

Minutes of Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 10 July 2014, in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

Members Present: Councillor Burton, Chair
Councillor McEldowney, Vice Chair

Councillors: Dillon, Elattar, McAleer, McNamee, Mallaghan, Molloy, C O'Neill, Reid, J Shiels, G Shiels, T Quinn, Wilson

Officers In Attendance: Mr Tohill, Chief Executive
Mrs Campbell (Magherafelt DC)
Mr Frazer (Dungannon DC)
Mr Glavin (Cookstown DC)
Mr McCreesh, (Cookstown DC)
Mr McAdoo (Cookstown DC)

The meeting commenced at 8.10 pm

Business

The Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed all to the first Development Committee Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council and outlined the Agenda Items for consideration.

D1/14 Apologies

Apologies were offered on behalf of Councillors Forde and Monteith.

D2/14 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

D3/14 Development Committee Terms of Reference for the Transitional Period (A)

The Chief Executive advised Members that the Mid Ulster District Council at its meeting on 26 June 2014 had established four Committees to take forward the work of the Council during the transitional period and that the Terms of Reference for each Committee had been set by Council.

The Chief Executive advised that as per the agreed Terms of Reference the Mid Ulster District Council had not delegated any authority to the Development Committee during the transitional period.

Meetings of the Development Committee would take place on the Thursday following the first Monday in each month at 7 pm.

D4/14 To receive updates from Transition Working Groups (B)

Development and Regeneration Working Group

The Acting Chief Executive (Cookstown DC), gave a comprehensive overview on the remit and scope of the Group and on the scoping and baseline activities that have and will be taken forward on a cross-council basis for the shadow period, in respect of Development and Regeneration across the Mid Ulster District Council area.

A DUP Member stated that in regard to Rural Development, the SWARD cluster, consisting of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt Councils had been one of the most successful and that Members have engaged in discussions with DARD officials, to ensure continued successful roll-out of Development and Regeneration Services across the Mid Ulster District Council area.

Community Planning Group

Officers provided the Development Committee with a comprehensive overview of the Community Planning Group, indicating that the Development of the Plan is very much a work in progress and will involve continued input from the three cluster Councils, stakeholders and partners. It is critical that the Mid Ulster District Council embarks on this project in an inclusive manner, engaging internally at all levels.

Following a query from a SF Member regarding the recent meeting with the DSD Minister, the Chief Executive advised that the cross party delegation put forward a robust case to the Minister outlining the Mid Ulster concerns on the DSD Budget Allocation Model and the funding of public realm schemes. He advised that a response is awaited.

D4/14/4.3 Sport and Leisure

The Director of Operations (Magherafelt DC), gave a comprehensive overview on the remit and scope of the Group. He provided a summary of activities taken to date, priorities, tasks, work plans and financial resources required to take the Sport and Leisure Group forward on a cluster basis towards April 2015.

A UUP member stated that in view of privatisation of the Leisure Centre in Magherafelt, he was concerned that Council, could be driven into a way of privatisation across the board.

The Officer outlined the contractual arrangements in place between Greenvale and Pulse Fitness, which has provided to be a more cost effective way of delivering the service. North Down have similar arrangements in place and Belfast City Council are examining their options.

The UUP Member indicated that the issue of contractual arrangements between Magherafelt and Pulse costings do not reflect what happens in Cookstown and Dungannon and that the Committee needs to bear that in mind to ensure we don't disadvantage Cookstown and Dungannon Councils.

A SF Member queried the deficit budget between revenue and what the service costs for each leisure centre.

An SDLP Member asked the Officer to tease out the level and cost of delivery of a comprehensive Sports and Leisure Services across the Mid Ulster District Council area and report back to Committee.

Resolved The Director of Operations to prepare a detailed costings paper in respect of Sports and Leisure Services to the Development Committee.

Matters for Consideration

D5/14 Paper on Proposal for Mid Ulster Sport and Leisure Membership Scheme (C)

The Director of Operational Services (Magherafelt DC), outlined the key issues, timetables and costs of convergence of 'front of house' IT Systems for all three current Councils, while facilitating an element of compatibility with Greenvale.

It was recommended that the Development Committee endorse the recommendation to Council with regard to the introduction of a Mid Ulster Council Sport and leisure Membership Scheme and brings back a detailed report to the September Committee meeting.

The Chair indicated that there is a clear need to engage with the community and re-affirm what their particular needs and aspirations are in respect of this Scheme, with the aim of having all information collated during January / February 2015, with proposed first draft prepared for June 2015.

An SDLP Member mentioned the possibility of combining Community Engagement Events with compilation of the Mid Ulster Business Directory.

A SF Member raised the question that if at the end of the five year period, there would be an option for termination of the contract.

The Officer indicated in September 2017, there would be minimal or no termination costs.

The SF Member indicated he would be very supportive of the scheme, but totally opposed to privatisation.

The Officer agreed to take on board Members' comments.

Resolved The Sports and Leisure TWG to bring back a detailed report on the Mid Ulster District Council Sport and Leisure Membership Scheme, to the September Development Committee meeting.

D6/14 Paper on Response to consultation on new EU Programmes: INTERREG and PEACE (D)

Officers indicated that it is proposed that the new PEACE Programme, to be known as PEACE IV, will be delivered with a distinct focus on Shared Education; Children and Young People; and Share Spaces and Services; and Civil Society.

Funding streams should be accurately matched and delivered to address local economic, social and environmental needs specific to the area covered by INTERREG Funding, of which Mid Ulster District Council is positioned.

The response highlights that the consultation document and new programme appears to predominately direct funding to resourcing government departments for 'mainstream activity'. It also indicates that community led 'bottom up' approaches to identifying and delivering local activities of benefit is absent from the draft programme.

A UUP Member stated that the draft response needed strengthen to outline the concerns regarding payment in euro, the proposed 15% match funding noting areas of deprivation and that the time period of the scheme was effectively 5 years not 7.

The Acting Chief Executive (Cookstown DC), advised that the consultation period ends on 28th July 2014.

A SF Member stated that the last training exercise had proved very effective in bringing people together across the three Councils and it was important to continue in this vein to secure match funding for the programme.

It was recommended that the Committee consider and adopt the draft response for submission.

An SDLP Member stated that in respect of children and young people, the work 'play group' should be replaced with 'pre-school'.

Proposed by Councillor J McNamee
Seconded by Councillor T Wilson

The draft response be adopted with the inclusion of Member's comments.

Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 8 pm and ended at 9.30 pm.

The Chief Executive thanked everyone for their attendance and advised that the Committee would meet again in September 2014.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____