

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Thursday 14 October 2021 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,
Magherafelt and by Virtual Means**

Members Present

Councillor Molloy, Chair

Councillors Ashton, Black (7.30 pm), Burton, Clarke*, Corry*,
Cuddy, Doris*, Elattar*, Kerr*, McNamee, Milne*, Monteith*,
Quinn*, Wilson

**Officers in
Attendance**

Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Ms Campbell, Strategic Director of Environment
Mr Browne, Head of Tourism
Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing
Mr Hill**, Head of Parks
Ms Linney**, Assistant Director of Development, Strategic
Community Development
Mr McCance, Head of Culture & Arts
Ms McKeown**, Assistant Director of Economic
Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes
Mr Clarke**, Community Development Manager
Mr O'Hagan**, Head of ICT
Mrs Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

**Others in
Attendance**

Councillor Gildernew***
Councillor S McGuigan***

Deputation – South Tyrone Empowerment Project
Ms Bernadette McAliskey***

* 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 Molloy welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Cllr Molloy 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.

D171/21 Apologies

Councillor Hughes.

D172/21 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chair declared an interest in agenda item 9– Cycling Ireland Regional Cycle Hubs as he was a member.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in agenda item 10 – Swim Ulster as he was involved in that.

D173/21 Chair’s Business

The Chair advised that item 14 Community Development report would now be taken for Decision immediately after item 11 Cahore Playing Fields, Draperstown.

The Chair referred to letter received by members from an Event Promoter in relation to an event at the Hill of The O’Neill requesting that it be raised at tonight’s meeting. He advised that the matter had now been raised and referred to the relevant Officers for consideration and take forward.

D174/21 Deputation – South Tyrone Empowerment Project

The Chair welcomed to the committee Ms Bernadette McAliskey from South Tyrone Empowerment Project and invited her to make her presentation.

Ms McAliskey thanked the committee for giving her the opportunity to present to the meeting tonight. She provided an overview of the service provision provided by STEP – MIDUS (Mid Ulster Advice Services from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2021 (appendix).

She advised that MIDUS undertook to provide across all 5 levels of advice provision: Basic access to information; Interpretation of information; Assistance to act on information; Advocacy and representation and Challenging Policy. She said that the total number of unique individuals over the period from 1 April to 30 September 2021 ranged to 7,000 plus. The welfare topic/issue ranged from: Welfare benefits, debt management plans, housing, immigration, legal rights, family issues, employment rights, education advice, health and mental health, tax and consumer rights. Client feedback resulted in 96% satisfaction with support received and 87% satisfaction with outcome.

She advised that STEP also provided: Internal referral to and from MIDAS to: Welfare Reform and Debt Advice; Homeless Support; Family Support; Access to Crisis Hardship/Prevention of Destitution Funds; Immigrant and Migrant Work Integration Support.

The Chair thanked Ms McAliskey for her presentation and said that it was good to hear some of the feedback and as elected representatives, there was nothing in the report which was a surprise when dealing with people in need on a daily basis. He stated that the last 18 months had been extremely trying for society in general and where possible to lend a hand or give advice really helped people.

Ms McAliskey thanked members for giving her the opportunity to make her presentation tonight and said that if any Councillor needed to contact the organisation with any kind of query that she and her staff would always be happy to help out in any way that could.

Councillor Black entered the meeting at 7.30 pm.

The Chair thanked Ms McAliskey for attending tonight and she withdrew from the meeting at 7.31 pm.

Matters for Decision

D175/21 Economic Development OBFD

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes presented previously circulated report to provide members with an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council:

(i) Social Enterprise NI: Council Membership 2021/22

Resolved To approve that Mid Ulster District Council subscribe to become a member of Social Enterprise NI at a cost of £800.

(ii) Christmas Off Street Car Parking Charges Dungannon & Magherafelt

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved To approve the temporary reduced tariff for the first 3 hours of 10 pence in all Off Street Pay & Display Car Parks in Dungannon and Magherafelt from Saturday 20 November 2021 to Saturday 1 January 2022 (6-week period) at a cost of £23,400.

D176/21 Update on Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22

The Head of Culture & Arts presented previously circulated report and sought approval for the following:

- (i) Provide members with an update on the 2021/22 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Funding Programme
- (ii) Provide members with the list of projects approved for funding by Department for Communities
- (iii) Seek approval to set up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for each project where required

- (iv) Seek approval to utilise the approved Council framework Contractors where required
- (v) Seek approval to initiate a tender process to appoint a suitably qualified Contractor to install automated doors at the five locations as identified within section 3 of this report

Councillor Doris said that she was happy to propose the recommendations and commended the great work which has been carried out, but was also aware of still more work to be done. She also wished to commend Department for Communities and Sinn Féin Minister, Deirdre Hargey for the huge investment in helping to progress this.

She referred to the report being raised later in the meeting in on what she had asked for back in July in relation to leisure services and stated that there has been great work being done even more than she was aware of. She said that it would be important for the Communications team to highlight this all over social media and any other avenues in making it known of what facilities which will be there and were there for people with additional needs.

Councillor Kerr stated that he would be happy to second the recommendations and also agreed that there was great feedback being received on the report. He said that there was a great need for facilities for disabled and autistic children throughout the Council facilities. He referred to 3.11 of the report in relation to the purchase of accessible picnic tables and enquired if these would be wheelchair friendly.

The Head of Culture & Arts clarified that the picnic tables would be wheelchair accessible to allow families to sit together around the table.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council:

- (i) **Provide members with an update on the 2021/22 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Funding Programme**

Noted.

- (ii) **Provide members with the list of projects approved for funding by Department for Communities**

Noted.

- (iii) **Seek approval to set up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for each project where required**

Resolved That approval be given to setting up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for each project where required.

- (iv) **Seek approval to utilise the approved Council framework Contractors where required**

Resolved That approval be granted to utilise the approved Council framework Contractors, where required to deliver the projects identified.

- (v) **Seek approval to initiate a tender process to appoint a suitably qualified Contractor to install automated doors at the five locations as identified within section 3 of this report**

Resolved To initiate a tender process to appoint a suitably qualified Contractor for the installation of automated door at the five locations identified (Mid Ulster Sports Area, Maghera Leisure Centre, Cookstown Leisure Centre, Greenvale Leisure Centre and Tobermore Golf Centre.

D177/21 Lough Neagh Partnership Core Funding 2021/22

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to approve annual contribution for year 2021/22 towards the core running costs associated with Lough Neagh Partnership (LNP) in the delivery of marketing tourism, recreational, environmental and heritage activities on Lough Neagh (LN) and the shoreline on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve that:

- (i) Mid Ulster District Council fund Lough Neagh Partnership £22,000 as requested subject to funding being secured from all five Councils on the shores of Lough Neagh.
- (ii) Lough Neagh Partnership submit a quarterly update to MUDC.

Councillor Kerr said that he was glad to see reference being made to Coalisland Great Places Project as a great deal of work has been done in the area including its industrial heritage.

He referred to section 6 of the report – NIEA Shoreline Plan and enquired if there were any more specific details regarding the project or would this be brought to a future meeting. He said that a lot of Lough Neagh falls within his own DEA and would be very interested in seeing what projects were coming forward for proposal.

The Head of Tourism anticipated that a report would be brought to committee before Christmas on Lough Neagh.

D178/21 Sports Representative Grants

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing presented previously circulated report to present to members the proposed community grant allocations for the range of Sports Representative Grants – Team and Individuals (September 2021).

The Chair wished to pass on his congratulations to one of the recipients Darren Rafferty who recently became Irish Junior Champion for time-trial and road racing.

Councillor Ashton said that she would be happy to propose the adoption but sought clarification on the grant aid programme and whether it was anticipated to be spent within this financial year or was there going to be any underspend.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing advised that currently there was a balance of £4,725 and had seen an increase in the amount of submissions this last few months as we arise out of the Covid restrictions. At this moment in time it was anticipated that funding would most likely be spent by the year end.

Councillor Ashton advised as it was coming near the time for looking and reviewing budgets and although she took into consideration the amounts which were being awarded to the recipients which go out and represent this area, but felt it may be worthwhile looking at a grants reallocation review if there was an overspend within other sports areas.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing said that he would investigate the matter.

Proposed by Councillor Ashton
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to approve the Sports Grant Allocations to the value of £1,650.00 as recommended within the report.

D179/21 Cycling Ireland Regional Cycle Hubs

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing presented previously circulated report advising that the Membership Development Officer for the Ulster Branch of Cycling Ireland has contacted Mid Ulster District Council with a proposal to establish a Regional Cycling Hub in the District

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the report and to approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding that will seek to establish a Cycling Ireland Hub at a suitable location within the Dungannon area and for Council to meet the costs of the initial enabling works and ongoing annual cost of electricity supply.

D180/21 Swim Ulster

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing presented previously circulated report to advise that the Operations Manager at Swim Ireland had contacted Mid Ulster District Council with concerns over current pricing mechanisms for bookings across the Districts three swimming pools. The purpose of this report is to outline the current pricing costs for swimming club/organisation bookings across all Mid Ulster District Council Leisure sites and give consideration to an amended rate.

He outlined 3 options for consideration:

- (a) Do Nothing** – this option would maintain the status quo in line with the pricing rates as previously approved in February 2021. Swim Ulster have advised they would find it difficult to maintain current operations within the district if they were to pay these rates therefore potential loss of income and/or reduction in coaching hours/pool bookings based on Swim Ulster's available budget. Potential impact to the 3 x Mid Ulster District based swim clubs and clubs within neighbouring Councils.
- (b) To offer Swim Ulster the same price that local clubs avail off** - instead of working towards the approved pricing of £25.00 per lane (25m) and £40.00 per lane (50m) then adopt the local club rate of £7.90 per lane price. Whilst this would be acceptable to Swim Ulster, it may bring pressure from other club groups including those that reside outside the District who appear content with the rates. Potential loss of up to £4.3k - £4.9k per annum in income based on current Swim Ulster rates. Concerns that this loss in income may not be able to be realised elsewhere during this period of recovery from the Covid pandemic.
- (c) Hybrid approach to Swim Ulster Pricing** – 18 out of the 48 weekly spaces for specialised Swim Ulster coaching is currently apportioned to the 3 x Mid Ulster District based swim clubs therefore a direct benefit of Governing Body support to residents in our District. This equates to 37.5% of total spaces.

Officers have pressed Swim Ulster to make available more coaching spaces for Mid Ulster District residents therefore Swim Ulster have committed to working towards making available 24 out of the 48 weekly spaces (50%) available to the 3 x Mid Ulster District based swim clubs over the next 12 months and putting support in place with the 3 x clubs to help them achieve this.

Additionally Swim Ulster would seek to hold at least two skills camps in the Mid Ulster area per year. (Holiday time).

Therefore propose to offer the same percentage discount to Swim Ulster charges to recognise the benefit of this coaching provision for local swimmers within the Mid Ulster District area, i.e. £12.50 (25m) and £20 (50m).

This would be more in line with what other Council's charge. Whilst there would be a decrease in income, approx. £2.7k-£3k per annum, it would not be as severe as option B and the non-monetary benefit is increased provision for Mid Ulster District residents.

Councillor McNamee enquired how much it would cost to use Greenvale Leisure Centre.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing advised that this would work out at roughly £12.50 a lane/per hour for 25m and £20 a lane/per hour for 50m.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to progress with Option C as detailed within Section 3.10 of this report.

D181/21 Cahore Playing Fields, Draperstown

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing presented previously circulated report to provide an update to Members on a leasing proposal for Cahore Playing Fields, Draperstown and seek approval to proceed following an expression of interest process.

Councillor Elattar said that she would like to propose to accept the recommendation as it seemed to be the sensible approach as money needed to be spent to bring pitches up to standard, with the leasing arrangement allowing the cost to be recouped in a relatively short period by Council. This also allowed local clubs to take over the responsibility of the pitches which would benefit the local community as a lot of important work was carried out by these clubs in all areas of community of life.

Councillor Cuddy said that it seemed a very complicated process and couldn't understand why the Council just did not step out and let the two clubs talk to the landowner directly and progress on that way. He said that it was suggested that it would take £55k to upgrade the pitches before it was passed over which seemed very complicated. He was aware of Dungannon United Youth and Dungannon Thomas Clarkes having their own issues going through and felt that any public organisation needed to have policies in place in the event of the wheels starting to come off and felt that Council were stepping outside policies which may become very difficult and unhelpful for the clubs. He said that he appreciated that the two clubs were providing fantastic services to the area but felt there was a need to keep this as tidy as possible. He enquired if there was a possibility of Council signing this over to the Clubs without the expense so they could actually draw down funding themselves as a clear and transparent way forward should be shown to any club to help them as much as possible. He stated although there was no capital building project, £55k was still going to be spent and felt that the Property team would have been involved in this as they had a lot of experience on projects delivering onsite work, being able to follow it though and knowing how things would play out in the future. In his opinion there was a certain amount of risk involved and although he would like to see this progress, it was vital that it went through the proper channels and policies of this organisation otherwise it was going to end in tears.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing advised that there was an arrangement with the landlord until 2043 which was an obligation and a responsibility for the Council while in that lease. He said that whilst £55k would be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee, it would be an initial spend of £33.5k for one pitch. He said that the purpose of this lease would help enable and build capacity within the local community to prove tenure and a pitch that would allow them to bid them into future grant programmes which could potentially bring a floodlit 3G to the local area for use of local clubs. He stated that with or without the lease and having gone through the Pitches Strategy at the minute and working away through that, the Council has an obligation to that community facility in terms of upgrade and whether a lease progressed or not it was highly likely the Council would have to spend money for improvement works for the two pitches in any case.

The Strategic Director of Environment referred to comment regarding Council stepping outside policy and advised that Officers were working within the remit of Council policy. She advised that the pitches at the aforementioned location was substandard particularly the soccer pitch and Gaelic pitch with work done previously by legacy Magherafelt Council on one but the other two pitches were very waterlogged and needed work to be carried out on them. She concurred with the Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing comment regarding work needing completed whether the lease goes ahead or not as there was an obligation to carry out this work over the next number of years. She also agreed with the Assistant Director in regards to his comment regarding one of the football clubs having an opportunity to apply for funding and if they were successful then the Council wouldn't undertake to carry out the work on that pitch as it would be done as part of their application which would give them an opportunity to invest and grow the club in that particular area. She stated that there was a lot of requests coming in from football clubs as some of the pitches were substandard and there was an onus on Council to make them fit for purpose before signing them over to anyone else and significant investment made. She said that the club were currently applying for funding and needed proof of tenure and this was why it was effectively being brought forward. In the event of them not having a pitch tenure, they would not be able to apply for funding which would potentially be available to them.

Councillor McNamee seconded the proposal and agreed with the previous Officers as the Council would be leasing this pitch for a good few years to come and money needed to be spent on upgrades to provide pitches for the people of the area which we were providing for at the minute. He said that it would be unwise to do what Councillor Cuddy was suggesting to pull the rug from under the clubs and allow them to negotiate which was unfair as there had been a similar situation in Cookstown where the Beechway facility was offered to Cookstown Youth with pitches being maintained every year and feels that this issue should be similar.

Councillor Wilson referred to Councillor McNamee's remark and advised that the Council owned a piece of ground at Beechway and even though it was a housing executive owned, the Council had a very long lease which was slightly different in what was being dealt with here. He stated if the pitches had to be brought up to speed, his concern would be that this was brought before committee in February and a report in front of members tonight to go ahead with this, but he had raised an issue about another sporting facility and it has never reached this table which made him wonder and said that he would leave it at that.

Councillor Cuddy advised that although the report was brought in February, the deputation was in last month. He said that it would be great to see it being delivered and was not against the project and important that facilities were there throughout the district and remarked about a comment being made about the club wishing to submit an application for funding for a 3G pitch and enquired why £55k was going to be spent on a pitch when it was anticipated to turn it into a 3G pitch in the not too distant future. He said that it was great to see funding being allocated to soccer, Gaelic and rugby pitches etc. but was more concerned about what happens down the line and sitting here in a year's time or less where the same club will be coming forward again seeking the Council's Technical team to deliver on a significant project. He stated that he wasn't against the proposal but felt that there was an onus on Council to be cautious due to what could happen in the future for example a mistake being made resulting in a lot of expense for Council. He said that the

Council's Capital team were stretched at the moment and going down this path was a possible serious issue for the Council in the future. He concluded by saying that he wouldn't be voting against the two clubs getting what they required, but his issue would be the process and wished to see an even approach for everyone.

The Chair advised that he was sure the Officers had taken consideration of Councillor Cuddy's remarks.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing referred to process and mechanism and advised members that there was a workshop coming up in a few weeks' time regards the Pitch Strategy which was all building towards an investment plan with members approval hopefully which would set out a process for the next number of years for all pitches across the district – football, Gaelic, rugby, hockey and bowling. In relation to process and mechanism it has been understood from the formation of Mid Ulster District Council that all of the pitches over all the different sporting codes with little or no investment from year to year, outside of routine maintenance or additional monies or funding being leveraged in would be investigated. He said that hopefully over the coming months there would be an opportunity to nail down that mechanism and process that would hopefully see it prioritise an investment plan over the next number of years.

Councillor Elattar stated that the Officers had outlined very clearly why there was a need to go forward with this now and appreciated what Councillor Cuddy had said about not voting against it as these pitches in Cahore were not fit for purpose. She advised that people could be knee deep in water with the soccer teams having to travel sometimes to Dungiven to be able to play matches and further afield as they cannot access the pitches which were meant to be used. She agreed money needed to be spent on these pitches whether or not the lease goes ahead but this lease would allow for the clubs to apply for outside funding which would be able to add to what these pitches offer and would be a good thing for Council and the local community as a whole.

Councillor McNamee advised that the landlord was open to extending the lease.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve that Officers:

- 1) Proceed to progress to the next stage by drafting, agreeing and executing terms with the successful submissions in line with LPS valuations for pitch 1, 2 and 3 for a period of 25 years with option to extend
- 2) Proceed to engage with the landlord and extend the term where relevant to ensure agreements are co-terminus
- 3) Assign a rental value of £1,000 per annum to the pavilion for a separate keyholding agreement – subject to annual review and monitoring
- 4) Refer upgrade costs to the Policy and Resources Committee for a budget allocation of £55,000.

Councillor Burton enquired if there had been any contact with Caledon Football Club and asked if the committee would agree to issue a letter to them. She said that this was a similar situation as there was a blockage in a pipe which was waterlogging their pitch also

which resulted in it being awkward for the youth wing to play as there was a need to support them.

Councillor Burton advised that she would send on the relevant details to the Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing to investigate a possible way forward.

D182/21 Community Development

The Assistant Director presented previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

- Community Grants - to agree the rolling grant awards - Local Community Festivals, Good Relations and Decade of Anniversaries
- Capital Discretionary Grants – to approve the capital discretionary grant
- Emergency Support funding – to approve the venue/facility funding support
- Community Development - to update on Community Development

(i) Community Grants - Local Community Festivals, Good Relations and Decade of Anniversaries

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve grant award recommendations outlined in Appendix 1.

(ii) Capital Discretionary Grants

Councillor Cuddy enquired about the process for the discretionary grant and enquired does a recipient receive £50k or nothing.

The Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development advised that the award was for £50k to a group with a project at a minimum value of £300,000 and this allowed the group to proceed. She noted this was the only group who applied to the grant that was in a position and ready to proceed with their project. The officers continue to work with the other projects and the grant will open again next year, pending members approval re the budget. She said that only one group was at a state of readiness with a minimum of £300k project which allowed them to receive a £50k contribution from Council to help them achieve their project.

Councillor Cuddy said that this was a quick turnaround after the group providing their presentation to committee last month and having it delivered this month.

The Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development advised that one of the conditions was that the group applying for funding had to provide a presentation to committee and this was arranged last month. Officers have been working with the group since they submitted their application earlier in the year when the grants were opened. She stated that the ongoing process allowed for Officers checking the group's business plan, site visits, meeting re the project criteria, with the final part of the process being a presentation to committee due to the size of the investment by Council.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve Capital Discretionary Grants award of £50,000 based on successful applications to the grant programme.

(iii) Emergency Support funding

Councillor Monteith referred to 3.3 and said that it was something that he would be happy to support and move forward with and enquired if this was open to any voluntary group or for any group which didn't receive any kind of support in the past.

The Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development advised that it was open to any voluntary & community group which takes part in delivery of community development activity in the district and is based on being not for profit, community constitution and volunteering.

Councillor Monteith sought clarification on what the difference was on the facilities grant and the one we currently do.

The Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development advised that the one which was given to venues was for overheads and contribution to maintenance, and this one allowed for wider spend on wider community facilities opening up. She said that the allocation from DFC was £134k and it was stipulated that this was for opening up for the community and not just reacting to community emergency issues. It was to take on board social distancing or the need for an extra toilet in a facility. She said although it was small amounts of money, it tied in with other similar funds at this time to allow groups to undertake this type of activity. She confirmed that this was for community development facilities only, and not just for the 44 venues that come forward under the venues grant.

Councillor Monteith said that he would be happy to propose and referred to the Community Development Programme and Anti-Poverty issues. He asked that the Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development engage with some of the local schools on issues which they were facing in relation to Universal Credit – free school meals and funding. He said that funding depended on free school meals and pupils in the school, but with the £20 reduction it's omitting a lot of people out of Universal Credit and felt that this was going to cause havoc with a lot of the schools funding and a huge hole in schools budgets.

He proposed that the Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development make contact with local schools and take forward with the Department for Education on issues relating to reduction of Universal Credit on funding for schools. Also the whole funding mechanism for funding for schools needs to be looked at as it was a complete farce for people living in poverty in order to provide an education for their children. The situation is the more children a school has in poverty, the better budget they get and surely this should not be the way to move forward in the future as there was an onus to keep people out of poverty, not to keep them in it to keep the schools open.

The Chair concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments and stated that the same sentiments had been raised with him also.

Councillor Kerr agreed with Councillor Monteith and stated that he had also been contacted by parents and teachers as the £20 was a major lifeline to some families and to see the Tory Government withdraw it was quite ironic when there was a Tory MP complaining about seeking a pay-rise when he was earning in excess of £80k. He felt that these types of people were disillusioned and not au fait with hardship and dealing with low and economical issues.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council:

- (i) To approve to approve the venue/facility funding support.
- (ii) That the Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development make contact with local schools and take forward with the Department for Education on issues relating to reduction of Universal Credit having on funding for schools.

(iv) Community Development

Noted.

Matters for Information

D183/21 Special Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 2 September 2021

Members noted Special Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 2 September 2021.

D184/21 Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 September 2021

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 September 2021.

Councillor McNamee enquired about the current status of the 5 Year Play Park Strategy and the roll out of Year 1.

The Head of Parks advised that all proposals had been submitted in relation to the 5 Year Play Park Strategy. He advised that Procurement department had received a number of interested companies through the framework with regard to Expressions of Interest and were now in the process of uploading our tender specification onto the framework with regard to the actual process of preparing the submissions from the companies. He confirmed that things had progressed with the initial stages of the 5 Year Strategy.

Councillor Kerr referred to D163/21 – Washingbay Walkway and advised that he still hadn't received an update. He said that he raised this issue at last month's Development Committee meeting and also at full Council and was extremely disappointed.

He also referred to D160/21 – Economic Development report and alluded to comments made by Councillor Monteith and the Chair regarding the shortage of haulage drivers which was affecting Ireland. He asked if it would be possible to liaise with local secondary schools, colleges and representatives from local haulage industries to see what the Council could do as a local authority to try and entice young people, people on low income or unemployed to become HGV drivers to try and take a new approach on the issue as there was huge shortcomings of recruitment into the industry.

He felt that due to a huge shortage of HGV drivers regionally, the Council should be exploring heavily subsidised lessons and testing for young people and unemployed as every other trade had funded courses, so why not haulage as it was an expensive endeavour beyond many.

Councillor Monteith referred to item D158/21 in relation to Christmas Events and ongoing issues in Dungannon.

He said that every single day there seemed to be a new company opening up roads, blockages and temporary traffic lights and said that Dungannon is a complete and utter mess currently with traffic works on almost every main road in around the town, housing estates/developments. He stated that people were bemused with the digging up of footpaths and was aware of one footpath being dug up every week for four weeks by four different organisations which was scandalous. He said that Council were trying to encourage traders and run events which looked like a ring of steel trying to get into the town in relation to temporary traffic lights and road works which was farcical.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith

That a Dungannon DEA meeting be held with the upmost urgency with Road Officials and with whatever companies that's responsible for road works. Officers to investigate concerns beforehand rather than waiting for full Council endorsement.

He said that our Economic Development team and Councillors needed to see Road Service and Utility Companies responsible around the table as no-one can give him a straight answer on why this was happening right now, week on week leaving housing estates and footpaths in a complete mess, with construction debris being left lying around the streets and was sure that other members maybe also getting complaints.

He felt that this issue needed to be taken very seriously otherwise there was going to be a very disappointing Christmas for the traders of Dungannon as people will not make their way into town whilst they have to face this onslaught on a daily basis at the minute.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

He said that it was ridiculous to see the destruction caused by these road works on people's daily lives, being hemmed in, not getting in or out and no disabled access along footpaths and agreed that this was an upmost urgency.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that a Dungannon DEA meeting be held with the upmost urgency with Road Officials and Utility Companies which were responsible for road works. Officers to investigate concerns beforehand rather than waiting for full Council endorsement.

Councillor Wilson advised that this same issue was also raised at the Environment meeting on Tuesday night past by Councillor Cuthbertson where it was agreed that this be the same process. He said that he also had received complaints regarding this and that a road in Cookstown had also been closed for a fourth time which was outrageous. Last Monday Cookstown DEA held a meeting with Gas to the West contractors regarding the road closure to make their feelings known although he would be unsure whether Councillors concerns were listened to or not. He stated that the contractors had alluded to a huge push being put on as there was a moratorium by the end of November as they could not continue on with works after this date and agreed with previous proposal to get them in front of us.

Councillor Cuddy said that he agreed with the sentiments of the previous speakers.

He advised that Councillor Wilson referred last month to SGN who were targeting Cookstown and Dungannon areas and mostly businesses foremost. He said that quite a few residents had applied online within different areas but very few people seem to be able to get connected to the gas and felt that this was the first organisation who came and started to dig up the roads and footpaths several years ago. He said that last month it was suggested that the Council organise a meeting or source information to see how many residents actually connected up as traders and people who utilise the town could understand it better if they could see a dividend at the end, but said that he wasn't confident of the numbers connected up to the gas network in Dungannon. He said that utility companies were not digging up the streets and footpaths for nothing and would eventually be of benefit in the long term, but such a pity that so much was happening at once. He advised that the utility companies usually fix up the roads and footpaths reasonably well afterwards but more of a concern was the dirt and debris which was left behind and likened to walking through a mucky field. He referred to new road from Killyman Road to Moy Park which was resurfaced less than a year ago after gas pipes installed into houses and although the road surface seems good, residents were being constantly tortured with the noise of empty heavy Lorries going past due to the uneven surface of the road. He agreed that there was a lot of work to be done regarding this issue and agreed with previous speakers that this needed addressed as it was a huge issue for the Council to deal with as soon as possible.

Councillor Burton agreed with Councillor Wilson about the concern being raised at Environment Committee and whilst travelling home on Tuesday night after the meeting and although being aware of signs at the traffic lights in Dungannon, felt it was like a minefield. She said that local people were probably aware of the situation of the traffic lights but for people from outside the area this could be very confusing and very poor on behalf of these utility companies to continue to carry on the work.

She referred to comments made by Councillor Kerr in relation to the lorry drivers and going forward how the Council could assist them and felt that another matter which should be investigated was the regulations around CPC training and the astronomical cost and

how often it has to be renewed, every few years which adds extra financial burden and very off putting for people. She said that it was tough enough to keep a vehicle on the road with raising costs of fuel and maintenance and criteria around the working hours drivers were allowed to drive and asked if this could also be considered.

Councillor Ashton also followed up on comments made by Councillor Kerr in relation to the shortage of HGV drivers. She said that it was quite apparent around Dungannon area the shortage of employees across industry and felt that it may be worthwhile investigating the wider piece through Economic Development on how to support employers on how to attract people especially now that the furlough scheme has ended. She said that some companies had tried to open up again but hadn't the workforce and felt in the short term this may help some of these industries which were struggling at the minute.

The Chair agreed that it would be worthwhile having engagement to see what assistance could be provided to help these industries.

Councillor Monteith referred to D159/21 in relation to Department for Health Consultation on the Integrated Care System and enquired if there was an update. He also referred to meeting with GP providers as there was another 3 to 4 weeks of frustration and distress from local residents unable to access GP services either through normal working hours or Out of Hours with the service continually being based in Craigavon which was unacceptable. He referred to the recent news about funding being made available in for people in London and listening to them saying that it was the right for a patient to have a face to face appointment with their GP if they so wish, but this was most certainly not the case in this area and presumably in other areas as well. He was keen to see if there was any update on the two meetings as he was receiving phone calls each day, but was concerned about a phone call from a distressed family on Tuesday which were told that a relative of theirs had to go to hospital immediately, ambulance sent for the patient at 12.30 pm and at 9 pm that night their relative was still waiting in the ambulance outside Craigavon Hospital with a row of ambulances all waiting and people wonder why there were no ambulances available. He said that our Health Service was a mess, it was creaking and collapsing around us and the solution seems to be that the Southern Trust keeps sucking all the services into Craigavon and Daisy Hill and let the rest of the areas wither on the vine.

The Chair advised that he had contacted the Trust regarding the Out of Hours services at South Tyrone Hospital this week which was referred back that no decision had been made. He was advised that the Chair of the Council had written to the Trust asking the same question and was told that he should refer back the answer the Chair was going to receive. He said that was as good as it got and no further forward unfortunately.

The Assistant Director of Development, Strategic Community Development advised that was the response in relation to Southern Trust but stated that Officers would continue to follow this up. In regard to the two meetings, there hasn't been any dates finalised but this would be followed up and would stress the urgency of these.

Councillor Monteith advised that the Northern Trust and Southern Trust normally meet members before Christmas and suggested that rather than received their nice, glossy report which tries to portray how wonderful a job they are doing and felt if they were to

come this time, then an agreed Agenda should be agreed to carry out a proper discussion rather than members sitting listening to a PR exercise.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith

That it be recommended to Council that an agreed Agenda be drawn up between the Trust and Council on important issues members wished to be discussed relating to what people were dealing with on the ground.

Councillor Doris agreed with Councillor Monteith's comments and said that an agreed Agenda would be much more time efficient for everyone involved. She said members were due to meet the Northern Trust next Tuesday 19 October.

Councillor Kerr said that he would be happy to second Councillor Monteith's proposal and agreed with what he had said about the Trust coming to Council trying to make out they were doing a world-class job and all Councillors were aware on a daily basis that this was far from the truth. He stated that people needed to have access to healthcare as a lot of people were veering towards private clinics which was an absolute farce as it was our human right to have entitlement to healthcare. He said that everyone had conversations with family and friends around long term health problem or injuries and most likely have no other option but to go privately which was also an added financial burden.

Seconded by Councillor Kerr

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that an agreed Agenda be drawn up between the Trust and Council on important issues members wished to be discussed relating to what people were dealing with on the ground.

Councillor Elattar said that she could understand the problems people had experienced attending the Northern Trust and Southern Trust as she had personally experienced it herself over the last few weeks, but felt that the ultimate responsibility lay with the Minister for Health and felt that this was who the Council should really be targeting. She said that the Trusts were doing their best to work underneath the guidelines of the Department for Health and the finance they receive and felt if this issue was to be addressed properly, then the Council should be talking to the Department for Health and not the Trusts.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar

To make contact with the Minister for Health to address the important issues which needed addressing.

Seconded by Councillor Molloy

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to also make contact with the Minister for Health to try and address the issue of healthcare concerns.

Councillor Burton referred to D151/21 Chair's Business and enquired if there was any update or response on the issue she had raised regarding the pregnant mothers and birthing pools at Craigavon Area Hospital.

The Strategic Director of Environment advised that she would investigate the matter and provide a response to Councillor Burton.

The Chief Executive referred to the two health issues which were raised by members and advised that Officers would investigate to see where they currently were and any correspondence received would be shared with members. In relation to GP meeting, he advised that he had two dates in his diary which was being worked upon but just waiting on confirmation. He said that he would endeavor to firm up the days this week and share any progress with members.

Councillor Kerr sought an update regarding Washingbay Walkway fencing.

The Head of Parks said that he was aware that Councillor Kerr was seeking further information regarding this and said that Officers were working the best they could in relation to getting this resolved and were sourcing the funding for that. He said that he hoped to provide a complete report but reassured the member that this was progressing on the basis that additional funding was sourced to pay for the works 100% and hoped that these works could be extended to the existing contractual arrangements onsite. He said at the moment it was looking positive the works could be conducted over the next number of weeks at no additional cost to the Council.

D185/21 Economic Development OBF1

Members noted update on key activities as detailed below:

- Coalisland Great Places Project
- Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2021
- DfC Revitalisation Scheme 2021/2022 – Coalisland Town Centre

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes referred to the shortage of skilled staff in many local businesses raised by members earlier in this meeting and at the previous committee meeting. She advised that the Consultant appointed by Council to develop Mid Ulster's new Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan had been made aware of these issues and would ensure these were considered in the new Plan. She stated that Mid Ulster's first meeting of the LMP was due to convene in October 2021 and invitations would be issued shortly. She added that there is still a few political parties who have yet to nominate their representatives to the Mid Ulster LMP and once this happens, the first meeting will be convened. The issues relating to the shortage of HGV drivers, and staff shortages in the manufacturing, engineering, agri-food sectors, etc. would all be taken on board and discussed at the LMP meeting.

D186/21 Leisure Disability Provision

Members noted update which outlined the current provision in leisure centres for those with additional needs (minute reference: C154/21).

D187/21 Master Plan/Business Case - Maghera Walkways

Members noted update on the appointment of Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI) to develop a Master Plan/Business Case for the potential development of lands between Mullagh Road/Tobermore Road as an outdoor recreational green space for the Maghera area.

Councillor Black said that it was good to see this project moving forward and a real opportunity to provide some quality open space to the residents of Maghera and the surrounding areas and was looking forward to seeing the concepts coming forward in due course.

Live broadcast ended at 8.35 pm

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Burton 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 D188/21 to D189/21.

Matters for Decision

D188/21 Davagh Forest Mountain Bike Trails – TRPSI Application

Matters for Information

D189/21 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 September 2021

D190/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.45 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 please raise your hand in the normal way and keep raised until advised to lower it
- 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.



MIDAS

Mid Ulster

Advice Services

Overview of service provision
from
01 April 2019-30 Sept. 2021

What did we say we would do?

We undertook to provide across all 5 levels of advice provision:

1. Basic access to information
2. Interpretation of information
3. Assistance to act on information
4. Advocacy and representation
5. Challenging policy

How much did we do?

- + **Total Number of Unique Individuals over the period: 7,000 +**
- Average enquiry per individual client over per year: 09
- Average contact with each client per enquiry =1.43
- Average no. of contacts per unique client = 11.5

April 2020- April 2021 snapshot

Welfare Topic / Issue	Numbers
Welfare Benefits – all types	23321
Debt including DROs, Debt Management Plans, IVAs	265
Housing	2846
Immigration	1061
Legal rights	173
Family issues	645
Employment rights	5891
Education advice	363
Health and mental health	489
Tax	162
Consumer	359

How well did we do it

Complaints:

- + Year 1: – 4
- + Year 2: - 2
- + Year 3 - 1.
- + Client feedback:
- + 96% satisfaction with support received.
- + 87% satisfaction with outcome

Staff Support and Training

Happy workers are productive workers

All staff are:

provided with regular supervision & 1-1 Support

Regular updates and training on changes in policy & legislation

Access to health and mental health support

Individual work station and Advice Pro licence

Challenges Areas for Improvement

Challenges:

Cookstown & Magherafelt Office

Electoral area targets

Impact of Pandemic

Solutions & improvements

Relocation & Upgrade

Research on underlying reasons
and adaptations to these – review

Reviewed; adapted remote and
blended service ; reviewed holistic
STEP provision to best need holistic
need

Covid Impact on clients and Service.

Covid did not create inequality but it deepened and widened it

Increase in

- + Poverty
- + Financial crisis and hardship
- + Emotional Stress and Mental Health concerns
- + Also increase in
- + Community Support and Shared Work

Added value to MIDAS

STEP also provides:

- Internal referral to and from MIDAS to:
- Welfare Reform and Debt Advice;
- Homelessness support
- Family Support
- Access to crisis hardship/ prevention of destitution funds
- Immigrant and | Migrant Worker Integration Support



Thank You

Questions?