

<b>Report on</b>	1) Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020 2) Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020) 3) Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative 4) Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 1 Evaluation (2019/2020) 5) Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes - 7.9.20 6) Business Eye Magazine : Mid Ulster Feature 7) ICBAN Update – October 2020
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	12 November 2020
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Fiona McKeown, Head of Economic Development

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
	To receive updates on the matters detailed below.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p><b>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020</b>          At the Development Committee on 12 March 2020, Members recommended to Council “in principle” to approve to sponsorship of the Mid Ulster Business Awards in November 2020 at Category Sponsorship £1,750 + vat – ‘SME Business of the Year’ subject to:</p> <p>(i) clarification of other sponsors involved as per previous Council decision; and,          (ii) seeking seek clarity in relation to voting regarding the public vote categories and how this may disadvantage “public voting” for businesses in the Clogher Valley area given the newspapers are not in wide circulation in this area.</p>

2.2	<p><b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020)</b> Following on from the success of Mid Ulster’s Enterprise Week in 2019, a second year of events is now planned in 2020. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, these events will take place online in the form of high quality business webinars, encompassing a range of issues pertinent to all businesses during the pandemic.</p>
2.3	<p><b>Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative</b> The Mid Ulster Skills Forum identified a number of priority actions contained within the Mid Ulster Skills Report and Action Plan 2018-2021 for delivery in the current financial year. This included a Careers Attractiveness Initiative focused on showcasing Mid Ulster’s key priority sectors to post primary schools in Mid Ulster to ensure a future pipeline of talent to feed local company needs.</p>
2.4	<p><b>Mid Ulster Town &amp; Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 1 Evaluation</b> The Mid Ulster Town &amp; Village Business Spruce Up Scheme offered discretionary grants of up to 75% eligible costs, capped at £5,000 per property for external and/or internal improvements. The Scheme was available to both occupied commercial premises and vacant/derelict units within the town centre boundary of each of the towns (Coalisland, Cookstown, Dungannon as per Area plan 2010; Maghera and Magherafelt as per Area Plan 2015) and development limits of the eligible villages as per the proposed Mid Ulster Settlement Report within the draft Local Development Plan (2030), published in February 2019, under the Mid Ulster Settlement Hierarchy, with the additional village of Moygashel. The scheme opened for applications on Monday 19 August 2019 and closed for applications at 4pm on Wednesday 18 September 2019.</p> <p>Knox &amp; Clayton Chartered Architects were appointed to assist in the delivery of the Mid Ulster Town &amp; Village Business Spruce Up Scheme, including assessment of applications and management and monitoring of the successful projects. Applications, which proceeded to assessment, had to achieve a minimum threshold of 40% to be eligible for grant aid. 253 applications achieved over the 40% threshold to value of £912,306.29.</p> <p>In the financial year 2019-2020, under Phase 1, 32 applicants accepted Letters of Offer and completed works to the value of £112,771.42.</p>
2.5	<p><b>Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes - 7.9.20</b> Coalisland Town Centre Forum was established in March 2019. It is a partnership of public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations working together to deliver a range of strategic economic actions to develop Coalisland town.</p>
2.6	<p><b>Business Eye Magazine – Mid Ulster Feature</b> Business Eye magazine ran a Regional Economic Development feature in their September/October 2020 edition focusing on some of the key activities carried out by Council’s economic development sections during the Covid-19 crisis.</p>

2.7	<p><b>ICBAN Update – October 2020</b></p> <p>Over the past number of years, a group of 8 Councils from north and south (as listed below) have provided a financial contribution towards ICBAN to support their work; Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh Council, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Monaghan, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim and Cavan County Councils.</p>
3.0	<p><b>Main Report</b></p>
3.1	<p><b>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020</b></p> <p>On 3 September 2020, JPI Media advised Council that due to Covid19 they had to cancel some events for this year. On 13 October 2020, they contacted Council to confirm that, with this being the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mid Ulster Business Awards they were planning to postpone with a view to holding the Awards in April 2021 and would advise Council of their plans accordingly.</p> <p>JPI Media have noted in response to the two issues Council sought clarity on (as outlined in 2.1);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) once sponsors are confirmed they will send these through to Council and</li> <li>(ii) this is a vote that is promoted not only in the paper but also online and through JPI’s social media channels and [JPI] also encourage their sponsors to share and spread the word about the reader vote. They also noted that the Council could also promote this through their own database therefore reaching the Clogher Valley area.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.2 Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020)</b></p> <p>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2020 will take place from Monday 16 to Friday 20 November with 12 online webinars staged throughout the week under the theme of ‘Survival, Recovery and Resilience’. The webinars have been tailored to provide specific support to businesses of all sizes and sectors from start-up through to growth in the context of Covid19. Examples of the topics include; start-up advice; building digital/online capacity; sales, communication, team building, exploring new ways of working, managing mental health and people, EU exit etc.</p> <p>Spearheaded by Council’s economic development team, support has also been attained from Invest NI, MEGA and GoForIt. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Fermanagh and Omagh Council is also collaborating in a tri-Council Mid-South West Region webinar celebrating leading entrepreneurs from across the region.</p> <p>A full programme of business webinars is attached on Appendix 1.</p> <p>Members are welcome to register to attend any of these virtual events.</p> <p><b>3.3 Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative</b></p> <p>This project is aimed at enhancing the image and attractiveness of Mid Ulster’s key priority sectors and is a valuable step in informing young people about the</p>

great career opportunities available locally and helping them make choices that work for them and benefit our local economy, by matching skills choices to industry needs.

The SYNC (**See Your New Career**) resources comprise a mix of videos, fan-deck brochures and storyboards showcasing six key sectors (Manufacturing & Engineering; Food and Agri-Food; Construction; Retail; IT; and Hospitality). The resources detail career opportunities and pathways, interesting developments, potential earnings, skills, attributes and qualifications needed to gain entry.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently the school closures in October 2020, the launch of the project has been delayed. However, it is planned to distribute the SYNC career resources in a safe manner to all post primary schools within the Council area in November 2020. The resources will provide schools with a great stimulus for classroom discussions on the range of career options available in Mid Ulster.

#### 3.4 **Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 1 Evaluation**

Following the completion of Phase 1 of the Spruce Up Scheme during the 2019/20 financial year, an Evaluation was completed by Knox & Clayton (independent chartered architect), a copy of which is attached at Appendix 2.

In summary, Council provided grant-aid to 32 applicants in Phase 1 amounting to £112,771.42 and this leveraged further private sector investment of £88,062.96. The funding provided by the scheme has unquestionably improved the external frontages and internal areas of each property.

Phase 2 of the scheme is well underway in this financial year (2020/2021), involving 55 properties, and is scheduled to complete by March 2021.

#### 3.5 **Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes 7.9.20**

Minutes of the meeting of Coalisland Town Centre Forum held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 are attached at Appendix 3.

#### 3.6 **Business Eye Magazine – Mid Ulster Feature**

Mid Ulster Council is promoted in Business Eye Magazine's special regional economic development feature (Appendix 4). The article highlights some of the work undertaken by Council's economic development section during the pandemic to assist local businesses.

#### 3.7 **ICBAN Report – October 2020**

The Report on Appendix 5 provides an update on ICBAN's work across the five key strategic areas of;

1. The Framework of Regional Priorities
2. Community Engagement on Brexit
3. EU Funded Projects

	<p>4. High Speed Broadband Infrastructures</p> <p>5. Border 'Animator' Project</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p>Financial:</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020</b> £1,750 + vat from within existing economic development budget (subject to Council being satisfied regarding the issues they sought clarity on).</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020)</b> Within existing budget.</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative</b> Within existing budget.</p> <p><b>Business Eye Magazine – Mid Ulster Feature</b> Business Eye article costs have been included in the Economic Development Budget for 2010/21 (£750+Vat)</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020</b> Officers time</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020)</b> Officers time</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative</b> Officers time</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020</b> Could be postponed again due to Covid 19 situation</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020)</b> Virtual event low risk</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative</b> Schools may not be willing to take receipt of the Careers Resources at present due to Covid19 situation.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	<p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: n/a</p>

	Rural Needs Implications: Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020) is open to all urban and rural Businesses across Mid Ulster
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
	It is recommended that Members:
5.1	<b>Mid Ulster Business Excellence Awards 2020</b> <b>Note</b> the postponement of the Mid Ulster Business Awards to April 2021 and await further update and clarity from JPI Media on the issues raised.
5.2	<b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (16-20 November 2020)</b> <b>Note</b> details of online business webinars taking place during Mid Ulster Enterprise Week from 16 – 20 November 2020.
5.3	<b>Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative</b> <b>Note</b> update on Mid Ulster Careers Attractiveness Initiative.
5.4	<b>Mid Ulster Town &amp; Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 1 Evaluation</b> <b>Note</b> Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 1 Evaluation Report (2019/20)
5.5	<b>Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes - 7.9.20</b> <b>Note</b> minutes of Coalisland Town Centre Forum meeting held on 7 September 2020.
5.6	<b>Business Eye Magazine – Mid Ulster Feature</b> <b>Note</b> Business Eye article (Sept/Oct 2020).
5.7	<b>ICBAN Update – October 2020</b> <b>Note</b> ICBAN Update Report, dated October 2020.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	Appendix 1 – Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2020 – Online Webinar Events Programme  Appendix 2 - Mid Ulster Town & Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 1 Evaluation (2019/2020)  Appendix 3 – Minutes of Coalisland Town Centre Forum - 7.9.20  Appendix 4 – Business Eye Magazine – Mid Ulster Feature  Appendix 5 – ICBAN Update - October 2020