

APPENDIX 1

MINUTES OF COOKSTOWN TOWN CENTRE FORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 7 JULY 2020 AT 12.30PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present:

Councillor McNamee	Mid Ulster District Council
Councillor Buchanan	Mid Ulster District Council
Councillor Hughes	Mid Ulster District Council
Councillor Mallaghan	Mid Ulster District Council
Councillor Wilson	Mid Ulster District Council
Chris Magee	PSNI
Glynn McGarry	PSNI
Patrick Anderson	Department for Communities
Ursula Marshall	Cookstown Disability Forum
Annette McGahan	Mid Ulster PCSP
Peter Beckett	Large Retailer
Paul Wilson	Large Independent Retailer
Fiona McKeown	
Mary McCullagh) Mid Ulster District Council
Colin McKenna	

In attendance: Deborah Ewing) Mid Ulster District Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Gavin Bell and Councillor Mark Glasgow, Mid Ulster District Council; Tom Jebb, Vintners Association; TP Sheehy, Small Independent Retailer; Jim Eastwood, Cookstown Enterprise; Conall McKee, DRD Roads Service; Bernie Sonner, Tenants Association; Hazel McKenzie, Cookstown North Community Association; Adrian McCreesh, Mid Ulster District Council.

2. MINUTES OF TOWN CENTRE FORUM MEETING 9/11/2019

It was proposed by P Beckett and seconded by P Anderson to ADOPT the minutes of the Town Centre Forum Meeting held on 9 November 2019.

3. MINUTES OF TOWN CENTRE FORUM MEETING 15/06/2020

It was proposed by U Marshall and seconded by Councillor Hughes to ADOPT the minutes of the Town Centre Forum Meeting held on 15 June 2020.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

There were no matters arising from minutes.

5. UPDATE ON TOWN CENTRE RECOVERY PLAN

M McCullagh advised that the Town Centre Recovery Plan is being presented at Development Committee on Thursday 9 July 2020. If approved this will then be ratified at full Council on 23 July 2020. A copy of the Plan can be circulated to members following ratification.

a) DFC Funding Proposal

Council continue to liaise with Department for Communities with regards to securing funding to enable a Covid 19 business grants programme for town centres. It is anticipated that the grant will include items that assist businesses to meet Covid 19 Government Guidelines. P Anderson advised that they are still awaiting on a central decision being made. He also advised members that they are negotiating with DAERA at present to try and ensure that rural areas are included in the potential Covid 19 business grants programme. This is an ongoing request from all Council's but he stated that it is significant for Mid Ulster due to the rurality of the district. Councillor Wilson agreed that it is essential that the rural community is not forgotten and advised that there is now an urgency on programme delivery, expressing concerns that there could be issues should the money not be forthcoming.

b) Marketing Element

M McCullagh advised that the Reconnect marketing campaign has commenced and is progressing. Adverts have been placed in the local press encouraging people to support their local businesses. An online business tool is now available which provides a range of downloadable resources for businesses and includes checklists, posters and floor sticker templates covering hygiene, social distancing measures, payment processes etc. A copy of the link was forwarded to members for their information and M McCullagh encouraged them to share with other businesses in the area. She advised that McGlaughlin's Bakery had shared an image on social media of their new sanitising station with one of the template posters.

The Open for Business campaign is ongoing. Several businesses have submitted videos to Council showing the social distancing measures they have in place which is then being promoted across Council's social media channels.

A video is currently being developed across the 5 towns of Mid Ulster which will promote the district as a place to visit and shop.

Reconnect with confidence stickers are being printed and will be delivered to town centre and village businesses for display in their shop windows. The idea is to encourage patrons to enter the business premises with the sticker on the window to show that there are safety measures in place and that it is safe to visit.

A marketing plan is being developed and members will be updated at future meetings. Councillor Wilson thanked the staff for their work during this difficult time and stated that it is essential to promote Cookstown in the best way possible and encourage footfall back into the town.

c) Pavement Café Licensing

Councillor Wilson advised that Pavement Café Licensing is being raised at the Environment Committee on Wednesday 7 July 2020. He stated that Council are conscious of the need to take into consideration the access issues in relation to pavement licensing. An update on this will be provided at next meeting.

6. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MID ULSTER TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS

M McCullagh provided an update on Mid Ulster Town Centre Projects as follows:

a) Physical Regeneration/Improving Infrastructure

i) Rural Regeneration Projects

There are 37 villages who will access funding to develop and deliver projects identified through their respective village plans. Assistance will be provided to the following villages within the former Cookstown District: Pomeroy; Ardboe; Stewartstown; Sandholes; Coagh/Drummullan; Rock; Ballyronan; Moortown' Churchtown/Lissan; and Orritor/Broughderg.

Meetings have taken place to finalise projects and move them to the next stage involving an appointed professional led design team. The following projects have been completed: Pomeroy. Ardboe, Stewartstown, Rock, Ballyronan, Orritor, Lissan and Coagh. Works are ongoing at Sandholes and Moortown. M McCullagh thanked the community groups in each area for their assistance which has enabled the successful and smooth delivery of the projects.

ii) Mid Ulster Town & Village Spruce Up Scheme

Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme offers discretionary grants of up to 75% eligible costs, capped at £5,000 per property for external and/or internal improvements. The scheme was open to both occupied commercial premises and vacant/derelict units within the town centre boundary of each of the towns and development limits of the eligible villages as per the proposed Mid Ulster Settlement Report as per the draft Local Development Plan (2030).

Knox & Clayton Architects were appointed as independent consultants to assist in the delivery of the Scheme.

Council are currently working through Phase 1 which has had a few delays due to Covid-19. In June 2020 Phase 2 commenced with a further 69 Letters of Offer issued to the next businesses on the ranked list. M McCullagh advised that this is still a large number of projects still on the ranked reserve list.

iii) **Town Centre Enhancement**

A range of town centre enhancement proposals for Cookstown have been completed thanks to funding received from Department for Communities. The works included:

- Upgrade of sign and maintenance area at the A29 Roundabout
- Replacement hoarding and vinyl A29 Roundabout
- Powerwashing and cleaning street furniture and bins of main retail core (paved areas)

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Gas to the West

Councillor Wilson advised that they had met with Gas to the West representatives who have advised that there are works ongoing in Cookstown until approximately December 2020. There are 2 teams working in the town and the main roads to be affected are Coolreaghs Road and Lissan Road. However it was noted that the roads will not be closed but may operate on stop/go system. Other anticipated works will take place in housing estates but access will still be available.

The Gas to the West team have advised that if there are any concerns from businesses or residents that they are happy to meet with them on site to resolve any issues.

8. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Councillor Wilson proposed that due to current circumstances and the need to discuss the Town Centre Recovery Plan that a meeting could be arranged in August. Councillor Buchanan and U Marshall agreed.

Councillor McNamee raised a request from Councillor Bell regarding the times that the Town Centre Forum meetings are held to be reviewed to accommodate other members. Councillor Wilson proposed that this issue is included as an agenda item at the next meeting which will provide all members with an opportunity to comment on.

A date for August will be finalised and members will be notified accordingly.

The meeting ended at 1.05pm

APPENDIX 2

Minutes of Coalisland Town Centre Forum Meeting Monday 10 August 2020 at 12.30pm Microsoft Teams

Present

Raymond O Neill	Coalisland Traders Association (Chair)
Cllr Niamh Doris	Mid Ulster District Council (Vice Chair)
Cllr Robert Colvin	Mid Ulster District Council
Ursula Marshall	Mid Ulster Disability Forum
Patrick Anderson	Dept. for Communities
Francie Molloy	Coalisland Residents & Community Forum

In Attendance

Adrian McCreesh	Mid Ulster District Council
Michael Browne	Mid Ulster District Council
Colin McKenna	Mid Ulster District Council
Catherine Fox	Mid Ulster District Council
Oliver Donnelly	Mid Ulster District Council
Mark Leavey	Mid Ulster District Council
Celene O Neill	Mid Ulster District Council

	DISCUSSION
1	Apologies Cllr Joe O'Neill Mid Ulster District Council Cllr Dan Kerr Mid Ulster District Council Cllr Niall McAleer Mid Ulster District Council Mark Kelso Mid Ulster District Council Fiona McKeown Mid Ulster District Council Raymond Lowry Mid Ulster District Council Declan Dorrity The Venue/The Beer Shed JP McCartan PSNI
2.	Introductions Cllr Doris Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the role of Chair as Raymond O Neill was having problems linking in.
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting - Monday 6 July 2020 Proposed by U Marshall Seconded by P Anderson and agreed: - The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6 July 2020 were a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4.	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Meeting – Monday 6 July 2020 There were no matters arising from the minutes of Monday 6 July 2020</p>
5.	<p>Covid-19 Business Support Grant Scheme C McKenna updated those present on the recently opened Covid-19 Business Support Grant Scheme. The scheme is open for commercial businesses both in the urban and rural areas within Mid Ulster. Grant awards are between £500 - £3000. The programme is open for online application from the 10 August and is a rolling programme with no closing date. It will be first come first served and will close when funding has run out. The scheme is part funded through DFC, DEARA and Mid Ulster Council. So far, there has been 40-50 applications received. The funding is for capital projects only to allow businesses to put social distancing measures in place.</p>
6.	<p>Coalisland Projects Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalisland Public Realm Scheme <p>M Leavey provided an update on the Public Realm Scheme stating that the contractor is currently working on Barrack Street and moving on to pave Main Street shortly. The car parking spaces on Main Street are also currently undergoing construction and the railings are due to be erected in the next few weeks.</p> <p>In relation to the existing BT phone kiosk at the bottom of Platers Hill the consultation exercise for permanent removal of the kiosk commenced on 27 July 2020 and is due to finish on 2 November 2020.</p> <p>Broadband providers BT and Fibrus are also planning to carry out works within the town to install fibre broadband infrastructure.</p> <p>C McKenna updated that Fibrus was planning to install fibre broadband in c1900 premises within Coalisland town. In the rural areas, the current Project Stratum scheme being delivered by the Department of the Economy will be identifying areas for upgrade to Fibre.</p> <p>F Molloy asked for an update on the current proposals to deal with flooding in the town. M Leavey updated that NI Water are currently carrying out investigations on infrastructure. A database of all properties affected was created and sent to them and it is hoped that a follow up meeting will be held within the next two weeks.</p> <p>Cllr Doris asked as to the make – up of the seating at the Cornmill asking if the current proposal include wooden seating. M Leavey updated that the Project Manager has asked the contractor to look at alternatives – metal etc. and will feed back once these have been sought.</p> <p>Cllr Doris also asked what the current design would be at Barrack Street car park. M Leavey stated that there is no further update on this as the technical team are currently looking at options.</p> <p>F Molloy asked that a meeting is set up with the owners of Heron’s shop to discuss parking proposals at front of their shop on Barrack Street</p>

Action: M Leavey to organize meeting between technical team and owners of Heron's shop Barrack Street to discuss parking arrangements.

R O'Neill joined the meeting and asked as to the current situation with the proposed one-way system and whether it is going ahead as planned. He quoted that there is a 30 % reduction in business turnover on main Street and a recent Freedom of Information request to Department for Infrastructure highlights that Coalisland vacancy rate is currently 28% - one of the highest in Northern Ireland.

R O'Neill stated that the decision to push on with a one-way system was a Sinn Fein one and it will be to the detriment to the town.

A McCreesh interjected stating that, as Chair R O'Neill should be impartial when it comes to political opinion. R O'Neill rebutted that the survey carried out by AECOMM on behalf of MUDC stated that 62% were against the one-way system and that it is madness that it is still going ahead.

F Molloy stated that the one-way system will make the roundabout at 'Mamies corner' a lot safer and that a one-way system will make the traffic flow a lot safer around the town. He also stated that the new car park at Barrack Street would also alleviate many problems. Ultimately, though the carriageway on Main Street is not wide enough to accommodate two lanes of traffic.

R O'Neill stated that the current proposal to construct a 7-spoke roundabout is illegal.

(R O'Neill left the meeting at 13.06)

- **Gortgonis Recreation Centre Redevelopment**

M Leavey provided an update on the Gortgonis scheme stating that Mid Ulster Council are currently liaising with DfI Roads Service around access to the two sites – recreation centre and the school.

F Molloy suggested that a site visit is held to look at options.

Action: M Leavey to arrange a site visit with F Molloy, DfI Roads Service and MUDC to look at options for road layout.

- **Coalisland Events – Halloween & Christmas 2020**

O Donnelly provided an update following the meeting held with the Halloween Working Group. There are currently investigating options for the event such as a high-level fireworks show at Gortgonis with limited attendance and /or a Fireworks show with vehicular access only. Both have potential after O Donnelly and P Gallagher had a site visit and spoke with MUDC Health & Safety officer. The other potential is to hold a light show in the town centre (Cornmill area) in partnership with local businesses.

	<p>This is all predicated on the announcement due from the Executive on 24 August, which will decide whether there will be any events going forward. O Donnelly stated that officers are at least working up proposals for events so preparations are in place with the ultimate decision being made by Council.</p> <p>A McCreesh stated that the Safety Advisory Group will be making a decision on events and Officers will be guided by them in terms of that can and cannot take place. He said that officers are working up proposals but the announcement on the 24th August by The Executive will decide the way forward for all events.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Cllr Doris asked for an update on the lands on the former Railway Line</p> <p>P Anderson updated that there were initially two interested parties but now there is only one who has confirmed they are willing to work with Mid Ulster Council on any future development.</p> <p>F Molloy suggested that a meeting is set up with the traveller’s representatives to resolve the issue.</p> <p>Action: P Anderson to set up meeting with traveller’s representatives with regard to the land on the former Railway Line.</p> <p>Cllr Doris asked if it was possible to get more businesses onto the forum. Firstly, we should revisit the Terms of Reference and contact the 4 existing traders to see if they want to remain.</p> <p>Action: O Donnelly to contact the 4 existing traders to see if they want to remain.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 7th September @ 12.30pm via Microsoft Teams</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Meeting Duration Meeting ended at 13.40pm</p>