

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council  
held on Thursday 11 February 2021 in the Council Offices, Circular Road,  
Dungannon and by Virtual Means**

**Members Present**

Councillor McNamee

Councillors Ashton\*, Black, Burton\*, Clarke\*, Corry\*,  
Cuddy\*, Doris\*, Elattar\*, 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  
Ms Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

**Others in  
Attendance**

Councillor S McGuigan\*\*\*

**Agenda Item 4 – Deputation – Parkanaur College**

Mr Bernard Cullen, Chair  
Ms Maureen Crawford, Vice Chair  
Mr Patrick Graham

\* 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.*

*The Chair, Councillor McNamee wished everyone a Happy New Year, he stated that last year was difficult but that there was now a vaccine and the infection rate was coming down and that he hoped the situation would improve in the coming months.*

**D020/21 Apologies**

Councillor Hughes.

## **D021/21      Declarations of Interest**

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

## **D022/21      Chair's Business**

The Chair said that he was saddened to hear of the passing of former Councillor Bob Mulligan yesterday. He stated that Bob had served in the first term of this Council and was also a Councillor with the former Dungannon Council from 1993 and wanted to pass on condolences to Bob's immediate family on behalf of this committee.

Councillor Cuddy said that he had worked with Bob for most of his Council employment up until the last term and found him a gentlemen who treated everyone the same with a great knowledge and he had certainly missed him the last four years and was a pleasure to work with him especially in Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council. He said that Bob was an asset to the former Council and they were very lucky to have him and passed on his condolences to his family.

Councillor Ashton passed on her sympathy to Mrs Mulligan and his family and stated that she had worked with Bob during the former DSTBC and also in Mid Ulster Council and was saddened to hear the announcement of his passing today and also passed on her condolences to his former colleagues within the Ulster Unionist Party.

Councillor Kearney said that on behalf of his party they were sad to hear of the death of Bob. He recalled that Bob give his working life to public service and for 20 years a hard working Councillor. He said that he had last met him at the Clogher Valley Show in 2019 and was still his jovial self and passed his condolences to his family and to the Unionist party.

Councillor S McGuigan concurred with all previous members' sentiments regarding former Councillor Bob Mulligan and passed on his condolences on behalf himself and his party to Mrs Mulligan, his family and the Ulster Unionist Party.

Councillor Kerr passed on his condolences to Councillor Mulligan's family.

Councillor Monteith concurred with previous comments regarding Councillor Mulligan and said that although they both had very different perspectives on life, they always got on well and remembered him carrying out a lot of work for the Clogher Valley area and passed his condolences to Councillor Mulligan's family.

Councillor Burton passed on her deepest sympathy to Bob's family at this difficult time. She said that she had first worked with him from when she was first elected in 2005 to Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council and had always found him to be very passionate about the area he represented and no matter what they were pushing for he was very supportive and treated her with total respect, as she did towards him. She was saddened to hear that he had been ill for a little time and passed on her condolences to Councillor Mulligan's wife and family.

The Chair advised that item 23 Gearing for Growth would now be taken under item 21 under Confidential Matters for Decision.

Councillor Kerr advised that he wished to raise an issue which was raising some concern within his area. He said that some local residents have had major problems over ambulance response times due to new houses/housing developments not being on the ambulance navigation system. He said that recently within Coalisland, two neighbours had experienced this with their newborns waiting close to an hour before the ambulance had responded to their 999 call. Thankfully, in both cases after receiving medical treatment both newborns made a good recovery.

He stressed that importance of ambulance response times to emergency calls being critical as any delay could mean the difference between life and death. He said that the navigation system problem could not continue and must be resolved with immediate effect with all new housing/housing developments being added routinely to the Ambulance Service navigation system. He asked that Council liaise with Ambulance Service as closely as possible to ensure this takes place.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Kerr  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith

**Resolved** That instead of waiting to full Council, that the Senior Management Team contact the local Trust or Ambulance Service to lobby to resolve this. Building Control Department to also contact the Trust or Ambulance Service and update them on newly developed housing developments or houses and make sure they appear on the navigation system.

Councillor Clarke said that there was a slow response and an inability to reach people in a serious situation cross the Ambulance Service at the minute with the pandemic possibly being blamed for a certain extent, but it needed to be resourced properly. He said that within his part of the country, residents were on the edge of Northern Trust, Southern Trust and Western Trust and about 40 miles from the nearest acute hospitals, so it would be vital that there was proper resources put into the Ambulance Service. As the public witnessed a few weeks ago, a fleet of ambulances were all parked in a line outside hospitals because they could not take any more admissions inside to deal with the casualties and whilst those ambulances were all parked outside that hospital, they couldn't be utilised where there was a general need. He felt that it was incumbent on the authorities to make sure that the Ambulance Service was properly resourced to reach all needs in all parts of the constituency and all parts of the Council area.

The Chair said that he had also seen issues within his own area regarding the Ambulance Service with delays up to 2 and 3 hours and witnessed patients laying outside that length of time. He said that sadly it was a case of not being ill enough but in Councillor Kerr's case it was locating the actual address where they have been called too and this was a serious issue. He felt there was a need to connect the breakdown and make sure that when the Ambulance Service was going out to an address they know exactly where they were going.

Councillor Wilson said that he had received a number of complaints from delivery drivers and numerous other people about locating an address and was previously aware of the Council encouraging townlands but we should also be encouraging people to put a house number on their properties or at the end of their lanes in the instance of an ambulance being required. He said that there was a need to take into consideration Councillor Kerr's comments as people were living in unprecedented times, with the National Health Services being at full stretch and in some cases overstretched, and it was imperative to help those we can who were most in need. He stated that there was a meeting some time before Covid where it was discussed about the Ambulance Service being reformed and a great discussion about updating the service in Cookstown and suggested writing to Ambulance Service to see where they were with that report.

Councillor Doris raised the ongoing issue of land DMAC Engineering and said that she had attended a meeting today which was proposed for a Men's Shed going forward. She said that members would be aware of ongoing historical issues relating to that piece of ground and the current issue doesn't seem to be with the Planners but with Environmental Health.

Proposed by Councillor Doris

Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that an urgent meeting be arranged with Environmental Health Officers and all relevant Stakeholders to get the Men's Shed project (DMAC site) of the ground and explore issues not relevant to Environmental Health like the carpark not being done.

Also that a report be brought forward to the next Development committee regarding land at the Old Railway in Coalisland which has been set aside for community allotments.

Councillor Burton said that she and possibly the rest of the Clogher Valley Councillors had received a letter in relation to issues regarding the roads in, out and around Granville Industrial Estate which were like a patchwork quilt. She said that it was previously agreed that work would be carried out before the end of the financial year and had forwarded on the correspondence from Westland's only to be told that this was now being put back until 2021/22. She said that anyone who had attended the Granville Resident's meeting (unfortunately she had to leave early to join another zoom meeting) could clearly see the frustration of the people living within that vicinity and was nothing short of shocking and felt it would be important for this Council to do something about it before people and businesses start thinking of pulling out of the Industrial Estate as they were struggling at present. She sought guidance from Senior Officers on whether it would be best to go to Transport NI/Infrastructure Minister or for our Senior Officers to meet with Senior Officers of DfI because this work was needed for such a long time but yet it was put back again and the residents have very strong concerns. She enquired whether it would be more beneficial to liaise with the Infrastructure Minister or go to the local Infrastructure top tier.

Councillor Molloy advised members that he works in Granville and was all too aware of the problems regarding access for emergency vehicles, for workers, non-parking for workers and all the issues which has went along with this Estate and its neighbour in

Dungannon Business Park and lack of investment to link the two Industrial Estates together which beggars belief sometimes. He said that he would welcome Councillor Burton's suggestion to seek guidance from Senior Officers on what the best approach was for both the Estate, businesses, residents and workers on the Estate as it needs sorted out as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Clarke advised that he had visited the site and seen firsthand the far end of it from the main road, he understood the amount of traffic which was there, the size of the traffic, the size of the vehicles which use it and felt that the biggest part of the problem was the design of it as it was all turns and the damage those large vehicles with their double and treble wheels in a place like that was enormous. He felt that this was more of a structural problem, with a main road entering into it and branches of it. He agreed with Councillor Molloy's comments regarding link up between the two business parks and felt that there was no reason why this shouldn't be the case which provided access back out onto the main road. He said that he would support any measures that Officers wished to take but felt that responsibility lay with DfI and was up to them to sort it.

Councillor Monteith advised that Dungannon Town Councillors had also received the email the same as the Clogher Valley Councillors. He said that the whole Granville issue was down to an example of terrible planning, total lack of joined up thinking, between planners, housing and Industrial Estate and was just a mitigated disaster which was coming to a head now where residents were up in arms about their rights and their rights to live in a peaceful environment, businesses no room to expand, workers nowhere to park and these issues have been ongoing since he has been a Councillor.

He stressed the need to get on top of this dilemma because sooner or later some businesses were going to pull out and we would all be "could've, should've, would've" and it would be too late. He said that this wasn't the first time businesses in Granville had sought the help of Councillors previously from Dungannon and now Mid Ulster, MLAs and MPs and whatever emerges from this, we cannot leave it just to deal with this particular issue raised by this company as an overall plan was needed on what the future was so that the people who live out there, who reared their families there for generations, have the ability and the self-security knowing that they will be able to do this going forward, but also for businesses having security to know that they were being listened to. He said that there should be a situation where everyone can work together to sustain a better community in Granville because no-one was getting what they need currently and no-one has any long term security and was aware that the issue of roads needed to be dealt with but there was a need for a long term plan for access onto the main road and more security for peace of mind for residents as to what the long term future was. He stated that he would support any efforts to deal with this but felt there was a need to sit down at a more strategic level on an ongoing basis to try and resolve this matter.

Councillor Cuddy said that all Councillors were aware of Granville Industrial Estate being too successful and wasn't designed for the large amount of employees in the first instance. He stated that Granville Estate was on private lands which was another issue with the private company getting their rent regardless and were not interested in joining up with another Industrial Estate. He said that group leaders held a meeting with InvestNI not so long ago on this issue and asked why there wasn't opportunities to get a larger one as businesses can outgrow smaller sizes and hold these large companies

within the area. He agreed with Councillor Monteith's comments around the issue being strategic as this was something this Council needed to get their heads around as we don't want to lose these successful businesses to other Council areas as these businesses started off in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt areas and we want to keep them. He said that this needed to be reinvestigated again to get it resolved.

Councillor Kerr concurred with previous comments and said that there were a lot of workers using this site and said that it was important that roads were in a reasonable condition as a huge initiative for Engineering companies was good roads for large HGVs and this definitely needed to be looked at.

The Chief Executive said that 3000 workers utilise Granville each day and competing forces in a sense that although this complaint was from a business and as much as we wish to grow and develop the business ethic there was also the need to recognise the plight of residents. He advised that Officers had arranged to meet the residents again as there were odour and noise complaints.

He advised that Economic Development Officers and himself had held previous meetings relating to the road issues and with every business in Granville. He said that it was Officers hope that the road was going to be upgraded two years ago with the possible implementation of a roundabout or turn in, but it was reported that no resources were available. He stated that this was not just a DfI problem but also an InvestNI problem as they created the Industrial Estate and the Business Park beside it so perhaps there was a shared responsibility.

It was

Proposed by Councillor Burton

Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to seek an urgent meeting with Nichola Mallon, Minister for Infrastructure regarding issues affecting residents, workers and businesses in Granville.

### **D023/21 Deputation – Parkanaur College**

The Chair welcomed the representatives from Parkanaur College to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Ms Crawford thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak to them tonight and provide update on work carried out by Parkanaur College.

Ms Crawford and Mr Graham provided presentation (appendix 1) and advised that Parkanaur College's ethos was to provide a safe place for learning and living; for students and residents to enjoy learning important life skills that would assist them in their future employment/independency; to provide a 'home away from home' for students and residents; to provide the highest level of care and support for residents and students.

Mr Graham advised Parkanaur Manor House was located in Parkanaur Forest Park for over 50 years which was donated to local population. It's currently managed by Thomas

Doran Parkanaur Trust, a charity which provided training towards employment for young adults with disabilities. Increasingly used by those with multiple disabilities, often including autism and housed a residential care home for 14 residents. He said that Parkanaur was a shared site with Forestry Service and Speedwell Trust and the felt that Mid Ulster Council could help them achieve their vision through:

- Council having significant experience in planning, for example Connecting Pomeroy.
- Co-ordinating potential partners such as Forestry and Speedwell Trust.
- Assisting in accessing funding for improvements to estate.
- Seeing Parkanaur as a delivery partner in achieving objectives of the Community Plan.
- Helping shape our future/providing fresh eyes.
- Greater use of Parkanaur facilities by the local population.

The Chair, Councillor McNamee thanked the representatives for their informative presentation and invited Members to come forward with any questions/comments they may have.

Councillor Molloy thanked the representatives on providing their impressive presentation and advised that he was aware of the work which was carried out by the Thomas Doran Trust and Parkanaur and the sites overall which may be cumbersome regarding the different things which go on at the site. He said that the presentation provided a good insight into future plans on what potential there was for the site and working with different departments and agencies to try and get the best possible outcome for the site and the school and enquired if there was any funding available from the Department of Health.

Ms Crawford advised that the residential site was funded by Health Trusts, with four out of the five Trusts placing residents with them with the fifth Trust about to place another resident. She said that the funding received from Health Trusts was very important as there was very little amounts of income coming from elsewhere at the moment and any which was received had to be developed i.e. social enterprise or a donor left in a will. Approximately 2/3 of funding received came from Health Trusts residential side and 1/3 came from DfC for training side.

Councillor Cuddy said that he knew the area well as his father had grew up within the vicinity of Parkanaur and spent a great deal of his childhood years around the forest. He stated that he had the pleasure of meeting Thomas Doran and found him a real gentleman. Mr Doran had returned from America and purchased the college as he had a disabled child himself and turned it into this magnificent site which had great potential but felt the Trust needed help and expertise to make it into something great and be linked up as it was beside the East/West corridor. He said that going forward outdoor pursuits would be the big thing and hoped that the Council could link up with the staff of Parkanaur to enhance it.

Councillor S McGuigan said that he lived very close to Parkanaur College and knew only too well the great work that takes place and would be very supportive of their plea here tonight. He felt that the group were trying to arrange a cocktail of funding and when it comes to it being assessed they were possibly not meeting the criteria as they were doing things which they may not feel comfortable doing and doing things which

they may not be paid to do. He stated that the group were asking for assistance and guidance to progress their plans to present to Departments and felt that the Council should help them to progress to the next stage.

Councillor Black commended the group for all the great work they were carrying out and felt what they were proposing could be mutually beneficial to the wider community as a whole and proposed that the group meet with Council Officers to have a look at these issues to try and move the project forward.

The Chair agreed that he would be happy to second the proposal as it had the potential of being tremendous and this may be achieved by Officers linking in their expertise with the group.

Ms Crawford thanked the committee and said that the group couldn't be anymore delighted or any more grateful to members tonight as this was exactly what they needed.

Proposed by Councillor Black  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

**Resolved** That Officers liaise with representatives from Parkanaur College to provide expertise on funding streams for future plans of the College.

*The representatives from Parkanaur College left the meeting at 7.56 pm.*

## **Matters for Decision**

### **D024/21 Sports Representative Grants**

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to present to members the proposed community grant allocations for the range of:

- Sports Representative Grant – Team and Individuals (February 2020 – March 2020 and also April 2020 to January 2021)

Proposed by Councillor Milne  
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the recommendation for sports grant allocations that have been awarded but could not be claimed due to Covid-19 to transfer to 2021/22.

### **D025/21 Leisure Pricing 2021/22**

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to provide information to Members on the proposed April 2021 – March 2022 Leisure pricing and sought approval to implement from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.



Councillor Molloy said that he would be happy to propose the recommendation but sought clarity on reduced Corporate all-inclusive membership for employees for more than 10 people enrolled and enquired how many local businesses would sign up to the programme and what kind of PR was carried out.

The Head of Leisure advised that this was a new pricing point which commenced in December 2019 and so far the uptake had been quite poor with the Covid pandemic possibly having an impact but when Officers looked at the previous price point of £27 per month compared to standard adult rate of £29.95 and household membership of £31.67 per month, this may not have seemed good value. He said that this new pricing point was benchmarked against other Councils and was brought to committee tonight to reduce the cost down from £27 to £22.50. It was the intention to go out with a new membership package with increased PR and marketing with this reduced pricing and engagement with businesses throughout the district which may upsell the benefits of the discounted package to encourage people to use the facilities.

Councillor Corry thanked the Officer for the report but referred to the matter of match bookings for the 3G/4G pitches. She referred to Rugby and Soccer match cost per adult was £51.50 and for Gaelic match for adult was £72.10 and enquired what the difference was which also included the Training Bookings. She also sought clarity on Adult Gym Induction with Greenvale being £50 and the rest of the other facilities being £25.

The Head of Leisure advised that back in 2018 members gave approval for increment price increases or decreases as there was differences between the three legacy Councils and previously Greenvale Leisure Centre under Pulse would have charged £50 for casual gym inductions where Cookstown and Dungannon would have charged £25 and under that approval it was felt appropriate to adopt the legacy Cookstown and Dungannon price point therefore reducing that. He said that the uptake of £50 gym induction at Greenvale had been historically very low but hoped that this would now stimulate business moving forward.

The Head of Leisure referred to query regarding price points for pitches and said that in terms of Soccer/Rugby and GAA, this was consistent on what was adopted in 2018, but felt that the costs reflected more to do with timing and size in terms of pitch requirements but would certainly investigate the issue if need be.

Councillor Black referred to percentages on 3.4 of the report 'Commercial Rates' *where it stated that currently there is an inconsistent approach to the percentage pricing uplift for commercial rates for certain pricing products and this can vary between 42% to 328% additional compared to non-commercial rates* – and sought clarification where these percentages came from. He also referred to the grid and whilst very good in appendix felt it may be more beneficial to have the old price added to it to see comparisons with the old prices.

The Head of Leisure in response to query regarding the grid advised that prices hadn't deviated from where they originally were in the 2018 report, except for those with approved incremental increases or decreases and these were noted within the Notes column, but after this meeting he could circulate the report if members' so wish.

He referred to query on Commercial Rates and said that this was an outworking of the three legacy Councils coming together with Pulse coming back in-house a few years ago and focused mainly on issues like room hire and hall hire. These were areas where it may take a lot for a group to be considered 'commercial' if they were profit making and this was a more consistent and considered approach across all the centres with a proposal to uplift a 50% on the standard adult rate. He said the criteria on how a group would be considered as 'non-commercial' was included within the appendix also.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve:

- (i) Appendix A: Leisure Pricing April 2021 – March 2022
- (ii) The adoption of the proposals outlined in section 3.4 for commercial rates, birthday parties, swim lessons, pool hire, additional child discounts and corporate memberships
- (iii) Discretionary pricing flexibility to continue to be considered as and when required under the Scheme of Delegation to allow scope for sales promotions, official Council supported events, member service issues, site specific usage trends, etc.

#### **D026/21 Cahore Playing Fields, Draperstown**

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to provide information to Members on correspondence from Draperstown Celtic Football Club and sought approval for Officers to investigate options for Members future consideration.

Councillor Elattar referred to Draperstown Celtic which are a community based club, who were helping to promote both good physical and mental health across all age groups, working along with local group Steps. The club has been flourishing in recent years, but it needed the pitches upgraded in order to progress on in the league and they would like to be able to lease the land so that they could apply for funding to make the necessary changes. There is some work that needed done before they could lease, and this needs to be explored and costed by Council as they hope to join with the GAA to develop this proposal and turn it into a more user friendly sports facility for local residents. She said that the Council would benefit from it being leased as they currently have to maintain the facilities and pay rent to the landowner and proposed that Officers proceed to explore all options available.

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to support the proposal going forward and concurred with Councillor Elattar as the club were an integral part of the community as they cover all age groups, abilities, male and female and were very much involved in Covid support and mental health matters.

*Councillor Kearney declared an interest in the above item as he had a playing family member there.*

He felt that the scheme was well worth supporting as it was an excellent idea with the Council working towards the development of a Leisure policy in other areas at other times and felt that this was very good work to go along side this.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar  
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the report and approve that:

- (i) Officers carry out a survey of Cahore Playing Fields and ascertain costs for potential works to the grass pitches.
- (ii) Officers engage with Council legal services and the landlord of Cahore Playing Fields to ascertain conditions associated with leasing and if permissible, engage with Land and Property Services to ascertain market value for rental/leasing options.
- (iii) The above be presented to a future Development Committee for consideration when available.
- (iv) Officers proceed to explore all options available.

**D027/21 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21 Additional Leisure Projects**

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to:

- Provide members with an update on the 2020/21 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Funding Programme
- Provide members with a list of additional projects approved for funding by Department for Communities
- Seek approval from Council to accept the letter of offer from Department of Communities for projects identified under section 3 of the report.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that approval be given:

- (i) To accept the additional funding allocation (£16,828) from Department of Communities to deliver the additional project (as detailed under section 3 of the report).
- (ii) As with previous applications taken to Council in November and December 2020, set up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for the project and to utilise the approved Council framework contractors, where required to deliver the project identified.

**D028/21 Update on Forest Schools within Council area for 2020/21**

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report to update Members on the current position of Forest Schools for 2020-2021 within the Council area and to seek approval for the reallocation and distribution of project resources for the current programme.

Proposed by Councillor Milne  
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that approval be given to:

- (i) Note the postponement of the Forest School Programme for 2020/21 year due to the Covid pandemic.
- (ii) Funding received from NHLP being distributed across nine registered schools, who expressed an interest in the 2020-21 Forest School Programme to enable them to deliver the Forest School programme on their own sites/virtually, with support and guidance from Council staff.

### **D029/21 Seachtain na Gaeilge 2021**

The Head of Culture and Arts presented previously circulated report and sought Members approval to issue a call for Expressions of Interest from interested groups and individuals seeking to deliver activities and projects designed to encourage and promote use of the Irish Language as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge 2021.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the call for Expressions of Interest to be issued inviting submissions from interested groups and individuals seeking to deliver online/virtual activities and projects designed to encourage and promote use of the Irish Language as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge 2021.

Councillor Cuddy felt that this was very short notice, with most festivals being postponed until next year in response to Covid and was interesting to see that this festival was still going ahead, but would have no issue as long as Covid regulations were covered. He said that this international festival was anticipated to run from 1<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> March and asked if there was ample time to get it into the papers as this was very short notice.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that although Seachtain na Gaeilge 2021 runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> March, however doesn't necessarily mean that activities would commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> March and could well commence in the second week. The reality of the situation is that all activities would be delivered online and virtually, as has been the case with the activities currently being within Culture and Arts. He advised that the fact that it is under the umbrella of Seachtain na Gaeilge 2021 festival does not mean that there was actual activities being delivered in person in the form of a festival but more the case of buying into a virtual online offering of celebration of the Irish language in the lead up to St. Patrick's Day.

### **D030/21 Sperrins Sculpture Trail Update**

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to provide Members with an update on progress in relation to the Sperrins Sculpture Trail project. Approval is sought to accept the Letter of Offer from DAERA through its Rural Tourism Scheme for funding towards Phase 2 of the Sculpture Trail project, i.e. capital delivery, together with approval of the Council's financial contribution.

Councillor Clarke said that he was delighted to see the project moving ahead and within Mid Ulster part of AONB, Davagh was an appropriate site and enquired if there were any details and drawings to see what the project was.

The Head of Tourism stated that once the Artist was appointed after being considered by all Councils, there would be consultation with details and graphics on what the project would look thereafter.

Councillor Cuddy said that it was good to see the funding being received and working with other Council but asked why other areas within the Sperrins were not being considered as the sculpture was a considerable size. He felt that the gateway into the Sperrins should have been considered as an alternative site as it was on the edge of a busy road to encourage people into the Sperrins and may not have been an appropriate site to put a sculpture right in the middle of it like the site in Davagh. He advised that he had no issue with the initiative as it was good to see funding coming through for an area of outstanding beauty.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to:
- (i) Authorise the match funding required, being £142,234.34 (25% of the tender costs of the Mid Ulster District Council element of the project) to be expended between the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years in accordance with the progression of the project works, the funds having been previously included within the Council's Capital Programme.
  - (ii) Authorise the Officers to fund the relevant professional fees amounting to £13,050 from the Tourism & Culture and Arts 2020/21 budgets.
  - (iii) Instructs its Officers to review the current Capital budget and implement such steps as are necessary to ensure that all capital costs associated with Capital Projects, including legal and other associated costs, are properly incurred and funded from the relevant Capital Project budget.

#### **D031/21 Economic Development Report - OBFD**

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

##### **(a) ATCM Membership Renewal**

Councillor Molloy raised the issue around Town Centre Management especially around Dungannon and the existence of DRP. He said that the high street in the last 8 to 10 weeks had resulted in major changes in how business was done and how business will be done going forward and proposed that the Head of Economic Development and the

Chief Executive carry out some exploratory negotiations around the Town Centre Forum for Dungannon, to re-engage and relook at how as a deliverable Forum proceeds in the future as it wasn't currently working and not viable as there was no interest to pursue it. He concluded by saying that a fresh look was needed going forward.

Councillor Monteith said that he would be happy to second Councillor Molloy's proposal. He concurred with Councillor Molloy's comments 100% as there was different general interests around the town and there was a need to focus thoughts and minds to come up with a solution for a way forward for traders, people and users of the town, customers and the general public so everyone can move forward with some sort of positivity. He said that he would whole-heartedly support Councillor Molloy in asking the Head of Economic Development and Chief Executive to re-engage to start discussions with previous people involved and ideally new people on their thoughts also.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that the Head of Economic Development and Chief Executive carrying out some exploratory negotiations around the Town Centre Forum for Dungannon, to re-engage and relook at how as a deliverable Forum it proceeds in the future.

The Head of Economic Development said that she would be happy to pursue this. She added that historically Dungannon had used DRP as the vehicle to progress town centre initiatives. She noted this was a different approach to the structures used in Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera, who have adopted the Town Centre Forum partnership model to progress the development of their retrospective towns which have worked very well.

Councillor Burton stated that she had been approached by Fivemiletown Chamber of Commerce regarding a number of businesses closing down and felt that it would be important to try and help the Chamber of Commerce in trying to promote the area and work with businesses on the different issues. She said that Click & Collect was causing problems in rural towns and villages and was aware that there wasn't a lot the Council could do about that but felt that it would be very important to keep the communications line open and asked that the smaller rural towns be kept updated.

The Head of Economic Development advised that the Economic Development team had recently met with representatives from Fivemiletown Chamber of Commerce to update them on all the current Council initiatives available to assist the business community. The Chamber appreciated the update provided and officers encouraged them to avail of the free business support, which included Council's large suite of business programmes. She added that one of these programmes, 'Digital First', could assist businesses by providing bespoke mentoring support to implement 'Click & Collect' services, and hoped to see some applications coming through from them.

Councillor Cuddy referred to a perfect example relating to the Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House being utilised by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister from the two main parties nearly every night on Castlehill. He said that we all knew where they were but very few outside Dungannon probably knew where they were and felt that this should be an opportunity to show one of the Council's main sites in Mid Ulster. He said that it would be beneficial for SMT to place a sign somewhere in the background to get the Hill of The O'Neill recognised for the fantastic site it was and felt that the Council were missing a trick.

He also referred to Economic Industry in Northern Ireland and stated that Mid Ulster was within the centre of it and felt it would be useful for a report to be circulated to see how Northern Ireland protocol was affecting businesses in Mid Ulster.

The Head of Economic Development advised if a comprehensive report was needed on how the NI Protocol was affecting businesses in Mid Ulster, then external support would be needed, as it is a large piece of work and currently the economic team is working at full capacity. She added that Council keeps in weekly contact with businesses across Mid Ulster advising and updating them on a variety of support measures, including EU exit.

The Chief Executive concurred with the Head of Economic Development's comments that the Council didn't have any direct data as there was no resources to carry out the collation of data but Officers were working closely with Manufacturing NI and many of their members came from Mid Ulster. He said that Manufacturing NI had recently released data on surveys they had carried out and advised that our Officers would tap in and go back to them to re-engage and try and determine the element of Mid Ulster companies which was made up with their data, with an update being brought back to members.

In response to query regarding advertising behind the First and Deputy First Ministers, the Chief Executive advised that Officers would try again to see if there was an opportunity for brand identity.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that anytime the site was used for the announcements, it was highlighted that they were doing so from Dungannon and most people would know that it was the Hill of The O'Neill.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted to:

**ATCM Membership Renewal**

Renewal of membership with the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) for the calendar year, 1 January to 31 December 2021 at a costs of £545 (excluding Vat).

**(b) Labour Market Partnership (LMP)**

Councillor Monteith advised that he would agree in principle but sought clarity on some issues regarding a baseline for workers as the reality was that there was too much

work, badly paid jobs and bad working conditions. He said that although he had no particular issue with organisations like the Mid Ulster Skills Forum, they are what they are, industry led with no involvement with trade unions and felt that moving forward this organisation needs to have a more strategic link with trade unions in relation to workers' rights and moving forward on that and would be of the opinion that if the Council was setting up any labour market partnership that trade unions and workers needs to be an integral part of that. He stated that too often economic strategies were taken forward by employers and workers which were a secondary thought at best, with reality being that there wouldn't be a quality labour market when there were people in very badly paid jobs and poor working conditions. Although he accepted people learning new skills and trying to get jobs with better wages which was natural, the reality was that there was a system here where people accepted that there were jobs that needed done and also accepted the fact that people would have to live in poverty to do these jobs which was not acceptable any longer and should never be unacceptable. He said that if there was going to be any sort of labour market in the Mid Ulster area, then there was a need to make it to reflect the needs of our community which was one of many areas sadly with very bad pay and poor working conditions. He stated that he had no difficulty with this recommendation and proposed going forward as long as it was an integral issue within Mid Ulster as other Councils would do what they seen fit, but if a new partnership was to be set up it needed a very strong worker focus and a strategic input from the trade union movement.

Councillor Kerr concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments and said he also had no problem agreeing to the report as it was a good initiative but said it was vital that trade unions and workers be involved in the process. He advised that trade unions uptake was particular low across employment sectors, especially engineering sectors and in some cases employees being treated very unfairly during these unprecedented times during Covid. He said that he was aware of some employees being told that their jobs were on the line on a Monday and then being laid off the next day and felt that lessons needed to be learnt from this and make this initiative a focus for the working person and trade unions along with voluntary bodies and employers.

The Head of Economic Development advised that a further report would be brought back in due course.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that approval be given to:

- (i) Labour Market Partnership (LMP)**  
Mid Ulster Council participates as a key stakeholder in the planning and development of Labour Market Partnerships, which will coordinate activities relating to skills development, training and employability programmes in Mid Ulster. Going forward that an integral part of the proposal be that when the new partnership is set up that a very strong worker focus be included with a strategic input from the trade union movement.



## **D032/21 Community Development**

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

### **(i) Community Grants – To agree the rolling grants for Good Relations**

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve Good Relations Grant (£3,480.00) as appendix 1.

### **(lii) Mid Ulster Community Planning Poverty Plan**

Councillor Doris wanted to recognise the invaluable work carried out by Neighbourhood Renewal team in relation to poverty as it was really important to have that mix of stakeholders and a great example of a Council led initiative which had made a huge difference within her area of Coalisland being able to fund a number of huge projects like the Fianna Club, Brackaville Pitch and going forward plans for Gortgonis Leisure Centre which was an important thing going forward. In working with a number of groups, it has been indicated within the report that there was a real issue with long term funding cycles as a lot of the funding cycles was on an annual basis and asked if it would be possible for the Council to lobby DfC to look at this differently.

Councillor Monteith said that it was good to see the strategy getting to this stage and paid tribute to Officers for their collaboration and to all Councillors for their contribution in taking part as this was a living plan and it wasn't essential that it covered every aspect, but it needed to cover the important issues. He said that he was very content with the beginning of the plan where it states categorically that poverty was not a natural thing, it was not inevitable which has to be recognised and for far too long there was a general acceptance that this was the case and the bottom line was we were living in a system where people were running out of money for the basics like food, shelter and heat on a regular basis, with any system like that being wrong and being dismantled. He said that he had a few issues as this was going to be Mid Ulster District Council's Strategy with a lot of lobbying and liaising with other organisations and building partnerships but there were issues that our Council has to do as well as an organisation also, we need to look at our procedures and on page 25 it talked about social clauses and things like that and procedures, but the reality was that this Council had the authority to look at the legalities and how we would do it. He stated that the Council had the authority to write into tenders that any firm getting businesses from us should be paying the livable wage, no zero hours contract and all those type of issues, but we need to start with our own house as well as trying to encourage outside bodies and this needed strengthening up. He advised that one of the issues in our town centres was the lack of childcare provision for people working in the town centre and this would be a perfect opportunity to encourage enterprise for implementing childcare in the middle of the town. He said that enhancing the livable wage and strengthening workers' rights has to be at the very core of this plan as we have to make work pay, a situation where people can provide for their families which were core issues and must take legislative change, but said that this wouldn't be solved with the best will of the world with partnerships and working within the current framework as we need

enforceable legislation especially around housing which was highlighted on page 26. Issues around housing needed to be mandatory, controlled and enforced rigorously as housing was one of the biggest factors to poverty within Dungannon town if not further afield and heard consistently on a daily basis about the cost of housing. Another issue was the fitness of housing and was aware that Environment Health were working on matters in trying to get the fitness standards and legislation enhanced as the current legislation and guidelines were for houses which were 60 – 70 years old and not fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

He referred to page 27 and highlighted his dismay at this being industry led and felt that this needed to change as it has been industry led for far too long and if talking about poverty, workers needed to be to the forefront in bringing this forward, workers needed to be at the forefront on any initiative with trade union membership being promoted and trade union consultations being strategic as there was no reason why our Procurement department could not insist that any company which secures a tender from the Council must recognise the trade union within it, as there was too much trade union bursting and discouraging people from being involved.

In conclusion Councillor Monteith stated that there were things within this plan which needed beefed up, but was a decent starting point but that was all that it was a starting point as there was a need for legislative change which needed to be lobbied heavily. He said that the pandemic took to the fore the inadequacy of statutory sick pay within the private sector, with the reality being that there was absolutely no excuse for statutory sick pay being wholly inadequate within the private sector in relation to the public sector and this needs equalised and made equivalent of a person's normal wage.

Councillor Milne enquired if the Council was tying in with Department for Communities within all of this.

The Head of Community Development confirmed that the Council was tying in with the Department for Communities and hoping to get to meeting with them quite soon in relation to this. She advised that DfC had set up a working group at the moment and had identified four specialist advisors and allowed them the time to identify the key concepts which would be shared out, but currently the working group does not have council representation, but this has been brought to the attention of NILGA who were going to put it forward to make sure that they are going to represent Council as there was an issue of having every council rep on. She stated that Council were working directly with DfC officials directly and sharing our plan. She did not it was important to stress that the plan was under the 'community planning' and is still in draft form at this stage, until all the community planning partners agree it as this will be important in successful delivery, as many areas are delivery for other partners and there are lobbying issues which are an ongoing process, but would keep members updated going forward.

Councillor Milne said that he was happy with response as legislation had to go through DfC committee.

Councillor Molloy concurred with Councillor Monteith's comment about the document being a start, but as people had to live by it, it needed to be expanded, developed and acted upon and not left sitting on the shelf like some other government documents. He said that a lot of Councillors through the pandemic were proactive in helping people

with food banks, fuel etc., which was soul destroying when you see the effects of poverty on young families and elderly people and didn't only effect their physical health but also their mental health and there was an onus on the Council to make poverty a thing of the past in this district and beyond otherwise this Council has failed. He concluded by saying that if Council continued to provide foodbanks and fuel banks then society had also failed and this must change.

Councillor Kerr thanked Officers for bring forward the comprehensive report and wanted to highlight some issues within it. He said that Mid Ulster had generated some of the most poverty in the North of Ireland which also featured children, high rental costs, cost of living, pupils from deprived backgrounds not succeeding as well as others, free school meals and academics, university enrolment, better qualifications, better wages, mental health issues, people coming from deprived areas, life expectancy etc. with much more, indicating the large scope of reasons behind poverty in Mid Ulster. He said that the report also referred to one of the most deprived towns within Mid Ulster which was his own home town of Coalisland which was a daunting fact and was very important that the Council do everything they can to lobby the associated agencies to try and get as much support as possible.

He said that he was glad to see Councillor Monteith referencing the regulating of rent. He also referred to wages within different regions with different settings and felt that people needed to live in a comfortable lifestyle with bills being paid and families not having to choose between heating their home and feeding their family.

He referred to homeless and said although it wasn't as widespread within Mid Ulster compared to other areas within the North of Ireland, homeless can take on many forms because of different reasons. He recalled after the Grenfell Tower fire in London there was a great deal of homelessness, with one of the Council's deciding to take over derelict buildings in the region and provide housing for the affected residents and said that it would be beneficial for this Council to identify similar measures relating to derelict buildings which could be utilised for temporary accommodation for homeless people within Mid Ulster district.

Councillor Kerr referred to provision of free provision of ATM's which was a difficult subject, especially in rural areas and within Coalisland town there were no machines which were free and charged a fee and felt that this was the most basic example of capitalism asking people to withdraw their own money and be charged for it. He said that free access to cash in rural towns and areas would be very beneficial.

He stated that mental health was a major issue within Mid Ulster area and had been discussed at length at previous meetings. He stressed the need for greater access to Psychiatrists, services and trained Counselors in Mid Ulster as this was a major issue and would only get worse after the Covid pandemic.

The Head of Community Development took all comments on board and said that she would share the final document with members and would be engaging with DfC, but document still very much in draft form until it was sent to all partners in relation to sign off and buy in, but would update members accordingly.

Proposed by Councillor Doris  
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the Mid Ulster Community Planning Poverty Plan.

**(iii) Timorese Association Inclusive Group Engagement**

Councillor Monteith suggested that it would be beneficial to have another engagement with the East Timorese to see how they were progressing due to a lot of fear around concerns they had entering the New Year. He asked that the engagement be set up to include East Timorese groups and elected representatives.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith  
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

**Resolved** That it be recommend to Council that a follow up engagement be held with East Timorese group, elected members and officers.

**(iv) Community Development Report**

Note update.

**Matters for Information**

**D033/21 Minutes of Development Committee held on 14 January 2021**

Members noted minutes of Development Committee held on 14 January 2021.

Councillor Doris asked if there was any update from the last meeting on the Council taking over the land from ABC at the Ferry Bridge on the Derrylaughan side so that it could be better maintained.

The Chief Executive advised that a request has been made but this would be a long process transferring land from one Council area to another with significant cost implications. He said that when calculations were known, they would be brought to Environment Committee for consideration.

Councillor Clarke referred to item D005/21 - Mobile Catering Concessions and referred to a previous discussion around tender for providing food service in Council areas and various recreational points. He advised that last weekend there was a catering van operating at Davagh Forest selling refreshments which wasn't on the circulated list provided at a previous meeting.

The Head of Parks advised that the tendering exercise hadn't been released yet to the public for services but would be going out by the end of this month and advised that there was a similar situation at another Council site where a catering vendor was operating without permission and this would be the same in this instance. He said that this incident would be investigated and if the vendor was in-situ this week, then staff would have a word with them to make them aware of the pending tender exercise and provide them with any information they need as trading shouldn't be taken place at Davagh without Council authority.

Councillor Monteith referred to D006/21 – food stamp scheme which was agreed at last month’s Council meeting. He advised that a few parents had been in contact with him regarding a number of schools not passing information on to parents on the availability of the scheme which was previously agreed by Council. He said that there was an onus on this Council to get this scheme correct and it shouldn’t be the case of parents ringing schools and begging and asked Officers how communications could be enhanced so parents are treated with respect and provided with the appropriate communication. He felt if schools were not going to provide adequate communication to parents, the Council must set a mechanism and publicity in place to do so but would agree that it was a good initiative if it was managed properly, but must be an initiative to treat with respect and dignity.

The Head of Community Development advised that a generic email could be issued and liaise with the member in terms of the school. She advised that nearly all the primary schools were engaged, with still 30 out of hundred schools still being engaged by email and telephone as there is difficulties finding a link, which was still be worked though and now being done through the Department of Education and could potentially be one of those schools, but she would check it out. She advised that currently all schools have been engaged with at the minute and providing details on their families but understandability the schools haven’t sent on any communications as yet until they have the full vouchers in their hand, but this is being worked through as it was difficult to provide some schools without the full allocation at the moment. She agreed that a generic email be issued to schools to share with all families.

Councillor Burton referred to D005/21- Mobile Catering Concessions trading at Forestry Parks and advised that she had been approached by a number of traders at Edfield carpark, Fivemiletown and asked if Officers could liaise with the Chamber of Commerce in relation to that either virtually or face-to-face meetings with social distancing being adhered to.

Councillor Burton also referred to page 165 regarding issues relating to closure of National Insurance Office from last March. She said that this was raised at NILGA with the Chief Executive doing everything in his power to try and get a response without any success and found it torturous for people living outside this country to reside her and pay their taxes. She felt that this was ridiculous and unprofessional for the office to be closed for almost a year and asked that the Chief Executive revisit this as there had been no response back from Officers to the previous request.

The Chief Executive advised that unfortunately he had no further update as he was under the impression that progress had been made this would be chased up as a matter of priority and come back to member. He stated that he was unaware that the Chief Executive of NILGA was having the same difficulties in trying to make contact.

#### **D034/21      Master Plans/Scoping Studies for Altmore/Cappagh, Drumcairne and Dunmoyle Forests**

Members noted update on the recently appointed consultancy team in respect of developing scoping studies for the potential development of Altmore/Cappagh Drumcairn, and Dunmoyle Forests as multi-activity hubs.

Councillor Elattar enquired if there was any progress with setting up a meeting the Forestry Service regarding carparking at Iniscarn.

The Head of Parks advised that officers had met representatives from Forestry Service out on site at their request to identify locations for the actual proposal and have asked the Council to work those proposals up into a formal request which Officers were currently doing. He said that the options currently would be to extend the roadside parking which was the most popular option that Forest Service would be keen to progress on. He stated that there had been movement of this issue, with site meetings and discussions with both Roads Service and Forest Service and hoped that this could be progressed as quickly as possible, pending funding being secured to carry out the works which was currently being investigated.

Councillor Burton referred to anticipated upgrading at Lumford's Glen and felt that this needed to be kept on the radar.

The Head of Parks advised that this was still on the agenda with Forest Service but they advised that a clear filing had to take place before upgrading of the pathways takes place. He said that Officers would be happy to assist in any way they possibly could and would keep members updated on progress.

Councillor Burton said that this was a long slow process, especially for the people of the area as forests were now a lifeline in these difficult times around mental health issues. She felt that Lumford's Glen was continuously being overlooked as it was now sitting untouched for this last couple of years and needed progressed.

Councillor Doris welcomed the report and particularly welcomed the work done at Drumcairne Forest as she had been contacted by many residents complimenting the work carried out especially now as forests were seen as a lifeline during this pandemic. She said she was aware of complications around Cappagh/Altmore Forest but would like Officers to explore the best steps forward in getting the tiny islands removed in Cappagh Village which were causing a nuisance. She also asked that Officers address the bus shelter at Cappagh as a matter of urgency as it was hazardous.

The Chair said that Officers would investigate this and provide members with an update.

Councillor Clarke referred to Iniscarn Forest and asked that he be involved in any discussions taking place with the landowners.

Councillor Kerr wished to reflect Councillor Doris' comments and said that this was a step in the right direction as Cappagh was waiting a long time. He felt that Roads Service had responsibility for the islands within the village and thanked the Council for getting the streets cleaned but asked that immediate attention be given to the bus shelter as it was an eyesore. He said that after the bus shelter was acquired for Beechline and Kildrum and wanted to thanked the Council for progressing this and said that it would be important to also get Cappagh Bus Shelter addressed as it reflected badly on Mid Ulster District Council.

Councillor Kearney referred to concerns around land ownership at Portglenone Forest where there were two incidents of people breaking limbs. He said that there was a

need for Forestry Service identifying their grounds as this happened on their lands but could be seen as happening on Council owned lands by the people who fell.

The Chair advised member that in the past when he had issues relating to Drum Manor Forest and asked that a DEA meeting be held regarding a way forward and suggested that this may be a better way forward.

The Head of Parks said that he was aware of the two incidents and agreed that although that part of the forest wasn't in the Council's remit it may be difficult for the public to see that. He said that there was a need for discussion with the Forestry Service and if Council were agreeable, the issue of signage on Forestry owned land be implemented and that Council would be happy to proceed this way regarding Portglenone Forest or any other place which doesn't fall into the Council remit.

The Chair advised that there were many forests which could fall into this criteria and suggested that if any member had a concern regarding a particular forest similar to Portglenone then they should consider having a DEA meeting as a way forward.

#### **D035/21 Interim Update on Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan**

Members noted Interim update in relation to Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan.

Councillor Doris thanked Council Officers on their great work and said that she had been approached by representatives from the Disability Forum and people from Brackaville GAA club enquiring if there was any possibility of implementing a ramp at Brackaville Park as it was completely inaccessible for prams etc.

The Head of Parks said that he was aware of the location of Brackaville Playpark and would be something that Officers would wish to discuss further with the neighbouring sports club as to a possible relocation or at least an improved public access as he appreciated that the current access was less than perfect and may be more beneficial to investigate an alternative route via the club grounds if that was possible. He said that this would be something that would be taken forward and would keep members informed of any progress.

#### **D036/21 Interim Update Ballysaggart Lough Development Project**

Members noted Interim update on Ballysaggart Lough Development Project.

Councillor Molloy welcomed the update and said that he was aware of ongoing discussions around developments at Railway Park and was good to see that this was still on the agenda. He said that a proposal was made at the last Neighbourhood Renewal meeting to do a presentation on the projects and hoped to get an update and look at extra funding measures around helping out.

#### **D037/21 Outdoor Recreation Strategy Update**

Members noted Interim update in relation to Outdoor Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan.

Councillor Kerr advised that Ballyronan Bluetits Chill Swimmers had been in contact with him who were a group of swimmers for physical and mental health well-being all year round based in Ballyronan. He said that Council had contacted the group advising them that they were not permitted to be swimming in a certain area due to health & safety issues. This group was very proactive in their work in supporting people with mental, physical and limited mobilities in the area. He asked if Officers could engage and formulate dialogue with the group to try and identify a different location.

He also referred to Washingbay Walkway close to shoreline of the Lough which was a problem along the path as eastern winds and strong current escaping onto the grass verge and walkway resulted in major flooding and erosion damage. He said that Council had spent a lot of money on the area and would be useful for Officers to organise a Torrent DEA meeting on-site, with social distancing being adhered. Due to the current restrictions it may be more beneficial to do this virtually to discuss with Technical Analysts from Council, Officers, representatives from the community group in more detail and develop a strategy to deal with the problem, look at costs and help elevate the problems.

The Head of Parks referred to Ballyronan Bluetits Chill Swimmers and said that the Council was certainly aware the group's needs and had engaged with them and was currently looking at safe alternatives for the club in relation to resolving any of their issues. He assured the Councillor that dialogue had already commenced with the group with the reason for their activities being brought to a halt was due to health & safety as swimming was not permitted within the walls of the Marina and that was the only reason, but advised that alternative locations was being sourced to provide safe access to the Lough and would keep the member updated on any progress.

The Chair advised that Officers would follow up both issues raised by Councillor Kerr.

The Chief Executive advised that a lot of members had made reference to DEA meetings and wanted to remind them that at the last meeting a discussion ensued regarding the concept of reinvigorating meetings which was currently in progress. He stated that there would be a roundall of all the DEA meetings with the Director of Public Health & Infrastructure, Director of Leisure & Outdoor Recreation and himself. He would be asking members for agenda items in advance to make meetings as productive as possible. He said that Officers found DEA meetings as useful as members did.

Councillor Molloy wanted to acknowledge projects outlined in the Outdoor Recreation report and commended Officers on some fantastic projects with some already being delivered as it greatly improved the facilities worked on.

#### **D038/21 Lower Bann Blueway**

Members noted update on the Blueway Feasibility Study carried out for the proposed development of a Blueway along the Lower Bann from Newferry (West) to Toomebridge.

#### **D039/21 Economic Development Report – OBFI**

Members noted update on key activities as detailed below:



- Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes 09.11.20
- Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2020 Evaluation Report
- Pilot Covid Recovery Start Up Payment

*Live broadcast ended at 9.20 pm.*

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

Proposed by Councillor Molloy  
 Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

**Resolved** In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of 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 D040/21 to D042/21.

**Matters for Decision**

- D040/21 Facility Management and Internal Directional Signage and District Road Name Signage Tender Report
- D041/21 Gearing for Growth Programme

**Matters for Information**

- D042/21 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 14 January 2021

**D043/21 Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 9.30 pm.

CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_