeful that she would be able to bring back the relevant information to the next Broadband meeting due to be held on 8th April in which all members were invited. Any member which had any concerns about broadband should be at the meeting to raise issues.

Councillor Molloy referred to item discussed at Environment meeting on Tuesday night which was connected around the issue of the River Blackwater. The member advised that he had received a disappointing response from DfI Rivers today in relation to a query that was submitted 2 weeks ago in relation to a full blockage of the river at the old Railway Bridge between Verner's Bridge and Bond's Bridge where a lot of storm damage had washed down a lot of branches and trees resulting in the river being completely blocked. A lot of issues had arose including Lough Neagh Rescue being unable to get up the river if required to do so. DfI Rivers advised that they had come out and examined the river and mysteriously the blockage had gone, this was a result of many good volunteers and people coming along 2 Saturday's past with a lot of effort removing the blockage and spent 2 full days with heavy lifting equipment including diggers, winches, tractors, trailers, chainsaws etc, everyone got together to work to remove the debris. The member felt that it was totally unacceptable that this was left to people to open up a waterway which is essential to our tourism offering along with the people who live locally. The member said that this was a disappointing response from Rivers Agency, that a statutory body would allow the local people to carry out this work at a risk to themselves, over the 2 Saturday's 30 to 40 volunteers came along putting themselves in danger on a river with boats and only with a lot of

management ensuring that lifejackets and floatation were supplied. The member stated that this was a disaster waiting to happen, a member of the public trying to carry out this work when there were other agencies who should be doing it and felt that on back of what was discussed at the Environment Meeting on Tuesday night these concerns should be raised on what has been done.

Councillor Quinn concurred with Councillor Molloy's comments and advised that it was discussed on Tuesday night's Environment Committee and was aware that a letter was being sent to the Minister. The member said that it was an absolute disgrace what DfI were allowing to happen, if it wasn't for the likes of Gerard McCourt and others, the blockage would never have been shifted. The volunteers had put themselves at risk getting the equipment, boats and everything raised up which was not an easy job in any shape or form and because the people live and care about the Blackwater they put their lives at risk and got it done. If this was not done there would be no way Lough Neagh Rescue would have been able to come up and possibly save lives as this was a life-or-death situation. The member advised that there was also a blockage at Maghery Canal, Rivers Agency came out and advised that it would be sorted and the very next day they advised the member that it wouldn't be sorted as it wasn't their concern. Rivers Agency were the statutory body which should be responsible for looking after our rivers and the fact now the Mid Ulster Council has to write to a Minister to try and bring this to his attention although he was confident that the Minister will try his best to get it resolved. The member referred to the other Council responsible on the other side of the River who were really not making an effort to do anything and Mid Ulster were nearly having to delve into another Council area to try and get this sorted which says a lot about our Council and also a lot about a neighbouring Council also. The member stated that the longer this goes on, the more chance of a tragedy happening and DfI need to take some responsibility and looked forward to the meeting with the Minister, going forward would hope that this issue is resolved very quickly.

The Chair thanked members for raising their concerns and agreed with the frustrations as this issue was going on for a long time and a solution needs to be found.

Councillor Corry said that they have become aware of an opportunity to deliver a pilot health and wellbeing educational programme within the Mid Ulster area which is led via a clinical and academic evidence-based approach which aims to specifically target brain health including Alzheimer's, Dementia and End of Life Care. The programme is proposed to be delivered via an innovative approach through storytelling and animation, targeted at school children along with linkages to Councils Age Friendly strategy and using arts & culture means to improve health & wellbeing. This opportunity is coming about via potential funding via the Shared Island funding programme therefore requires an application to be submitted and led by a local authority in the South, working in partnership with organisations based in the North. The member sought permission from this committee to give consideration to approving officers to explore the feasibility of this opportunity, to engage with the Shared Island unit and a local authority in the South and understand the opportunities on how to avail of this opportunity via partnership working and to submit a Letter of Support towards the funding application before the application deadline of 28th March. There will be no financial ask of Council and obviously would have to meet any due diligence but if Officers could explore the proposal and link in with the proposed

applicant regarding a Letter of Support. When full details are made available, they could be presented to committee or council as appropriate.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that a Letter of Support be submitted to explore the opportunity before the deadline of 28 March 2024.

D040/24 Deputation – Benburb Priory

The Chair advised that Professor Gerry McKenna, Mr Kevin Boyd and Ms Carmel O’Kane from Benburb Priory were in attendance to provide an overhead presentation and invited them to address the committee. (appendix)

Professor McKenna provided members with a brief overview of the History of Benburb Priory Estate 1, Estate 2 and Estate 3. He advised that Benburb Priory was a leading Cultural and Heritage Centre and outlined its assets and actual and potential offerings. The Cultural and Heritage Centre offers support for conferences, talks, tours and events; lectures and meetings facilities, business meetings, residential accommodation; arts and crafts; facilities for community groups; support for local sports groups; support for local small businesses and tourism. Benburb Priory Priorities offers:

- Spiritual/Pastoral: Supportive, Reflective, Sharing and Caring;
- Social and Cultural: Community Exchange, Community Support, Sport and Recreation, Heritage, Education and Intergenerational Activities
- Commercial: Business Support, Events, Conferences and Meetings

Mr McKenna outlined:

- 1). Benburb Priory Sustainability Physical Requirements:**
Refurbishments and replacement builds (including residential) to support events, conferences and activities; Enhancement of physical estate (improved walkways, signage, interpretative boards etc); Childrens play area; Roadways (Castle), parking
- 2). Benburb Priory Sustainability Human Resource Requirements:**
Management; Accounts/book-keeping; Events organisation; Library & Museum support; Cleaning and Maintenance; Continued support from committed volunteers (a major strength of the Priory)
- 3) Benburb Priory Sustainability External Support Requirements**

Local Community; Local Councils (MUDC and ABC); Religious and spiritual groups; Community Groups and Priory Users; Culture and Heritage Groups (e.g. O’Neill Country Historical Society, Universities, Specialist Groups etc); External funders (Heritage Fund, Peace Plus, Government Departments, Local Councils, Charitable Foundations, Donors etc).

Professor McKenna said that Benburb Priory's Vision is:

'An oasis of spiritual, cultural and social development and a model of community cooperation for the benefit of all'

In conclusion, Benburb Priory is a thriving and vibrant centre but needs the continued and active support of all key organisations and individuals in promoting a sustainable future for the benefit of the local and wider community.

The Chair thanked Professor McKenna for his presentation and said that it was a great asset on our doorstep in Mid Ulster with a lot of history also. He said that he was glad to see the group outlining their vision for the future and would like to think that the Council can support them in any way to keep the magnificent building and everything that was going on there to continue into centuries ahead of us.

Councillor Molloy thanked Professor McKenna for his impressive presentation and may not give justice to what the whole site is. One of the last visits representatives of Dungannon District Council made including himself, Councillor F Burton and Councillor R Burton who was Mayor of the Council at the time, was particular taken with the first edition of King James Bible in the library which was fantastic to be able to come along and access that at the time. The member said that it was a really rich offering that Benburb has there, the walks and riverwalks and was aware of a lot of working being carried out within the last fortnight by volunteers. He concurred with Chair's comment about Council being able to do anything to enable, help or broaden it as it features in really well with The O'Neill dynasty in terms of Benburb, Hill of The O'Neill and Tullyhogue. The member advised the building had an overall history and building on that to let people know what it out there is what it is all about and wished the group very well with the future of it and said that Council will be there to do what they can to help.

Councillor Gildernew stated that she would like to offer her support also to the project. The member advised that she had lived on the Armagh side of the river for a number of years and that herself and children would walk through the Priory over to the village, which was a beautiful, serene setting. The member also advised that she had attended Benburb Sunday on annual basis with her parents and family from they were little and wished to offer support and recently had been out with her brother Colm and staff from her office to offer advice on signposting and funding opportunities. The member wished the group well in their future endeavours going forward.

Councillor Clarke thanked Professor McKenna for this presentation and although he came from the opposite side of the district he had attended and been to Benburb for many years. The member advised that he had a particular interest in history and agreed that it was a great site with an unbelievable setting. He felt that one thing that he missed was the gap between the Christian period and the Castle itself, nearly thousand years, which was an important site during those years as well and during those times and would like to see that brought forward. The member stated that there was a vast collection of unbelievable material in the building and hoped that this could always be preserved, looked after and protected as you could not put a value on it. He wished to be assured that the prime aim of anything that is done in Benburb is protected as there was material there that is nowhere else. There is a need to make

sure everything is in place to protect what is there for the future as it was important for everyone and wished the group and Benburb well going forward on those grounds.

Professor McKenna advised that representatives of Benburb Priory had went to great efforts to implement the new structures and getting top legal advice to ensure the sustainability of Priory. The structure in place cannot be sold or available to any group including the Servite and had went to great effort to say that this was for the future and an asset for the people.

Councillor F Burton left the meeting at 7.40 pm.

Councillor McQuade thanked Professor McKenna and representatives for attending the meeting tonight and stated that Benburb was a fantastic, unique, historical village. The member advised that he lives 3 miles away and like Councillor Gildernew attended Benburb Sunday each year when coming from home Tyrone beating Armagh most years. He agreed that it was a fantastic opportunity and historically we have to do what we can to preserve and keep this historic facility. This site generates fantastic community use, with the hurling and soccer clubs working closely to try and develop an initiative to work within the Priory grounds and over the years a lot of community groups have got a huge benefit out of it and hoped that the Council can do what they can to help going forward.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) thanked Professor McKenna for his presentation and from an Officer's prospective he had the pleasure of attending the Priory and agreed that it was a fantastic facility and also agreed with some of the comments made in that the presentation doesn't capture the full extent of the offering and work. The SD: C&P said that he was aware that Professor McKenna and his team had been linking in with Assistant Director of Development and her team and would continue to provide that support from an Official's prospective, not only looking at what opportunities that are available from a funding and support from the Council, but also look into linking in with some of those wider strategic partnerships, both locally and beyond. The SD: C&P said that he would be really happy to continue working with Professor McKenna and his team in relation to the development of the facility.

The Chair thanked the representatives for attending the meeting tonight and wished them well going forward and advised that the Council would be there to help in any way they can.

The representatives from Benburb Priory withdraw from the meeting at 7.43 pm.

Matters for Decision

D041/24 Development Report

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following –

- Rolling Community Grant Awards
- Arts Council NI Consultation

- Arts Development Plan
- Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House Plan
- Mid Ulster General Advice Service Annual Review - For Information
- Development Department -Update

Councillor Clarke said that it was brought to his attention that there would be an opportunity for promoting Slieve Gallion through the song. The member advised that the lyrics of the song could be placed on the site of Slieve Gallion and the site he would have considered appropriate would be the site that the Council has developed, which is open and accessible. The member asked that Officers investigate this possibility as it was something that was well known within the area regarding the song relative to this area.

The AD: Dev advised that she would link in with Councillor Clarke regarding this issue.

Councillor Quinn referred to letter from Chair of the Council to Arts Council for Northern Ireland and said that there was so much included which shows the depth of the arts in this Council area which is fantastic to see. The member said that he would like to raise 2 questions, he said that he noticed Mid Ulster Arts Showcase budget was £10k and he had pestered Officers on how this could be increased so we could really see a huge success with that and hoped that this would progress going forward. In regards to the letter to the Arts Council we are at pains to point out the talent we have in this area and the organisations we have, if anyone went to see Westside Story they will agree that it is a fantastic show, it is amazing the talent that is on the stage and also Grease coming to CRAIC theatre in the future. Year on year these two-organisations put on amazing work and people each year go on to win awards and go elsewhere outside the district like Belfast to show them how it is done. The member enquired if a bigger commitment has been seen from the Arts Council yet into these in terms of funding as Covid nearly killed of these organisations and are still living on shoestring budgets and constantly crying out for more money. For every pound we get from Arts Council we get £2 to £3 back and this is why it is very important for Coalisland and Donaghmore as they are depending on that. From his prospective, he does not see any extra money coming into Mid Ulster and still being ignored, which is not the fault of this Council, but was the West of the Bann scenario which annoyed him. The member said that it was his understanding that CRAIC was bringing one of their shows up to Stormont within the next few weeks and months which showcases what they can do with it when they get funding. The member enquired if Officers were aware of anything coming from the Arts Council towards this Council area.

The AD: Dev advised that Council does provide some level of funding through our Strategic Arts and one of the things that it is trying to achieve is a network of the groups to share resources where they can but also get a momentum to lobby. One of the things that they are considering once Council responds to the consultation is getting the Arts Council down to showcase what is happening across the District in community arts and let people see what is happening on the ground.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in:

- *Ulster Scots Agency*
- *Mid Ulster Pipe Bands*

Councillor Wilson referred to the Arts in general and see what we actually do is great and would support Councillor Quinn on the fact the number of young people involved in the Arts. He said that he had taken his grandkids to see the pantomime in Burnavon and the number of young people on the stage was unbelievable and does wonders for encouraging mental health and wellbeing. In referring to comment regarding the invitation from the Arts Council to meet with these groups, he felt that the Arts Council needs to be invited to come to us and do no harm to be invited to attend this committee. The member said that although the Arts Council supports things, the vast majority is within a 12 mile radius of the M1 and M2 and may be useful to see what the theatres are receiving within that zone compared to what we are getting West of the province.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that an invite be forwarded to the Arts Council inviting them to attend a future committee meeting.

Councillor Gildernew declared an interest in Brantry Bard as Strategic Arts Partner.

Councillor Gildernew referred to 2.6 of the report and referred to the Test and Learn in the Aughnacloy area which was one of the areas that was a great initiative. The member advised that there have been a few meetings so far, first one was in Aughnacloy High School which was attended by all parties and a really good meeting, it was then decided to move forward without elected representative input which may have benefits also. The member stated that a few groups have come forward to say that they haven't been included in the next stage of it and asked if it would be possible to acquire a list who is included and whether people can still be included in the process at this stage.

The AD: Dev advised that Council was linked in with DfC and will check to see if the relevant groups were included as it was about getting as many people involved as possible.

Councillor Corry referred to The Hill of The O'Neill and said after tonight's presentation enquired if there could be an opportunity through Heritage or Open Learning course to tie in Tullyhogue and Benburb around our history of The O'Neills.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to –

- Approve the assessment panel recommendations under the community grants
- Approve the response to the Arts Council NI Consultation
- Approve the annual Arts Development Plan

- Approve the annual Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Development Plan
- Note the Mid Ulster General Advice Service Annual Review
- Note the update from the Development update.

D042/24 Health, Leisure & Wellbeing Service Level Agreements 2024/25

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to agree proposals on Community Service Level Agreements (SLA's) for the financial year 2024/25 only.

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to propose the recommendation as the groups which undertake the SLA's do great work looking after vital community assets.

Councillor Molloy said that a lot of these groups coming out of Covid had very little footfall in some of their facilities and have to remember that everyone is facing increasing costs and would be happy to second the recommendation due to the service they provide.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to grant approval for the Health, Leisure & Wellbeing Service Level Agreements for the period 2024/25 financial year only.

D043/24 Request for Support

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to provide information on a recent request for support for a project bid to a funder from the Clanrye Group.

Councillor Gildernew said that she would be happy to support the recommendation as the social prescribing project is a fabulous project and would be great to see it rolled out.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to grant approval to supporting the Clanrye Group by way of issuing a letter of support for their project for submission as part of an application to Peace Plus.

D044/24 Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) Data Sharing Agreement with Mid Ulster District Council

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report asking Members to consider a Data Sharing Agreement between the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and Mid Ulster District Council.

Proposed by Councillor W Buchanan
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Data Sharing Agreement between Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and Mid Ulster District Council as enclosed within the appendix.

D045/24 Mobile Vendor Opportunities

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to seek Member's views on a proposed approach to make available specific Council managed open spaces & recreation sites for mobile vendors.

The following Council managed open spaces & recreation sites have been carefully considered in line with being significant customer footfall venues and ensuring there would be little or no potential for a conflict of interest for services that may already be in situ:

- Iniscarn Forest
- Mid Ulster Sports Arena - Cookstown
- Pomeroy Forest
- Round lake Fivemiletown

Councillor Molloy referred to item 2.2 Dungannon Park and advised that there was no offering at this location, although there was one previously which had elapsed and felt that this would be an ideal opportunity for someone to take this up due to the footfall as it was an ideal location.

Councillor Wilson referred to Mid Ulster Sports Arena (MUSA) and said that this would be one that he would wonder about as it may be busy during the evening but not as busy during the daytime. The member advised that in the past Council went to tender for various sites and one of the people who tendered which could have been awarded, was overturned by Council. The member enquired if the tender went out again, could that same situation arise.

The AD: HL&W in response to Councillor Molloy's query advised that Council currently does have a separate live procurement process at the moment, with Dungannon Park being included within that along with Cookstown Leisure Centre and Greenvale Leisure Centre. He advised that primarily why they were grouped together was because they have existing facilities onsite by way of kitchen facilities and hope to be in a position to evaluate that and bring back recommendations next month or the following month. The arrangements specifically for Dungannon Park would be whoever the successful incumbent would be to run the café, they would be able to provide the vending opportunities for the Park also and hope to have feedback on this situation in due course.

The AD: HL&W in response to Councillor Wilson's query regarding MUSA and advised that this was one of the sites out of them all which had received the most representation in terms of prospective companies and bidders and would also agree that it would be up to their own discretion when to be there. Council would not be putting any stipulations on trading times as it would be up to them to decide, but there would be key times during the week there is obvious footfall with it being outside the town.

The AD: HL&W said that in terms of sites, these have been carefully selected and members may be aware of various discussions in the Chamber in the past years around the variety of sites and members comments has been carefully reflected and the subsequent audit report which was considered also. Sites has been carefully selected and believe that these do not have any conflict of interest or incumbence within the immediate facility that could be displaced. It is important that visitors are accommodated when they are out and about on their walks and the companies also. The AD: HL&W wished to give reassurance that any of those previous discussions and members thoughts around the lists which were circulated a few years ago have been reflected upon and carefully considered.

Councillor Molloy said that it was good to hear Dungannon Park being considered, in the modern era of trading, mobile catering cart offering is probably the best we are going to get in Dungannon Park. Having someone there as a presence during opening hours or working hours is less likely and come and go where places are busy, for example the Parkrun on a Saturday morning and may be an option to determine peak times.

The AD: HL&W said that it was hoped with this opportunity if Council were successful in appointing a vendor that whilst they would have a base inside the building, they would be able to extend their services outside the building also. The AD: HL&W advised that this can be kept under review, but would not want within such a small location, conflict between competing businesses.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to grant approval for officers to commence the tendering process for making available the sites listed above for the purpose of mobile vendors and thereafter present the outcome of the tendering process to a future Development Committee for Members consideration.

D046/24 Mid Ulster Sports Arena – Capital Development

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to provide members with an update on the European Commission's ruling on 25th September 2023, in relation to the long-term control and management of the use of microplastics and to seek Members approval for the new MUSA pitch to be developed based on current internationally recognised standards to include modern containment methods.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree that the new MUSA pitch be developed based on current internationally recognised standards to include modern containment methods. These developments will be subject to continued planning consultations and guidance as part of planning approval processes.

D047/24 Economic Development Report – OBFD

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report to provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below:

- Town Centre Business Spruce Up Scheme
- ATCM Membership
- NABMA Membership
- Lough Neagh Rescue - Service Level Agreement (2024/2025)
- Labour Market Partnership (LMPs): Multiply Funding Programme Bid
- Sperrins Partnership Funding (October 2023 – March 2024)

Councillor Wilson said that he was happy to propose the report but wished to raise an issue regarding Town Centre Spruce Up Scheme. He advised that there were two premises at Oldtown Street, namely the hairdresser and Stanley Best Estate Agents that do not fall into this category. In referring to the map, the line instead of going straight across to their premises, goes at an angle down the laneway. The member advised that these were not our maps but the Department's and a map in which Council never used.

The Chair said that it was his understanding that this issue was raised at a previous meeting from other towns indicating something similar. He referred to comment from AD: EDT&SP advising of the possible opportunity of meeting representatives from DfC updating them on what the situation is.

Councillor Molloy sought clarification on whether sitting on LMP barred him from making a proposal and if not, he would be happy to second the report.

The AD: EDT&SP clarified to members that the maps which DfC requested Council to use for the Spruce Up Scheme originated from the various Area Plans which had been developed many years ago. She added that Officers had consistently lobbied DfC to extend the 'eligible town boundary' area to the 30 mph speed limits at the edge of the four towns, but after several meetings with DfC officials, they refused to allow any changes to the scheme boundaries.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson

Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to –

- 1) Town Business Spruce Up Scheme
Approve that Council's Chief Executive be granted delegated authority to approve and issue Letters of Offers to successful applicants from the Town Business Spruce Up Scheme to meet Department for Communities funding timelines.
- 2) Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal
Approve Council renew its annual ATCM membership (January 2024 – January 2025) at a cost of £620 (excluding Vat).
- 3) National Association of British Market Authorities – Memberships
Approve Council to become a member of the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) for the financial year 2024/2025 at a cost of £768 (excluding Vat).
- 4) Lough Neagh Rescue – Service Level Agreement (2024-2025)
 - i) **Note** Lough Neagh Rescue's 2023/24 Progress Report outlining actions completed against their SLA Targets.
 - ii) **Approve** Mid Ulster District Council's Service Level Agreement with Lough Neagh Rescue for the year 2024/2025
 - iii) **Approve** the release of £12,000 to Lough Neagh Rescue from Council's Tourism budget (2024/2025) subject to Council being provided with the requisite documentation as detailed in the Service Level Agreement.
- 5) Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMPs): NI Multiply Programme Bid
 - 5.1 Subject to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) formally confirming the successful bid;
 - (i) **Approve** Council's participation in the NI Multiply Programme.
 - (ii) **Approve** Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) as the delivery vehicle for the Multiply Programme in Mid Ulster.
 - (iii) **Approve** that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to;
 - a) Sign and return the letter of offer from the Department for the Economy when it is received. It is expected that the letter of offer will provide funding in the region of up to £235K to cover the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The types of initiatives/activity that Council are expected to deliver are included in Appendix 6. A copy of the letter of offer and programme of activity will be submitted to the Committee when available.

- b) Procure suitable organisations to deliver the agreed programme of activity in adherence with Council policy and procedures to enable the Multiply Programme to commence as swiftly as possible.
- 6) Sperrins Partnership Funding (October 2023 – March 2024)
Approve financial contribution of £2,500 to Sperrins Partnership, for the period 1 October 2023 until 31 March 2024.

Matters for Information

D048/24 Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 February 2024

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 February 2024.

Councillor W Buchanan referred to D025/24 and advised that he was raising the issue on behalf of Councillor McLean. He enquired if access to 50m pool in Magherafelt had increased any as there has been various complaints made about half of the pool being closed off.

The AD: HL&W said that Officers were aware of the situation and share frustrations with members of public. He advised as it was a 50m pool, resources were needed to staff it and when it is a 25m pool it needs less staff. Leisure has been experiencing unprecedented staff shortages and currently running a recruitment campaign seeking 24 full-time and part-time vacancies which are out for public advertisement and due to close imminently. He said whilst Officers were hopeful, they also recognise that it may not provide an answer to all of the solutions due to working within a challenging budget situation. Council is trying to work within a balancing programme in only opening the 50m pool on certain days, mornings and evenings of the week and whilst recruitment may yield a massive pressure for opening it more, Officers are aware that it cannot be opened during the current climate 7 days per week. The AD: HL&M hoped that a balanced blend for clubs and individuals who use the pool can be reached successfully in the future.

D049/24 Corporate Events 2024

Members noted contents of previously circulated update which provided information on the proposed Mid Ulster District Council Corporate Events Programme for April 2024 – March 2025.

Councillor Gildernew advised members that she wished to raise an issue on behalf of Councillor McLernon in her absence in relation to Coalisland Summer Bash. The member advised that Councillor McLernon had been speaking to the Chief Executive and Council Officers in relation to seeing the Coalisland Summer Bash rolled out again this year and hopefully to coincide with Newell Stores 10k in Coalisland at the end of May. This event has been a proven event over the past 3 years and there is now an expectation that this is an annual community event due to its success over the last 3 years. The people of Coalisland have embraced this annual event and look forward to it each year. Coalisland is the 4th largest town in Mid Ulster and Councillor McLernon

would like Council Officers go back and look at it again and see if funding can be found for it.

Councillor Quinn said that he would be happy to support Councillor McLernon's proposal in her absence. The member said that this was discussed at Coalisland Town Forum with himself, Councillors McLernon and Carney being very eager to get this event reinstated along with other events like the continental market as it was a massive success during the years it was run. Coalisland is a very lively town and when Newell Stores put on their 10k run, it was an event like no other, with music being put on, there is no other atmosphere in the town like it with enjoyment for both young and old was fabulous and also to showcase the public realm. There has been a lot of disappointment when it was cut back, it was just not the same and were used to Coalisland having the International Music Festival for 10 years which was fabulous, and this was the sort of atmosphere that the Summer Bash was bringing back. The member hoped that there is something that Officers can look at to bring this back as it was his understanding that costs were not extortionate.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) advised that Officers recognised that Coalisland Summer Bash was a really successful and well supported programme. As already alluded to there was a decision taken as part of the 2023/24 rate setting process to remove Coalisland Summer Bash from the Annual Events Programme, therefore there is no longer resources available within our budgets. The SD: C&P said that however, if there was a direction from committee to go away and look at this, then this can be accommodated and would be looked at in the context of potential wider directorate underspend in year and an update would be provided to committee. The SD: C&P advised that if there was a view that this is to be a sustained position within the Events Programme, that this would need to be picked up politically and considered and agreed as part of the rate setting process for 2025/26 going forward.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council the Officers investigate funding opportunities available to reinstate Coalisland Summer Bash event for this year.

D050/24 Environmental Health Service Update

Members noted contents of previously circulated update on the work of Mid Ulster District Council's Environmental Health Service during the period 9th December 2023 to 16th February 2024.

Councillor Gildernew referred to previous meetings with Environmental Health Officers and staff, there had been an agreement to put in static testing in the Killeeshil and Cabragh area in the vicinity of the Northway Plant. The member advised that the last time she spoke to Environment Health Service Manager, Officers were still deciding on what compounds to test for and enquired if this has been agreed or the testing commenced yet.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) advised that there has been a number of investigations ongoing within the Environmental Health team and his understanding was that Officers had concluded on what they are going to test through the static monitoring. He advised that a monitor has been sourced and procurement exercise about to be completed if not already done so. The SD: C&P advised that once this has been completed, a timeline would be agreed on the installation on the monitoring period, which should be imminent.

D051/24 Mid Ulster District Council Air Quality Report 2023

Members noted contents of previously circulated update on the Draft Air Quality Monitoring report 2023 for the Mid Ulster District Council area and of the ongoing monitoring currently being undertaken in relation to this.

Councillor Molloy said that again we were faced with the two same sites that are over the limits which were recognised and quite high. He advised that there have been a number of ongoing meetings with statutory bodies which has been welcomed to try and elevate the issue. The member advised that as we progress, it would be important to keep these meetings going, keep on the agenda and live to try and get a long-term solution. He referred to the recent food festival in Moy and said that the new layout kept the flow of traffic moving and worked reasonably well.

D052/24 2023/2024 Tobacco Control Test Purchasing Activity

Members noted contents of previously circulated report on the Tobacco Control Officer's test purchase activity during 2023/2024.

D053/24 Economic Development Report - OBFI

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the key activities as detailed below –

- ICBAN – Peace Plus - DS3 Smart Towns and Villages (Investment Area 2.4)
- Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes – AGM Minutes 15.09.21 & Meeting Minutes 18.5.22
- Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes - 09.10.23
- Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) – Call 1

Councillor Quinn referred to Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes in October 2023 and advised that there was a recent one in February 2024 and enquired why they were not circulated tonight.

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) stated that there was another meeting of Coalisland Town Centre Forum in February 2024, however, Forum Minutes are not brought to the Development Committee until they are ratified by Forum Members. She stated this will happen at the next Forum meeting, and then the minutes can be brought to the Development Committee thereafter.

The live broadcast ended at 8.31 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public 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 D054/24 to D060/60.

Matters for Decision

D054/24 SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project
D055/24 Public Right of Way
D056/24 Tender for Play Park Facilities
D057/24 Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership – Draft 3 Year Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2025
D058/24 Collaboration Agreement with Belfast City Council for Go Succeed (NI Enterprise Support Service)

Matters for Information

D059/24 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 February 2024
D060/24 Mid Ulster's Employ-led Disability Inclusion Programme Evaluation

D061/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 8.55 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, [Cookstown/Dungannon/Magherafelt].

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

I would 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 agenda.



**Presentation to Mid Ulster
District Council
Development Committee**

14 March 2024

1

History of Benburb Priory Estate 1

- early Christian period, religious settlement
- early 1600s, Sir Richard Wingfield (later Viscount Powerscourt) granted 9,200 acres of land including Benburb and surrounding area
- 1611, Wingfield built a castle/bawn at Benburb (Benburb Castle) on the site of the original Shane O'Neill castle, and built St Patrick's Church (1618)
- 1646, Battle of Benburb. Owen Roe O'Neill's army defeated the army of Col. Robert Monro
- 1877 James Bruce (distiller) bought the estate, remodelled the village, and built the manor house (1887)
- 1917, Bruce died, estate (reduced to around 100 acres as a result *inter alia* of the land acts) passed to his brother. It fell into progressive disuse under successive owners.
- 1940, estate requisitioned by the War Office as a WW2 military hospital for UK, US and Belgian troops

2

History of Benburb Priory Estate 2

- 1947, estate purchased by Clonfeacle parish and later sold to the Servite Order (Chicago branch)
- 1949, Benburb Servite Priory established as a seminary for training of friars
- Late 1950s/early 1960s, close to 100 friars and trainees based at Benburb
- 1970s onwards, progressive diminution in friar numbers paralleled by increasing role of the Priory as a cross-community centre
- 2000, amalgamation of Servites in Ireland and Great Britain into 'Province of the Isles'

3

History of Benburb Priory Estate 3

- Early 2000s, Servite library holdings and archives from across Great Britain and Ireland transferred to Benburb
- 2010, Library & Museum Board established
- 2012, initial tranche of funding from Heritage (Lottery) Fund (HF)
- 2014, major tranche of HF funding to refurbish Stables area, develop Library and Museum and establish coffee shop
- 2017, Library and Museum officially opened by the Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland archbishops of Armagh
- 2020, revised governance and management structures established in order to maintain Priory (Servite) ethos, and its role and sustainability as a major religious, cultural and community centre (recognising the inevitable inability of the Servite Order to maintain a constant physical presence in Benburb).

4

Benburb Priory – A Leading Cultural and Heritage Centre

The Assets

- Beautiful and historic estate
- O’Neill/Wingfield Castle (reopened to the public after years in dormancy)
- the Library and Museum
- the Manor House
- the white bridge spanning the River Blackwater
- the walled garden and its greenhouses dating back to the 19th century
- walkways and laneways
- Fishing and other river activities

The Actual and Potential Offerings

- support for conferences, talks, tours and events
- lecture and meeting facilities, business meetings, residential accommodation
- arts and crafts
- facilities for community groups
- support for local sports groups
- support for local small businesses and tourism

5



6

Benburb Priory Sustainability Physical Requirements

- Refurbishments and replacement builds (including residential) to support events, conferences and activities
- Enhancement of physical estate (improved walkways, signage, interpretative boards etc.)
- Childrens play area
- Roadways (castle), parking

7

Benburb Priory Sustainability Human Resource Requirements

- Management
- Accounts/book-keeping
- Events organisation
- Library & Museum support
- Cleaning and Maintenance
- Continued support from committed volunteers (a major strength of the Priory)

8

Benburb Priory Sustainability External Support Requirements

- Local Community
- Local Councils (MUDC [and ABC])
- Religious and spiritual groups
- Community Groups and Priory Users
- Culture and Heritage Groups (e.g. O'Neill Country Historical Society, universities, specialist groups etc.)
- External funders (Heritage Fund, Peace Plus, government departments, local councils, charitable foundations, donors etc.)

9



Vision

'An oasis of spiritual, cultural and social development and a model of community cooperation for the benefit of all'

Benburb Priory is a thriving and vibrant centre but needs the continued and active support of all key organisations and individuals in promoting a sustainable future for the benefit of the local and wider community

10

