

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 16 February 2023 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means**

**Members Present**

Councillor Clarke, Chair

Councillors Ashton, Black, Corry\*, Cuddy, Doris\*, Elattar\*, Kerr, McNamee\*, Martin\*, Milne\*, Molloy\*(7.02 pm), Monteith, Quinn\*, Wilson

**Officers in Attendance**

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

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

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

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

Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer

**Others in Attendance**

Councillor McKinney (7.17 pm)\*\*\*

Agenda Item 4 – Deputation Mid Ulster Red Squirrel Association

Mr McAleese – Chairperson\*\*\*

Ms Donnelly – Vice Chairperson\*\*\*

\* 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.*

**D020/23 Notice of Recording**

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

**D021/23 Apologies**

Councillor Burton.

## **D022/23      Declarations of Interest**

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

## **D023/23      Chair's Business**

None.

## **D024/23      Deputation – Mid Ulster Red Squirrel Association**

The Chair, Councillor Clarke welcomed Mr McAleese and Ms Donnelly from Mid Ulster Red Squirrel Association to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr McAleese outlined the mission statement of the group which is to work together, with Council, to support the under-threat native red squirrel population and their ever-shrinking habitat; for the benefit of contributing to the wider Irish and UK red squirrel conservation efforts, and helping empower the entire community to make lasting, positive change.

Mr McAleese also outlined the aims and objectives of the group which is to –

- Monitor and study red squirrels in their natural habitat. Encouraging the red squirrel population to grow by ensuring their environmental needs are met. The removal of the invasive grey squirrel via regulated, safe, and humane trapping / dispatch methods.
- Educate the general public, landowners and statutory and voluntary bodies on how to create and maintain an environment that is sympathetic to red squirrel survival.
- Raise funds in order to facilitate the groups purposes.
- Ensure close collaboration with our allies in the red squirrel community, along with all associated groups and organisations, situated right across the island of Ireland.

Ms Donnelly highlighted how the red squirrel population from 1945 to 2010 has changed and diminished and that the population is dying out. Ms Donnelly stated it is important to work together to help protect the red squirrel now and for future generations. Ms Donnelly stated it is imperative that current red squirrel populations are supported through subsistence feeding and habitat protection and expansion along with an increase in grey squirrel removal efforts. Ms Donnelly stated that things need to change and that whilst the Mid Ulster Red Squirrel Group is here to help bring about that change, it is only with full support and backing of Council, Forestry Service, and other associated public bodies that it can save the red squirrel.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke thanked Ms Donnelly and Mr McAleese for their informative presentation and stated that Davagh was one of the first places he had seen a red squirrel and for the group to keep up the good work.

Councillor Corry stated it was frightening to see how the red squirrel population has dwindled over the years and thanked the group for their hard work and dedication in saving the red squirrel. The Councillor stated that habitat and tree planting go hand in hand with this and that Council and Councillors should be supportive of the hard work being done. Councillor Corry referred to the groups difficulties with opening a bank account and advised that sometimes credit unions can help with this. The Councillor stated that Mid Ulster is a beautiful area and that having the possibility of a red squirrel trail is an exciting opportunity as well.

Councillor Molloy thanked the representatives for their presentation and stated he was impressed with the groups dedication to restoring the red squirrel. The Councillor stated that the opening of bank accounts is an ongoing issue for a number of community groups but that some literature or sharing the video shown tonight would be helpful to get the message out to the community and community groups so they can encourage people to support the red squirrel and discourage the grey.

Councillor Quinn stated that he had probably seen more mink around where he lived outside Coalisland than red squirrels and stated that the group did not have an easy task but should be encouraged in their efforts. The Councillor referred to the introduction of the pine marten and that this seemed to help the red squirrel population in areas where they had been brought in and asked if this is something which has been considered in the Mid Ulster area. Councillor Quinn stated he would be happy to support the group any way he could and felt that Council as an organisation should also be supportive of the group and increasing the red squirrel population in the Mid Ulster area.

Ms Donnelly advised that there have been a couple of red squirrel sightings in Drumcairne Forest.

Councillor McNamee stated the group were carrying out great work and asked if the pine marten is a threat to the red squirrel as well as the grey and what other eradication methods are being used to remove the grey squirrel. The Councillor also asked if there are any red squirrels in Drum Manor Forest.

Ms Donnelly stated that whilst there have not been any sightings of the red squirrel in Drum Manor there is potential for the future and that the group were awaiting the outcome of an Ulster Wildlife study.

Mr McAleese stated that the feedback and interaction from the public has been phenomenal to date and sightings of red squirrel are beginning to be submitted from across the District and from areas which were previously prolific with the grey squirrel. Mr McAleese stated that the pine marten populations have been increasing and that with further studies it is hoped to get a clearer picture of where the pine marten are residing. Mr McAleese stated that the group are of the opinion that there are a lot more red squirrel and pine marten in the District than what is known about now and that further investigations should be able to prove this.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke stated he had a great interest in what the group are doing and that in Creggan Forest close to where he lives there have been sightings of red squirrels. Councillor Clarke stated he would do whatever he could to support the group.

*Ms Donnelly and Mr McAleese withdrew from the meeting at 7.25 pm.*

## **Matters for Decision**

### **D025/23      Development Report**

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

- Rolling Community Grants
- Good Relations Plan 2023-24
- TEO Refugee Support Programme
- Development Update

In addition to the report the AD: Dev advised that Council have been approached with regard to the Northern Ireland Refugee Scheme and looking at a project with key partners. The AD: Dev advised that a proposal regarding refugee support was prepared and submitted in liaison with STEP. The AD: Dev advised that an allocation of £133,015 has been recommended in relation to support for refugees up until March 2024 on the basis that Council allocate the monies to the partner who will deliver the programme and that monitoring will be through to the TEO Office.

The AD: Dev advised that a letter of support has been sought by Early Years regarding a Peace Plus application to develop the proposed community hub project at the old workhouse in Clogher. The AD: Dev also referred to request received from Poetry Ireland who are undertaking a climate change project on a cross border basis and are seeking a letter of support from Council in relation to the project including some help with linkages to key artists.

Councillor Monteith referred to the the Tbuc scheme and 25% match funding which comes from Council and asked how much this works out at.

The AD: Dev advised that Council match fund £103,000.

Councillor Monteith asked if officers were of the opinion that the money was well spent the last time.

The AD: Dev advised that in relation to the programme Council would have had good outcomes and feedback from the TEO Office and that they would have been supportive in relation to all the activity undertaken. The AD: Dev advised that in the past couple of years activity has also been tied into the community plan. The AD: Dev stated that the poverty initiative started out of the Good Relations Plan and was successful during Covid as partnerships had been established and therefore officers were able to act quickly at that time.

Councillor Monteith stated there was other funding within Tbuc which was outside of Council remit and he did not see a lot of evidence of the outcomes. The Councillor felt it would be worth officers discussing this with Tbuc and referred to housing associations and that residents cannot get their heating or windows fixed but that there are grants for face painters. Councillor Monteith stated he was not against community activity however tenants are entitled to a decent home. Councillor Monteith proposed the report but in addition proposed that the advisory groups be brought in to discuss other Tbuc funding streams. In relation to the Clogher Community Hub proposal, Councillor Monteith stated that there needs to be adequate memorial to those who lost their lives within the confines of the workhouse there similar to that at South Tyrone Hospital. Councillor Monteith stated that it was good to see the old workhouse building in Clogher being kept in life to work for the community in 2023 but that no one should forget the suffering and horrors that went on within the walls of that building.

Councillor Molloy seconded the proposal to adopt the report and also seconded the proposal for Council to engage with Tbuc groups as there is good work done in relation to inclusivity but that he felt there is also some daft money spent. The Councillor stated he did not know how much control Council would have in relation to this but that he felt if Council is involved then it should have a say.

In response to Councillor Ashton, the AD: Dev advised that the requests for letters of support had come in since the report was written. The AD: Dev stated that the letter of support in relation to Peace Plus application for Clogher Hub was urgent but that the other request could be brought back next month if Members preferred.

Councillor Ashton asked that the requests be emailed to Members.

Councillor Monteith stated he was happy to amend his proposal that the request for letter of support for Poetry Ireland be considered next month. The Councillor stated he was content for the letter of support in relation to Clogher Hub would go ahead as the project has been presented to Members previously and that this letter would be a continuation of Council's support.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke proposed that there was also a job of work to be done in relation to Magherafelt Workhouse.

Councillor Monteith seconded Councillor Clarke's proposal.

Councillor Wilson stated he supported the comments in relation to bringing in the Tbuc groups, especially the housing associations.

The SD: C&P stated that Tbuc is a central government strategy and the policy lead is the Executive office who oversee the whole strategy including the Council Good Relations Programme. The SD: C&P asked if Members were asking that the Executive Office come to Council to discuss how other elements of Tbuc funding work.

The AD: Dev clarified it was the housing associations who prepare housing plans Members wanted to invite to come in for discussion.

The SD: C&P stated that officers can look at this and invite the relevant parties to a future meeting.

Councillor Corry referred to proposal in relation to Magherafelt Workhouse and advised of request received regarding commemorative piece at this location and asked that Council look at this.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- To approve the assessment panel recommendations under the Good Relations Grant as outlined at appendix 1 of report.
  - To approve the Good Relations Plan 2023-2024 as outlined at appendix 2 of report.
  - To invite relevant parties to a future meeting to discuss other elements of Tbuc funding.
  - To approve the allocation of £133,015 for the TEO Refugee Support Programme up until March 2024.
  - To issue letter of support to Early Years in relation to Peace Plus application for Clogher Valley Community Hub. Letter of support for Poetry Ireland to be considered at next month's meeting.
  - To recognise the suffering of those who lost their lives within Clogher and Magherafelt Workhouses and assist with memorials at these sites.
  - To note Development Department Update.

#### **D026/023 Sports Representative Grants**

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for Sports Representative Grant – Individuals (January 2023).

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconeded by Councillor McNamee and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the sports grant allocations as outlined in appendix 1 of report.

#### **D027/23 Health, Leisure and Wellbeing Scale of Charges 2023/24**

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which outlined the proposed scale of charges for April 2023-March 2024 for the Health, Leisure and Wellbeing service and sought approval to implement same from 1 April 2023.

Councillor Kerr proposed the scale of charges as set out.

Councillor Kerr stated that a constituent had approached him in relation to cervical smear testing and that she had a test last October but has received no result. The Councillor stated this was concerning as residents need access to testing quickly so that any abnormalities can be dealt with. Councillor Kerr proposed that Council

make contact with Southern Trust in relation to cervical smear testing, the importance of these tests and having them dealt with quickly.

Councillor Cuddy seconded Councillor Kerr's proposal and asked if income into leisure centres has stayed the same or dropped from the year before to last year.

The AD: HL&W advised that the 2020/21 was a challenging year for everyone and income did drop during that year due to closures and Covid restrictions. The AD: HL&W advised that the 2021/22 and 2022/23 years are on a par and whilst not quite at the peak of pre covid level income he stated that the revised income projections will be met and that this will be kept under review. The AD: HL&W stated it is hoped that the freezing of charges will go some way to maintaining confidence and that facilities will be affordable to users.

Councillor Cuddy stated that the issue of income in leisure centres was one of the issues raised during the rates process. The Councillor stated that the officer seemed to be hopeful that income will come back to somewhere near where it was pre covid. Councillor Cuddy stated that leisure centres are an important part of Council's business and if the income is not there it puts more pressure on other things.

Councillor Molloy stated it was important to strike a balance in having pricing at a rate that Council is competitive and facilities being used rather than over pricing.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- To approve the Health, Leisure and Wellbeing Scale of Charges 2023/24 as set out at appendix 1 of report.
  - To write to Southern Trust in relation to cervical smear testing and the importance of having these tests carried out and results coming back in a timely manner.

#### **D028/23 Commencement of Sections 1-12 of the Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022**

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which provided update on the new provisions of the Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 commencing on 1 April 2023 and sought approval to set fixed penalty levels for certain offences under said Act.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to note the new legislative powers for Council in relation to the private rented sector and to give approval for Officers to enforce by way of fixed penalty levels at £500 for offences detailed as per sections 3.5 through to section 3.10 of report.

Councillor Monteith stated that this is statutory legislation which Council did not have a lot of say over. The Councillor referred to the fixed penalties for non registered landlords and asked how many these fines have been issued since the legislation was brought in.

The SD: C&P advised that the number of fixed penalties issued would not be available tonight but that the Member could be advised of the figure in the coming days.

Councillor Monteith stated that tenants are struggling and felt that if Council does have powers to enact and enforce tenant rights it should be pro active in letting people know that they can contact Council in relation to these issues. The Councillor stated that the promotion of these rights needs to be done in a number of languages and should be carried out every couple of months. Councillor Monteith stated that the vast majority of private tenancies are dealt with through agents and suggested that all those tenants should be provided with the legislative powers of Council. Councillor Monteith proposed writing to all agents asking for information on anyone they know who is facilitating a private rental property and is not registered. The Councillor stated that Council needs to find landlords who are not registered and should be encouraging tenants that they do have recourse to Environmental Health in relation to fitness and the standard of housing. Councillor Monteith proposed that detail on the number of fines for non registered landlords be provided, that new tenant rights are promoted and that this is done regularly and in different languages. Councillor Monteith further proposed that letting agents are asked to include the new rights within new private lets that they are involved in and that letting agents are asked to work with Council to ensure all landlords are registered. The Councillor stated that Council should support tenants because when tenants complain about housing this can often lead to eviction. The Councillor stated that this is a chance for Council to take the lead in relation to housing standards and make a difference in peoples lives.

Councillor Corry seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

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

- To provide detail in relation to number of fines issued for non registered landlords since legislation was brought in.
- To promote new tenant rights and that this be done regularly and in different languages.
- To ask letting agents to include the new rights in new private lets that they are involved in and ask them to work with Council to ensure all landlords are registered.

## **D029/23 Pitch and Recreational Spaces Strategy**

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which sought approval to adopt the proposed Pitch and Recreational Spaces Five Year Strategic Plan.

The Chair, Councillor Clarke stated this is a good piece of work which needed to be done and provides a framework for the future.

Councillor Molloy thanked the officer for the comprehensive report and stated that the report identifies what a lot of Members already know but that it helps to see where the gaps are and that the report will be a useful tool going forward. The Councillor stated that community provision tends to be largely in the GAA and rugby



sector where these clubs are providing their own facilities and that Council has to find a way of supporting those clubs and those communities by helping them maintain and grow their facilities for the betterment of the community. In terms of the schools sector Councillor Molloy stated that there is a realisation for schools in that it makes sense to open up their facilities out of hours and that this can be a revenue stream for them. The Councillor stated it is important to engage with school principals and Boards of Governors on this matter to make them aware that Council is interested in working with them to open up their facilities and the benefits that this can bring. Councillor Molloy stated that the facilities tend to be at secondary level schools but that there is also scope to engage with primary level as well. Councillor Molloy stated that there is ongoing work to be done but that the report forms a good start and proposed the report recommendations.

Councillor Ashton referred to the partnership working of Council and stated that she found this is the best way of delivering in rural communities. The Councillor spoke in relation to Council partnership with DfC and Aughnacloy College to deliver a state of the art sports facility in Aughnacloy. Councillor Ashton referred to page 233 of the report which states that the use of the facility is three hours by two organisations and advised that the site opened in 2018 and that since Covid restrictions have lifted the site is thriving every night of the week and is used from 7am every Saturday with usage including soccer, gaelic and rugby. The Councillor stated that this is testament to the effort put in by the community, Council and the Department to show that the facility is needed in the area and that the community have taken ownership of it. Councillor Ashton highlighted through the report the usage of the grass pitch in Aughnacloy and that this facility has had no bookings and that alternative use can be considered at that location. The Councillor referred to the growth of the facility at Aughnacloy and stated that Ulster Rugby have come on board with the school and would also seek the support of Council to make Aughnacloy College a hub for the west. Councillor Ashton stated this is a huge coo for the Council that an organisation such as Ulster Rugby want to invest in this area and see the benefit of the Aughnacloy site. The Councillor stated that the investment in Aughnacloy and the benefit this has given young boys in particular resulted in Aughnacloy College boys winning the School Cup for the first time and that this is a direct result of being able to access the facilities in Aughnacloy. Councillor Ashton seconded Councillor Molloy's proposal and further proposed that in order to progress the Ulster Rugby project that Council move to engage with the EA ahead of March P&R Committee in order to progress the Ulster Rugby hub project in Aughnacloy.

Councillor Wilson stated that MUSA is centre of excellence within Mid Ulster and referred to the pitches only achieving a 'good' assessment and that this needed to improve. The Councillor stated that the part of the report he was disappointed in was that of hockey. Councillor Wilson stated that Cookstown Hockey Club play in the highest league and that this Council offers nothing to the sport. The Councillor referred to the indoor arena which some of the hockey clubs use during the year but that this is only for practice and stated that there was an overall lack of facilities provided by Council for hockey. Councillor Wilson asked that officers meet with representatives of the hockey clubs to discuss a way forward.

Councillor Black seconded Councillor Ashton's proposal.

Councillor Monteith stated he had no difficulty with what was within the report but agreed with the comments in relation to inaccuracies in relation to usage. Councillor Monteith referred to page 113 of the report and the assertion that GAA is a Spring and Summer sport, the Councillor stated that nothing could be further from the truth. Councillor Monteith stated that there is a severe lack of GAA pitches across Mid Ulster and highlighted provision for soccer is 57 pitches to facilitate 491 participants, rugby has 17 pitches to facilitate 1084 participants and GAA has 122 pitches to facilitate 14348 participants. The Councillor stated he was not suggesting that Council have the resources or capital ability to meet that demand but that he was frustrated that the report does not outline projection demand for any sport. Councillor Monteith stated that Council is in the process of producing a Development Plan and that a projection of pitches is needed, particularly in urban areas and that land needs to be zoned for this. *Councillor Monteith declared an interest that he is involved in the GAA in an urban context.* The Councillor stated he accepted that Council cannot finance everything but that clubs needed to be given the chance to expand in any sport. Councillor Monteith stated that if Council is serious at promoting health and fitness from a young age then the facilities need to be in the areas that people live in. The Councillor expressed disappointment that there didn't seem to be any recognition of the Development Plan and how the growth of a club can be facilitated. Councillor Monteith proposed some work in relation to this and that officers engage with planning. Councillor Monteith also stated Council should not be approving planning permission for any school which does not have recreational space and highlighted that some of the biggest primary schools in the area have no green space within their curtilage. The Councillor stated he was disappointed the report did not go further as it has taken a long time to get to this stage and that going forward officers needed to consider the Development Plan and engage with planners on this.

Councillor Kerr supported the comments raised by Councillors Monteith and Molloy and that he knew from being involved with his local club the clashes there can be between teams regarding usage of facilities. Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

The SD: C&P thanked Members for their input and stated that with any strategy the evidence and consultation is a snapshot in time and that this is used as the baseline to understand what needs to be done to meet current demand. The SD: C&P assured Members that on moving through the delivery of the strategy the baseline figures will be reviewed to ensure future proofing and that the work that is delivered as part of the strategy helps longer term need. The SD: C&P stated that the work in relation to schools is important and that there is work ongoing with schools across the District to look at projects to open up school sites for community use and that hopefully there will be more of this activity ongoing throughout the strategy. The SD: C&P stated that the strategy cuts across five sporting codes and that hockey is one of these codes. The SD: C&P stated that there is some recognition in terms of the work that is needed in relation to local hockey clubs but that there are also opportunities across all of the sporting clubs to work together to help them move forward with their own aspirations. The SD: C&P advised that once financing is released updates on the strategy will be provided to Committee.

Councillor Wilson referred to the officer's comments in relation to consultations with groups and that this will be a rolling process. The Councillor stated hockey is mentioned but that there is nothing within the strategy for that sport. Councillor Wilson stated he felt it would be useful to have a meeting with Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt hockey clubs to give them some reassurance.

The SD: C&P took on board the Councillors comments and stated that within the action plan there are SLA partnership arrangements identified around the hockey clubs and that the clubs will be brought on board and that there will be further conversations with them regarding how Council can support them and their aspirations. The SD: C&P reassured Councillor Wilson that hockey will not be forgotten about under the strategy.

Councillor Wilson stated that what the officer had outlined needs to be beefed up so that the hockey clubs see something for them within the strategy.

The AD: HL&W stated that over the last number of years hockey have been able to avail of the schools facilities access fund and confirmed that the strategy seeks to formalise arrangements with Cookstown and Dungannon Hockey clubs. The AD: HL&W advised that the survey taken in 2021 was a snapshot in time and that this is a first time inventory and that the figures obtained then need to be used as a platform to build on for the future.

*Councillor Monteith left the meeting at 8.23 pm*

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- To approve the Pitch and Recreational Spaces Five Year Strategic Plan;
  - To recommend to the Policy & Resources Committee that the Pitch & Recreational Strategy 2023 -2028 is included as part of the Council capital programme and the required capital financing allocated (£4,273,792).
  - Consideration of the additional re-current revenue costs (approx. £76k per annum) as part of the 24/25 rates estimates and beyond.
  - To engage with the EA, in advance of the March P&R Committee, to progress the Ulster Rugby hub project in Aughnacloy.
  - To recognise the Development Plan and engage with planners in relation to future growth provision of clubs, particularly in urban areas.
  - To engage with planners in relation to ensuring new schools have recreation space within their curtilage.

**D030/23      Funding offer from Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 2022-2023**

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report outlined a potential funding opportunity for the Environmental Health service from the OPSS for 'The Capacity & Capability Building Programme in Northern Ireland: Non-Food Products 2022'. Funding is for the period 1st July 2022 – 31st March 2023.

Councillor Wilson asked if this was a follow up to funding headed by Causeway Coast and Glens Council last year.

The AD: HL&W advised this funding was completely separate, that the funding is for consumer product safety work, items which may exist in each of the Council's work plans through Environmental Health and the opportunity to do some extra work between now and year end to support businesses in their obligations regarding product safety.

Councillor Wilson clarified if this had anything to do with the Protocol.

The AD: HL&W stated there was nothing mentioned within the documentation to suggest this and that a clear direction has been given by the funder that this is for non food consumer product safety work.

Councillor Kerr proposed the recommendation. Councillor Kerr advised that someone from the National Association of Drainage Contractors had contacted him in relation to shortage of staff within the industry and difficulties in accessing local labour and suggested that the local college and labour partnership tie in with them to offer access to training courses. The Councillor asked that officers make contact with this person in relation to same. Councillor Kerr also referred to European Social Fund which is coming to an end in the coming months and that there are residents who may be facing redundancy because of this. The Councillor asked that Council reach out to local colleges and trade unions to see if there is anything it can do to prevent job losses when the funding comes to an end.

Councillor McNamee seconded Councillor Kerr's proposal.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council
- (i) to accept the offer of funding from OPPS (up to a maximum of £55,000) in relation to activities undertaken in 2022/2023, and if accepted, that it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to sign and return the funding agreement between Mid Ulster District Council and the Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS); and
  - (ii) to engage with local colleges and Trade Unions regarding the cut to funding provided by the European Social Fund and for council to contact the National Association of Drainage Contractors to help alleviate labour's shortage and engaging with local education providers to see if courses can be provided.

## **D031/23      Economic Development Report - OBFD**

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

- Association of Town Centre Management – Membership Renewal

- Independent Evaluation of Council's Business Support Programme
- Lough Neagh Rescue (2022-2023) – Draft Service Level Agreement
- Sperrins Partnership Agreement
- Tourism Spring Campaign 2023

*Councillors Cuddy, Molloy and Wilson declared an interest in this item.*

Councillor Quinn proposed all the report recommendations and in particular the one for Lough Neagh Rescue as he stated they do great work. Councillor Quinn referred to the three Councils who contribute and asked if this used to be five.

The AD: EDT&SP stated that there are three main funders, these being the three Councils with the largest borders around the Lough.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Quinn's proposal.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal -**  
To renew its ATCM membership (January 2023 – January 2024) at a cost of £595 (excluding Vat).
- Independent Evaluation of Council's Business Support Programmes –**
- That officers proceed to seek competitive quotations to appoint a suitably qualified organisation/consultant to undertake an Independent Evaluation of Council's suite of Business Support Programmes, with costs to be funded from the 2023/24 economic development budget in the region of £15,000 (excl Vat).
  - That the Chief Executive be awarded delegated authority to appoint the successful organisation/consultant following the quotation exercise to allow work to commence as soon as possible.
- Lough Neagh Rescue (2022-2023) – Service Level Agreement -**
- To approve annual contribution of £12,000 to Lough Neagh Rescue from Council's 2022/2023 tourism budget;
  - To approve Mid Ulster District Council's Service Level Agreement with Lough Neagh Rescue (LNR) on Appendix 3, for the 2022-2023 financial year (subject to final review of SLA by Legal Services) and release the full payment to LNR once the Agreement has been signed and returned and Council provided with all the requisite documentation.
- Sperrins Partnership Agreement Approval -**  
To retract Mid Ulster Council's 2022/2023 Service Level Agreement for £22,000, issued earlier this year to Derry & Strabane Council (the Lead Council for Sperrins Partnership) and revert to make payments against the original Partnership Agreement dated 2020, until it expires in 2023, after which a new Agreement can be developed. This change has no material impact upon the delivery of the Sperrins Partnership Action Plan, but rather sought to align the governance arrangements with partners/organisations, funded from Council's economic development, tourism and strategic programmes service plan.
- Tourism Spring Campaign 2023 –**

To retrospectively approve the Tourism Spring Marketing Campaign and for the Chief Executive to sign and return Tourism NI's offer of funding totalling £20,000 for the Co-operative Partnership Marketing Fund, in order to meet the timeframe to return the Service Level Agreement by 31 January 2023. To also retrospectively approve provision of up to £7,000 match funding from Council's Tourism budget.

**D032/23 SOLACE Report on Strategic Funding Alignment**

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes (AD: EDT&SP) presented previously circulated report which provided an update on a SOLACE NI Report (prepared by Ekosgen), focusing on Strategic Funding Alignment to Map Investment Fund Opportunities in Northern Ireland.

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council -
- To endorse the Report and Investment Mapping Tool appended to this report, produced by Ekosgen.
  - To agree that officers use this report and the Investment Mapping Tool as a 'live' tool which should be updated as may be required to guide and inform the approach to funding opportunities.
  - To agree that officers consider the establishment of a process to continuously review and update the investment mapping tool, investment/funding opportunities and approved/committed projects internally and also across local government. Consideration should be given to the resource implications of introducing and maintaining this process.
  - To agree to share the final report as appropriate, with relevant partner organisations eg, Community Planning Partnerships, City and Growth Deal Board's etc.
  - To agree that Council pay an equal share of costs to SOLACE NI to fund development of the report, ie, £1,310.

**Matters for Information**

**D033/23 Minutes of Development Committee held on 12 January 2023**

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 12 January 2023.

Councillor Kerr asked if there was an update on the Altmore/Cappagh project and asked if officers can contact Forest Service as some people have been in contact with him regarding the trails and improving accessibility. Councillor Kerr referred to the Maghera Regeneration Project being successful in obtaining Levelling Up Funding and that Gortgonis Health and Community Hub wasn't and asked for update on the Gortgonis project.

The SD: C&P stated that in respect of the Altmore/Cappagh project there was funding through NIEA for masterplanning work but unfortunately a suitable contractor could not be secured for this work which means that it cannot be delivered before the end of the financial year. The SD: C&P advised that officers are looking at alternative plans of what can be done going into the new financial year. In relation to Gortgonis, the SD: C&P advised there was no further update from that which went to the Policy and Resources Committee but that officers are seeking to progress the enabling works agreed at the last Committee meeting and that further updates will be brought through the Policy and Resources Committee.

### **D034/23      Economic Development Report - OBF**

Members noted update on key activities as listed below:

- Dungannon Traders Association Proposal
- Levelling Up Fund Capital Funding (Round 2)
- Mid Ulster International Women's Day Events

*Live broadcast ended at 8.40 pm.*

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

Proposed by Councillor Wilson  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr 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 D035/23 to D039/23.

#### **Matters for Decision**

D035/23	Development Report – Arts (SHHP)
D036/23	Tender for the maintenance of play equipment and associated landscape works
D037/23	Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan
D038/23	Council Led Entrepreneurship Support Service – Shared Prosperity Fund Bid

#### **Matters for Information**

D039/23	Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 12 January 2023
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### **D040/23      Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 9.00 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



