

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council  
held on Thursday 13 May 2021 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,  
Magherafelt and by Virtual Means**

**Members Present**

Councillor McNamee, Chair

Councillors Ashton\*, Black, Burton\*, Clarke\*, Corry\*,  
Cuddy\*, Doris\*, Elattar\*, Hughes\*, Kearney\*, Kerr,  
Milne\*, Molloy\*, Monteith\*, Wilson\*

**Officers in  
Attendance**

Mr McCreesh\*\*, Chief Executive  
Ms Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation  
Mr Browne\*\*, Head of Tourism  
Mr Gordon, Head of Leisure  
Mr Hill\*\*, Head of Parks  
Ms Linney\*\*, Head of Community Development  
Mr McCance, Head of Culture and Arts  
Ms McKeown\*\*, Head of Economic Development  
Mr Greer, ICT Support  
Ms Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

**Others in  
Attendance**

Councillor S McGuigan\*\*\*

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

**D078/21      Apologies**

None.

**D079/21      Declarations of Interest**

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

## **D080/21      Chair's Business**

The Chair advised that this was his last meeting as Chair of the Development Committee and wanted to thank Officers and staff for all their help and support during what could only be described as a very difficult year. He also wanted to thank the Vice-Chair, Councillor Black and all members for their support as these meetings contributed towards plenty of good work being carried out for the good of the district and hoped that a corner was being turned for the better and wished the incoming Chair and Vice-Chair the very best for the year ahead.

Councillor Doris also thanked the Chair for his tremendous work throughout the past year during difficult circumstances and also the Vice-Chair and committee members for their valuable input.

Councillor Doris enquired if there was an update on the Ferry Bridge issue as this was something Sinn Féin had lobbied for a long time and was seeking to find out if the project had progressed any.

The Chief Executive advised that during a previous discussion it was agreed that Officers would go away and look at this as it was a legacy agreement and the Director of Public Health & Infrastructure had informed of a legal agreement between Craigavon Council and Dungannon Council in 2009. He said that it was his understanding that Craigavon were assuming the repair and maintenance responsibilities of the bridge, although it was agreed that any costs associated would be shared 50/50 with each of the two Councils being responsible for upgrading each of their own sides of the bridge by way of pedestrianisation, access and seating etc. with clarity being received by the Solicitor who had went through the legal agreement. Mid Ulster's side of the bridge had been looked at and the Head of Property Services was doing an exercise on terms of an upgrade and enhancement with any costings being carried out in conjunction with colleagues of ABC as there was an onus to have both sides of the bridge upgraded. He said that there was a hope that ABC would look at their side of the bridge and would encourage them to carry out a survey of the bridge to make sure it was still fit for purpose as they do need to be accessed every few years for health & safety and quality reasons. He said that he would be anticipate the Head of Property Services bringing back a report to the Environment Committee before the end of July as this was fairly imminent.

Councillor Doris thanked the Chief Executive and said that it was great to hear that progress was being made and also wanted to thank the determination of the local community on both sides of the bridge for their persistence on the matter.

Councillor Molloy enquired about the terms of ownership and whether there would be no transfer as Mid Ulster owns the Tyrone side of the river and anything would be transferred with no ambiguity there.

The Chief Executive advised that he had scanned the agreement himself, but the Director of Public Health & Infrastructure and the Head of Property Services were heavily involved in it and appeared that there was a clear responsibility for our side

and ABC for their side and a shared expenditure for any upgrade, maintenance and enhancement of the bridge.

Councillor Burton advised that she had raised this issue in the past regarding the bridge at Caledon from Craigavon side and had been approached by Caledon Regeneration Partnership who had asked her to raise the concern regarding the need for a general tidy up as it was in a dilapidated state. She advised that she had liaised with the Head of Property Services who indicated that he would go away and identify whose responsibility the bridge was and asked if there was any update and if there wasn't, could this be investigated as soon as possible.

The Chief Executive said that he would follow this issue up with the Head of Property Services as a matter of urgency and an update would be provided to the member.

#### **D081/21      Deputation – Killeeshil and Galbally First Responders**

Councillor Kerr advised that due to unforeseen circumstances the deputation from Killeeshil and Galbally First Responders could not make the meeting tonight to make their presentation.

The Chair asked that an invitation be reissued to Mr McCaughey inviting him back to a future meeting to make his presentation.

#### **D082/21      Regional and Minority Languages Bursary Programme 2021/22 and Irish Language Activity Funding Programme 2021/22**

The Head of Culture & Arts presented previously circulated report to:

1. Update Council on the proposed Regional and Minority Language Bursary programme 2021/22
2. Update Council on the proposed Irish Language Activity Funding Programme 2021/22
3. Seek decision from Council regarding approval to publicly advertise both programmes.

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to propose the recommendation as there had been a lot of people disappointed last year as courses and activities were cancelled due to Covid and hoped this year all being well that these would now go ahead as people would be delighted to get back to doing residential courses and for groups to organise events.

Councillor Monteith said that he would be happy to second the proposal, but wanted to highlight the issue of anti-Irish racism and the continuous attacks on the Irish language signage across the community. He said that he didn't want to see this escalating as there was a small determined bunch of people intent on attacking Irish culture at every opportunity and said there was a need to send a message out that this would not deter the promotion of the Irish language as there was nothing to be ashamed of in promotion and something that this Council was very good at. He said that personally he would like to see more work done, but felt that there had been the right balance

struck and was important that every opportunity at committee meetings and full Council that a message be sent out that this hatred which fuels these attacks be called out at every opportunity as this will not win.

Councillor Ashton referred to the Irish Language Funding Activity Programme and enquired why it wasn't the Regional Minority Language Funding Activity Programme or was there a separate programme opened for the Ulster Scots activity.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that this was the Irish Language Activity Fund which was run every year as part of the Council's Irish Language Action Plan. Every year there was a public call for groups involved in the promotion and development of Irish language within the region to provide mechanisms where they could further develop the Irish language within their local community and this was what the activity funding was designed to support.

Councillor Kerr said that he wished to reflect on Councillor Monteith's comments and advised that he also was contacted on a weekly basis regarding the attacks on dual language signage and could nearly identify which signs they were as it seemed to be the same concentrated effort. He said that there needed to be maturity shown as dual language was not threatening anyone, because if he was to be offended by the English language, he wouldn't leave the house and would call on the people responsible to desist immediately and consider contributing something positive to society instead of attacking signs.

Proposed by Councillor Corry  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to:

- i) Publicly advertise the Regional and Minority Language Bursary Programme 2021/22.
- ii) Issue a public call for Expressions of Interest for support under the Irish Language Activity Programme 2021/22.

Councillor Ashton sought clarification regarding the Ulster Scots funding and whether there was an Activity Funding Programme and where this sat within this regional funding.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that this didn't sit within this funding programme, but in the past Ulster Scots was funded separately through Arts & Culture for example Ulster Scots Language classes delivered in the Bridewell, the Burnavon and other locations within the region.

Councillor Ashton enquired why the two languages were treated differently through the funding stream and asked if this was something that needed to be brought back to the Regional Minority Group on how the Ulster Scots programme was being delivered.

The Chair said that this was two separate activities as one was a language and one was not a language and more of a dialect and advised that there had been programmes around the Ulster Scots and this was just being done different.

The Head of Culture and Arts provided clarification to members on how the language bursaries were delivered and advised that these were broadened to extend to all Regional and Minority languages and this scheme was open to any individual who wanted to enroll on a residential course to learn a regional minority language, whether that be Irish or Ulster Scots. The Irish Language Activity Fund was exclusive for the promotion of the Irish language and part of the Irish Language Programme but the Ulster Scots Language Activity doesn't fit within our Irish Language Programme and therefore is delivered within the Arts and Culture Programme in partnership with organisations such as the Ulster Scots Community Network.

The Chair advised that this was part of the Council's Irish Language Policy.

Councillor Molloy concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments and said that he had travelled extensively through Scotland and Wales where there was numerous Gaelic and Welsh signage across the board and heavily programmed as this was their first language of choice. He said that there needed to be an acceptance of the Irish language as ratepayers were paying the price for replacing signage which was damaged and this should not be tolerated any longer and now was the time for prosecutions.

The Chair referred to the Environment Committee where the number of reported damaged signage was brought. He said that this was criminal damage and was at a stage for PSNI to get involved due to high number of attacks involved right across Mid Ulster.

## **D083/21      Virtual Tours – Hotel Cluster**

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to propose supporting the Mid Ulster Hotel Cluster with the development of virtual tours for weddings and conferences.

Councillor Doris said that she would be happy to propose the recommendation as this had been a particular difficult year for the hospitality and events sector and Mid Ulster were fortunate to have an extensive range of venues. She said that anything that the Council could do to help the people in that industry should be encouraged and would like to take this opportunity to recognise the work done in providing video coverage of Coalisland Town Centre including Eden Blooms, The Perfect Gift, No. 5 Clothes Shop etc. which was absolutely fantastic with upwards of 3,000 views, which was brilliant advertisement for the town and great to see things reopening and felt that social media was the way forward and would be a great help to a struggling industry. She commended Officers for making the videos in Coalisland which were brilliant.

Councillor Burton said that it was important to promote other areas as there didn't seem to be much promotion in the South Tyrone side and felt that it was important to make it as wide as possible. She said that there were a lot of tourists travelling

through our area to Fermanagh and it would be important that they stop and spend time in our district. She said that she was aware of the nine hotels identified right across the geographical area but enquired about other venues like Blessingbourne as they also provide a venue for wedding receptions and asked if this venue was ruled out because it wasn't a hotel.

The Head of Tourism advised that this project identified the nine designated hotels and not venues like Blessingbourne as they were being supported through other programmes such as the Heritage Destination Programme which was funded through DAERA before Christmas. He advised that there would be opportunities for other establishments to avail of future initiatives but this was primarily for the hotel cluster.

Councillor Black stated that this was a good initiative and at the start he wondered if the boat was missed slightly, but now people can view wedding venues in person but if it was going to be used on website then it would be an abstainable option for many people who cannot attend in person and commended officers for their work. He enquired if there was any other support in the pipeline for hotels in particular.

The Head of Tourism advised that through the weekly webinars, hotels were supported and a specific cluster set up with various different speakers being brought in to help them in relation to funding and support.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to support the production of virtual tours for Mid Ulster Hotels.

## **D084/21 Community Development**

The Head of Community Development presented previously circulated report:

1. Peace Plus Response – to agree the response to Peace Plus
2. Community Development – to note the community development update

She advised that grants had closed yesterday and would be brought to the next committee.

Councillor Molloy welcomed the report on the Peace as it was a good response across the board as it was in-depth and covered a lot of ground. He referred to connectivity relating to blueway/greenway and said he was aware of ongoing work with ICBAN in relation to this kind of a project, especially with Ulster Canal in particular, but seems to be a far off development at our end.

He proposed that options be looked at in conjunction with ABC to include River Blackwater alongside Ulster Canal to get some kind of a project together with a lobby group as there was a better chance of getting progress if working together in conjunction.

Councillor Doris said that she was happy to second Councillor Molloy's proposal as there was a need to keep the pressure on with ABC to push this project forward.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to:

- i) To approve the Response to Peace Plus.
- ii) To note the community development update
- iii) Look at options in conjunction with ABC to include River Blackwater alongside Ulster Canal to get some kind of a project together with a lobby group as there was a better chance of getting progress if working together in conjunction.

The Head of Community Development advised that this was something that could be brought forward as this was originally in the lobbying group with the old Blackwater Partnership, with a lot of research and studies which could be pulled out again and brought forward.

Councillor Corry thanked the Head of Community Development on a very detailed and comprehensive report. She referred to 4.3 'Victims and Survivors' referenced within the document and asked what that meant.

The Head of Community Development advised that in the documents Peace Plus would always put in 'Victims and Survivors' as this would provide a strong support programme and then they are funded directly by SEUPB and not through any intermediaries. She concluded by saying that they were focused within the plan.

Councillor Kerr stated that it was a very comprehensive report but wished to raise a few issues on the following items within the report:

- 1.1 There was a need to include poverty as correctly identified. Poverty and the lack of opportunity is linked as people from lower economic and social status are not as likely to succeed compared to someone from middle or upper class backgrounds.
- 1.2 Agree with an organised community lead initiative which can help identify localised issues and with the correct resources can hopefully help alleviate the situation.
- 2.3 Absolutely agree with help developing and enhancing workers skills. He drew attention to comments within the report stating that Mid Ulster Council had a great number of private sector enterprises and felt the workers morale should also be encouraged. Access to trade union membership, employer's opting into living wage scheme, legislation which encourages labor representation at board of Directors level at the larger corporation as all wages were set by collective bargaining instead of individual lobbying. Private sector workers

should have the same entitlement as the public sector at a more local level to help workers and fight on their behalf as we seen in the recent global pandemic where workers were shafted at the first opportunity when trouble was looming. Some of these employers receive many grants and logistical support from regional and national bodies.

- 2.4 Would definitely support the transfer of regeneration powers and budgets from the Department to local authority as there were better feelings on the ground on what intervention and investment was needed. The enhancement of broadband was badly needed in all our areas as the global pandemic has exposed the weaknesses and shown light with home schooling and working from home, and said that this was now the time to move towards a universal broadband as this should be considered as a basic human right, same as access to water or housing. Fibrus was handed millions of pounds of public funding to upgrade the North's broadband but local residents in more rural areas have made contact with him saying that they have been charged double in comparison to the same packages in the Coalisland area. Affordable broadband should be available to all residents not some based on location.
- 3.3 Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing needs investment within this sector. We should be encouraging young people to talk, especially young men or adolescents. There is a need to try and change the mindset of young people especially around sexism, misogyny, relationships and respect for one another.

Councillor Ashton referred to the wider Community Development part on Grant Aid and said due to Covid, community festivals had to be suspended and as things were starting to lift, now was the time to try and get communities back engaging in community work on the ground and proposed to reopen the rolling grant, subject to Health & Safety and adhering to the Public Health message if ratified by the Executive on 24 May, we should see the commencement of public gatherings.

The Head of Community Development referred to latest guidance of over 30 and up to 500 based on a risk assessment and advised that some groups may be able to carry out a risk assessment and some may struggle and asked for some flexibility on the community grant if it is to be reopened to allow for both numbers and also other ways of doing it in the event of someone wishing to do a smaller festival alongside some internet provision that this be allowed for some flexibility.

Councillor Monteith said that he would be happy to second Councillor Ashton's proposal as she was 100% correct, despite restrictions easing up and weather permitting that events be held outdoor rather than indoor and with the restrictions the Head of Community Development was alluding to that this be opened out and be ready to engage with the communities to get them back out and doing their work.

He referred to the Peace Response and commended the report and stated that it was very well put together and commended the glaring omission where our officers pointed out on poverty not being mentioned what so ever where poverty was well rehearsed at numerous meetings by members around housings etc. and said that he personally would be very critical of Peace particularly in many of the working class communities. He said that whilst it served a function in some areas in some sectors, but the reality



on the ground was the same areas were experiencing very often the same problems 25 years later after 3 or 4 Peace programmes and grassroots feelings was that this was done to them and at them rather than them having any involvement in really what were the issues for them. He said that groups were forced to being something that they were not interested in being to qualify and the professional and voluntary community sector had hoovered up the money at every opportunity this point needed to be made. He commended the work which had been done on it but we do need to move from community initiatives to a household, family, individual based on targeting the ability and income of families where the income should be improved coming into the house, housing standard of the house, and holistic review of the education. He stated the houses were a major issues around the standard of housing with little or no money spent within the private sector or the public sector in improving the standard of living since the financial crash 2007-2008. He commended Officers on their efforts delivering the project but Peace did not do what it was supposed to do and lift people out of poverty.

Proposed by Councillor Ashton  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to reopen Community Festival Grant, engaging groups back into community work, subject to Health & Safety and Public Health message.

Councillor Cuddy stated that some good points had been raised by previous Councillors regarding the Peace programme and the jury's out on whether it has made any difference. He referred to the period 2021-2027 and enquired what was going to happen after that date going forward.

The Head of Community Development advised that there was a commitment up to 2027 and after that date funders were already looking at a Shared Future Prosperity Fund where pilots were already being rolled out. She anticipated that the new set up would continue on after the Peace programme ended and looked to be a lot more flexible

Councillor Burton concurred with most of the previous comments and agreed that Peace done a certain amount of work but would wonder sometimes about the amount of money which had been spent and not anywhere near the improvements that it should have brought at this point years on. She stated that it seemed to a certain extend to be the same people who benefitted year on year and if it were to bring people together, it was the same people on the same trip which done away with what the Peace programme was all about. She said that hopefully the country was coming out of Covid and a lot of houses were not up the standard of living for families and felt that there should be a totally different way of looking at gauging poverty as there would be a lot of people out of work after this traumatic time goes by and people living in houses which still have wooden window frames watching their curtains blowing in the wind and yet have young children which have damp in their bedrooms. She said that she was aware of a mother with cupboards in her house that she cannot keep food in because they are that damp and also children developing asthma due to the

dampness of their home and felt that money should be targeted in a much better focused way to try and elevate genuine poverty.

The Chair said that some great comments were raised and wanted to refer to the administration part of Peace and for anyone who attend these meetings would see the unnecessary bureaucracy that there was all the time and leaving people waiting for months and months to be paid.

#### **D085/21      Mid Ulster Anti-Poverty Plan – Pilot Children and Youth Wellbeing Scheme**

The Head of Community Development presented previously circulated report as part of the Mid Ulster Anti-Poverty Plan, summer hunger and youth mental health are issues identified for action. To seek to address these issues it is proposed to deliver a pilot initiative for children and young people to both engage them in fun activities to support their mental wellbeing and alongside this, address some level of summer hunger.

Councillor Corry said this was an excellent scheme from Mid Ulster District Council and DfC to combat holiday hunger and was aware of a lot of members being vocal on that. She also referred to young people's mental health and wellbeing and how it was evident that this had increased due to Covid.

Councillor Corry sought clarification on the following:

- i) Pilot 1 – Children's Wellbeing plan – referred to where the five main towns and also Fivemiletown being included and asked if there was a possibility for other towns to be incorporated or if anyone can come in from other towns as poverty wasn't just in the five main towns and Fivemiletown.
- ii) Pilot 2 – Youth Wellbeing - enquired if the catchment area was the same as the previous of five main towns and Fivemiletown and if anyone can come into the towns from other areas also.
- iii) Soccer cages for smaller villages and towns - advised that Councillor Elattar and herself have been working with young people in the Draperstown's area due to some bother and part of this was down to boredom. She asked if there was any other activities that could be considered rather than football and soccer as some children were not interested in sport.

The Head of Community Development referred to Child's Play and advised that the five main towns were targeted to areas of high poverty and Fivemiletown was included due to distance, but said that the areas would be mainly estates because the numbers were restricted due to the capacity of play facilities and what they can accommodate as the estate areas which were being targeted would be difficult to bring in people from other areas for what was being planned. She said that it was anticipated that a number of summer schemes would be taking place in our local leisure centres and facilities and these would be promoted by the Head of Leisure who would be putting together a booklet on what other schemes were available. She stated that a number of schools would be picking up a number of summer schemes given the Education Authority funding that was issued and another fund which was promoted today by the Youth Service which was circulated amongst groups for summer schemes. The

summer scheme which was being brought forward was very much targeted at poverty and hoped that the others would pick up around it.

She referred to the youth vouchers and advised that these were not just for town based and being allocated across the whole district for any young person within that age group on free school meals and would be for each individual in receipt of a free school meal place.

Councillor Corry referred to soccer cages and asked if there were any other activities as some children were not interested in soccer, football or other sports.

The Head of Community Development advised that officers would try and establish what other summer schemes were happening in the community, but in relation to this programme this was the capacity which was being carried out this summer but there would be no way that all villages could be accommodated on this one. She advised that going forward there was going to be a lot of activity in relation to the current grants which have gone out as a lot of calls have been received already and it was anticipated that these would be promoted as far as possible through the community newsletter which should be off help.

Councillor Monteith said that this was a great initiative especially towards primary school age group, but would have slight concern regarding the older group identified regarding recruitment as it could be difficult to encourage the older children to avail of the services especially those living within socially deprived areas as a lot of those activities are not within those areas. He said that it was well known that young people from socially deprived areas do not usually go outside their areas especially during the summer and times like that and felt that officers should engage with the Education Authority to try and involve outreach and street workers to try and engage young people and make them aware of these facilities being made available and co-ordinate an approach to encourage them to avail of these as he would have a fear that the ones who want the most would be the most reluctant to come forward due the stigma attached. He said that the younger group of children would be more parent driven and the older the children would be more driven by the young person themselves so if they are not availing of it, discussing it or their peer groups not availing of it, there would be a difficulty trying to get them involved otherwise. He stated that there were hundreds of summer schemes and would be worthwhile working with them in conjunction with the organisers to see if some lunches or free packed lunches could be provided in some parks for an hour a day for everyone so that the stigma would not be attached to an individual person who was in receipt of free school meals. This would stop this stigma of deprivation as older children do not want to be different to their friends and it was important to engage with them to avail of this programme without feeling uncomfortable doing so. He said that there were opportunities here for the community to buy into the programme like pop up sandwich bars and a free packed lunch for anyone who wants it within those areas and may be some which do not fit the criteria for free school meals but this wouldn't be the end of the world if getting out to everyone and would take the stigma away from deprivation.

Councillor Doris said that she completely agreed with Councillor Monteith in terms of engagement with the older groups and was aware of the good working relationship Council had within her area and would be definitely be very important to engage with

them. She also agreed with Councillor Corry's comments regarding not all children/youth being interest in soccer, football or sports and advised that the ground work that the Youth Services carries out was absolutely invaluable and said that she would be happy to second the proposal as it was a brilliant initiative coming from DfC and was aware of how passionate Minister Harney was about this kind of thing. She concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments around the meals and advised that there had been an Honesty Café run by Dungannon & Coalisland Surestart at the Junction back in 2018/2019, which was a great initiative as people went in and donated whatever they could afford and no-one was aware of what anyone paid and this in turn addressed hunger without the stigma. She concluded by saying that this was a good report and would make a tangible difference for a lot of families within the area and would very much welcome it.

Councillor Kearney commended the report and said that the Head of Community Development had recently outlined this at the Education Skills Community Planning group and was very well received by the statutory agencies and showed this Council trying to do its best for the young people. He sought clarification on the 2–3 sessions in Maghera and said that this was obviously a restricted programme in relation to the three larger towns and asked if this was 2–3 sessions over 2 or 3 days or a 2 to 3 day spot.

The Head of Community Development advised that 2-3 days has been put in at the moment based on what can be received for the facilitation as a lot of the Facilitators were not beginning to get really busy, but hoped to carry out 3 sessions in ie. Coalisland, Maghera and Fivemiletown and proposed in the towns 2–3 sessions which would be replicated again in another week at a later period to pick up the numbers as it was anticipated to have higher numbers due to the concentration of the estates which were being targeted.

Councillor Kearney stated that he noticed that the Education Minister had allocated funding of £5,000 per week to certain schools and felt that there could be a certain crossover with schools, but felt that this was a great scheme and was aware of some Teachers being very keen to help out for two weeks and wanted to acknowledge that over the past number of years that the Education & Skills Group had really blossomed and a great buy in with permanent people coming to it. He wanted to acknowledge the work being carried out by the Head of Community Development and officers as it was a real hard task.

Councillor Burton thanked the Head of Community Development and her team on the work which has been put into this initiative. She wanted to mention that there was a Housing Estates Group in Fivemiletown and obviously the youth annex there and also a football team and asked if the Council were intent on linking in with those groups as part of the initiative and how the Council could work with that area.

The Head of Community Development advised that the proposal for Fivemiletown was to use the annex because they are partner with the Council's Leisure Department and there was the intent to target the estates and work through the Estates Group. She said that specialist play facilitators would be brought in as it would be too difficult to manage volunteers and would not be linking in with the Sports groups. Our Leisure

Services would be providing summer schemes and there is also an EA grant to support community summer scheme activity.

Proposed by Councillor Corry  
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers:

- i) To agree to the proposal to deliver the pilot children's wellbeing play scheme.
- ii) To agree to the proposal to deliver the pilot youth wellbeing scheme.

In response to the Chair's comments around stigma for socially deprived areas, the Head of Community Development advised that her department had partnered with Leisure Services to develop the voucher in a generic format that is alongside the £1 programme scheme run by Leisure Services. The voucher can be used to accommodate friends and family, so not to differentiate between the person paying and the person not and there is nothing on the card to state "free school meals". All this programme would be known for was trying to engage our young people into the Leisure Centres through different promotional campaigns. In relation to play, there would be food provided to all. She said that there had been some thought about putting some healthy snacks into the Leisure Centres for the set times that the youth were using it (after lunch to early evening) whether a person was in receipt of a free school voucher or not.

She advised that the Council had worked with STEP in the past with regard to the Honesty Café and this was something that Officers could try and re-engage on. At the moment Council have been trying to link with the FareShare Programme with local schools and if the schools were going to be doing summer schemes, then officers would try and identify further links. She stated that alongside the FareShare Programme, promotion could be incorporated with the EA grant to encourage clubs to provide snacks to allow all children to participate. In terms of Honesty Café, other models would be investigated for Cookstown and Magherafelt also.

#### **D086/21      Ballyronan Boat Club – Development Proposal**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought approval to engage with Ballyronan Boat Club in relation to scoping the potential for Club House development proposals at Ballyronan Marina.

Councillor Clarke advised that by reading through the report he could see the longstanding set up in Ballyronan which was one of the most prime sites and well used over the years. He said that he was in Ballyronan last week and had seen the work which had been carried out resulting in an even better site and would be happy to propose the recommendation due to the scope of history and interest.

Councillor Kearney concurred with Councillor Clarke's comments and said that the Halloween event attracted thousands of people to the area and would be happy to second the proposal.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to progress discussions with Ballyronan Boat club and assist in creating a development proposal/concept plan for presentation to a future Development Committee meeting.

#### **D087/21 Pricing Tariff for Ballyronan House Boats**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought approval for tariff structure associated to the provision of new house boat accommodation units introduced to Ballyronan Marina for 2021-22 season.

Councillor Clarke advised that this was a wonderful development and passed on his credit to everyone involved in bringing this project forward as it was going to be outstanding.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers:

- i) To approve the proposed tariff structure as presented for the Ballyronan House Boat accommodation units at £120 per night, per boat for a minimum stay of two nights.
- ii) To approve the discretionary pricing flexibility as and when required under the Scheme of Delegation to the Director to allow scope for sales promotions, site specific usage trends, etc.

#### **D088/21 Economic Development – OBFD**

The Head of Economic Development presented previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

##### **i) Mid Ulster Economic Development Action Plan 2021/22**

Councillor Elattar congratulated officers on the amount of work they have carried out as there was some very exciting schemes to revitalise local communities when things open up again.

She said that she had one issue in relation to Appendix 1 – 5.4 – Mid Ulster Business Awards 2021 and wanted to ensure that an award would not be sponsored for an event which involved Dalradian.

The Head of Economic Development advised members that further information on the Awards had been sought from JPI Media, including details of funders and how the event would be promoted across Mid Ulster, especially in the Clogher Valley area. When such details are received, a report will be brought back to Committee for a decision on whether to contribute funding towards the event. Meantime, she said the Awards have been included in the Action Plan, in principle, to ring-fence funding until Members have all the information to make an informed decision.

Councillor Elattar said that she would be happy to propose the action plan.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar

Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve those projects and costs within the Economic Development Action Plan for 2021/22.

Councillor Wilson commended the Head of Economic Development on her very comprehensive report but wished to raise a few issues on the following items within the report:

- 2.3 Reducing Dereliction and Vacancy Levels in Dungannon Town Centre –  
He was aware of concerns in Dungannon but felt this was unreasonable as this was also happening in other towns like Cookstown and Magherafelt. He felt that it was wrong to stick to one town only and consideration should also be given to other towns.
- 2.1 Provision of Wi-Fi in 5 main towns plus Bellaghy –  
He felt that this was unreasonable for Bellaghy to be afforded the benefit of Wi-Fi as there were other areas like Coagh who should also benefit.
- 2.5 Small Grants Business Marketing Scheme –  
He felt that £300 for digital capabilities was a bit tight and that £500 should be considered as it could attract more businesses and make it more worthwhile.
- 4.3 Town & Village Spruce Up Scheme (Year 3 of 4) 2021/22  
He said that there were quite a number on the reserve list from the last time and asked if they would be moved up or would they have to reapply.

The Head of Economic Development responded to Councillor Wilson's comments:

- 2.3 Dereliction in Dungannon – She advised this related to a previous Council decision to provide funding to advance a Pilot Dereliction Scheme in Dungannon, subject to DFC providing match funding.

- 2.1 Provision of Wi-Fi in Bellaghy – She advised that no wi-fi signal was available in Bellaghy village and ahead of the official opening of the Heaney Centre, a wi-fi service was provided in the area and ongoing fees related to this are funded from Council's Economic Development budget, in addition to those relating to the district's five largest towns.
- 2.5 Small Grant Business Marketing Scheme – She advised that personally she would desire to develop this into a much larger scheme but currently a budget of £150,000 is all that is available from Council's Economic Development budget. Allocating a smaller grant of £300 would assist a minimum of 500 businesses, or alternatively offering a grant of £500 would assist 300 businesses. She stated that a number of requests have been made to DfC and DAERA for funding but to date no match funding has been provided but this would be kept under review.
- 4.3 Town & Village Spruce Up Scheme – She advised that 72 Letters of Offer to the value of £250,000 have been issued to traders for the current year (2021/22 – which is year 3 of 4 of the scheme). A reserve list of projects remains for Year 4. She noted if there was any funding slippage this year, then projects from the ranked reserve list would be moved up accordingly and funded. It is anticipated, those projects remaining on the reserve list, will be funded next year, subject to members approval of the economic development budget (2022/23).

Councillor Wilson disagreed with project going ahead in Dungannon as every town like Cookstown and Magherafelt had their own issues with dereliction and vacant properties and would be a useful exercise to see how much money was spent in each town. He said that he could understand the Heaney Centre availing of Wi-Fi and just because something was put in a small village, it was unfair that other small villages were being overlooked for the same opportunities.

Councillor Ashton enquired if officers had investigated an Online Job Fair for Employers.

The Head of Economic Development advised that prior to the pandemic a large Mid Ulster Job Fair was held in Cookstown Leisure Centre with up to 50 businesses from the area present, seeking to fill job vacancies as well as offering apprenticeship opportunities. The event was well attended by the public and students alike, seeking to find work. She said discussions are ongoing with DfC to determine the feasibility of co-hosting another Job Fair in Mid Ulster in 2021 as part of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week in November 2021. Discussions are at an early stage and Members will be kept informed.

Councillor Ashton enquired if officers had investigated a Job Fair for Employers.

The Head of Economic Development advised that prior to Covid an event had been ran in Cookstown Leisure Centre with up to 50 employers in a room advising and meeting the public and students on possible job opportunities. She said that these unprecedented times resulted in very different circumstances and discussions were ongoing with DfC to see if there were any possible opportunities or how it could be done but this would be down to government guidance. She advised if this did go



ahead that this event would tie in with Enterprise Week pending a risk assessment on numbers allowed to attend.

Councillor Ashton advised that ABC had ran a very successful virtual Job Fair recently and asked if something similar should be considered for Mid Ulster Council.

Councillor Kerr enquired if there was any update on meeting with Roads Service regarding the major resurfacing scheme to compliment the Public Realm Scheme in Coalisland.

He referred to the Spruce Up Scheme and said that he would again like to mention the boundaries which exclude businesses outside of these borders and would urge that this be looked at so all businesses could avail of the scheme.

The Chief Executive advised that the issue relating to the Public Realm Scheme had been referred back to the Environment Committee. He assured the committee that he would forward on an update to all members tomorrow as a matter of urgency.

In relation to the query regarding the Spruce Up Scheme, he advised that currently Council were in year 3 of a 4 year programme. He said he is aware of members views that should a future scheme be developed after this scheme ends, it should be open to all businesses across Mid Ulster, and said it shall be.

The Head of Economic Development referred to item 2.5 – Small Grants Business Marketing Scheme and sought clarity from Members on the grant level. The report proposes a grant of £300 to 500 businesses or whether Members wished to opt for Councillor Wilson's suggestion to increase the grant to £500, which would support 300 businesses.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee  
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to agree the recommendation of grants up to £300 to a minimum of 500 businesses for marketing and digital activities.

Councillor Burton said that she fully supported as many businesses as possible being included as it was important to broaden out the scheme as some help was better than no help at all.

*Councillor Molloy declared an interest in Dungannon Enterprise Centre.*

Councillor Molloy referred to Public Realm Scheme in Coalisland and stated that there were still concerns around Dungannon's scheme regarding issues around kerbing which still needed to be resolved and said that an update was required.

The Chair stated that there were similar issues in Cookstown regarding the Public Realm Scheme and suggested that a possible way forward would be to arrange a DEA meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers that a Dungannon DEA meeting be arranged to raise concerns relating to issues around Dungannon Public Realm Scheme.

**ii) Mid Ulster Traders Recovery Action Plan**

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve Mid Ulster Traders Recovery Action Plan.

**iii) Rural Micro Business Development Scheme 21/22**

Proposed by Councillor Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve participation of MUDC in the 2021/22 Rural Micro Business Development Scheme (subject to approval of funding from DAERA).

**D089/21 Railway Park**

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to present to Members a Business Case concept for the addition of a 3G pitch to the previously approved Railway Park project.

Councillor Molloy advised that good work was being done in the background on scoping exercises to support the need for this project and was aware of this being discussed at ongoing DEA meetings regards Railway Park Development. He said that he would be happy to propose the recommendation and was aware about concerns regarding the risks around flooding as the area was prone to be a wetland, but if ongoing development was going to take care of that he was happy to support the recommendation.

Councillor Monteith said that the issues got a good hearing at previous DEA meetings and had to say he that this working group was one of the most beneficial DEA

meetings ever set up by the Council over the last 5 to 6 months. He said that this DEA Working Group had been very beneficial and not just to resolve issues relating to Railway Park but also the Walkway at Drumcoo and Windmill Wood. It was very beneficial and some good ideas came from Officers and a lot of positivity had come out of it as there has been good engagement with the community and the tide was beginning to turn. He said that the community have finally realised that the Council were serious about committing and developing the area and was a good idea as it could become a good working park for all sections of the community including people from disadvantaged areas trying to access facilities. He said that there should be no difficulty in asking groups to help manage activities and ad hoc kick-a-bout sessions (recreational) as a diversionary measure from other things and felt that this project was something members both here and legacy should be proud of.

*Councillor Monteith said that he may need to declare an interest as he was involved with some of the groups who may become involved with Railway Park Project in the future.*

Councillor Cuddy agreed that Railway Park project had been discussed numerous times in DEA meetings. In regard to this Council going to spend £1m on this section of the Linear Park said it was a great step forward on a concept of a path around the whole parameter of Dungannon town which was something that members all signed up into in the old legacy Dungannon Council and now being taking forward by MUDC. He advised that 2/3 has already been completed within the last 10-15 years with some great sections, but have got nowhere near the final section as yet. He said that £1m spend on the area was very welcome but raised concern regarding the wetlands as when he was growing the land flooded like a lake and this could result in a major issue in the next 10-15 years when people do not clean out their drains, similar to the Linen Green and a park would recover very quickly but a 3G pitch wouldn't recover as quickly as an green open space.

He said that he was also concerned about the management of the facility as it was a £500k project for the 3G pitch plus expenses and felt that it would have been more beneficial to have been linked into a cluster. He stated that there was going to be a great project done by the Clarke's which was only a thousand yards away and through Neighbourhood Renewal spend upwards to £1m was agreed which would be a great facility and at the top of Lisnahull and a benefit to everyone in the area. He felt that the £500k being spent for a 3G pitch could've been spent on a linkup from the Donaghmore Road, Quarry Lane or from Milltown down to Dungannon Park and felt that there was a missed opportunity from Linear Park to around the town as there was an ambition for people to be able to walk or cycle around the parameter of the town and through other communities. He felt that the first £1m was great, but felt that this £500k was a step too far as this could have been spent on further sections around Dungannon town, but had no intention of voting against the recommendation as Dungannon DEA Councillors all work very well together and great to get the money, but felt that there was an opportunity lost here.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the Business Case concept for the addition of a 3G pitch to the Railway Park project and give approval for the development of this concept via an ICT team and the submission of full planning permission.

## **Matters for Information**

### **D090/21 Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 April 2021**

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 April 2021.

Councillor Doris referred to D061/21 – Defibrillator signage at Canal Work and enquired if there was any update.

The Chief Executive advised that he would provide an update to the member first thing in the morning.

Councillor Doris referred to D063/21 – Brown tourism signage and advised that there was a proposal at the last Development meeting that a letter be issued to the Department of Economy in terms of lobbying for them to take this on in place of DfI Roads and asked if this was actioned.

The Head of Tourism advised that the letter was currently be compiled at present and the issue was raised at the last Tourism Development Committee meeting where they wanted to do this alongside what was being done at the moment. He said that this would go to the Chair of the Tourism Development Committee and then would be forwarded on to the relevant statutory agency involved for consideration.

Councillor Kerr referred to D063/21 – Washingbay Walkway – he enquired if there was any update on the situation of a gate at Washingbay Walkway and improving play provision for younger children. He advised that concerned parents had contacted him regarding the gate situation as it was in a very close proximity of a shoreline pathway.

He referred to D064/21 – Cappagh Public Realm Scheme and proposed that a report to be brought back on Cappagh Public Realm Scheme or that it be put this on the agenda for the relevant committee for a review.

He advised that at the last meeting it was stated that larger settlements within MUDC got priority and taking on smaller locations would be discouraged due to finance and manpower. The residents of Cappagh deserve to be treated the same as those living in larger settlements of Coalisland, Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Maghera and disparity needs to be looked at and was sure any extra cost wouldn't be large or resources to deal with this wouldn't be immense.

The Chair advised that the 2<sup>nd</sup> matter on Cappagh Public Realm would have to be referred to the Environment Committee.

The Head of Parks advised that officers were aware of a number of issues around Washingbay with some proposals coming through from a Councillor and a Community Group. He advised that due to the opening of Washingbay Play Park, a few different designs were being considered as the gate has to be self-closing and the larger the opening, the heavier the gate would be. He stated that the gate was 100m from the Loughshore and wasn't right on the edge but felt that the biggest concern would be traffic due to the site being really busy and officers were looking to see if it was feasible for cars to get that close to the playpark. He said that investigations would be ongoing on best method for the gate and would be put in place as quickly as possible.

Councillor Monteith seconded Councillor Kerr's proposal.

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers that concerns in relation to Cappagh Public Realm be brought to attention of the Environment Committee.

Councillor Monteith referred to D061/21 – He referred to local fundraising and the drive for aid for East Timor and said at the last meeting it was discussed about having a DEA meeting with those involved. He said that this meeting hasn't happened and sought clarity when the meeting was anticipated to take place.

He also referred to D070/21 – He said that he had proposed at last month's meeting that an update relating to the Ann Street Development be provided and stated that to date there has been no update and asked officers when this was expected to happen. He said that there was considerable rumors going around and answers were not readily available for people and clarity was needed to be going out in the public domain and a DEA meeting arranged as soon as possible.

The Head of Community Development in referring to issues relating to East Timorese advised that within the last number of weeks officers had been trying to get the two or three groupings together, however this has not been possible. We are still engaging with the TAIS group and they are happy to meet however the other groups are not keen on formalised meetings, however officers were still liaising with all groups. She said that officers would still to pursue meeting engagement.

The Chief Executive in referring to Councillor Monteith's query on Ann Street advised that Mr McCreedy and himself had met with the Developers and updated them on the request from Council and sought an update on where they currently where. He said that it was proposed to hold a DEA meeting on week commencing 24 May for members on Ann Street Development and also invite Moorfields Developers to provide an update to all present.

## **D091/21      Facility Update – US Grant and The Bridewell**

Members noted update on the enhancements to both US Grant and The Bridewell.

Councillor Burton referred to US Grant and wanted to record the appreciation from the local people especially on the upgrade to the playpark as this would be a great facility

going forward. She said that US Grant's was a great stop for tourists and there was a hope that people would be visiting from America which has already begun and hopefully this would work out in the long term.

She enquired if there were any future opportunities for funding through Ulster Scots as there were still some people lobbying in relation to some more material being provided in the park for older children as it seemed to be geared towards the younger children and asked if this was an option to be looked at going forward.

The Head of Tourism said that in regards to the funding there had been two lots applied to US Grants, with the Access and Inclusion Funding being the one that was actually used for the play area and the interpretation of the Ulster Scots for the two different lots of £30k. He advised that officers were working very closely with the Ulster Scots Agency with regards to the further marketing of that particular site plus others and currently liaising with them regarding further opportunities going down the line.

Proposed by Councillor Burton  
Seconded by Councillor Black and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers that if there was an opportunity for funding at US Grants that this be progressed as this needed to be as wide ranging as possible in terms of local people and for people coming on tours.

Councillor Corry thanked the Council on the work they have been doing on accessibility but advised that an a member of the public in the past had raised an issue in relation to the Bridewell regarding access, accessible toilet and changing places facilities because of the different level of need and didn't want to be taking up space for someone who may need an accessible bathroom. She enquired if people still had to purchase a key to use the changing places facility as it was unfair to ask people with a disability to pay to use the bathroom and said that it would be beneficial if the Council had a general key to give out to users without a charge.

The Head of Tourism advised that the changing places at the Bridewell was controlled by staff at the front reception with no charge or key to gain access to facilities.

## **D092/21      Economic Development Report – OBF1**

Members noted update on key activities as detailed below:

- Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership (MURDP)
- Mid Ulster Broadband Working Group
- Bank of Ireland (Dungannon) Branch Closure

Councillor Clarke advised that today there was the regular LAG/DAERA update meeting and DAERA officials came across very calm and reassured on the progress and delivery of Mid Ulster Rural Development Programme. He said that usually they

would have been a little excited coming up to the end of the financial year due to this unpredictable year, but the Council had no concerns as a very successful programme has been delivered with everything under control and wanted to take this opportunity to thank staff involved in delivering the programme based in Gortalowry House on how they have excelled in their role and brought this so far and so well through the programme and undoubtedly to a very successful conclusion. He said that job creation had been tremendous in the circumstances, taking into account the economic and Covid situation and so many jobs created in the times that we are in.

He stated that he had serious concerns about what the subsequent Rural Development Programme would be like as we are at the closing stages of the current programme and there was an understanding that there would be a follow up programme. He said that there was no format on knowing what this would be like and usually prior to this there would have been a lot of consultation, publicity and well known on how it was going to be run and delivered and priorities. We don't know how it is going to be delivered or whether it would be run by a local strategy partnership approach which has been tried and tested and indications are that DAERA may take this in-house or in some other form and felt that this was too slow in coming to a conclusion. He said that there was no idea on what level of funding that may be available and whether the new programme would address the concerns, issues and priorities of individual Council areas as the previous programmes had done. He said that he would be very afraid of the ability of DAERA to deliver an in-house programme due to the number of people employed as it was way below for the current operations that they were involved in and if we move towards DAERA, there were people who do not have the experience in delivering such a programme in which our officers have delivered in the last number of years.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke

Seconded by Councillor Corry and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers that an urgent meeting be requested at a high level between our Chief Executive and Minister for DAERA to get clarity on how this was going to be progressed.

The Chief Executive advised that the committee over the last year had raised concerns both individually and through Council and more significantly through NILGA and Councillors Burton and Kearney had been at the forefront of committees in raising this at Stormont. He said that the Council had made it very clear regarding the loss of these programmes and match funding which the Head of Economic Development used for the delivery of her programme and over the last 4 and half years this has accounted for £28m across Mid Ulster and this was the amount of money levered in to match fund and invest in businesses and right across rural communities. He stated if this funding goes then this would leave a huge gap which needed to be plugged and as Councillors Burton, Clarke and Kearney had stressed previously at NILGA that the concern would be that this would not be plugged pound for pound by Central or UK Government.

He said that he agreed entirely with the second issue raised by Councillor Clarke and that the Council had a fantastic relationship with DAERA with many previous LAG members and Chairs on this committee who knew the feeling of scoring projects night after night with officers and the work that officers do with community groups, voluntary groups, sports clubs, farmers, businesses etc. and DAERA do not do that and they will not do that at a local level. He said that he would have the same concerns regarding a new form of this programme being moved away from the local LAG structure. The LAG structure was designed for one reason as it worked from the bottom up and that was why it worked so well in this part of the world because it was embraced and applied with the evidence speaking for itself. He said that he shared members concerns and would go with the will of the committee in seeking a meeting with the Minister and Senior Officials or whoever the new Minister may be as it was a very worthy request and so hugely significant for Mid Ulster, vastly more than any other Council.

Councillor Kearney said that he couldn't agree more with the previous speakers as he had an opportunity on behalf of NILGA to address the Finance committee at Stormont to warn them of our concerns. He advised that next year only £11m would be allocated cross the North which was a holding year before the shared prosperity fund which everyone was still planning about. He stated that the £11m would be shared amongst all the Councils compared to MUDC having £11m ourselves across the four years and felt that there were red lights flashing and would be concerned what was coming. He referred to all the work in which Council and officers had dedicated their time and all the jobs involved across the 11 Councils dispersing these funds and we now were at a crossroads and a need to take this on and have this crucial meeting to reinforce the points that Councillor Clarke and Chief Executive have raised.

Councillor Burton totally agreed with Chief Executive's remarks and felt there was a need to make our case be known as right across the whole of Mid Ulster which had benefitted from the Rural Development funding and we really need to ensure that going forward there was a bottom approach that people which knew best needed to be involved in the creation on how this money was going to be spent. She said that it was important that we make a case and have our voices heard.

The Chief Executive proposed that the best way forward would be to seek a meeting with the Minister as a starting part.

#### **D093/21      Leisure Services – Service Improvement Plan 2021/22**

Members noted Leisure Services – Service Improvement Plan 2021/22.

#### **D094/21      Pitch and Recreational Spaces Strategy Update**

Members noted update on Pitch and Recreational Spaces Strategy.

#### **D095/21      Parks Service Improvement Plan 2021/22**

Members noted Parks Service Improvement Plan 2021/22.



Councillor Kerr said that he had no problem with the report but wanted to propose that the Council encourage more disabled friendly park and picnic benches at their facilities. Recently a Council in the Belgian City of Bruges installed these picnic benches across its City which will make it more wheelchair accessible for users.

Councillor Molloy commended the report which included a lot of detail and referred to the Active Travel projects and asked if these were the six projects already seen going through Council and committees or were there proposals to be added to that.

The Head of Parks advised that these would be the current projects as this service improvement was for one year and would be trying to deliver as many of those six along with our partners in the 12 months if possible.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr  
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers that a report be brought back to a future meeting to introduce a similar initiative for Mid Ulster District Council and to make street furniture, picnic and park benches all wheelchair accessible with a similar design going forward.

Councillor Doris said that she was happy to second Councillor Kerr's proposal as this was something she was passionate about for people with disabilities have accessibility. She said that some really good work done on the park equipment had been done and was aware of disabled accessible picnic tables being available at Peatlands Park also.

She asked that when officers were looking into the furniture for Coalisland Public Realm Scheme it may be worthwhile investigating disabled accessible furniture also as there had been a lot of work in the town making it wheelchair accessible.

#### **D096/21 Mid-South West (MSW) Region Growth Deal Update**

Members noted progress on the ongoing work in relation to the Mid-South West (MSW) Region Growth Deal.

*Live broadcast ended at 8.55 pm.*

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

Proposed by Councillor Kerr  
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 D097/21 to D100/21.

**Matters for Decision**

- D097/21 Tender for Direct Debit Bureau Services to Include an Online Joining/Membership Platform
- D098/21 Tender to supply willow to Cookstown Leisure Centre
- D099/21 Gortgonis Project

**Matters for Information**

- D100/21 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 15 April 2021

**D101/21 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 9.05 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 - apologies and then roll call of all other Members in attendance.