

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 12 January 2023 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor Clarke, Chair

Councillors Ashton, Black*, Burton, Corry, Cuddy* (7.19 pm), Doris* (7.05 pm), Elattar*, Kerr*, McNamee*, Martin*, Milne*, Molloy*, Monteith*, Quinn* (7.08 pm), Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P)

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

Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev)**

Ms McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP)**

Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

Others in Attendance

Councillor S McGuigan*** (7.49 pm)

Agenda Item 4 – Deputation – Bring Your Own
Ms Coyle***

* 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 Clarke welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Clarke 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.

D001/23 Notice of Recording

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

D002/23 Apologies

None

D003/23 Declarations of Interest

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

D004/23 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor Clarke stated that over the last weekend three clubs from the Council area were successful in winning All Ireland semi final matches and offered congratulations and best wishes to the three teams in their final matches.

Councillor Kerr wished Galbally, Stewartstown and Glen teams the best of luck in their forthcoming Intermediate, Junior and Senior finals and hoped there will be three All Ireland champions coming back to the Mid Ulster area.

Councillor Molloy added his sentiments to the comments made and congratulated the three teams on their success to date.

Councillor Monteith concurred with the comments and stated the teams successes were a fantastic achievement and that success in the Mid Ulster area at both county and club level over the past number of years has been outstanding. The Councillor hoped there would be three All Ireland trophies returning to Mid Ulster in the near future.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke stated it was wonderful that there are three teams from the area who have won their way out the county and province and have now won their semi final matches and are there for the final. The Chair stated that this is a tremendous achievement for those clubs.

Councillor Molloy advised that the Island Wheelers Cycling Club have been successful in tendering for the All Ireland Irish Cycling Championships and that the Club have been engaging with Council officers as to the proposed route and other assistance which Council could provide. The Councillor asked that any help which can be offered from across the Council departments that the Council would engage with the Club and he wished the Club a successful Championship.

D005/23 Deputation – Bring Your Own

The Chair, Councillor Clarke welcomed Ms Coyle to the meeting and invited her to make the presentation on Matty's Inclusive Initiative and 'Bring Your Own' (Appendix 1).

Ms Coyle explained that her son, Matty, is autistic and that going out to a restaurant can be challenging for him meaning that it can be difficult for her family to go out for a meal together. Ms Coyle stated that she considered what she could do, what would help Matty and other autistic people and on this basis came up with Matty's Inclusive Initiative. Ms Coyle explained that the Initiative encourages restaurants to allow parents of autistic children to bring their own food to be enjoyed by their child when dining out or to prepare the food brought in, or even source the preferred food if enough notice is given. Ms Coyle stated that the help from the restaurant won't

eliminate all the problems but gives families the opportunity to experience dining out together, in a calm and enjoyable way. Ms Coyle advised that, to date, a number of restaurants have come on board which makes a huge difference to children and parents when dining out.

Ms Coyle stated that Mid Ulster Council have also assisted Matty and her family to achieve two of the best experiences namely a birthday party and Christmas experience. Ms Coyle advised that Matty's favourite place is Hill of The O'Neill outside space and that with the assistance of Councillor Quinn a birthday party for Matty was organised at this site, this was the first time at age 4 Matty was able to have a birthday party. Ms Coyle advised that Hill of The O'Neill also accommodated Matty at the Christmas experience held there.

Ms Coyle stated her objective is to help spread acceptance on a wider scale so that families like hers and so many others feel welcomed and supported. Ms Coyle stated that the more people are involved the more help there is.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke thanked Ms Coyle for the presentation and that it highlighted to him that one size does not fit all.

Councillor Quinn congratulated Ms Coyle on the presentation and stated he has known Matty and the family for a long time and that assisting with organising Matty's birthday party was one of the best things he had done as a Councillor and that he is proud to see the success being made with the Initiative. Councillor Quinn stated that this is a fantastic Initiative and felt that Council should be endorsing it as much as it can and referred to the different vendors and outlets who serve food some of which are under Council control. The Councillor asked if this Initiative is something which could be introduced to those facilities or if it could be included in specification when Council is tendering for food provision in the future. Councillor Quinn stated that he had taken his eldest daughter out for coffee last week which highlighted to him how much more difficult it must be for parents of autistic children when eating out and that he felt anything Council can do to ensure what they have control over offers this type service should be done and asked if this is possible.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) advised that Council engage with a range of food businesses across the District and that Council can look at how it can help to raise awareness of the Initiative and encourage those businesses to participate. The SD: C&P stated that officers can look at the communications engagements with food businesses and if there are mechanisms that can be used to promote the Initiative then Council will be happy to do that.

Councillor Quinn asked if a letter can be sent out food business advising them of the Initiative.

The SD: C&P advised that officers will look at the best way of promoting the Initiative and will contact Ms Coyle to get further information.

Councillor Molloy congratulated Ms Coyle on the presentation and the work done to date on being Matty's voice and raising awareness but that it was now time for the next step. Councillor Molloy stated that he had four children who are all different in

their own ways and that trying to keep them engaged when dining out can be problematic without the added complications of Autism. The Councillor stated that the Initiative is fantastic and the more people and food establishments become aware of it can only be a good thing and that he would be supportive of it in the future.

Councillor Kerr wished Ms Coyle well with the Initiative and hoped Council will follow up by raising awareness of the Initiative as much as possible.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke stated that the presentation had been important and that he hoped assistance from Council in communicating awareness of the Initiative will help to progress it going forward.

Ms Coyle withdrew from the meeting at 7.22 pm.

Matters for Decision

D006/23 Development Report

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

- Rolling Community Grants
- Development Department Update

Further to the report the AD: Dev advised that Community grants will be opening at the end of January and that information will be sent to Members in relation to workshops being held to support groups in terms of grants.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- To approve the assessment panel recommendations under the Good Relations Grant as outlined at appendix 1 of report.
 - To note Development Department Update.

D007/23 Schools Sports Facilities Access Grant

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which advised on the advertised Schools' Sports Facilities Access Grants.

Councillor Corry stated she was happy to propose the recommendation and that past schemes had been very valuable for schools.

Councillor Ashton seconded Councillor Corry's proposal.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in this item as his son plays for Cookstown Hockey Club.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree to the recommendation for successful grant applications as outlined at section 3.5 of report.

D008/23 Update on Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Programme 2022/23

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which provided an update on the 2022/23 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Funding Programme.

Councillor Ashton stated she was happy to propose the recommendations and asked where the accessible picnic tables are being located. The Councillor stated that when funding had been secured in relation to the accessible picnic tables it went as part of a community call and wider community grant scheme.

The AD: HL&W advised that the accessible picnic tables referred to in the report are for Council designated sites and although he did not have the locations to hand tonight he would circulate the detail after the meeting. The AD: HL&W advised that at different times of the year there are grant programmes for community facilities and he was aware there were a number awarded prior to Christmas.

Councillor Corry seconded Councillor Ashton's proposal. The Councillor stated that from working with Mid Ulster Disability Forum accessibility and inclusion is important and that the accessible picnic tables will make a huge difference to peoples lives and Council facilities. Councillor Corry added that the sensory hub is also an exciting project and will add so much more to Council events.

Councillor Kerr referred to previous discussions in relation to the accessible picnic tables and asked if the design of the tables will be what had been previously considered whereby wheelchair users can access the picnic table.

The AD: HL&W confirmed that the previously discussed design is the design Council will be moving forward with.

Councillor Burton referred to the larger events within Mid Ulster such as Clogher Show and asked if the accessible picnic tables or sensory hub could be loaned to organisations to assist with their events.

The AD: HL&W advised that the accessible picnic tables are normally in fixed locations and cannot be moved but that the sensory hub will be mobile and can be moved to different events throughout the District. The AD: HL&W advised that due to the value of the sensory hub there would have to be some due diligence and governance arrangements which would need to be considered for loan of this equipment to third parties but that is something that can be looked at by officers going forward.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve –
- Setting up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for each project identified in section 3.3 of report, where required.
 - Utilising approved Council framework contractors, where required, to deliver the projects identified in section 3.3 of report
 - Allocating 10% match funding for projects approved for funding by the Department for Communities through its 2022/23 Access and Inclusion Programme with funding to be met from within existing resources that will be responsible for the management and delivery of each project.

D009/23 Monrush Recreation Area

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which provided an update on DfI Roads planned works in the vicinity of the Monrush recreation area and to seek contribution from Council towards the works within the Council boundary.

Councillor Wilson stated he had attended a meeting with DfI Roads, Councillors and Keith Buchanan MLA and what is being proposed by DfI Roads will help to finish off the works already being completed by them in the area. Councillor Wilson proposed the recommendation.

Councillor Black seconded Councillor Wilson's proposal.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve £6,000 contribution to DfI Roads for the proposed project at Monrush recreation area.

D010/23 Iniscarn Community Group (PSG) Service Level Agreement

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which considered a proposal to enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Protect Slieve Gallion (PSG) Community Group, Iniscarn for caretaker and cleansing duties within Iniscarn Forest.

Councillor Corry proposed the recommendation and stated she had attended the opening of the play park at Iniscarn and that it is a fantastic Council asset. The Councillor stated that the Protect Slieve Gallion Community Group do great work in the area and that Service Level Agreements are invaluable and a good way for Council to move forward in this type of scenario whereby people are visiting the site on a day to day basis. Councillor Corry stated she had no doubt the Community Group care about the site and will do all it can to keep the area in good condition and report back to Council on anything which requires attention.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke seconded Councillor Corry's proposal. The Chair stated that it had been in 2006 when he first raised Slieve Gallion as being a jewel in the crown and Iniscarn being an ideal access point. The Chair stated that having a Group who is interested in the site will benefit both ways.

Councillor Ashton asked if Council is currently incurring resources and costs associated with running this site.

The AD: HL&W advised that it has been a challenge since the facility has been enhanced to get staff from across the District to monitor the site which in turn incurs additional mileage, staff costs and hours. The AD: HL&W stated that he hoped the Service Level Agreement represented value for money along with giving a sense of capacity building between Council and the Community Group to carry out the services and that Council staff would then step away from the daily routine associated with site whilst still giving direction and support where needed.

Councillor Ashton asked what the saving is to Council by entering into the Service Level Agreement and requested that this information be forwarded into the ongoing discussions in relation to rates.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) advised that this was not a monetary saving as there is not a dedicated resource to the site but that the officer has highlighted that there is a team who looks after the entire estate and that as additional sites come on board this resource is spread thinner. The SD: C&P advised that Service Level Agreements are helping to ease some of these pressures so it is not that there is a dedicated resource to this site which will be freed up but rather that capacity can be increased across the estate.

Councillor Ashton asked if Council is actually increasing its costs is a saving not being made.

The AD: HL&W advised that there is a budget allocation within revenue budgets tracking back to Council's five year outdoor recreation plan and that this cost is within the budget associated with the plan.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Protect Slieve Gallion to provide on-site support services on a daily basis equating to 12 hours per week, 7 days per week on a flexible rota at an approx. cost of £123.60 per week/ £6427.20 per annum. This is for the period February 2023 – March 2023, thereafter annually. This will be reviewed for effectiveness and extension in line with other annual Service Level Agreements in support of Council's leisure and outdoor recreation services.

D011/23 Drumcairne and Derrynoyd Funding Opportunities

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which provided an update on the development project at Drumcairne and Derrynoyd Forests and sought approval to enter into a lease agreement with Forest Service Northern Ireland (FSNI) in respect of the carpark and terrace garden area within Drumcairne Forest.

Councillor Kerr stated he was happy to propose the recommendation and it was good to see more Council involvement in the Drumcairne Forest project.

Councillor Doris asked how long the lease is for.

The AD: HL&W advised that the lease will be for 25 years with an option to extend. The AD: HL&W advised that if Members agree the recommendation tonight then the lease agreement will be presented at January Council for sealing.

Councillor Doris asked if there was an update in relation to Cappagh/Altmore Forest.

The AD: HL&W advised that procurement documents were being released tomorrow that will be seeking quotations to appoint an ICT team to bring forward designs on the Cappagh/Altmore project. The AD: HL&W advised that it is hoped the ICT team will be appointed during February and further to this there will be further community engagement.

Councillor Wilson asked if the lease rental figure of £500 is for the 25 years or if this charge can be raised throughout the term of the lease. The Councillor also asked who is responsible for the maintenance of the car park.

The AD: HL&W advised that £500 is a fixed rental figure, payable each year, for the 25 year term of the lease but that this will be subject to review should an extension to the lease be invoked. The AD: HL&W advised that the work being done at Drumcairne will require minimal inspections/maintenance and it is believed the maintenance can be delivered within existing resources.

Councillor Corry asked when it is envisaged work will begin.

The AD: HL&W advised that it is hoped contractors will be on site before the end of the January and that due to nature of funding it is hoped that works will be completed by end of March however there is a degree of flexibility with the funder.

Councillor Corry stated that the Park Run at Derrynoyd is becoming more popular and that users are looking forward to the having the paths fixed and works completed.

Councillor Kerr advised that an environmental activist had been in contact with him in relation to the planting of trees, specifically the Hazel, which is an ancient native tree to Ireland. The Councillor advised that the person contacting him has started a campaign to plant Hazel trees in all 32 counties of Ireland and proposed that officers make contact with this person to see if it can assist in bringing her aspirations to fruition in Mid Ulster and the counties within the Council area. Councillor Kerr stated that he was aware of other Councils who have become involved in the project and it may be positive for this Council to create links in order to boost tourism.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke advised that contact could be made in relation to the Hazel planting project.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to enter into a lease agreement with FSNi in respect of lands around the carpark and terrace garden in Drumcairne Forest and to agree to pay the £500 annual rental.

D012/23 Economic Development Report - OBFD

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

- Outdoor Information Touch Screen – Coalisland Town Centre
- Signing of Tourist Attractions and Facilities
- Nordics B2B Workshop
- Sperrins AONB Management Plan

Councillor S McGuigan joined the meeting at 7.49 pm during presentation of the above report.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke advised that it is now 55 years since the Sperrins was declared an AONB and yet it is the last to have a management plan. Councillor Clarke stated it was good to see a Sperrins AONB Management Plan being put in place and funding to go along with it and that this is a move in the right direction.

Councillor Wilson asked if there was previously monies approved to carry out a scoping exercise in relation to brown signage and if that was the case he further asked if the report had been brought forward. The Councillor stated that at the time he had asked that the scoping exercise look at what signage there is currently but also what signage is not there.

The AD: EDT&SP advised that an organisation has been appointed to carry out a study in relation to brown signage. It was advised that the work is ongoing and it is anticipated that the initiative will be completed by end of March 2023 and that further to this a report will be brought back to Committee for consideration.

Councillor Wilson proposed that the Council invite the Chief Executive of Tourism NI to a meeting to discuss the issues in relation to brown signage within the Council area.

Councillor Wilson referred to the Nordics B2B Workshop and stated that he appreciated that these trips be looked at but asked what the criteria is for attending. The Councillor stated that Tourism NI go to a number of locations across the world and that Council has in this case, picked to go to Copenhagen, and that whilst he was not saying the Council should not attend costs needed to be looked at.

Councillor Kerr proposed the report recommendations and welcomed the touchscreen being located in Coalisland.

Councillor Quinn seconded Councillor Wilson's proposal to invite the Chief Executive of Tourism NI to Council to discuss brown signage as he felt there is a greater need for this signage in rural areas. Councillor Quinn further seconded Councillor Kerr's proposal to adopt the report.

Councillor Doris stated she sat on the Tourism Development Group and that the issue of brown signage is something the group has been pushing for at least three years and it was good to see there is now some movement on the issue.

Councillor Doris asked if Irish will be included on the touchscreen to be located in Coalisland.

The AD: EDT&SP advised that the touchscreen replicates the content of the Council website and data in relation to visitor information and whats on etc is channeled through to the touchscreen similar to those already installed in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt.

Councillor Burton stated that the issue of brown signage can be difficult for people trying to run tourism businesses in a rural setting and that the criteria to acquire the signage is a major part of the issue. The Councillor stated that it was her understanding that the criteria for brown signage has not be updated for a long time and that if the Chief Executive of Tourism NI is being invited to Council then officers dealing with tourism businesses should also be included in the meeting to outline the difficulties businesses are experiencing. Councillor Burton stated that this issue is raised on a regular basis and that change needs to come to support businesses.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council –
Outdoor Information Touch Screen – Coalisland Town Centre –
To approve the purchase and installation of one visitor information kiosk to be located within Coalisland town centre.
Signing of Tourist Attractions and Facilities –
That the Council Chair write to Tourism NI to express concern in relation to the current policy and procedures for acquiring brown signs and invite the Chief Executive of Tourism NI to meet with Members to discuss the issue.
Nordics B2B Workshop -
To approve attendance of Council's Tourism Manager at the Nordics B2B Workshop in Copenhagen from 15 to 17 February 2023 for the discounted fee of €325 excluding VAT. In addition, Council to also pay for additional costs related to the Officer's flights/travel, accommodation and any meals outside of those offered as part of the event.
Sperrins AONB Management Plan -
To accept the letter of offer, if the Sperrins Partnership application to DAERA's Environment Fund Strategic Strand 2023-2028 is successful. Members will be kept up to date on developments in relation to the management plan. If there are any additional financial requirements, these will be brought back to Council for consideration.

Matters for Information

D013/23 Minutes of Development Committee held on 7 December 2022

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 7 December 2022.

Councillor Kerr referred to item D196/22 and stated he was still awaiting an update in relation to Ardnaskea/Kings Row flooding and that he was disappointed that a

meeting had not yet taken place. The Councillor also asked for an update in relation to the Gortgonis project.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) advised that there was no further update in relation to the Gortgonis project and that future updates will be brought to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Doris asked if there was an update in relation to the recruitment of lifeguards as she was still receiving calls stating that children cannot access swimming lessons.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) advised that a recruitment exercise was carried out during December and that some interviews have been held with some still to be held this month. The AD: HL&W advised that some job offers have been made and that those people are going through pre employment checks but that it will probably still be a number of weeks before the results of the recruitment exercise yields results however he was glad to say there had been huge interest shown in the recruitment process.

D014/23 Draft Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the progress of the Ageing Well Initiative and also provided a draft of the Mid Ulster District Council Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan prior to the launch of the public consultation.

Councillor Corry thanked the Age Friendly Co-Ordinator for the amount of work done to date in bringing forward the draft Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan.

D015/23 Economic Development Report - OBFI

Members noted update on key activities as listed below:

- Tourism Development Group Minutes – 7.9.22
- Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes – 7.2.22
- Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2022 – Evaluation
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership

Live broadcast ended at 8.05 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Wilson

Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst members consider items D016/23 to D018/23.

Matters for Decision

- D016/23 COVID Recovery Small Settlement Regeneration Programme
- D017/23 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Economic Inactivity Competition – Requests for Support

Matters for Information

- D018/23 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 7 December 2022

D019/23 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 8.18 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:-

- o 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
- o 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
- o 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
- o Should we need to take a vote this evening please raise your hand in the normal way and keep raised until advised to lower it
- o When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- o 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
- o If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- o 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.