

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Wednesday 5 April 2023 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means**

<b>Members Present</b>	Councillor Black, Deputy Chair  Councillors Ashton, Burton, Corry *, Cuddy, Doris*, McNamee*, Martin*, Milne*, Quinn* and Wilson*
<b>Officers in Attendance</b>	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)** Mr Brown, ICT Support Mrs Forde, Committee and Member Services Manager
<b>Others in Attendance</b>	Agenda Item 4 – Deputation - Life After Support Group  Ms Debbie Mullen

\* 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.*

**D061/23 Notice of Recording**

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

**D062/23 Apologies**

Councillor Clarke, Elattar, Kerr and Molloy

**D063/23 Declaration of Interests**

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

## **D064/23      Chair's Business**

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black advised Councillor Quinn had an item for Chair's Business.

Councillor Quinn said like others as he was out engaging with different people the main topic of conversation was the funding cuts both from council and central government and the impact of same. He said he was aware Council was not immune to cuts but having discussed with others in Council and some political parties he would propose to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to give the Chief Executive delegated authority to identify ways and possibly allocate from reserves to top up funding streams and grants to assist groups impacted by funding cuts such as ESF.

The SD: C&P said Council do look for external opportunities to top up current grant funding streams but with regard to the use of Council reserves this would have to be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee. He spoke of the current funding and reminded Members that as a result of the rates setting process available Council grant funding had been reduced by £220k. He said he understood Members wanting to lessen the pain but advised that to use reserves was not a sustainable solution in the longer term and not within the scope of decision making of the development committee but what it could do was refer the proposal to policy and resources committee.

Councillor Ashton asked was community development team bringing an update on grant aid applications to the meeting.

In response the SD: C&P advised that grants assessment was currently taking place and delegated authority would be sought at the Council meeting in relation to grants as the process would not be completed in time.

Councillor Ashton referred to Councillor Quinn's comments and reminded him it was SDLP and Sinn Féin who had voted for the rates and now that the hitback was coming from the community. She said this should be a lesson to councillors as they need to realise the impact of what is put in front of them as here a month later they are changing their minds.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said that the points raised were valid.

Councillor Cuddy said considerable time was spent in striking a rate and the UUP take the process seriously, as within weeks of their decision councillors were back looking to revisit the recycling centre decision and now the grants. He said those in question needed to learn how to run an organisation. He concurred with Councillor Ashton and said parties need to think the process and decisions through. Councillor Cuddy said members had a strong officer team who presented the information and he was sure they were fed up with decisions being overturned. He concluded that everyone wanted to help communities but budgets were set for a year not a month.

Councillor McNamee said he was happy to support Councillor Quinn and he was aware Councillor S McPeake was raising the matter at the Policy & Resources committee.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said the Policy & Resources committee was the correct forum for discussion.

Councillor Corry said many groups had been in contact in relation to funding loss which was largely down to ESF funding cuts and reminded the Chamber it was the result of Brexit which had been championed by the DUP and the Assembly not sitting was a further impact. She said it may be worthwhile writing again for people were losing their jobs.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said a motion had been brought to Council regarding the loss of ESF and all parties had supported this.

Councillor Martin said she was in support of Councillor Quinn's proposal.

Councillor Burton concurred with the comments of Councillors Ashton and Cuddy and said there is a short view point, she said all would want to support groups but you cannot just rejig a budget as to run your home in this manner would not be productive. She asked how long it would be before groups new the outcome of their funding applications.

The SD: C&P said the Community Development team were assessing grants and as aforementioned the recommendation for delegated authority to the Chief Executive would be brought before Council in April.

Councillor Wilson concurred with Councillors Cuddy and Ashton and said he found it somewhat strange that use of reserves was shot down by nationalist parties at the rates setting, council had cut its own grants but now the proposal was coming to use the reserves and reiterated earlier comments that much time is spent considering budgets. He sought clarity as to who Councillor Quinn had spoken to from the UUP in relation to the matter.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black asked if Councillor Quinn wished to respond.

Councillor Quinn said he had spoken to many but would not reveal individuals.

Councillor Wilson stated he wanted to know which parties supported the idea.

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council, to be considered by Policy & Resources Committee 7 April 2023, to give the Chief Executive delegated authority to identify savings and possibly allocate from reserves to top up funding streams for grants to assist groups impacted by funding cuts such as ESF.

### **D065/23 Deputation – Life After Support Group**

The Chair, Councillor Black welcomed Debbie Mullen from Life After Support Group

Ms Mullen thanked Members for the opportunity to present and introduced Life After Support Group advising that it was borne out of the tragic death of her son Keelan at the age of 17 who had passed his driving test on the 1 February and lost his life on 2 March having hit black ice and skidded into a tractor and slurry tanker. She said her life changed for ever as a mother of four she had only three living children and following her loss she had been unable to navigate through life. She explained she was in the final year of a counselling degree and her tutors, peers and private health care had enabled her to access the help she needed but many who had suffered like her had not this support.

Four years after losing Keelan Ms Mullen said she had attended a workshop ran by the emergency services who were looking for what was missing when people were faced with such tragedy. She spoke of the support of the PSNI family liaison officer who was her lifeline at the time of the tragedy and had went above and beyond to help her. At the event she also met a gentleman from Derry who had set up a facebook page and asked her to speak at an event out of which the need for the support service had been realised, a working group formed, intervention plan developed and lobbying and support commenced. Life After Support Group was formed and have now welcomed their 203<sup>rd</sup> family to the group. She said the group work closed with the PSNI, emergency services and had tremendous support from all political parties. She highlighted that the Northern and Western Health Trusts love the group but do not financially support it, the PCSP in some areas assist with room hire and refreshments but the group needs people in position of pay outlining that some 500 counselling hours had been delivered free to people who have been impacted by people with experience.

Ms Mullen told how Derry City & Strabane Council had assisted with road safety events, permitting them use of the Guildhall Square to reconstruct road traffic collisions to allow people to see what can happen. She spoke of youth conferences, the Garda and PSNI participation in events together with emergency services who spoke of the hard hitting situations they face. She said many youths had a sharp shock but support was there for those who struggle with what they see. Ms Mullen highlighted an example of their work in that the group had lobbied with the DfI following a death at the Dark Hedges when an American couple on honeymoon had had an accident and Michael Monroe had lost his life. She told how the group had assisted the family at the time, lobbied the DfI and had got the Give Way sign changed to a STOP sign and to date there has been no further accidents at the site.

Ms Mullen shared that the PSNI had asked the group to go into their training school to engage with Family Liaison officers to help them carry out their role. She said the officers learnt from people who have experienced the tragedy as to how best to support families who have lost a loved one and assist them in trying to navigate life without them.

Ms Mullen sought support from Council with assistance in identifying a location to hold meetings in the district, suggesting Cookstown as it is central. She said the group support families from Mid Ulster and need ideas for venues to host meetings once a month.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black thanked Ms Mullen and said what she had done in the aftermath of her son's death had taken great courage, that she had touched on the most important things, individuals and families who would find help in being assisted by those who had walked the path themselves.

Councillor Doris extended sympathy to Ms Mullen on the loss of her son and commended her in using the legacy of his life to help others. She stated mental health support should not just be for those who could afford it. Councillor Doris said she had an interest in the line of work and she had no doubt the group would receive support across the Chamber and that officers would no doubt look at how they could assist and if Sinn Féin could support they would.

Councillor Burton thanked Ms Mullen for the powerful message delivered, extended her sympathy and said that the fact she supported others was testament to her and often it was the road you walk in life that gives you character. She said as a PCSP member she regularly lobbies regarding the roads given the record of road deaths in the district and shared that how someone recently had moved to the district and incurred higher car insurance costs. Councillor Burton highlighted that the district was a vast rural area of which Dungannon was the centre and officers needed to engage with the group to see how Council could assist. She shared that the PCSP in the district also host reenactments of road traffic collisions to try to get the message home to young people. She advised Ms Mullen to seek a presentation with Northern Ireland Local Government Association as all councils were affiliated to it.

Ms Mullen said that in the youth conference hosted in Derry even funeral directors attend but counsellors are always on hand as often deep emotions can be triggered and safeguarding is a strong consideration. She shared how she too suffers from post traumatic stress disorder but has now been able to participate in reenactments for prisoners in Magilligan whose actions on the road had led to custodial sentences.

Councillor Burton concurred as to how the reenactments can be traumatising and told how one youth who had participated in the reenactment was actually involved in a road traffic accident a few weeks later.

Councillor Cuddy said if you have not had the experience you don't fully understand and that it was great to see the organisation both in existence and working in the district. He said the UUP would want to support and acknowledged that money was a major issue but that Council would want the group to have a presence in Mid Ulster.

Councillor Quinn echoed the comments of fellow Councillors and spoke of the mental health support people would need emphasising that support is fantastic but the door closes at night and people are alone. He referred to 55 road deaths and 795 seriously injured which highlight the need for such services. He said the SDLP would be happy to support any way they can.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said there was no doubt there was unanimous support across the chamber.

Proposed by Councillor Black  
Seconded by Councillor Ashton

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that Officers make contact with Life After Support Group to discuss how Council can assist the group in Mid Ulster District.

### **Matters for Decision**

#### **D066/23 Update on Age Friendly & Mid Ulster Loneliness Network**

The Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to update members of the ongoing work around Age Friendly Communities and advise on a request for funding towards Mid Ulster Loneliness Network.

Councillor Corry said she was happy to propose the report and stated that both groups do tremendous work and given that the district had an aging population it was imperative that they were supported.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black asked if there was similar initiatives in other council areas.

In response the AD: HL&W said that Mid Ulster district straddles both the Northern and Souther Trust areas but he would revert to the Member as to the the extent of initiatives in other areas.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said he was just curious and was happy to second the proposal.

Proposed by Councillor Corry  
Seconded by Councillor Councillor Black and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the request for a contribution of £3,000 towards the Loneliness Network in order to further promote and develop the network as supported by the other key partners of the Mid Ulster Loneliness Network included NHSCOT and SHSCOT.

#### *Declaration of Interest*

*Councillor Burton referred to the Life After Support Group presentation and declared an interest in the PCSP.*

#### **D067/23 Development Report**

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report to update members and to seek approval for the following:

- Community Support
- Social Inclusion
- Good Relations
- Peace

- PSCP

It was noted that the PCSP minutes were for information.

Proposed by Councillor Black  
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the Development Report.

### **D068/23 Economic Development – OBFD**

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

- Hidden Heritage Tours 2023
- Tourism Mentor Programme 2023
- Service Level Agreement – Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) (2023/24)
- Service Level Agreement – MEGA 2022/25 – Update 2023/24

Councillor Quinn referred to heritage tours and asked if there was any plans to create walks around the ramparts in Derrytresk area of Torrent

In response the AD: EDT&SP said she was not aware but would ask the Tourism Manager to speak to the Member. She also said it would also be important to tie in with Council's outdoor recreation team and advised she would request their attendance when a meeting is convened with Councillor Quinn.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said it was a fair point as Council should take every opportunity it could.

Proposed by Councillor Burton  
Seconded by Councillor Corry

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

- 1 Hidden Heritage Tours 2023  
Approve content of the proposed Hidden Heritage Programme 2023 and associated budget of £4,000 from the 2023/24 Tourism budget, required to deliver the tours.
- 2 Tourism Mentor Programme 2023
  - 2.1 Approve content of the proposed Mid Ulster Tourism Mentor Programme and associated budget of £10,000 from the 2023/24 Tourism budget, which includes the appointment of a facilitator(s) to establish/develop 'Embrace the Giant Spirit' brand aligned experiences.

- 2.2 Note that subject to approval, competitive quotations will be sought from suitably qualified facilitator(s) to deliver the programme and appointment(s) made to allow the programme to commence.
- 3 Service Level Agreement: Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) (2023/24)
  - 3.1 Note ICBAN's 2022/23 Progress Report outlining actions completed against their 2022/23 Service Level Agreement Targets.
  - 3.2 Approve Council's Service Level Agreement with ICBAN for the financial year, April 2023 – March 2024, as detailed on Appendix 1c, subject to Council's Legal Team having final review of the SLA before issue.
  - 3.3 Approve the release of £15,000 from Council's Economic Development Budget (2023/24), subject to Council being provided with the requisite documentation as detailed in the Service Level Agreement on Appendix 1c.
4. Service Level Agreement: MEGA – Year 2 2023/24
  - 4.1 Note MEGA's Progress Report 2022/2023, outlining actions completed, against their Service Level Agreement Targets for 2022/2023.
  - 4.2 Approve release of second annual payment to MEGA of £15,000 from Council's Economic Development budget (2023/2024), subject to Council being provided with all the requisite documentation as detailed in the existing Service Level Agreement (2022/23 to 2024/25).

## **D069/23 Granville Industrial Estate (Dungannon) Report**

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report to update Members on Granville Industrial Estate, Dungannon. She advised that Council Members had led a strong lobbying campaign to request Government Departments to provide urgent infrastructure investment to allow improvement works to be carried out at Granville Industrial Estate and surrounding area. She acknowledged the work completed to date but indicated more investment is needed to target the issues as set out in the recommendations section of the report.

Councillor Cuddy thanked officers for the work and said it had long been an issue for both Dungannon and Clogher Valley Councillors. He said it was one of the most successful industrial areas which had just grown but had never had overall management. He welcomed the partnership working with statutory agencies and said there was great firms in the area which had grown but the infrastructure had not kept pace and required attention as the international companies were bringing people to the area from all over the world.



Councillor Burton welcomed the investment in the carriageway and footpath as many walk the particular stretch of road and lighting was a must and could possibly be sought through the 'Active Travel Scheme' as many workers, mothers and children walked the route. She said it was imperative that Council liaise with the Farmers Mart as often the overspill of traffic impacts the housing estate to the left hand side of the industrial area and there was issues of noise and odour. She concluded that the pathways around the development of homes was not up to scratch and opportunities could not be missed to improve the footpaths in the housing estate at Granville and indeed across many villages where footpaths were in bad condition.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said opportunities should not be missed but welcomed the positive direction.

Proposed by Councillor Burton  
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to grant approval for Council to issue a letter to Mr Johnny Graham, Senior Engineer, DfI Roads to:-

- (i) Welcome the recent £600k investment in carriageway and footway improvements at Granville, notwithstanding the need for additional street lighting on the footpath along the A45 which is critical for pedestrian safety and promoting active travel.
- (ii) Welcome the Granville Industrial Estate Options Report / Masterplan produced by Amey Consultants and to support the introduction of a left turn slip road at the main entrance as an interim measure to help alleviate congestion and improve access and egress from and to the Industrial Estate.
- (iii) Request DfI Roads engage with Dungannon Farmers Mart to discuss traffic and parking issues at Granville.
- (iv) Request DfI Roads to commence the legislative process to introduce a Stopping-Up Order on the Eskragh Road (North) in conjunction with revoking the Order at Eskragh Road (West), which came into operation in 2011.

## **Matters for Information**

### **D070/23 Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 March 2023**

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 March 2023.

### **D071/23 Corporate Events 2023**

Members noted update on the proposed Mid Ulster District Council Corporate Events Programme for April 2023 – March 2024.

Councillor Doris drew attention to identified savings and proposed that Council officers engage with the organisers of the 10k in Coalisland. She stated that the events attracts 1000s into the town centre and Council had a legacy of supporting the event and it would be appropriate to direct the savings identified towards it.

Councillor McNamee seconded the proposal and placed on record his disappointment that the Continental Market was not going ahead and sought assurance that it would be planned for 2024.

Councillor Ashton referred to Councillor Doris' proposal and said it was unfair to ask for financial support for one event, as if savings are identified there should be a review and the matter brought to Policy & Resources for approval.

The SD: C&P stated that due to the cancellation of the Continental Market there may be savings but as in the current costs crisis, planned events costs may rise, the monies previously identified may not be available for allocation across the schedule. He concluded that officers could explore options.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black asked if Councillor Doris was content to amend her proposal.

Councillor Doris said her original proposal stood as the 10K in Coalisland had previously been a corporate event run by Council, there is savings identified and to gain best impact they would be better allocated to one event than across many. She said she was not asking for the same proportion of funding as previously allocated but it was a good solution.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said whilst he understood her direction of travel a uniform approach was required as it was difficult to cherry pick.

Councillor Ashton proposed a strategic review on the savings.

Councillor Cuddy seconded the proposal stating that officers needed to have the opportunity to review as there were many good events and to select one was unfair.

Councillor Quinn concurred with Councillor Doris and stated they were not asking for all of the identified savings but the 10k was a massive event in Coalisland which attracted 1000s and something should be done to support it.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black stated that however the savings were distributed it had to be done in a fair manner.

Councillor Cuddy said he was not against supporting the 10k in Coalisland but currently there was no figures to consider and officers should review.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black stated more clarity was needed.

Councillor McNamee said the matter would have to be considered by Policy & Resources committee and he would suggest referring it there.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said the counter proposal was to allow officers to review and bring back a recommendation as to how the savings could be distributed in a fair manner.

Councillor McNamee said it was a decision for Policy & Resources and officers were better placed to review.

The SD: C&P for clarity said there is capacity in the events budget as a result of the continental market not proceeding this year.. However he said that any allocations to group(s) would need to be considered against our funding criteria. He said Council must operate within its frameworks.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said he was conscious of the SD: C&P's comments.

Councillor Doris said she was content if officers reviewed but said she had identified a possibility for the savings and it made sense for it to go to an event for which funding had been withdrawn. She concluded that in the autumn it could be reassessed but she thought it sensible to fill the gap.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said no one disagreed but it needed to be reviewed and delegated fairly and officers were best placed to assess.

Councillor Doris concurred but reiterated that the 10k event had been pulled from the schedule and her fear was the money would be dispersed with its impact not felt.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said her feelings were clear but it was appropriate for officers to review.

The Deputy Chair Councillor Black summarised the proposal

That it be recommended to Council to delegate authority to Chief Executive/Officers to review savings in the Corporate Events 2023 budget to identify and implement any opportunities for re-profile any budget capacity, considering requirements across remaining corporate events schedule and those events previously included, in an way which is equitable and in line with previously agreed criteria.

Councillor McNamee stated that key events in the past should be considered.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Black said that officers would take all comments on board and sought a proposer and seconded for the aforementioned proposal.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to delegate authority to Chief Executive/Officers to review savings in the Corporate Events 2023 budget to identify and implement any opportunities to re-profile any budget capacity, considering requirements across remaining corporate events

schedule and those events previously included, in an way which is equitable and in line with any previously agreed criteria.

### **D072/23 Economic Development Report – OBFI**

In response to Councillor Corry’s query regarding the Town and Village Spruce Up Scheme, the AD: EDT&SP advised that there is currently no plans to deliver a further scheme due to the significant budget reductions as a result of Council’s rate setting process. She concluded by stating that officers will continue however, to keep a watching brief for any new funding opportunities and if these become available, further schemes could be considered.

Members noted update on key activities as listed below:

- Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) Evaluation Report
- Letter of thanks from Network Personnel re ESF Programmes

*The Live feed ended at 8.20pm*

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

Proposed by Councillor Burton  
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy

**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 D073/23 to D074/23.

#### **Matters for Decision**

D073/23 Economic Development - CBF

#### **Matters for Information**

D074/23 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 March 2023

### **D075/23 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 8.42 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