

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 15 February 2024 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means**

**Members Present**

Councillor McNamee, Chair

Councillors Black, W Buchanan\*, F Burton, Clarke\*, Corry\*, Forde\*, Gildernew, McLernon, McQuade, Milne\*, Molloy, Monteith, Quinn\*, Wilson\*

**Officers in Attendance**

Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P)  
Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev)\*\*  
Ms McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP)\*\*  
Ms McCartney, Strategic Programme Development Manager (SPDM)  
Mr Brown, ICT Support  
Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer

**Others in Attendance**

Agenda Item 5 – Deputation – Cairdre Ní Néill (Irish Language Hubs)  
Mr Séamus Ó Gealbháin (Cathaoirleach – Chair)  
Mr Damian Ó Néill (Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge – Irish Development Officer)  
Mr Gerry Ó Gealbháin (Oifigeach Forbatha – Development Officer)

Councillor J Burton\*\*\*  
Councillor Kerr\*\*\*  
Councillor S McPeake\*\*\*

\* 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 in the chamber and by virtual means, by referring to Annex A to this minute.*

**D018/24 Notice of Recording**

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

## **D019/24 Apologies**

Councillor Bell

Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W)

## **D020/24 Declaration of Interests**

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

*Councillor Gildernew declared an interest in Mid Ulster Swim Academy 2023 Review as relative works in Leisure Centre.*

*Councillor F Burton declared an interest in Agewell.*

*Councillor Corry declared an interest in Agewell.*

*Councillor Milne declared an interest in Agewell.*

*Councillor Wilson declared an interest in Good Relations - Mid Ulster Pipe Bands.*

## **D021/24 Chair's Business**

Councillor Molloy said he wished to raise an issue regarding Aughnacloy Playgroup. The member advised that he had been approached by a member of the board raising concerns about inadequate facilities at the site. The playgroup is situated beside Aughnacloy pitches which is our property, and they lease a portion of the land. The member advised that the playgroup is having issues with toilet facilities and sewage and unfortunately had to close this week due to trying to get these concerns resolved. He asked that the different agencies be approached i.e. NI Water or DfI or whoever is responsible to come together to get a long-term solution as this has been going on now for several years.

Councillor F Burton said that she supported comments by the previous speaker as this was a very well-run playgroup but unfortunately, they are encountering these issues on a regular basis and said that any support that could be provided would be very much welcomed.

Councillor Gildernew concurred with previous comments and said that the playgroup does not have much available money and cannot run a facility without toilets and asked that anything that can be done to support the playgroup so this matter is resolved would be very welcome.

## **D022/24 Deputation – Cairde Uí Néill (Irish Language Hubs)**

The Chair, Councillor McNamee welcomed Mr Séamus Ó Gealbháin, Mr Damian Ó Néill and Mr Gerry Ó Gealbháin from Cairde Uí Néill and invited them to make their presentation (appendix 1).

The representatives provided presentation on the work of Cairde Uí Néill. Cairde Uí Néill are a Irish Language Voluntary Community Group which was founded in 1992 and registered as a Charities Commission in 2016, which serves the Coalisland/Clonoe Parishes and surrounding areas in Mid Ulster.

Cairde Uí Néill promotes:

- Irish Medium Education (IME)
- Community Engagement
- Expansion of Objectives
- Accountability and All-Ireland Recognition

Challenges to overcome -

Deficiencies/Inefficiencies in Current Service Provision:

- Lack of permanent facility
- Restricted class availability & inadequate ICT and internet access
- Venue limitations for events
- Youth Club challenges
- Examination preparation constraints
- Accessibility issues with the office for the Language Development Officer
- Despite these challenges, Cairde Uí Néill remain proud of its achievements in service provision, community uptake, program visibility, and outreach to users of all ages

How can Mid Ulster District Council help:

- Cairde Uí Néill have successfully secured Letter of Offer for £198k to purchase building and grounds from Dept of Communities under Indigenous Languages Capital Fund.
- Cairde Uí Néill have successfully secured match funding for £150k from Ciste Infhéistíochta na Gaeilge to help with purchase and initial basic renovation of building and grounds.
- Additional match funding available from Ciste Infhéistíochta na Gaeilge of £50k dependent on Cairde Uí Néill securing a further £50k. A letter of Offer from Council for £50k automatically secures Cairde Uí Néill the matched funding from Ciste, without this, the project is in danger of not happening.
- This is a key project in terms of Irish Language and Community Development both for Cairde Uí Néill and for the Councils own language strategy.

The Chair thanked Seamus, Gerry and Damian for their presentation and said that the group were doing brilliant work throughout Mid Ulster, particular in the Coalisland area. He said that he liked their vision for the future as it will compliment all the work the group was doing and would be fully supportive of supporting this initiative going forward.

Councillor McLernon wished to thank Cairde Uí Néill for their presentation this evening. The member said that she was very aware of this project and the massive

benefits this will have, not only to the Irish speaking community and the promotion of the Irish language, but to the wider community of Coalisland, the hub will be an immense benefit to the Coalisland community and the wider catchment area as it will be another element to that area of the town which will link up the Irish school and the development of Gortgonis. The member advised that this was a great foresight for Cairde Uí Néill to see this massive potential for what it will have for the community and felt that Council should see no reason not to support this application for funding as it was in line with Council's regeneration plans for that area of the town. She said that there was a need to recognise all the hard work that has been put in by Cairde Uí Néill as most of the work that has been done down through the years has been done voluntarily and community supported and as stated tonight in the presentation, the project is on the button in terms of what the Council is asking community groups to do, the group has went and done all the hard work, secured other funding and would encourage the group to work along with Council Officers to get the right funding package. The member wished Cairde Uí Néill every success on their application for the project and looked forward to seeing it delivered.

Councillor Molloy thanked the group for their presentation and stated that Cairde Uí Néill have always been to the fore promoting the Irish language and doing the groundwork in terms of what is happening over this last 30 years, not only in Coalisland but across South Tyrone and now Mid Ulster area. The member wished the group well with their project and whatever help is required through Council, to please come forward.

Councillor Quinn thanked Cairde Uí Néill for their excellent presentation and referred to all the great work the group has done over the years in Coalisland, which was plain to see. He said that given the fact the group does not have a hub or a centre but continue to do all the fantastic work in which they have done, speaks volumes. The member advised that he had lived in the Gaeltacht area of West Belfast as a student and had always thought it was fantastic idea, and through conversations with representatives from Cairde Uí Néill over this last couple of months, this could be a name that we could get and really develop the initiative. The member said that their aim to develop an area of the town that is a key part for this Council and certainly for funding, he did not see any reason why this Council would not be supporting the group as they provide fantastic work and look forward to see what the outcome is in the future.

Councillor Quinn referred to the site of the old boxing club, which is now a coffee shop called Uppercut, already a lot of development has been done which was basically an eyesore in the past and Mr Quinn has turned this into a great business. He enquired what Cairde Uí Néill's plans were and asked if they were working with Mr Quinn.

The representatives advised that they were working with Mr Quinn every step of the way and he was very supportive of the project as he sees it as bringing business to his business as well. The group are currently with McKeown & Shields Architects to reconfigure the site to try and retain Mr Quinn on the site. Gaelscoil at Gortgonis is anticipated to be up and going in the next year or 18 months which is a quite a rapid build and hoped that this would be operational by summer 2025, until that point the afterschool facility would not move in and had advised Mr Quinn to retain his lease

and they would work with him. One of the other aspects that had been mentioned earlier was about linking in with the Canal Path, it actually backs on to the Canal Path and at some point in the future with Phase 2 or Phase 3 of the development, a coffee shop is being looked at as a drop-in centre for the Cairde Uí Néill and Irish speakers within the town which would open onto the Canal and conversations has taken place with Mr Quinn giving him first refusal on the lease with Mr Quinn thinking it was a fantastic opportunity for his business.

Councillor Quinn felt that this was a fantastic idea as our Council has tried this over the recent years and had hit a brick wall. The member stated that if the site was opened up onto the Canal, the possibilities would be endless and a fantastic opportunity and great to see an organisation like Cairde Uí Néill doing that. The member wished the group well in their future endeavours and said that anything that he could do to help, to get in contact.

Councillor Kerr paid special thanks to Gerry, Seamus and Damian as it was good to see arguably three Coalisland Fianna men giving a presentation. The member said that this was a fantastic opportunity for the community of Coalisland to potentially turn a derelict building into a thriving community hub. In the recent Census, Coalisland had a high concentration of Irish language speakers and his cousins had attended the primary school in Clonoe, hundreds of children have passed through the corridors of the school and had provided a great platform and not just about education, but about community involvement. The member stated that he had absolutely no doubt that Council would be very keen to engage with the group and provide the extra funding required to make this reality into a flourishing community initiative. The member said that if the group need any help from the Torrent Councillors, then don't be afraid to reach out as we all have a vested interest in trying to promote our native language.

The Chair thanked representatives for attending the meeting tonight and said that the group could see for themselves the support from throughout the Chamber and advised that Officers would be in touch to discuss options for funding. The Chair wished Cairde Uí Néill all the best going forward.

*The representatives from Cairde Uí Néill withdraw from the meeting at 7.29 pm.*

## **Matters for Decision**

### **D023/24      Development Report**

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

- Rolling Community Grants
- Hill of the O'Neill Telecommunications Mast - Update
- Good Relations Plan 2024 - 2025
- Development Department - Update

Councillor Molloy referred to NI Water – Telecommunications mast and said that this news was seriously disappointing and almost an act of bad faith in what was previously agreed. The member advised that discussions had taken place over 12 months ago and at that stage his understanding was that NI Water was agreeing there and then to a feasibility study to look at the mast in partnership with the Council and now hearing the rollback that it is not in the budget, not a priority for them, same old, same old. The member stated that Council needed to be holding them to account and suggested writing to the now installed Minister inviting him to attend an onsite meeting to have a look at the situation, to discuss a way forward as a priority.

Councillor Monteith said that this was nothing short of a disgrace, this Council has been treated atrociously, the people of Dungannon have been treated atrociously, the wider area has been treated atrociously and this is the worst acts of ignorance of opinion right across the board he has seen in 20 years as a Councillor. This way forward was not of our choosing, it was NI Water who wanted to go down this path, it was NI Water who stated that this needed to go down a route of a feasibility study despite repeated requests from elected members as to updates and where we were at and were met with silence. The member said that it was the very good faith of this Council to agree to pay 50% of the costs in the first instance, given the fact that this mast is the sole responsibility of NI Water. The member referred to what Councillor Molloy previously alluded to that over 12 months ago NI Water lead Council to believe that there end of the bargain was secured and finds it incredibly difficult to get his head around how this would have been put to tender without them having the money in place to back it up.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) said that it was his understanding that NI Water were looking to appoint through a framework or contract they had in place and were engaging with this company to try and ascertain a price. The price which was initially quoted to Council increased and we went back to seek approval to uplift the amount of money the Council were bringing. The SD: C&P said that he would agree with members comments as he too was at the meeting and was also under the impression that NI Water had agreed to this, and had their finances secured.

Councillor Monteith enquired how could a public body initially tender for a process without having the money in place to do so and found it nothing short of a disgrace. He said that this will be the same process again going out and being more expensive, talk about a waste of money. The member felt that there was a need to put the pressure on but said that we were now well past feasibility studies as everyone knows what the answer is and that the monstrosity on the Hill has to go. The member stated that he was not massively in favour of the line of attack in the first place, but there was a need to take these people at good face value which has now basically been threw back in our faces. He said another 12 months has been wasted and seemed to him that every time there is any sort of pulling with this organisation in the last 20 years, that anytime you think you are getting anywhere, it's stalled and a stalling tactic all the time. The member said that there was a serious need to look at the issues around the site as it is a natural heritage site and planning permission submitted all the time for further antenna and that mast wouldn't have received planning permission if it wasn't there. He said that this is one of the worst examples he had witnessed in his lifetime as a Councillor and was absolutely

flabbergasted when he read the minutes of the meeting as it was an absolute disgrace.

The Chair also concurred with previous comments and agreed that this was a disgrace, NI Water approached Council to ask if we wanted to pay for it all, given the fact it was their apparatus.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to write to the now installed Minister responsible inviting him to attend an onsite meeting to discuss a way forward as a priority.

Councillor Gildernew referred to point 2.3 of Good Relations Plan for 2024/25 and said that it was great to see it there and hoped that Good Relations funding would be based on the 2022/23 level of funding and not on the lower budget that was set last year. The member said that in terms of the Good Relations Working Group, she was nominated to the group when she became a new Councillor and asked if there was any update as she was not aware of any meetings taking place.

The AD: Dev advised that the Good Relations Working Group operates under Corporate Services and aligns mainly to Equality Section 75 and the decoupling of the Good Relations and would take consideration of a Good Relations issue that may come from a Section 75 review. The AD: Dev said that if there were any strategic issues potentially at a corporate level it does come together. The AD: Dev advised that she would check if the group is anticipated to meet.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor McLernon and

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

- Approve the assessment panel recommendations under the Sport Representative grants.
- Approve the Good Relations Plan 2024 -2025
- Note the update from the Development update.

#### **D024/24 DfC Letter of Variance – Active Travel & Covid Small Settlements**

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) presented previously circulated report to:

- Provide members with an update on Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme – Active Travel and to seek approval to accept Letter of Variance
- Provide members with an update on Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme and to seek approval to accept Letter of Variance

Councillor F Burton said that she would be happy to propose the report as it was great to see that they are proposing to extend to March 2025. The member referred

to Active Travel Schemes and enquired where the new Council was currently at. She also enquired going forward would there be an opportunity to add in new areas into this scheme and when they anticipated to meet.

The SD: C&P advised that Council had appointed a contractor to work with us on the development of an Active Travel masterplan for the district. The starting meeting of the contractor had commenced a number of weeks ago, with Officers currently agreeing the timeline in relation to engagement. The SD: C&P stated that there would be specific engagement with elected members as well as wider engagement with the community and other partners.

Councillor F Burton referred to Aughnacloy Village Plan going forward, and said there was talk about areas that wished to be included the plan and felt it was a good way of lining up what people are seeking from that area and hoped that this could be progressed.

Proposed by Councillor F Burton  
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the reports and due to the deadline for return, that retrospective approval be given to signing of the Covid-19 Recovery programme and Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Letters of Variance as enclosed within the appendix which grants an extension of the period of funding to 31 March 2025.

#### **D025/24 Mid Ulster Swim Academy 2023 Review**

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) presented previously circulated report to provide an update on the Mid Ulster District Council swim lesson programme and to give due consideration to proposed enhancements of the current programme and investment in a be-spoke swim lesson online management module.

Councillor Gildernew said that this all sounded very progressive and should no doubt ease the frustration experienced by parents trying to get swimming lessons booked term after term. The member said that she hoped that Council would fully train and resource the swim teachers when the time comes for the new assessment, and this be reflected in any future pay discussions taking place.

Councillor Molloy said that he was sure that members have been inundated with issues around swimming lessons and bookings and felt there needed to be a better solution with technology the way it is. People queuing up at leisure centres in the rain to enlist for swimming lessons is not an ideal way and also not ideal for staff's time at the front desk signing people up. The member said it was interesting to see the increase in the number of people coming into the leisure centres since covid as initially he thought our leisure centres may have taken a downfall, but those numbers have increased steadily. 35% of leisure income was from swimming which was encouraging and for young people in particular, a life-skill to learn to swim can be a lifesaver, this encourages people into swimming and improves our registration process in the meantime.



Councillor Monteith advised that he had been approached regarding private swimming tutors and was aware of an ad hoc system ongoing in Dungannon which was suspended with a review to trying to regularise it and come up with a way forward and enquired if Council was any further on with that. The member said that after speaking with Officers they had hoped to bring something early this year.

The SD: C&P advised that a number of reports was to come back, and the next report was in relation to this matter, a policy has been drafted and being reviewed internally before being brought to members attention.

Councillor J Burton welcomed the report in the attempt to tackle the waiting list for the people of Dungannon as he had been contacted by parents waiting for months to enrol for swimming lessons. He was aware of people saying how tricky it was to enrol at reception but enquired if people would still be able to use this facility for enrolling in person across the three sites going forward as not everyone is tech savvy.

The SD: C&P said that it was his understanding that all of the functionality through the leisure hub system that people can access offsite will also be available at our receptions.

Councillor F Burton referred to comments regarding lessons all being booked out and had recently seen that Fivemiletown College Youth Annex swimming pool had availability and felt that this could be an ideal opportunity to use their facilities. The member said that it would be beneficial for children and schools from the Clogher Valley area to use this facility as it is quite a distance to use the pool in Dungannon. She asked if this could be investigated if there was a lack of availability in Dungannon that people are signposted to Fivemiletown Annex as it was a fantastic facility. Some people from Dungannon travel to Fivemiletown as they also have a fantastic fitness suite also.

The Chair felt that there could be more awareness after the new World Champion from County Armagh yesterday, first ever Irish swimmer to win a gold medal.

Councillor W Buchanan enquired if the latest strike had impacted on swimming lessons.

The SD: C&P stated that there was some impact, but Officers were trying to deal with it the best they can.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that approval be given for the direct award contract to the current provider of the leisure IT system for the be-spoke swim lesson management IT module.

## **D026/24 Communities & Place Scale of Charges 2024/25**

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report which provided information to members on the proposed Scale of Charges April 2024 – March 2025 for Communities & Place Directorate and to seek approval to implement from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

Councillor F Burton advised that she had been contacted by email along with the rest of the Clogher Valley Councillors on behalf of Ballygawley Area Development Association (BADA) advising of an office at the Playing Fields being available to hire out to the community and hoped that this could be added in for people who may require a smaller room to hire. The member said that it was at a very reasonable price of £15 per hour or £20 for two hours and was an ideal opportunity to make people aware of this facility.

The AD: Dev said that she would take on board as it was an ideal opportunity to help promote other areas.

Proposed by Councillor F Burton  
Seconded by Councillor McQuade and

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

- Communities & Place Scale of Charges 2024/25 as outlined within the appendices of the report.
- Amended campsite tariffs as per section 3.5 of the report.

## **D027/24 Economic Development – Broadband Working Group – Terms of Reference**

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report to seek approval for updated Terms of Reference enclosed for Mid Ulster's Broadband Working Group.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor F Burton and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve Council's updated Broadband Working Group Terms of Reference as enclosed on Appendix 1.

## **Matters for Information**

### **D028/24 Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 January 2024**

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 January 2024.

Councillor Quinn referred to D010/24 – Dredging of River Blackwater update and stated there was a report to be brought to the Development or Environment Committees which never materialised. The member enquired if dredging has taken place yet and whether the report was to be brought to this committee or Environment Committee.

The SD: C&P advised that the report was due to be brought to the Environment Committee and as previously agreed the Environment Committee would have the oversight on this matter.

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) said that the SD: Env had convened a meeting this week with officers from Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (ABC) Council and DfI Inland Waterways team to discuss the dredging issues. The AD: EDT&SP said she understood the SD: Env would bring a composite report to the Environment Committee to update Members.

The Chair hoped that the report could be brought next month.

#### **D029/24 Economic Development Report - OBFI**

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

- Tourism Development Group Minutes – 19 October 2023
- Mid Ulster International Women’s Day Events
- Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2023 Evaluation
- Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events

Councillor Corry said she wished to raise two comments regarding Mid Ulster International Women’s Day Events and Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events which were both held in Cookstown and Dungannon end and asked if Magherafelt area could be kept in mind for the future as there were some excellent venues in Bellaghy, Maghera, Magherafelt and Draperstown and beyond.

Councillor Corry referred to the speakers for International Women’s Day and said that last year there were some very good events and hitting it a bit harder than previous years in bringing in topics about women’s health, women’s health strategy, healthy relationships, violence against women and girls and menopause strategies etc. and wanted to make sure that these were not excluded due to issues women may be facing on a daily basis.

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) stated that Officers had been in liaison with the Council Chair to agree speakers for the events and these have now been confirmed. She advised information will be sent to all members to update them on the events and indicated the speakers will address key issues to support women’s health, wellbeing, etc, under this year’s International Women’s theme *‘inspire inclusion’*.

The AD: EDT&SP advised that Officers do try and move events around the district each year. She advised this is the first time one of the International Women's events will be held in Cookstown, as to date they've been held in Magherafelt, Dungannon, Moy and Clogher Valley areas. She noted next year the plan would be to have one of the events within the Magherafelt area again, in a central venue convenient for people to travel to from other parts of Mid Ulster.

Councillor Burton said that it would be important not to forget about rural women from rural areas who have to travel to towns. The member noted that it was previously held in the Clogher Valley and said that this must be a very long time ago as she does not remember it being held there. The member referred to venues available, the fantastic Valley Hotel - Fivemiletown, Corick House which is equally fantastic between Augher and Clogher. The member said that she was aware that we have to go around different areas but wants to make sure that everyone gets a chance as they were all ratepayers.

Councillor Wilson referred to Taste Mid Ulster Food and said that he had been contacted by a number of residents concerned about the hosting on the Sunday at 1 pm especially for those coming from Churches, Chapels or places of worship in Moy as some places do not finish until 1 pm. The member said that some residents were concerned about getting back which may be an issue and enquired if Officers had been in contact with all Churches and places of worship regarding this. The member said that a suggestion was made to him about moving the time of the event to 1.30 pm.

The AD: EDT&SP advised the member that Officers have been liaising with local Churches from the outset and that liaison had continued, as recently as this week to make sure the Churches were content with the times and to put in place arrangements for stewards to keep church entrances clear. She advised local Church contacts were content with the time of the event and this was confirmed again with them this week. Furthermore, she advised that music was not planned to start until 1pm, however to alleviate any concerns, she would ensure the music did not commence until 1.30pm. The AD: EDT&SP indicated that as one of the Churches holds an evening service and to be respectful of that, the Food Heritage event would finish at 5pm on the Sunday evening, to ensure there is no noise or disruption to the Church service.

*The live broadcast ended at 8.05 pm.*

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

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor McLernon 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 D030/24 to D034/24.

**Matters for Decision**

- D030/24 SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project
- D031/24 Macmillan Move More Programme

**Matters for Information**

- D032/24 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 January 2024
- D033/24 Food Standards Agency Audit
- D034/24 Agewell Project Update

**D035/24 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 8.50 pm.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

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

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

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

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

Thank you and we will now move to the first item on the agenda.

## **Gael-Ionad Uí Néill**

(Irish Language Community Hub)

Presentation to MUDC  
Thursday 15 Feb 2024

**Cairde Uí Néill**  
*Teanga Bheo, Pobal Beo*



## **Cé hiad Cairde Uí Néill?**

(Who are Cairde Uí Néill?)

- Irish Language Voluntary community Group
- Founded 1992
- Charities Commission Registered 2016
- Serving Coalisland/Clonoe Parishes & Surrounding Areas in Mid Ulster





# Stair Chairde Uí Néill?

(Where have we come from?)

## **Irish Medium Education (IM):**

- Established first Irish Language School in Tyrone 1992
- Sustained Gaelscoil Uí Néill financially for 3 years via fundraising until the Nursery and Primary school received official recognition from Dept. Of Education
- Continued to provide Financial Support for Irish Medium Education i.e. purchase of classroom mobiles and facilities
- Developed Prenursery (Náiscoil Bheag) and Social Services registered Afterschools (Iarscoil) services providing employment for 3 full-time workers - eg

## **Community Engagement:**

- Operating in an area of social deprivation, Cairde Uí Néill collaborates with the Neighbourhood Renewal initiative to deliver Irish Language Classes aimed at improving outcomes for residents within the community.

# Stair Chairde Uí Néill?

(Where have we come from?)

## **Expansion of Objectives:**

- Over time, Cairde Uí Néill broadened its goals to encompass the promotion of the Irish language for learners & speakers at all levels across the local community. Irish Language Development Officer (ILDO) employed under the Foras na Gaeilge Irish in the Community Schemes:
  - Scéim Pobal Gaeilge (SPG) 2011-2020
  - Scéim Forbartha Líonra Gaeilge (SFLG) 2021-present

## **Accountability and All-Ireland Recognition!**

- The ILDO's work overseen by Cairde Uí Néill sub-committee & monitored/reported to Foras na Gaeilge on a quarterly basis.
- Cairde Uí Néill submits comprehensive reports to the annual Comórtas Ghlór na nGael All-Ireland competition, where it has received National Prizes for its quality, breadth, and sustainability in local provision.





## Cad é a dhéanann muid? Cúram Leanaí (What do we provide? Child Provision )

- **An Naiscoil Bheag** – Premursery for 3 year olds
- **Iarscoil Uí Néill** - Afterschool for primary age pupils -- registered and inspected by Social Services
- **Other Support Initiatives:**
  - 'An Club Bricfesta' - Breakfast Club
  - Maidin Caife – Coffee mornings for Parent & Toddlers
- **Cultural and Educational Events:**
  - Feis Oileáin agus Cluaine – Primary and Secondary school levels
  - Tuairimí debating competition
  - An Rang is Gaelaí - The most Irish speaking Class
  - Scoil Spreagtha – ILDO working in partnership with Gael Tinn across local Primary schools

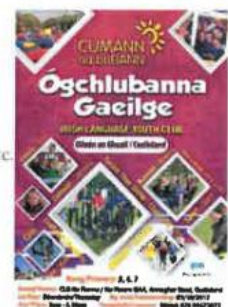


## Cad é a dhéanann muid? - Idir Shean & Óg

(What do we provide? Both Young and Old)

### Cultural and Educational Events for Youth:

- Collaborate with Fóram na nÓg - youth club development / adventure days / Youth Leader Development to enhancing young people's recreational opportunities through Irish
- Lá Gaelige at local GAA clubs' summer camps
- Campa Samhraidh Uí Néill - 2 week All-Irish Summer camp
- Club Scrúduithe - Exam classes and prep for local GCSE and AS/A Level students
- Cainteanna agus Forbairt Pearsanta an Duine – youth talks and presentations on areas such as Online Safety etc.







## Cad é a dhéanann muid? - Idir Shean & Óg

(What do we provide? Both Young and Old)

### • **Community Engagement and Adult Learning:**

- Adult learner classes and strong ties with Ulster University Diploma/Degree/Masters courses in the Irish Language
- Gaeilge sa bhaile – Irish in the Home classes for families of pupils in IM schools and wider afield
- Pop Up Gaeltacht, Conversation Circle, Quizzes & Guest Lectures
- Club Amhránaíochta Singing club, SIÚIL Walking Club, Léigh Leat Reading Group, An Paidrín Prayer group
- Trips to the Gaeltacht regions

### • **Family and Community Events:**

- Cairde Uí Néill organizes family-oriented events, such as children's discos, dinners for religious ceremonies, street festivals like Féasta Sráide, and St. Patrick's Day celebrations, Santa Dash
- Family picnic days, Interactive workshops such as Irish Harp Day and Family Storytelling events with children's writers such as Máirc Zephf



## Cad a dhéanann muid? Pobal na Gaeilge

(What do we provide? Local Community)

- **Promotion of Irish in the community:**
  - GAA Forum & Fondúireacht Sheosaimh Mhic Dhoncha
  - Established Lá na Gaeilge at Meadh Thír Eoghain with Coalisland/Clonoe Comhaltas
  - ILDO has strong working ties with Council Irish Language Officers
  - Gradaim Gnó - Irish in the business community





## Srianta ar ár gcuid Solathair? (Challenges to overcome?)

### Deficiencies/Inefficiencies in Current Service Provision:

- Lack of Permanent Facility
- Restricted Class Availability & Inadequate ICT and internet access
- Venue Limitations for Events
- Youth Club Challenges
- Examination Preparation Constraints
- Accessibility Issues with the office for the Language Development Officer
- Despite these challenges, Cairde Uí Néill remains proud of its achievements in service provision, community uptake, program visibility, and outreach to users of all ages

## **Cad chuige 'Gael Ionad Uí Néill'?** (Why do we need the Irish Language Community Hub?)

### **Impact of no new centre!**

- Risk of Programmes Ceasing due to closer of current facilities on Gaelscoil Uí Néill once new school opens in Gortgonis
- Youth Club Constraints: Lack of a central facility will leave youth provision unfulfilled despite high demand.
- Adult Language Class Challenges
- Accessibility Concerns : Current office facilities for the Language Development Officer are inaccessible, hindering community access to support services; new facilities at the proposed site would alleviate these concerns and improve community access.

### **How the centre helps the community!**

- Addressing Deprivation in location featured in the top 10 deprivation areas' of NI
- Health and Environmental Activities
- Support Services: vital support for parents and young children, addressing isolation issues, especially among single-parent families
- Boosting Confidence: Irish language engagement boosts self-esteem and confidence, with the Láirionad serving as a hub to combat deprivation in the community.
- Positive Impact of New Gaelscoil: The proximity of the new Gaelscoil to the Láirionad site will further contribute to reducing deprivation figures in the area.
- Combating Loneliness & Mental Health: range of activities on offer will combat depression, raise self-esteem, and foster friendships, expanding participation.
- Affordable Childcare: Naiscoil Bheag and Iarscoil provide low-cost childcare for low-income families in the area, further addressing socio-economic challenges.
- Forms part of the Councils strategy

## **Gael-Ionad Uí Néill - ár dTochaí!?** (Irish Language Community Hub – Our Future?)

- Very important for achieving Lónra Language Planning status for this part of Mid Ulster.
- Central base to integrate and grow the Irish language community – one of the most concentrated areas for Irish speakers in the north according to the last census yet no central base to call 'Baile.'
- It will house all of our activities: Development Office; Prenursery; Afterschool; Café; Youth Club; Drop-in centre; Classes; Talks; Conversation Circle; Singing Group, Walking Group al...
- Re-generation of a derelict building and adds to Council's current work to reinvigorate Coalisland Canal area.



## Tacaíocht ó Chomhairle Ceantair Lár Uladh? (How can Mid Ulster Council help?)

- Cairde Uí Néill have successfully secured Letter of Offer for £198k to purchase building & grounds from Dept of Communities under Indigenous Languages Capital Fund.
- Cairde Uí Néill have successfully secured matched funding for £150k from Ciste Infheistíochta na Gaeilge to help with purchase and initial basic renovation of building and grounds.
- Additional matched funding available from Ciste Infheistíochta na Gaeilge of £50k dependent on Cairde Uí Néill securing a further £50k. A Letter of Offer from council for £50k automatically secures Cairde Uí Néill the matched funding from Ciste - without this – the project is in danger of not happening!
- This is a key project in terms of Irish Language and Community Development both for Cairde Uí Néill and for the council's own language strategy.



## An dtig libh cuidiú? (Can you help?)

### Projected Project Costs

- £198,000 purchase of facility
  - £202,000 projected costs of renovation
- 
- £400,000 total project value

**CURRENT SHORTFALL OF  
£100,000 IN SECURED FUNDING  
BUT £100,000 MATCHED  
FUNDING WAITING TO BE  
CLAIMED**

### Current Funding Secured

- £150,000 DCAL
- £150,000 matched Ciste funding
- **£50,000 Comhairle Ceantair Lár Uladh?**
- **£50,000 matched Ciste funding**

- 
- £400,000 total project value

**£400,000 REGENERATION PROJECT  
WILL BE SECURED WITH 50K  
SUPPORT FROM COUNCIL**







