



16 January 2025

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Development Committee to be held in The Chamber, Cookstown and by virtual means at Burn Road, Cookstown BT80 8DT on Thursday, 16 January 2025 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

A link to join the meeting through the Council's remote meeting platform will follow.

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh  
Chief Executive

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## AGENDA

### OPEN BUSINESS

1. Notice of Recording  
This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site [Live Broadcast Link](#)
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest  
Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
4. Chair's Business
5. Deputation: The Executive Office: Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

### Matters for Decision

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| 6. | Development Report                               | 3 - 14  |
| 7. | Sport NI Community Planning Investment Programme | 15 - 34 |
| 8. | PeacePlus funding call for Clean Air             | 35 - 36 |
| 9. | Economic Development Report - OBFD               | 37 - 42 |

### Matters for Information

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| 10. | Minutes of Development Committee held on 4 December 2024 | 43 - 66 |
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11.	Implementation of a new approach to food standards regulation by District Councils in Northern Ireland	67 - 72
12.	Corporate Events 2024 Update	73 - 86
13.	Economic Development Report - OBF	87 - 132

**Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.**

Matters for Decision

14. Tender for the Social Supermarket Programme
15. Renewal of media licenses at Seamus Heaney HomePlace Exhibition
16. Letter of Offer MUSA Multi Facility Fund Programme
17. SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project
18. Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plans: 2025-26 and 2026-27

Matters for Information

19. Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 4 December 2024

<b>Report on</b>	Development Report
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development
<b>Contact Officers</b>	Philip Clarke – Neighbourhood Development Manager, Catherine Fox – Arts Development Manager, Cathy Brown – Seamus Heaney HomePlace Manager, Martina Totten – Social Inclusion Manager, Denise Smith – Diversity & Integration Development Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

<b>1</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update members and seek approval for the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refugee and Asylum Support Programme</b></li> <li>• <b>Good Relations Plan – TEO Additional Funding</b></li> <li>• <b>Development Department -Update</b></li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p><b>Refugee and Asylum Support Programme</b></p> <p>Council is asked to consider joining the Refugee and Asylum Sanctuary movement for Mid Ulster. The City and Areas of Sanctuary movement is operating across the UK. At present a number of areas and cities have adopted this to be known as a City or Area of Sanctuary. The aim of the Area of Sanctuary is to adopt the following -</p> <p>Council of Sanctuary is a place that provides a welcome and safe place for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants and supports the conditions that will allow people from these backgrounds to feel safe, valued and included.</p> <p>Under our Council of Sanctuary designation, we resolve to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join the City of Sanctuary's local authority network of cities and towns which promote the inclusion and welfare of people who are fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries.</li> <li>• Continue to work with key groups and organisations in Mid Ulster who provide sustainable support to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants</li> <li>• Ensure equality and diversity in the provision of our services, facilities, and open spaces.</li> <li>• Embody the City of Sanctuary values of Inclusivity, Openness, Participation, Inspiration, and Integrity in our work.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn with and from others in the City of Sanctuary local authority network to ensure the dissemination of best practice.</li> </ul> <p>The above text above reflects a similar position by Belfast City Council in April 2022 - Council of Sanctuary</p> <p>Please see information on the <a href="https://belfast.cityofsanctuary.org/about-us">belfast.cityofsanctuary.org/about-us</a></p> <p>It is proposed that Council would agree to participate in a Mid Ulster Area of Sanctuary and promote this across our communities and with statutory partners. It would also support in the facilitation of a forum on a Mid Ulster Area of Sanctuary.</p> <p>Refugee and Asylum Support</p> <p>Council is also partnering with STEP at present regarding support to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to Mid Ulster.</p> <p>As part of this support the NI Executive Office is providing £50K to deliver a refugee and asylum support programme focusing on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness and engagement on the promotion of an Area of Sanctuary</li> <li>Support for the establishment of a forum for an Area of Sanctuary</li> <li>Two Engagement and integration support events</li> <li>Support provision for rights and services (through language interpretation)</li> <li>Links to general support and community provision support</li> <li>Training and awareness to statutory partners, community partners</li> </ul> <p>Additional funding (£15k pending TEO underspend) to uplift activities to continue into June 2025 may be received, pending TEO confirmation.</p>
2.2	<p><b>Good Relations Plan – TEO additional funding</b></p> <p>The NI Executive Office sought expressions of interest (2 December 2024) from Councils across Northern Ireland to submit proposals (4 December 2024) for underspend in the Department. Mid Ulster Council's Good Relations Team submitted a proposal to allow for the uplift to several programmes to be delivered before 31 March 2025.</p> <p>It is proposed that support be given to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anti-Poverty Project £15,000</li> <li>Employability development £7000</li> <li>Youth Voice £1,350</li> </ul> <p>All the above projects were profiled in Mid Ulster Good Relations plan 23/24, however due to a cut in budget, projects were either not funded or did not receive full funding. The additional spend will therefore allow these projects/programmes to be supported. Officers have recently received notification that Ministers confirmed extra funding of <b>£23,350 to Mid Ulster District Council</b>. Officers are awaiting a letter of variance.</p>
2.3	<p><b>Development Update</b></p> <p><u>Neighbourhood/Community Development</u></p> <p>The new Community Development strategy consultation and engagement first phase has now completed, and the draft strategy is in development. Further engagement will take place with members when complete.</p> <p>Covid Small Settlements –</p>

Coalisland Canal continues in planning for works to commence Spring 2025.  
Moy Recreation provision – Decision on planning is pending, and then the final business case approval by DFC.

Pomeroy Forest Centre and Magical Trails – the community led Christmas event is fully booked for the Forest with a large number of people also using the trails, play area and Centre. Preparation for the school holiday season is taking place when the trail activity increases. The refreshments cart is now in situ at the Forest.

Social Inclusion – the new draft Community Asset Transfer policy is being finalized; continued engagement is taking place with NIHE and other agencies on social housing – a Dungannon DEA meeting has been scheduled for January to finalise the Dungannon Social Housing Place Plan.

#### Good Relations & Peace

The Good Relations 2024 – 25 projects have all commenced, with engagement and monitoring ongoing.

A post funding letter of offer has been received; All post funding conditions are in place to allow receipt of the full letter of offer. One outstanding area is Council seeking confirmation of funding in sterling to ensure expenditure to final claim amount.

#### Burnavon Arts Centre

The Burnavon continues to be extremely busy with conferences and meetings for Auditorium and the Studio. The annual Winter Craft & Food Fair was a great success, and the Christmas Panto is ready to commence, again with a large number of bookings.

#### Seamus Heaney HomePlace

Seamus Heaney HomePlace has had a very successful Autumn/ Winter programme with positive feedback across a range of events. The Education programme is continuing to be busy with many schools participating. Exhibition visitors and footfall have been high over the Autumn period and development of the new Spring programme is ongoing.

#### Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House

The Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House – the new marketing materials are continuing to be distributed, with increasing meetings and conference activity. The Santa Christmas event was a great success and was fully booked. The development of the new programme for 2025 – 26 is in development focusing on the areas that are attracting most people.

Works are complete for access to the Hill of The O'Neill from Circular Road; this is going to be promoted along with the Earls trail around the town.

#### Regional and Minority Language

The signage plan continues to be delivered across facilities in partnership with Council Technical Team. The programme delivery is taking place across the district. Planning for Seachtain Na Gaeilge is ongoing.

	<u>PCSP</u> Minutes for information – attached
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial:  Refugee and Asylum Support Fund £50k and potential £15k uplift  Good Relations Plan 24 – 25 – Additional Funding £23,350
	Human: NA
	Risk Management: NA
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: NA
	Rural Needs Implications: NA
<b>4</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
4.1	Members are recommended to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Approve the Refugee and Asylum Support Programme</li> <li>II. Approve the Good Relations Plan – TEO Additional Funding</li> <li>III. Note the Development Department -Update</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<b>List of Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 PCSP Minutes

**Minutes of Mid Ulster Policing and Community Safety Partnership meeting held on 4 September 2024 in Council Chamber, Cookstown and via MS Teams at 3.30pm**

- Present:** Councillor Christine McFlynn (Chair), Councillor Eimear Carney, Councillor Clement Cuthbertson, Councillor Anne Forde, Councillor Donna Mullin, Councillor Brian McGuigan, Councillor John McNamee, Councillor Sean McPeake
- Sue Chada, Robert Colvin, Niamh Doris, Ian Irwin, Grace Meerbeek, Ciaran McElhone, Pearse McFlynn, Pamela Stewart
- Sharon Crooks (NIHE), Chief Inspector Dodds (Roads Policing) Sinead Dolan (YJA), Ryan McGee (EA Youth), Superintendent Daniel McPhillips (PSNI), Leo Quinn (EA Youth), T/Chief Inspector Beverlie Reid (PSNI), Denise Smith (MUDC)
- Apologies:** Councillor Eva Cahoon, Alison Campbell- Smyth (NH&SCT), Michelle Grant (PBNI), Councillor Deirdre Varsani
- In Attendance:** Michael McCrory (PCSP Manager), Annette McGahan (PCSP Officer), Shauna McCloskey (PCSP Officer), Martina McCullagh (PCSP Assistant)

The Meeting commenced at 3.33pm.

**PCSP318/24    WELCOME**

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn welcomed all to the meeting.

**PCSP319/24    DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were reminded of their obligation in relation to declarations of interest.

**PCSP320/24    EA YOUTH SERVICE PRESENTATION – LEO QUINN**

Leo Quinn provided an excellent presentation detailing a comprehensive calendar of Programmes and Engagement work carried out by EA Youth Service during the previous 6 month period.

*These include various programmes in schools; Intergenerational work in the community; Healthy Minds Project; On-Line Safety Programmes; Residential Experiences; Self Care; Volunteer Week; Cultural Expressions Week; Needs based workshops; Leadership Programmes; Inclusion; PRISM Group Cookstown; International Trips and Summer Programmes.*

Leo Quinn advised that the official opening of Cookstown Youth Centre which is based at the library and part of Southwest College will take place very soon, PCSP Members are welcome to attend. Also, an exciting move in Dungannon to the Teachers Centre on Thomas Street will allow programmes to be delivered in-house rather than sourcing outside venues.

Training week will take place next week and will involve delivering programmes dealing with issues around tolerance, understanding and acceptance to schools

which have requested assistance in this area. As part of the upcoming PCSP Awareness night this will take the form of a celebration of tolerance and acceptance and will be delivered to young people across Mid Ulster district, the main theme will be the need to feel safe in their own area.

Three 'Engage for Change' programmes will be delivered in Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt during the next quarter. Police and EA Youth Service records show there has been zero re-offending from the many past participants in these programmes.

Clonoe Young Women's group continue to work on their 'Rural Safety Plan' which will be delivered across the district, PCSP Members are welcome to attend.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn thanked Leo Quinn for the excellent presentation and commended EA Youth Service on the volume of work they have carried out with young people across Mid Ulster District. The presentation will be circulated to Members.

### **Members questions and comments**

In response to a question from Grace Meerbeek in relation to the 'Inclusion and Diversity Seesaw App' and the possibility of providing training to PCSP Members, Leo Quinn advised that he would check this and provide an update.

In response to a question from Robert Colvin in relation to what EA Youth Service recognise as the main issues that negatively impacts someone's mental health, Leo Quinn stated there are a myriad of causes including the use of social media, FOMO (fear of missing out), exam stress and the come-down from taking drugs which results in their problems appearing worse.

Ryan McGee commended Leo Quinn on the compilation of an excellent presentation and praised all the EA Youth Service staff who have worked extremely hard to deliver the many programmes. EA Youth Service work closely with the Voluntary Sector and other Statutory Agencies. A large volume of information including thematic pieces of work, statistics and outcomes is available and can be shared if requested by Members. The funding provided by Mid Ulster PCSP towards an array of programmes is greatly appreciated and an invitation was extended to Members to attend events as their presence is an enormous boost to the young participants. A calendar of EA Youth Service events will be provided to PCSP in due course and circulated to Members.

Responding to a question from Sue Chada in relation to how volunteers are recruited, Leo Quinn advised that there is a progression route and some of the programme participants go on to be volunteers within EA Youth Service, there is also an open recruitment process.

### **PCSP321/24 ROADS POLICING PRESENTATION – CHIEF INSPECTOR DODDS**

Chief Inspector Dodds, Head of Roads Policing advised that 41 people have been killed on our roads this year to date compared with 46 at the same time last year.



The two age groups involved in the most fatal to serious collisions are the 20 – 30 and 50 – 70 age groups, there are also issues with younger road users. He referred to the 'Fatal 5' causes of deaths on our roads.

- Speeding
- Driving without due care and attention
- Not wearing a seatbelt
- Distraction (mobile phone)
- Driving under the influence of drink and/or drugs

Resources are stretched, Roads Policing Education Officers have been cut from 7 to 3, these officers are required to cover all secondary schools and community groups across Northern Ireland.

Chief Inspector Dodds stated that everyone is vulnerable on our roads, every road and every journey are dangerous and asked Mid Ulster PCSP to help get this message across to the public.

The Chair thanked Chief Inspector Dodds for the informative presentation and expressed concern at the low level of resources available to Roads Policing Education for all of Northern Ireland.

### **Members questions and comments**

In response to a question from Robert Colvin in relation to what improvements the DVA are doing to help reduce deaths on our roads, Chief Inspector Dodds advised that discussions are ongoing regarding the introduction of a 'graduated driving license'. This would mean all new drivers would only receive their full license when specific stipulations are fulfilled which would include more training.

Responding to a question from Pamela Stewart regarding dispelling the myth that speeding does not kill, Chief Inspector Dodds advised that they utilise social media outlets to report on cases that have gone through the court system where speeding has been the involved to help highlight the danger and the devastating impact it has on families.

In response to a question from Grace Meerbeek in relation to how a particular speed limit is attributed to a particular road, Chief Inspector Dodds advised that engineers from DfI assess the road and decide on the appropriate speed limit, signage and lighting requirements. If there are concerns regarding a road a reassessment can be requested from DfI.

Sue Chada agreed with Robert Colvin in relation to the DVA being more proactive around steps they can take to help reduce road traffic collisions. The introduction of more educational mechanisms from a young age so that young people are fully aware of the dangers of driving long before they become a driver.

Ciaran McElhone stated that driving instructors tend to teach learner drivers the route they would follow during their driving test which is very limiting and does not allow the learner to experience a full range of driving conditions, which would better prepare them for driving following their test, this should be reviewed.

Chief Inspector Dodds advised that he would raise these valid points with Test Centre representatives at an upcoming meeting.

Ciaran McElhone referred to several requests he submitted to DfI for a speed limit review which did not result in a reduction and would have concerns what DfI are prepared to offer.

In response to a comment by Councillor McGuigan regarding some roads having no speed limits signs displayed, Chief Inspector Dodds advised Members to provide the exact locations where there is no signage, and these would be passed on to DfI for checking.

Ian Irwin asked the following questions;

*What is the current staff level for Roads Policing?*

Chief Inspector Dodds advised that the current staff level in roads policing is approximately 130 people, this is lowest resource level in the past 10 years. As resource levels have gone down, fatalities on our roads have increased, there is a clear correlation between both. An Garda Síochána are aware of the same indicators.

*What type of drug driving test kit is used in the rest of the UK?*

Chief Inspector Dodds advised that the rest of the UK use the 3S test kit, as soon as the 6S test is certified they will switch to it.

*What support and self-care are offered to police officers dealing with the stress and emotions within roads policing?*

Chief Inspector Dodds advised there is no special support provided to the collision investigation unit as there is no surplus funding set aside for this purpose. Through a charity organisation and a private donation an away day was arranged for officers to help with techniques to deal with stress and improve mental health.

### **Drug Driving Test**

In response to a request from Councillor McNamee for an update on drug driving test, Chief Inspector Dodds advised that a pilot drug driving test went live on the 7 August 2024, it is an initiative that has been used by An Garda Síochána for some time. It is called a 3S test, is similar to a Covid test, takes 7 minutes to show a result and can detect the presence of cocaine and cannabis, each kits costs £30 approximately. An Garda Síochána now use a 6S test kit which can detect a greater range of drugs, as soon as this is certified by DfI it will be used in Northern Ireland. An Garda Síochána have found that the real value of the kit is that it is a deterrent to people as they are aware they can be randomly stopped and asked to take the test. Funding for the kits is limited in Northern Ireland.

Councillor McNamee stated that it is great to have this initiative up and running and it will hopefully have a positive impact as a deterrent and detection.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn thanked Chief Inspector Dodds for the informative presentation.

**PCSP322/24     MINUTES OF MID ULSTER POLICING & COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE 2024**

The Minutes of Mid Ulster Policing and Community Safety Partnership meeting held on Wednesday 26 June 2024 were approved by Members.

**Proposed by:** Councillor John McNamee  
**Seconded by:** Niamh Doris

**PCSP323/24     MATTERS ARISING**

**PCSP313/24 PCSP 306/24 / PCSP298/24 / PCSP290/23 MATTERS ARISING PCSP285/23 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Focus Meeting to discuss flags and offensive posters erected in Town Centres across Mid Ulster District**

The PCSP Manager advised that following the meeting in February 2024, he and the Good Relations Officer had individual meetings with representatives from each of the organisations who use Cookstown town centre. The sharing of e-mail addresses was discussed to have a line of communication open between organisations. In line with GDPR, we are currently awaiting permission from a few organisations prior to sharing e-mail addresses.

Councillor McNamee stated that these engagement meetings need to be re-energised to ensure that our town centres are safe shared spaces for all to enjoy.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn agreed that a follow up meeting should be arranged in Cookstown to engage with stakeholders.

With regard to coverage Councillor Cuthbertson stated that he had spoken about discussing all the trunk roads leading into Dungannon when this was first raised by Councillor McNamee, and was advised that only town centres would be the area for discussion. Councillor McPeake stated he was the outgoing chair at the time this was originally raised and reiterated that it was purely town centres that would be discussed, commencing with Cookstown, followed by Dungannon and Magherafelt. For further clarification, the purpose of these meetings is to hopefully agree a way forward with all organisations being involved and on board regarding the removal of flags, posters and emblems in a timely manner.

**PCSP316/24 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Arrange a Community Engagement meeting with residents and Local Neighbourhood Police to discuss anti-social behaviour issues in Coalisland – requested by Councillor Malachy Quinn**

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn advised that a community meeting to address anti-social behaviour issues in Coalisland will take place on Thursday 19 September 2024 in The Cornmill, Coalisland at 7pm. Details will be circulated to Members.

**PCSP324/24     EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – BEAM CREATIVE NETWORK**

Shauna McCloskey, PCSP Officer sought approval for an Expression of Interest received from Beam Creative Network to deliver their Internet Safety Programme ‘Who’s at the Door’ in Primary Schools across the district. The

target age group is Key Stage 2 children P5 – P7. The budget for this programme is approximately £3,000 which equates to 15 workshops delivered to 15 primary schools. The Programme is always well received with excellent feedback.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to the need to ensure that all primary schools across the district get the opportunity to avail of this programme.

Robert Colvin agreed with the need to rotate which primary schools receive this programme to ensure all schools receive it at some point, which may require a review of the use of 'first come, first served' basis.

In response to a query from Robert Colvin in relation to what type of programme evaluation takes place, Shauna McCloskey, PCSP Officer advised that an internal Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) is carried out annually.

**Proposed:** Robert Colvin

**Seconded:** Councillor John McNamee

#### **PCSP325/24    ROAD SAFETY QUIZ**

Shauna McCloskey, PCSP Officer sought approval to a request from Road Safety NI for funding to assist with the delivery of the annual Road Safety Quiz. The funding of approximately £1,000 would cover venue hire and refreshment costs to deliver the local heat and the final of the annual Road Safety Quiz.

**Proposed:** Councillor Sean McPeake

**Seconded:** Sue Chada

#### **PCSP326/24    AGEWELL FUNDING**

The PCSP Manager reminded Members that 2 amounts were previously agreed, firstly £5,000 for the Agewell tender which did not include the 'Handy Van' scheme or £15,000 for the Agewell tender which did include the 'Handy Van' Scheme. Following a meeting this morning with all concerned, it was agreed to include the 'Handy Van' scheme within the tender documents, therefore, as previously agreed PCSP will contribute £15,000 to Agewell on that basis.

#### **PCSP327/24    PCSP MEETING TIMES**

The PCSP Manager referred to the recent survey conducted with Members around meeting start times, the results show that the current start time remains the most favourable and the continuation of hybrid meetings.

#### **PCSP328/24    ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

T/Chief Inspector Reid reminded Members that a representative from the Policy Branch of the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) will be attending the next PCSP meeting in December 2024 and asked if Members if they had any specific questions that they wanted addressed.

Niamh Doris asked for information around the level of evidence required to allow a case to be brought to court.

Niamh Doris sought clarification on the 'opt in' scheme in relation to victims being notified when an offender is being released from prison.

Councillor McNamee sought clarification regarding the threshold requirements in relation to the release of serial offenders.

Sue Chada asked for an overview of the complete process including who is provided with updates and why the lengthy delay in cases moving forward.

If Members have any further questions, these should be e-mailed to the PCSP Manager and will be forwarded to T/Chief Inspector Reid.

### **FORUM TO DISCUSS COMPLEX ASB CASES**

Sharon Cooks, NIHE referred to complex anti-social behaviour cases that they encounter and the current joint work that takes place with the PSNI, and asked if it would be possible to set up a group that would include Environmental Health Department and the Youth Justice Agency to get input on these cases.

In response, the PCSP Manager advised that this was previously established with an information agreement in place to allow NIHE, Environmental Health and PSNI to have discussions and share information in relation to individual cases. The PCSP Manager will check with Environmental Health regarding any change in the agreement and provide an update to Sharon Crooks.

### **REQUEST FOR UPDATE ON 2 INCIDENTS IN COOKSTOWN**

Grace Meerbeek commended the engagement work carried out with various communities by the Neighbourhood Policing Team in Cookstown.

In response to a request by Grace Meerbeek for an update on damage caused to a car belonging to an Indian family and to a barber shop in Cookstown, T/Chief Inspector Reid advised that investigations are on-going.

### **PCSP329/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next PCSP meeting will take place on Wednesday 11 December 2024 in Council Chamber, Dungannon at 3.30pm.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn thanked everyone for attending today's meeting.

The meeting ended at 5.24pm



<b>Report on</b>	Sport NI Community Planning Investment Programme
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Leigh Gilmore, Health and Wellbeing Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide Members with an update on the 2024/25 Sport NI Community Planning Investment Programme
1.2	To provide Members with the list of activity approved for funding by Sport NI.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p>The 2024/25 Sport NI Community Planning Investment Programme invited expressions of interest (EOI) from Councils in line with their Community Plans.</p> <p>The core features of Sport NI's investment programme are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the delivery of the Community Plan.</li> <li>• Support the delivery of Sport and Physical Activity projects within each council area, (Projects MUST be developed and delivered by 31st March 2025) in line with the Community Plan.</li> <li>• Share knowledge to help Sport NI understand more about who is physically active or taking part in sport in Northern Ireland and where this activity takes place.</li> <li>• Target (evidence based) support to cohorts of the population who Sport NI know, are generally those most inactive in Northern Ireland, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Women &amp; girls;</li> <li>➢ People with disabilities;</li> <li>➢ Children &amp; young people especially those aged between 11-18 years;</li> <li>➢ Older people aged over 65;</li> <li>➢ Ethnically diverse communities;</li> <li>➢ LGBTQ+ communities;</li> <li>➢ People living in areas of greatest need (quartile1 - based on NISRA NI Multiple Deprivation Measures) and</li> <li>➢ People living in rural areas (based on NISRA NI urban/rural classification).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2.2	<p>Sport NI wrote to all councils on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 and advised that they were seeking to invest between £30,000 and £50,000 to a maximum of four councils and noted an intention that if more funds become available during the year, further awards may be made. Sport NI advised that they would be seeking to make awards across all councils, but this will be dependent on state of readiness of the projects, the level of partnership funding and the potential impact on the community through sport and physical activity.</p>
2.3	<p>Sport NI required a completed expression of interest form to be returned by 12 noon on Monday 25th November 2024.</p>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The Council's Health Leisure & Wellbeing team submitted an EOI to Sport NI ahead of the stipulated deadline. Details of proposed activity to be delivered before the 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025 is enclosed within the appendix.
3.2	On 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2024, Sport NI wrote to MUDC Officers advising that the MUDC application had been successful, enclosed a 'Letter of Offer' and asked that the Form of Acceptance should be completed and returned no later than Friday 10th January 2025.
3.3	Officers have reviewed the letter of offer and standard terms and conditions associated with this grant award and are therefore satisfied to recommend acceptance and delivery of the proposed activity as outlined within the initial expression of interest application and the ability to deliver the designated activities ahead of the funding deadline of 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p>Financial: Projects submitted are required to provide matched funding and where relevant this requirement can be met from within the existing budgets within the Health, Leisure &amp; Wellbeing department.</p> <p>Sport NI value of funding is £37,880</p>
	<p>Human: Staff time and staff resource allocated to delivering projects. This can be met from within existing resources within the Health, Leisure &amp; Wellbeing department.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant Council Policies and Procedures. All projects approved for funding by Sport NI will be required to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Considered in line with relevant Council Policies and Procedures.
	Rural Needs Implications: Considered in line with relevant Council Policies and Procedures.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>To note the contents of the report and due to the Sport NI deadline, give retrospective approval for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signing of the Sport NI Community Planning Investment Programme Letter of Offer as enclosed within the appendix.</li> </ul>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	Appendix A: Expression of Interest



	Appendix B: Letter of Offer Appendix C: Acceptance of Award Form Appendix D: Pre-Programme Survey
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## Appendix 2:

### Community Planning Investment Programme 24-25 – Project Outline

Please provide details on your proposed project by completing the table below and return along with you EOI to [sportdevelopment@sportni.net](mailto:sportdevelopment@sportni.net)

Project Description	Start Date	End Date	Target Group(s)	Total Cost	Other Partners	Other Partner Funding £	SNI Funding Requested £
Aquatic Skill and Confidence Class Dungannon - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 5-10 Participants</li> <li>• Supporting families of children that need additional assistance to enter, exit and support during aquatic activity.</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Disability	£1450.00	Dungannon Special Olympics	MUDC - £450	£1000.00
Neurodivergent Class Dungannon - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 6-10 Participants</li> <li>• Multisport activities that allow children and young people to move around and</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Disability	£1300.00	None	MUDC - £300	£1000.00

play games at their own pace.							
<b>Neurodivergent Class</b> <b>Cookstown - 10 weeks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 6-10 Participants</li> <li>• Multisport activities that allow children and young people to move around and play games at their own pace.</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Disability	£1300.00	None	MUDC - £300	£1000.00
<b>Neurodivergent Class</b> <b>Magherafelt – 10 weeks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 6-10 Participants</li> <li>• Multisport activities that allow children and young people to move around and play games at their own pace.</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Disability	£1300.00	None	MUDC - £300	£1000.00
<b>Teen Intervention Class</b> <b>Magherafelt - 10 weeks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10+ Participants</li> <li>• Multisport activities for children with a learning disability or physical disability. Promoting inclusion and offering additional and alternative</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	11 – 18 Disability	£1300.00	Northern Trust	MUDC - £300	£1000.00

social outlets to those children not requiring respite or befriending services.							
Intergenerational fitness programme Pomeroy Forest Building – 5 sessions 4-week physical activity programme ending with a funday finale to include information stands, fun activities and refreshments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 20+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Children and Younger People	£1500.00	MUDC Health and Wellbeing Unit	MUDC £315	£1500.00
Intergenerational fitness programme Draperstown Workspace - 5 sessions 4-week physical activity programme ending with a funday finale to include information stands, fun activities and refreshments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 20+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Children and Younger People	£1500.00	MUDC Health and Wellbeing Unit	MUDC £315	£1500.00
Intergenerational fitness programme Fivemiletown – 5 sessions	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Children and	£1500.00	MUDC Health and Wellbeing Unit	MUDC £315	£1500.00

4-week physical activity programme ending with a funday finale to include information stands, fun activities and refreshments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>20+ Participants</li> </ul>			Younger People				
Winter Forest Walk - Drumcairne Forest - 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Stewartstown Community Group	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Winter Forest Walk - Moydamlaght Forest - 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Moneyneaney Community Group	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Winter Forest Walk - Derrynoid Forest - 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Moneyneaney Community Group	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Winter Forest Walk - Davagh Forest 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Kildress Health Matters	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Winter Forest Walk - Davagh Forest 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Broughderg Area Development Association	MUDC £120	£1000.00

Winter Forest Walk – Knockmany Forest 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Knockmany Community Group	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Winter Forest Walk - Iniscarn Forest 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Iniscarn Community Group	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Winter Forest Walk - Blessingbourne Estate 10 Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10+ Participants</li> </ul>	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older	£1000.00	Blessingbourne	MUDC £120	£1000.00
Over 65's water confidence/swimming lessons - 11 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 8 Participants</li> </ul>	6/1/25	24/3/25	Over 65's	£1050.00	None	MUDC-£450	£600.00
Inclusive swimming lessons - 11 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 8 Participants</li> </ul>	6/1/25	24/3/25	Disability	£1050.00	None	MUDC-£450	£1010.00
Teen circuit class - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10+ Participants</li> </ul>	16/1/24	25/3/25	11-18yr olds	£560	None	MUDC-£300	£860
Family Circuit classes - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> </ul>	18/1/25	26/1/25	People living in areas of need	£560	None	MUDC-£300	£860

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 – 20 Participants</li> </ul>							
Ladies only exercise class - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10 -20 Participants</li> </ul>	16/1/24	25/3/25	Women & Girls	£560	None	MUDC-£300	£860
Free Soft play sessions - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 20 Participants</li> </ul>	8/1/25	17/3/25	Women & Girls/ People living in areas of need /Children and young people	£660	None	MUDC-£200	£860
Post natal exercise class - 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 10 Participants</li> </ul>	15/1/25	24/3/25	Women & Girls	£560	None	MUDC-£300	£860
Minority Group – Swimming Lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programme</li> <li>• 8 Participants</li> </ul>	6/1/25	31/3/25	Ethnically diverse communities;	£1000.00	None	MUDC £450.00	£550.00
Young Mens Health Day Programme – Sports Equipment, Clothing & facility hire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme</li> <li>• 10 Participants</li> </ul> Activity programme for young males with a learning disability - offering physical activity, peer support, mentoring, befriending,	06/01/25	31/03/25	People with Disabilities	£1500.00	The Arc	MUDC £500.00	£1000.00



respite services and volunteering opportunities							
NPLQ Gen 10 - 10 Free places Target areas of social deprivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10 Participants</li> </ul> Offering future employment opportunities and creating community wealth building opportunities	17/2/25	21/2/25	16-18yrs	£2130.00	None	MUDC £600.00	£1530.00
Female only – Introduction to Weightlifting classes 10 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10 Participants</li> </ul>	6/1/25	31/3/25	Women & Girls	2500.00	None	MUDC £1000.00	£1500.00
Equipment for Cancer Intervention Programme – Dungannon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10 Participants</li> </ul> Supporting the delivery of new classes	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Women Diversity Need	£500	None	MUDC £360	£500
Equipment for Cancer Intervention Programme – Cookstown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10 Participants</li> </ul> Supporting the delivery of new classes	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Women Diversity Need	£500	None	MUDC £360	£500

Equipment for Cancer Intervention Programme – Magherafelt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10 Participants</li> </ul> Supporting the delivery of new classes	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Women Diversity Need	£500	None	MUDC £360	£500
Equipment for Cancer Intervention Programme – Maghera <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Programme</li> <li>10 Participants</li> </ul> Supporting the delivery of new classes	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Older Women Diversity Need	£500	None	MUDC £360	£500
Community Outdoor First Aid Course – x3 (8hr 1 day) course aimed at walking, cycling, community groups. Delivery across District – Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt area. To include Catering.	1/1/25	31/3/25	Rural Areas	£1,950	The Outdoor Partnership		£1,950
Outdoor First Aid 2 Day Course – x1 (16hr 2 day) course aimed at community leaders, Walk, Cycling leaders. Delivery at Davagh Trail Centre	1/1/25	31/3/25	Woman and Girls Rural Isolation Youth	£1300	The Outdoor Partnership		£1300
Women MTB sessions – x4 3hr Social Ride sessions to include coaching & catering at Davagh & Blessingborne?	1/1/25	31/3/25	Woman and Girls	£1330	The Outdoor Partnership		£1330

Youth MTB sessions – x4 youth MTB sessions, 2hour coaching & ride out. (X2 Davagh X2 Blessingborne)	1/1/25	31/3/25	Youth – 11-18 years of age	£2100	The Outdoor Partnership		£2100
Inclusive and youth Bush Craft – x2 Specific EDI Bush Craft sessions Delivery at Davagh & Ballyronan 2 sessions for Inclusive 2 sessions for youth/families	1/1/25	31/3/25	People with Disabilities Families and 11- to 18-year-olds	£1210	The Outdoor Partnership		£1210
				£41,170.00			£37,880.00

**Council Name:** Mid Ulster District Council

**Project Title:** Promoting Inclusive Sport and Physical Activity in Mid Ulster

Completed by:  John Howard

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**CPIP/24/MUDC**

17/12/2024

Kieran Gordon  
Mid Ulster District Council  
Council Offices Circular Road,  
Dungannon  
BT71 6DT

By email: [kieran.gordon@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:kieran.gordon@midulstercouncil.org)

Dear Kieran,

**RE: 'Community Planning 24/25 Investment Programme'**

Thank you for returning your Expression of Interest form and project plan. I am pleased to advise that Sport Northern Ireland is prepared to make a **£37,880** exchequer award to **Mid Ulster District Council** to assist in the delivery of your "**Community Planning**" project.

**Acceptance of Offer**

To accept the offer of award, please complete and return the following form to [sportdevelopment@sportni.net](mailto:sportdevelopment@sportni.net) :-

- Annex A – Form of Acceptance (with two authorised signatories for your organisation)
- CPIP – Pre-Programme Survey

**Survey Requirement**

As part of our support towards your project you will be asked to provide information and data to support us in monitoring and evaluating the programme. As part of this, you will be required to complete a pre and post programme survey.

If you could please fill out the **CPIP- Pre-programme survey** and return this in preparation for your initiation meeting.

**Terms & Conditions of Award**

A copy of the Standard Terms and Conditions for Sport NI Exchequer Awards can be accessed at <http://www.sportni.net/funding/>

**Sport Northern Ireland**

House of Sport  
2a Upper Malone Road  
Belfast  
BT9 5LA  
**Email:** [info@sportni.net](mailto:info@sportni.net)  
**www.sportni.net**



Should you wish not to accept this offer and withdraw from the Programme, please notify by email.

All correspondence or queries should be sent by email to [sportdevelopment@sportni.net](mailto:sportdevelopment@sportni.net) no later than 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Yours sincerely,

**Alan Curran**  
Interim Head of Sports Systems



**PLEASE COMPLETE & RETURN NO LATER THAN 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**CPIP/24/MUDC**

TO: [sportdevelopment@sportni.net](mailto:sportdevelopment@sportni.net)

(By Email)

Dear Sport NI,

**RE: ‘Community Planning 24/25 Investment Programme’– Acceptance of Award Offer.**

We refer to your letter dated 17/12/2024 in which you offered Mid Ulster District Council an award of £37,880 for the delivery of our “**Community Planning**” project.

**We understand that this award is provided only for eligible costs associated with the Sport NI Community Planning 24/25 Investment Programme, as outlined in the submitted Project Outline template and agreed with SNI officers at the project initiation meeting.**

We hereby accept Sport Northern Ireland’s offer of award on the Terms and Conditions stated in the Letter of Offer and supporting annexes. We confirm that we have read and fully understand and accept the Letter of Offer and all the appendices and annexes.

The undersigned are duly authorised and empowered to sign this acceptance on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council.

Yours Sincerely

.....  
Name of Signatory 1  
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....  
Name of Signatory 2  
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....  
Capacity of Signatory 1

.....  
Capacity of Signatory 2

.....  
Date

.....  
Date

Duly authorised for and on behalf of  
**Mid Ulster District Council**  
*(Please remember to copy in both signatories when emailing your form)*

**Sport Northern Ireland**  
House of Sport  
2a Upper Malone Road  
Belfast  
BT9 5LA  
Email: [info@sportni.net](mailto:info@sportni.net)  
[www.sportni.net](http://www.sportni.net)



## **Community Planning Investment Programme – Pre-Programme survey**

<b>Name of Organisation:</b>	<b>Mid Ulster District Council</b>
<b>URN Number:</b>	CPIP/24/MUDC
<b>Completed by:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	

## **CPIP – PRE-PROGRAMME SURVEY GUIDANCE NOTES**

1. This pre-programme survey provides you with an opportunity to tell us what you anticipate achieving as a result of our award.
2. In order to complete this survey, please refer to your appendix 2 (Project Plan) of your EOI form which was submitted as part of your application.

## **CPIP- Data Reporting**

1. What is the **target number of participants** expected to participate in your project, excluding coaches and volunteers?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

2. What is the total number of **young people (Under 18)** expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

3. What is the total number of **women and girls** expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

4. What is the total number of **older people (Aged 50+)** expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

## **Sport Northern Ireland**

House of Sport  
2a Upper Malone Road  
Belfast  
BT9 5LA  
**Email:** [info@sportni.net](mailto:info@sportni.net)  
**www.sportni.net**

5. What is the total number of **people with disabilities** expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

6. What is the total number of people from **areas of high social need** (top 25% MDM) expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

7. What is the total number of people from **ethnically diverse communities** expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

8. What is the total number of people **living in rural areas** expected to participate in your project?

*[Please count each participant only once].*

## Sport Northern Ireland

House of Sport  
2a Upper Malone Road  
Belfast  
BT9 5LA

**Email:** [info@sportni.net](mailto:info@sportni.net)

**[www.sportni.net](http://www.sportni.net)**





### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request any information that we hold. This includes information received from third parties, such as, although not limited to, grant applicants, grant holders, contractors and people making a complaint. If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act we will release it, subject to exemptions; although we may consult with you first. If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release if requested, you should let us know when you apply.

### **DATA PROTECTION**

Information on applications is stored on computer and, in accordance with the Data Protection Act, such information is confidential. Sport Northern Ireland complies with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will use the information that you have provided solely for monitoring/ evaluation and research purposes.

### **DECLARATION**

I declare that all information provided is truthful and accurate.

*[Please confirm by adding your name to the below statement]*

Submitted by:

**Sport Northern Ireland**

House of Sport  
2a Upper Malone Road  
Belfast  
BT9 5LA

**Email:** [info@sportni.net](mailto:info@sportni.net)

**[www.sportni.net](http://www.sportni.net)**





<b>Report on</b>	PeacePlus funding call for Clean Air
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16th January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Melanie Patterson, Environmental Health Service Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to update Members and seek approval for the development of a proposal to submit a multi-agency application for PEACEPLUS funding under Theme 6, Investment Area.</p> <p>This focus of this call is: Cross-Border Strategic Planning and Engagement on the Issue of Clean Air.</p> <p>Details of the scheme are as follows:</p> <p><a href="https://www.seupb.eu/peaceplus/overview/themes-and-investment-areas/theme-6/61-strategic-planning-and-engagement-0">https://www.seupb.eu/peaceplus/overview/themes-and-investment-areas/theme-6/61-strategic-planning-and-engagement-0</a></p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	It is anticipated that one project will be funded under this call, and that the project supported will be ready to commence by mid-2025. The project should plan an implementation period of 3.5 years. It is anticipated that the project will have a value up to €6.5million.
2.2	Clean air is vital for human health and the natural environment. Air pollution is a transboundary issue meaning that pollutants generated in one jurisdiction can impact on human health and the environment in a neighbouring jurisdiction through prevailing weather patterns. There are many similarities in home heating, transport and agricultural practices north and south that cause air pollution.
2.3	<p>To better manage clean air/air quality challenges in a North-South context, more information and a better understanding is required on emissions, ambient levels and the formation of secondary air pollutants, and depositions on ecosystems.</p> <p>Any project to be funded under this Clean Air call will be based on the following three broad areas:</p> <p>Area 1. Air pollution from solid fuel burning</p> <p>Area 2. Transport-related air pollution</p> <p>Area 3. Ammonia pollution in agriculture and effects on biodiversity/sensitive ecosystems</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The financial call is open until 16 January 2025. So, any preparation must commence shortly to ensure a competent project is submitted.

3.2	To submit a competent project the services of a consultant may need to be employed. Funding of this service will be shared among interested All-Island partners and it is anticipated that this will be a financial contribution of no more than £500.
3.3	Mid Ulster District Council Environmental Health Officers currently monitor for some limited air pollutants. This call will utilise the current expertise of those Officers with monitoring, providing advice and guidance on the call.
3.4	SOLACE have considered and approved this approach and it has been agreed that Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council will take a coordinating role on behalf of all 11 councils.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: A revenue budget spend of no more than £500 – can be derived via in year revenue budgets.
	Human: Officer time to take part in the project
	Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members are asked to approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the development of a proposal to submit a multi-agency application for PEACEPLUS funding under Theme 6, Investment Area as outlined in section 3.2 of the report.</li> </ul>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	N/A

<b>Report on</b>	1. Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal  2. Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 16 January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Economic Development Service Manager Tourism Service Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
<b>1.1</b>	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal</b>  The Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) is a respected voice for town and city management at both a European and wider global level. They are a not-for-profit organisation with members that come from the public, private and third sectors. They include key stakeholders and thought leaders who develop and implement shared visions, strategies and action plans for town and city centres throughout the UK and Ireland.
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025</b>  As part of the visitor experience, food and drink presents an opportunity to help and support the hospitality sector in Mid Ulster.  In 2022, the Council secured funding from Tourism NI deliver a food business development programme entitled ' <i>Taste Mid Ulster</i> ' aimed at standing out in competitive local and regional markets, with an emphasis on promoting locally sourced and sustainable ingredients whilst delivering high quality service standards and offering a warm welcome to customers.

	<p>Under this programme, up to seventeen restaurants in Mid Ulster received support such as mentoring, photography, mystery shopper reports and development of signature food experiences. Furthermore, 'Taste Mid Ulster' Banquet events were held on Hill of the O'Neill, Dungannon in 2022 and 2023 which proved to very successful.</p> <p>Building on these previous initiatives it is proposed to organise a 'Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week' from 10 to 16 March 2025.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<p><b>Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal</b></p> <p>ATCM membership is now due for renewal for the period January 2025 – January 2026 at a fee of £645 (excluding vat). The invoice is attached at <b>Appendix 1</b>. Membership provides a range of benefits to Council including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A platform for knowledge exchange in Town and City Centre Management;</li> <li>- Access to written resources in Town and City Centre Management;</li> <li>- Access to Town Centre events information and a variety of webinars.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2</b>	<p><b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week</b></p> <p>It is proposed to deliver a 'Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week' from 10th to 16th March 2025 to support the local hospitality sector in Mid Ulster. Members will be aware that local food and drink businesses face challenging and uncertain times with rising operational costs and eroding discretionary spending for many. It is anticipated that this initiative will help to drive footfall and spend across Mid Ulster venues.</p> <p>The proposed Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week will highlight and promote the best of our restaurants and cafes, showcase the exceptional talents of our local chefs and promote the region's home-grown produce.</p> <p>As part of the initiative, restaurants will feature a Taste Mid Ulster Signature dish highlighting locally sourced seasonal ingredients to support local farmers, markets and food artisans. Themed tasting evenings will be held that offer unique, creative experiences, from farm to fork dinners to inventive fusion dishes complimented with locally crafted beers and spirits.</p> <p>It is also proposed to hold cookery demonstrations/masterclasses from the district's top local cooks and chefs to showcase delicious local ingredients within their signature dishes.</p> <p>The Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week will be augmented by a promotional campaign to include special offers, competitions, marketing, social media activity, radio and collaborating with key stakeholders including Food NI, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland.</p>

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial:</p> <p><b>Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal</b> Provision is made within the 2024/25 Economic Development budget to renew membership with ATCM for a fee of £645 (excl. VAT) for the period January 2025 to January 2026.</p> <p><b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week</b> A budget circ. £10,000 has been allocated within the existing 2024/2025 Tourism budget.</p> <p>Human:</p> <p><b>Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal</b> Officer time.</p> <p><b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025</b> Officer time to organise and manage the programme of events. Officers will work with the Council's Marketing and Communications team to promote and market the project.</p> <p>Risk Management:</p> <p><b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025</b> The project will be managed in accordance with Council policies and procedures.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b></p> <p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: <b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025</b> None anticipated at this juncture</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: <b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025</b> None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<p>It is recommended that Members;</p> <p><b>Association of Town Centre Management - Membership Renewal</b> <b>Approve</b> renewal of Council's ATCM membership (January 2025 – January 2026) at a cost of £645 (excluding VAT).</p>

<b>5.2</b>	<b>Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week 2025</b> <b>Approve</b> budget of £10,000 for the delivery of Taste Mid Ulster Restaurant Week from 10 to 16 March 2025.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	<b>Appendix 1</b> - ATCM Membership Renewal Invoice 2025-26



Association of Town Centre Management  
PO Box 242  
Westerham  
TN16 9EU

VAT Reg No:629241833  
Telephone: 44 (0) 300 330 0980  
Email: accounts@atcm.org



Invoice Number:	25026
Invoice Date:	01/01/2025
Order Number:	
Our Ref:	COOKSTO

Mid Ulster District Council  
FAO Mary Mc Cullagh, Town Strategy  
Burn Road  
Cookstown  
Co Tyrone  
BT80 8DT  
VAT Reg No:

**Quant Details**

1.00 2025 Full Band 1 Membership

Unit	Net	VAT	VAT
645.00	645.00	20.00	129.00

**Terms: 21 days from invoice date - please ensure invoice number is quoted on payment**

**BACS Details**

Bank: Lloyds TSB  
Account Name: Ass Twn Centre Man  
Sort Code: 30-92-32  
Account Number: 01440295

<b>Total Net Amount (£)</b>	645.00
<b>Total VAT Amount (£)</b>	129.00
<b>Invoice Total (£)</b>	774.00



**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council  
held on Wednesday 4 December 2024 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,  
Magherafelt and by Virtual means**

**Members Present**

Councillor Gildernew, Chair

Councillors Bell, W Buchanan, F Burton, Clarke\*, Corry,  
Forde, McLernon\*, McNamee, McQuade\*, Milne\*, Molloy\*,  
Monteith\*, Quinn\*, Wilson

**Officers in  
Attendance**

Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place  
(SD: C&P)  
Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and  
Wellbeing (AD: HL&W)\*\*  
Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV)\*\*  
Mr McCreedy, Strategic Programmes Service Manager  
(SPSM)  
Ms McKeown, Tourism Service Manager (TSM)  
Ms Spence, Economic Regeneration Service Manager  
(ERSM)  
Mr Kelso, ICT  
Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer

**Others in  
Attendance**

**Deputation: Shopmobility**  
Mr Mark Farquhar\*\*\*

\* 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.

In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, Councillor Gildernew took the Chair for the meeting.

*The Chair, Councillor Gildernew welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Gildernew in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.*

**D200/24 Notice of Recording**

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

## **D201/24      Apologies**

Councillor Black.

## **D202/24      Declaration of Interests**

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

*Councillor McNamee declared an interest in Shopmobility.*

*Councillor McLernon declared an interest in Shopmobility.*

*Councillor Forde declared an interest in Shopmobility.*

*Councillor F Burton declared an interest in Agewell.*

*Councillor Corry declared an interest in Agewell.*

## **D203/24      Deputation – Shopmobility**

The Chair advised that Mr Mark Farquhar from Shopmobility was in attendance to provide an overhead presentation to members and invited him to address the committee. (appendix 1).

Mr Farquhar advised that Shopmobility was based in Mid Ulster from 2010 which covered Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt and Gobility.

Shopmobility is part of the accessibility chain which included transport providers; medical referrals; access to home, services and shops and Shopmobility equipment. It offers accessibility, independence, equality, wellness and partnership working with hospitals and networking with agencies. Users include End of Life Care, people with broken limbs, cancer (chemo rehab) patients, amputations, COPD, arthritis, heart attack/stroke and hip/knee replacement patients which supports them with travel, shopping, medical appointments, leisure facilities and visiting friends.

Shopmobility provide over 200 pieces of equipment from paediatric wheelchairs, walking aids, powered scooters up to 36 stone, transit wheelchairs for dementia patients, manual self-propelled wheelchairs, portable scooters for transporting, accessible ramps and Elevated leg rests for adapting to broking limbs.

Mr Farquhar stated that there was a high demand for equipment as there were over 1100 members with Shopmobility Mid Ulster. These included Aging Population & more referrals from NHS, 200+ wheelchairs and scooters, 15 years of continued growth in demand, 21% of population disabled and 44% growth in demand since 2019 (Pre Covid). The service has increased dramatically year on year to date.

There is an urgent need for additional care funding and costs to cover contractual obligations e.g. salaries and rent. The impact results in: Increased Isolation, Economic Impact on Local business, Disruption to Social Networks, Strain on Emergency Services, Reduced Community Engagement and Limited Access to Essential services.

Mr Farquhar advised that he works in collaboration with Council around disability access which was becoming a huge part of his work in trying to make the infrastructure accessible. As an excess auditor he helps to support Council staff around providing audit reports on capital projects which was a huge part of his work. This takes place 3 to 4 days per month in terms of workload and was surprising the number of sites he visits for any of the new projects which come through the Disability Forum. On that work Mr Farquhar provides advice and drawings with architects, design teams and planners and visits sites during building and the construction phase providing advice on dropped kerbs and parking bays etc which are continually missed of plans and by contractors. He stated that this was a good oversight and independent audit report providing advice to Council staff on access funding and providing advice to various legs of the department which can be challenging and takes a lot of work due to changing staff within Council. He advised that this was all about making Mid Ulster accessible and making things adaptable to suit our older and disabled people.

The Chair thanked Mr Farquhar for his presentation and stated that it was an invaluable service and none of us knew when we or family members may need it. She said that it may be an opportunity for Council to look at it in terms of the rate setting process and community grants. The Chair enquired if there could be an opportunity to facilitate conversations with the Trusts to see if they could contribute towards the project also.

Councillor McLernon thanked Mr Farquhar for his presentation this evening which clearly demonstrated the importance of this service in Mid Ulster and looked forward to seeing it continue.

Councillor F Burton said that it was literally heartbreaking to hear that the crunch time has come and through her work with Community Transport she was aware the work Mr Farquhar was carrying out to support people that has access and disability problems. The member said that there was a massive need for this service and when he provided information at the end of the presentation about being an Access Auditor, we as a Council benefit from that and when she had sought his advice on rural problems, he had always been very helpful and supportive. The member enquired what would be the best thing that Mid Ulster Council could do to support the service. In terms of the Health Service and people attending appointments where they have to use the service, enquired if there was any data to show how frequently they had to attend health referrals. The member had met Mr Farquhar at Balmoral show in May and was great to see scooters available for people to use otherwise they would have been sitting at home basically only for this service. She said that anything that Council

could do to try and get people around the table like Ministers or health people to see if anything can be achieved as it was widely accepted that people should have the same opportunity that suffer from a disability and have the same access to get out. She referred to a CDM meeting where one of the team had indicated that loneliness was recognised as basically a killer as it took people down that much and felt that there was a great need to make sure that this service does not fall by the wayside. The member was aware that Community Transport had went through a similar scenario last year and felt that it was important that this service continues for people who really need it. As a rural Councillor she was aware of people living in those areas having no other access to travel for hospital appointments. The member asked Mr Farquhar if there was anything that Council could do right away, it would be useful to have feedback and also supported the Chair in her comments regarding opportunities for funding through grants and rate setting as it was about time that this was really looked at.

Mr Farquhar advised that an application had been made earlier in the year for Council's Strategic Funding but were unsuccessful. He said that immediate funds were required to keep the doors open as there was an imminent threat to the service's existence. This threat is immediate and Shopmobility had never been in this situation before. He said that there were two parts to the member's question, firstly immediate funding is required and where this can be obtained from to keep the service open even to the end of this financial year and to look at a long-term sustainable solution, which was something that has been looked at over the years. Unfortunately, when Stormont went down there was no way of liaising with Ministers but had met the Minister twice this year and although he was supportive, nothing has got over the line yet. The key thing going forward would be the link in with Health and unfortunately there has been no inroads, Shopmobility has tried over the years when Stormont was up and running but could get nowhere. Health held no stats over the years to send referrals towards the group, but he has a lot of stats available, bearing in mind 100% of users were disabled and have health issues. Mr Farquhar advised that long term sustainability was important around the collaboration with Health.

Councillor McNamee wished to commend Mr Farquhar for all the work he does as no-one knows as much as himself as he sits on the committee. The member stated that Council has to do all within their power to help the service continue on the strengths that it's in at the minute and not to dilute it in any way. The member referred to the 200 pieces of available equipment which was remarkable and should be very proud to have it in Mid Ulster.

Councillor McNamee advised that he would like to speak further on the matter in confidential business.

The Chair agreed that further discussions could take place in confidential business.

*The Chair thanked Mr Mark Farquhar for attending the meeting tonight and he withdrew from the meeting at 7.22 pm.*

## **D204/24      Chair's Business**

None.

## **Matters for Decision**

## **D205/24      Development Report**

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following –

- Community Grants – Irish Language Seachtain na Gaelige Grant Awards
- Social Supermarket Coordination Programme & Foodbank Resource Allocations
- Welfare Reform Support Project Funding
- Development Department - Update

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to propose the report as it was good overall. She wished to mention funding towards Seachtain na Gaelige and Coiste Forbartha Charn Tóchair which were two rural communities, and this money will be of a huge benefit and the communities will be very grateful. She also referred to Social Supermarket funding towards Maghera Cross Community Link and said that this was very much welcomed as she knows the group personally who do great work for some of the most vulnerable.

Councillor McNamee said that he would be happy to second the report, especially Social Supermarket funding as it was a huge help coming up to Christmas for those mostly in need.

Councillor F Burton said that she was delighted to see the amount of money coming through the Social Supermarket. The member enquired if this was something that people had to apply for or was this for people that Council has worked with in the past. She referred to Fivemiletown group who were really instrumental during Covid and questioned whether they were left off, did not apply or indeed entitled to funding. The member said that there was a difference in the amount of money allocated especially within rural areas and enquired whether this was down to how many residents reside in that area or how does the money be divvied out.

The AD: DEV advised that the groups on the list were ones that Council worked with, but an expression of interest had been circulated to make sure that no-one who is a emergency foodbank had been missed out in the District. She noted that Fivemiletown group had worked with Council and did great work, but not at the moment, and that they did have the opportunity to submit an expression of interest. The allocation was based on urban and rural population and number of users /demand for each of the foodbanks. The usage of the foodbanks are monitored continuously via the groups and Officers carry out their own monitoring throughout the year. If any new group comes in, they provide their own statistics and are then monitored.

Councillor F Burton said that last year that some of the groups on the list had been contacted, one of the rural areas were approached from people looking support from Cookstown and they were able to refer them back to some of the other groups on this list within that area. The member advised that some of these groups were asked right across Mid Ulster and enquired if Council advertises this call.

The AD: Dev clarified that the foodbanks are not advertised; it had been considered but it would be too overwhelming as there was a lot of referrals already. Council and DFC both support the foodbanks and funding is based on them working together as a network. There may be a scenario that one foodbank may focus on food, another on oil or electric support and they work together.

*Councillor Quinn declared an interest in SVP Coalisland as part of the money is shared with SVP in Clonoe.*

Councillor Quinn advised that he has been involved with SVP for a long time and money is put to great use. He said that it was a case now that sadly many people depend on charities and foodbanks which was heartbreaking but the list involving these 11 groups who carry out work for the communities was unbelievable. He stated that the foodbank in Coalisland does a lot for the community.

Proposed by Councillor Corry  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

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

- Approve the Irish Language Seachtain na Gaelige Grant Awards.
- Approve the Social Supermarket Coordination Programme & Foodbank Resource Allocations.
- Approve the Welfare Reform Support Project Funding.
- Note the Development Department - Update.

## **D206/24 Grant Aid Policy 2025/26**

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following:

- Updates and changes to the Grant Aid Policy for 2025/26
- Grant Aid Programme Timetable for 2025/26

The AD: DEV wished to bring to members attention that this policy was similar to what has happened previously but a few amendments; it was planned to amalgamate all the grants into one document and within one section of Council to provide a clear direction of which grant to apply for and avoid confusion. Grants are to be submitted earlier, it is proposed to reduce the time for applications from 6 weeks to 4 weeks and this allows letters of offer to go out earlier. It was also proposed that there are two open calls only as there is never any funding left in the budget. The date of closure for the grants will be 14<sup>th</sup> February and not 17<sup>th</sup> March, this will be communicated to the groups. Ongoing work has been continuing with our Audit Officer and External Auditor



to see how we take forward good governance whilst reducing administration for community groups as referenced in the report.

The Chair said that it made sense to reduce governance for community groups especially if documents have been held from previous years or registered with the Charity Commission. She said that this would be beneficial for community groups as they can struggle and would be more accessible for them.

Councillor Wilson said that he had a few concerns and referred to 2.1(g) and felt that if they were awarded a grant within 3 years, it should be cut down to 2 years. His reasoning for this was when he read the rest of the report, he believed that there was an opportunity here for someone to commit fraud and referred to statement within report where it states that grants of £3,500 or under would be paid upfront and not be asking for any invoices and 10% of what applies. The member couldn't recall the exact number of applicants which applied last year but approximately 450 applications had been received and looking at 45 groups with money being paid upfront with no invoices being submitted, felt that this was wrong. He stated that this may not be a huge issue for groups as he has worked with some of them and was not a huge ask to load some invoices as this was an easy task to do and this would be beneficial as it would be on file.

The AD: Dev said that Officers intention was trying to make it easier for groups and working with the Auditor to see how simplified it could be. She said that the decision on the invoices was up to members who work with groups. Officers are aware that the advance process is confusing for groups and also puts additional administration on the team. They were proposing to put out at 100% for small grants similar to what the old Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council used to do. The AD: DEV advised that this worked well in the past and the Auditor was content with that. It was felt that not submitting invoices would be easier for groups but also appreciated that members who work with groups would know best if it was too onerous or ok and Officers would be happy to reconsider.

The Chair advised that she did work closely with groups and would have a good knowledge and history of the groups listed anyway. She felt that the policy as presented was fair enough and would definitely help groups and remove their burden as they know what was expected of them.

The AD: Dev clarified that the 10% was on random selection.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) clarified that the monitoring process that has been suggested was for grants up to £20k, Officers would carry out verification visits only on 10% of completed projects. Officers would seek data and information from 100% of the applicants which would include their invoices and bank statements against listed expenditure against their application. The evaluation of the projects performance and outcomes against aims and objectives and identifying any areas for improvement.

Councillor Wilson advised that he was referring to the lower grant up to £3,500k and under.

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy propose the recommendation as these were groups that Council already work with. The member advised that some of these groups may not be tech savvy and would make it a bit easier for them and if anyone had concerns, then spot checks could be carried out by Officers.

Councillor McNamee seconded the report. The member enquired if there would be any community awareness events being held to make groups aware of the changes.

Councillor Forde concurred with Councillor Wilson's concerns and said if a group was requesting £750, then it would be acceptable to request three invoices and only a matter of checking to see if they were relevant. The member advised that she worked with dozens of groups all over and some would say that they could change and spend the money on something else, and she would advise them that they must spend the money on what it was allocated for. The member said that she would be concerned that when groups acquire the money that they will spend it on something else and may create more of a problem. The member referred to comment about taking so long to check the invoices and asked if it was really a huge issue.

The AD: Dev advised that it was not an issue for Officers to check the invoicing and that would be no problem, it was to make it as easy as possible for groups. She stated that there was no issue in terms of invoicing but if not onerous on the groups to provide an invoice, then not onerous on Council either.

The SD: C&P said that it would be useful if a decision could be taken this evening if members were comfortable doing that. He referred to part he was quoting from where policy states that all grant recipients irrespective of the value needs to upload their invoices, but Officers will only do spot check verifications on 10% of them. The SD: C&P suggestion to the committee would be to go with the decision which would be no change and groups upload their documentation, with Officers carrying out the 10% verification visits.

Proposed by Councillor Corry  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

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

- Approve Grant Aid Policy for 2025/26.
- Approve Grant Aid Programme Timetable for 2025/26.

## **D207/24 Ending Violence Against Women and Young Girls**

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV) presented previously circulated report to update members on recent correspondence from The Executive Office (TEO) in terms of the role of Council in supporting the implementation of the recently published strategic framework to end violence against women and girls and associated two-year delivery plan.

Councillor Corry said that she would be happy to propose the recommendation due to the level of violence against women and girls. She felt that this was a good project

and something we really need to be tackling. In the last 4 years 24 women had been murdered in the North, it's one of the most dangerous areas in Europe for women and girls, with 7 of those women being killed this year and 4 in the space of six weeks. The member knew one lady who was murdered and lived not too far from where she worked and felt that this was definitely a problem which needs tackled. She hoped that we can make a huge difference in our local area and across the board.

Councillor McNamee seconded the proposal and said that this had come on the back of Councillor Carney's Notice of Motion from the last Council meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Corry  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

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

- Note the intention of The Executive Office to bring forward proposals to provide funding to Councils to support the implementation of recently published Strategic Framework to end violence against women.
- Agree the related Council resource requirements in terms of putting in place the necessary grant funding processes.
- Agree to TEO proposal that Council adopt a lead role for the allocation of strand 1 funding (reference 3.4) to support Mid Ulster – Wide Programme over 25/26 year.
- Agree that officers develop and deliver a momentum programme as identified at Section 3.7.
- Give delegated authority to the Chief Executive to accept any letter of offer from TEO in relation to the 2024/2025 momentum fund and 2025/2026 change fund project.

**D208/24      Extension of the Service Level Agreement with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council**

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to seek Council approval for the renewal of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC) for the provision of Health Inequalities work for the period April 2024 – March 2026.

Councillor F Burton said that the report outlined the different work areas including Clogher Day Centre and other day centres across the area and also Brantry Association and Sure Start. The member referred to McCreedy Mill in Aughnacloy who run a day centre for vulnerable people and asked if they were part of the process or could they be part of it going forward.

The AD: HL&W advised that we did have a Health & Inequalities Officer, and he could certainly investigate if the member wished to provide him with the relevant information outside committee. He said that he could get the relevant staff member to link in with those groups to see if it was feasible or not.

Proposed by Councillor Bell  
Seconded by Councillor W Buchanan and

**Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to note the content of the report and approve the signing of the renewal of the Service Level Agreement with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for the provision of Health Inequalities work for the period April 2024 – March 2026.

#### **D209/24 Department for the Economy Sub-Regional Economic Plan**

The Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) presented previously circulated report to update members on the Department for the Economy's recently published Sub-Regional Economic Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

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

- Note content of the report
- Approve the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership as the delivery vehicle/structure to base the Local Economic Partnership (LEP).
- Approve the proposed LEP membership as detailed in the report noting that membership will be kept under review to ensure that it remains appropriate for the priority work areas agreed.

#### **Matters for Information**

##### **D210/24 Minutes of Development Committee held on 14 November 2024**

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 14 November 2024.

Councillor McLernon drew reference to D188/24 where she had raised the issue of life saving equipment being damaged along the Coalisland Canal towpath and enquired if Officers had the opportunity to provide any figures in relation to her request or solutions to deter this happening.

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) advised that from August 2022 to mid-November 2024 there was a report of 299 items needing replaced at a cost of over £11k, which was replacing the housing and throwlines. He said that various measures were being investigated but there was no quick fix on this and currently looking at educational measures and signage also. He advised that there was a lot of pros and cons with different solutions in the marketplace as there was a need to have a lot of this valuable equipment to be accessible and easy to obtain if someone was in difficulty. He felt that there needed to be a huge educational piece to reinforce how valuable these pieces of equipment were, with a number of measures being investigated by Officers presently. It was anticipated to bring these forward specifically for Coalisland Canal and other water recreational sites and was something

that was really high up on the agenda as teams were regularly attending these sites and replacing these items. The AD: HL&W encouraged members and community advocates to continually raise issues within local communities and Officers to find a resolution as quickly as possible.

Councillor Wilson drew attention to D194/24 and referred to issue which he had raised previously regarding discussions with the Hockey Club and also the Pitches Strategy. The member said that these discussions were to take place before last month's meeting and were put off and brought forward to this month. He was aware that Pitches Strategy was being raised at the next item and would deal with that there but would be interested to hear how discussions were going with the Hockey Club.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) said that it was his understanding that the request was to bring a report back in relation to update on where we were with Year 1 of the Pitches Strategy and on the back of that may lead onto conversations in relation to hockey and hockey investment, however he once again advised that any further investment will need to be picked up as part of the review of the Capital programme.

Councillor Wilson said that this was not his understanding as he continually raised the matter and if this had of been the issue it would have been brought to his attention and also the rest of the committee's attention.

#### **D211/24      Pitches and Recreational Spaces Strategy Year 1 Update**

Members noted update on the progress to date in relation to the Pitches and Recreational Spaces Strategy.

Councillor Wilson said he had concerns with the Pitches Strategy as figures produced were not particularly accurate and was speaking solely on hockey where it states there were 12 pitches across the district within Mid Ulster. The member said that he would love to know where the 12 pitches were and could be something that could be teased out at the meeting with Council officials.

Councillor F Burton referred to partnership with Aughnacloy College, Education Authority and Ulster Rugby. The member felt that it would be important to keep pursuing this to get it over the line and every night she goes past the lite up pitch it's so busy with young lads who hopefully become up and coming footballers. The gymnasium is really needed to encourage Rugby people to stick with it in the border town of Aughnacloy. The member was hopeful that all the ducks could be lined up for the planning application, sorted and approved and anything that Council could do to support it would be appreciated to push ahead with this.

Councillor Corry thanked Officers and staff involved in the Pitches Strategy as she was aware of all the hard work which has gone into it. The member referred to Draperstown Celtic club who had really seen the benefit of it and were more than grateful as their pitch regularly flooded and really were appreciative.

Councillor F Burton referred to Castlecaulfield and said that it was great to see the potential that was there and also wished to thank Officers and the team.

## **D212/24      Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Report - OBFi**

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the following key activities –

- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Minutes 06.09.24
- Mid Ulster LMP – Multiply Programme Update
- Evaluation of Mid Ulster LMP Social Employment Academies 2022-2023
- Tourism Trade Engagement Events October 2024

*The live broadcast ended at 7.38 pm.*

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

Proposed by Councillor McNamee  
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

**Resolved**      In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public 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 D213/24 to D

#### **Matters for Decision**

- D213/24      Tender for Ageing Well Project  
D214/24      Tender for Play Park Facilities  
D215/24      Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – NEETS Wellbeing and Employability Programme Tender Report  
D203/24      Shopmobility (continued)

#### **Matters for Information**

- D216/24      Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 14 November 2024  
D217/24      Town Centre Wi-Fi

### **D218/24      Duration of Meeting**

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 8.30 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, [Cookstown/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.

# Shopmobility

MID ULSTER

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## Helping to make Mid Ulster Accessible

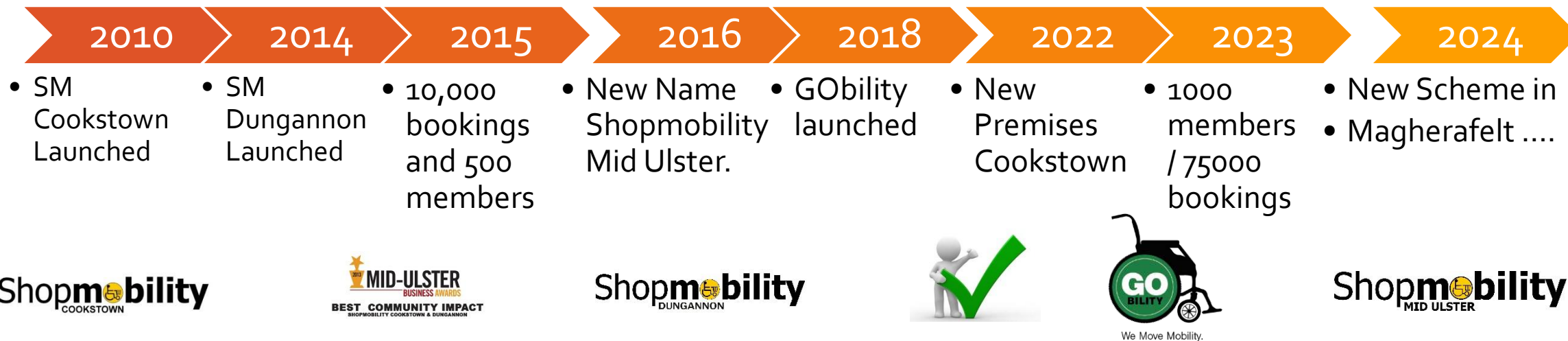
Meeting with Mid Ulster District Council

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024



# Who is Shopmobility? Shopmobility Mid Ulster

## Cookstown | Dungannon | Magherafelt | Gobility



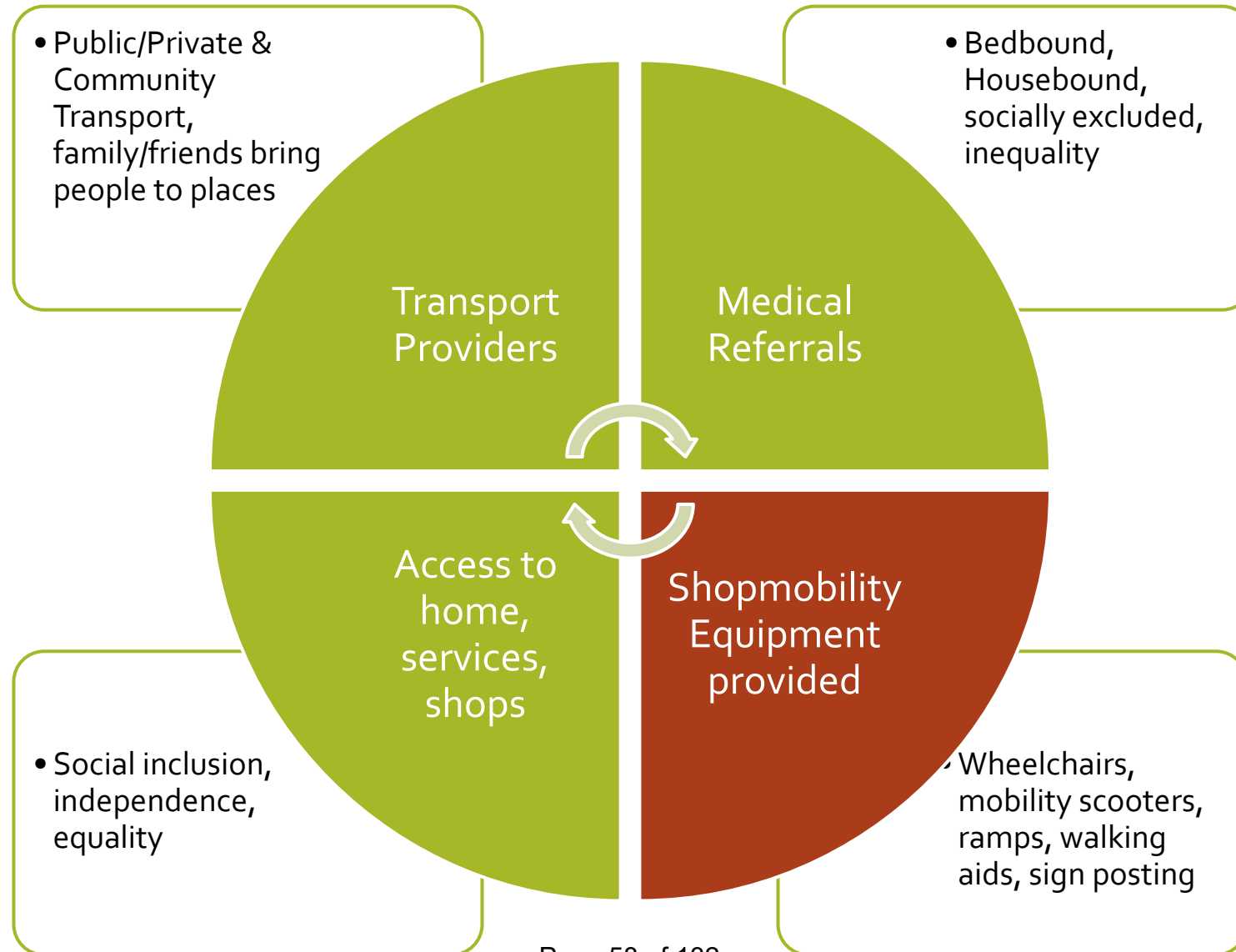
Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council



Department for  
**Infrastructure**  
www.infrastructure.gov.uk



# What is Shopmobility? – Part of the accessibility chain



# What is Shopmobility? - Equipment, Advice & Support



## Accessibility

- Access to shops, leisure, community & medical facilities
- Final link in transport chain



## Independence

- Mobility equipment provides opportunity to get around independently



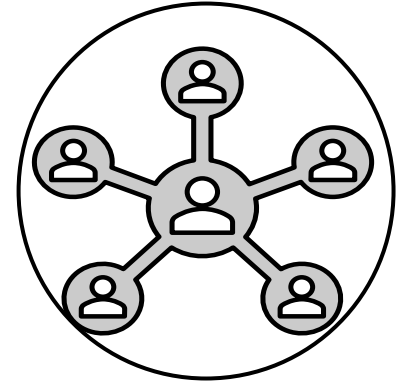
## Equality

- Opportunities to shop
- Access to services
- Attend medical appointments



## Wellness

- Mental, physical, emotional health supported during difficult times
- Social Inclusion



## Partnership

- Disability Access Audits
- Networking and partnership working with agencies and hospital



# Who uses Shopmobility?

End of life care

Huge demand in recent years

Broken limbs

Cancer (Chemo rehab)

Amputations

COPD

Arthritis

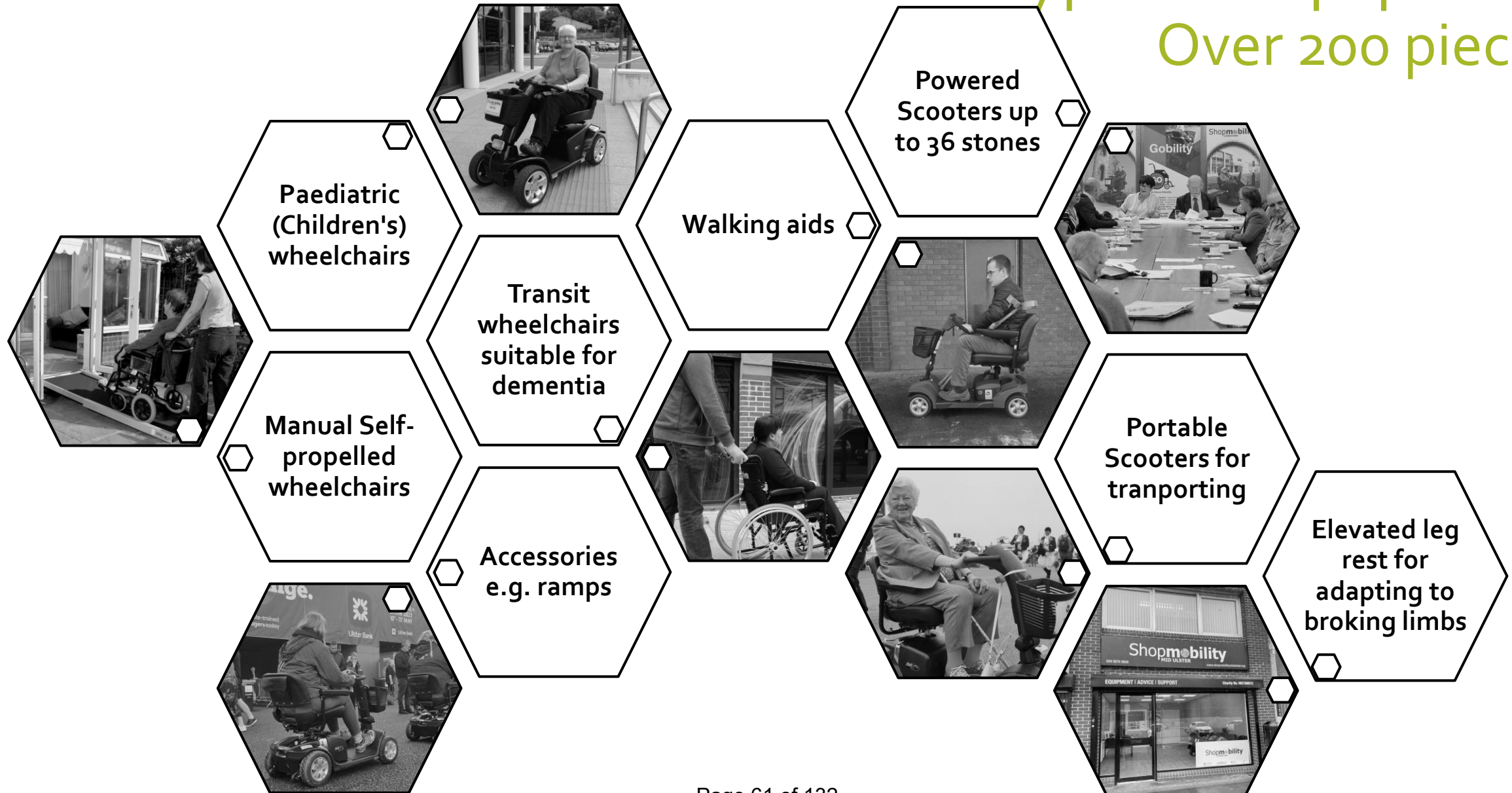
Heart Attack / Stroke

Hip/knee replacement

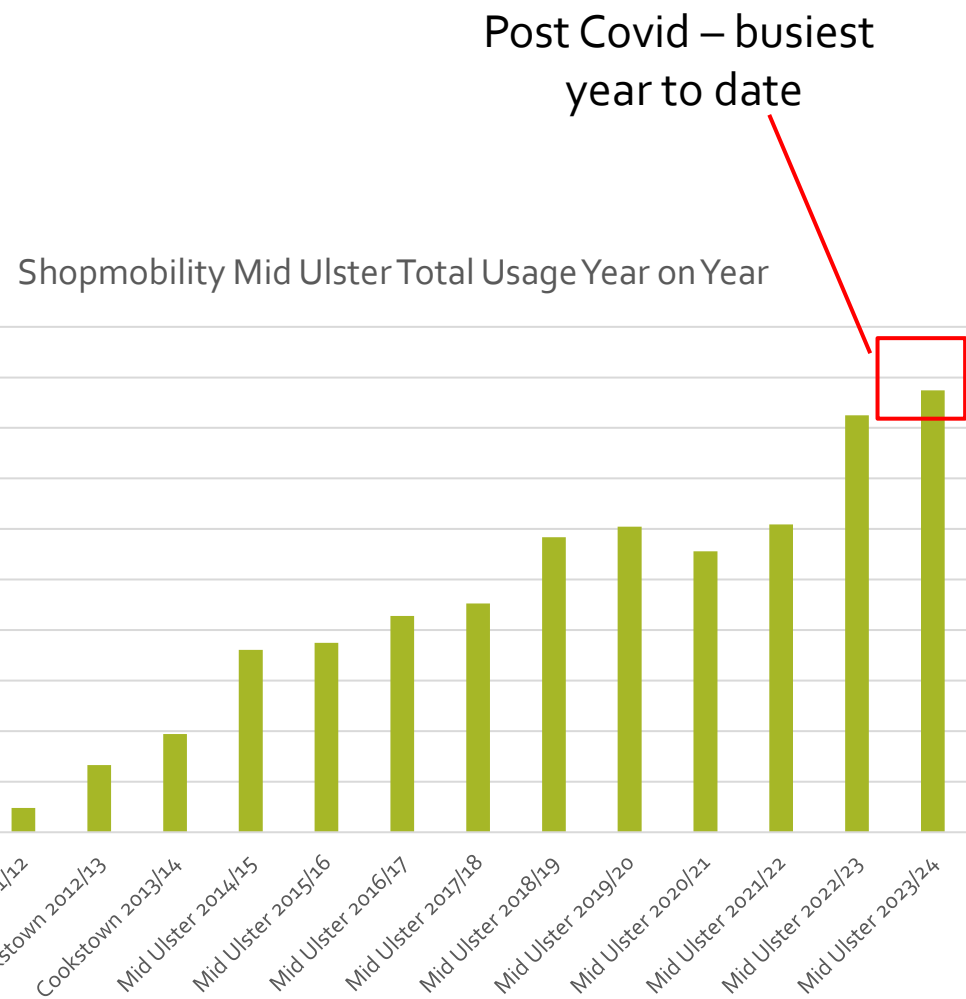
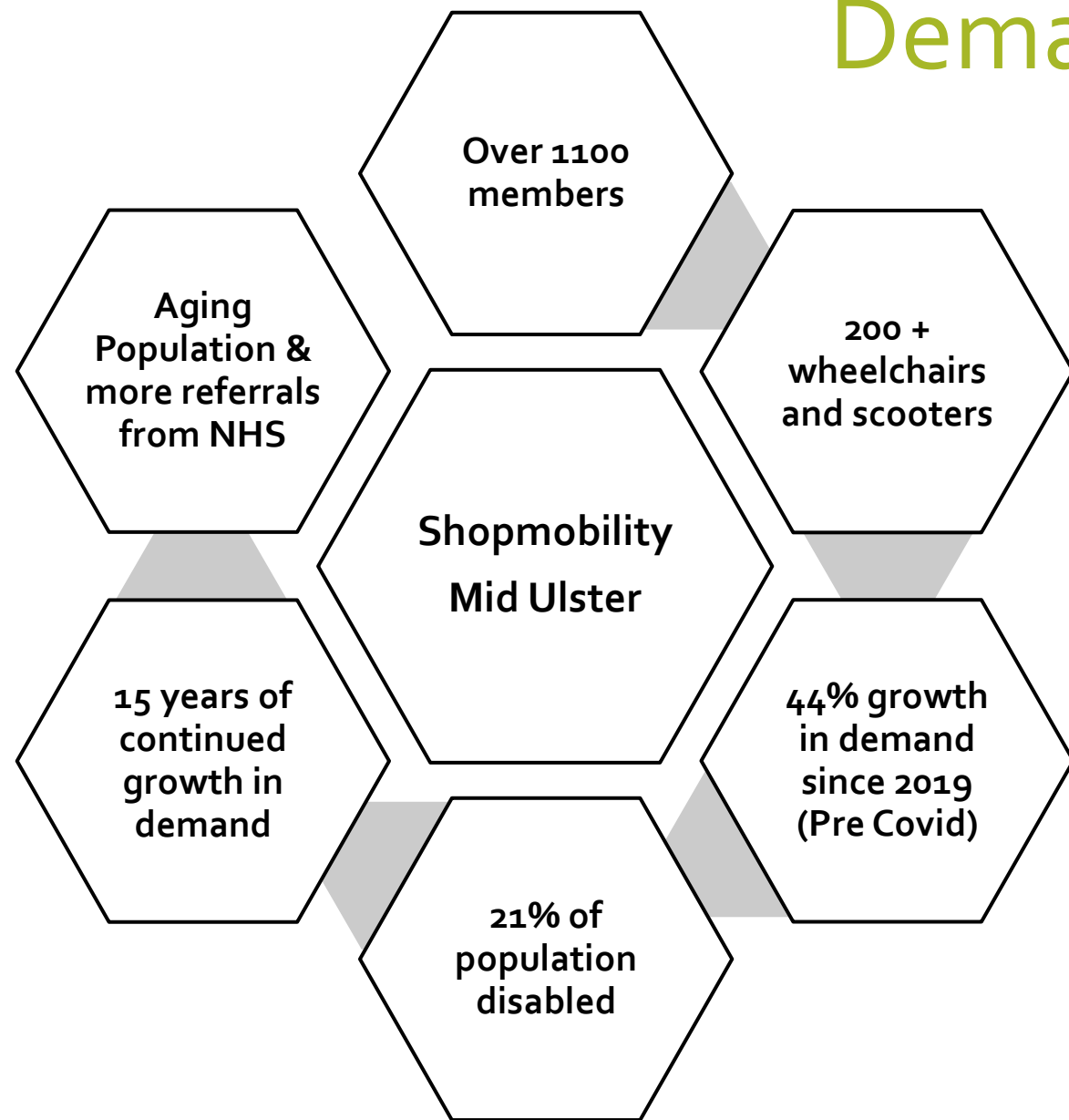


# Types of Equipment

## Over 200 pieces



# Demand





# Case Studies

## Matilda

- 7-Year-old child Bi-lateral Hip displacia Chromozone, 17q12 micro, duplication Bi lateral hearing loss, Hyper mobility Dysplastic pulmonary valve.
- Unable to walk, unable to get home from hospital
- Waiting on wheelchair from NHS – Shopmobility loaned wheelchair



## Trevor

- 68-Year-old male with Acute cerebellar ataxia.
- This is sudden inability to coordinate muscle movement due to disease.
- Founding member of Cookstown Parkrun and Completed 95 parkruns running
- Wanted to finish 100th Park runs
- Borrowed scooter to complete his 100<sup>th</sup> Park run and raise awareness for Acute cerebellar Ataxia
- Uses mobility scooter daily around house and town.

## David

- 63 year old from accident in Portadown
- Amputated arm and leg
- Hospital bound for over 6 weeks
- Due to be sent home without any wheelchair – bed bound
- Shopmobility Mid Ulster provided wheelchair and ramp same day.

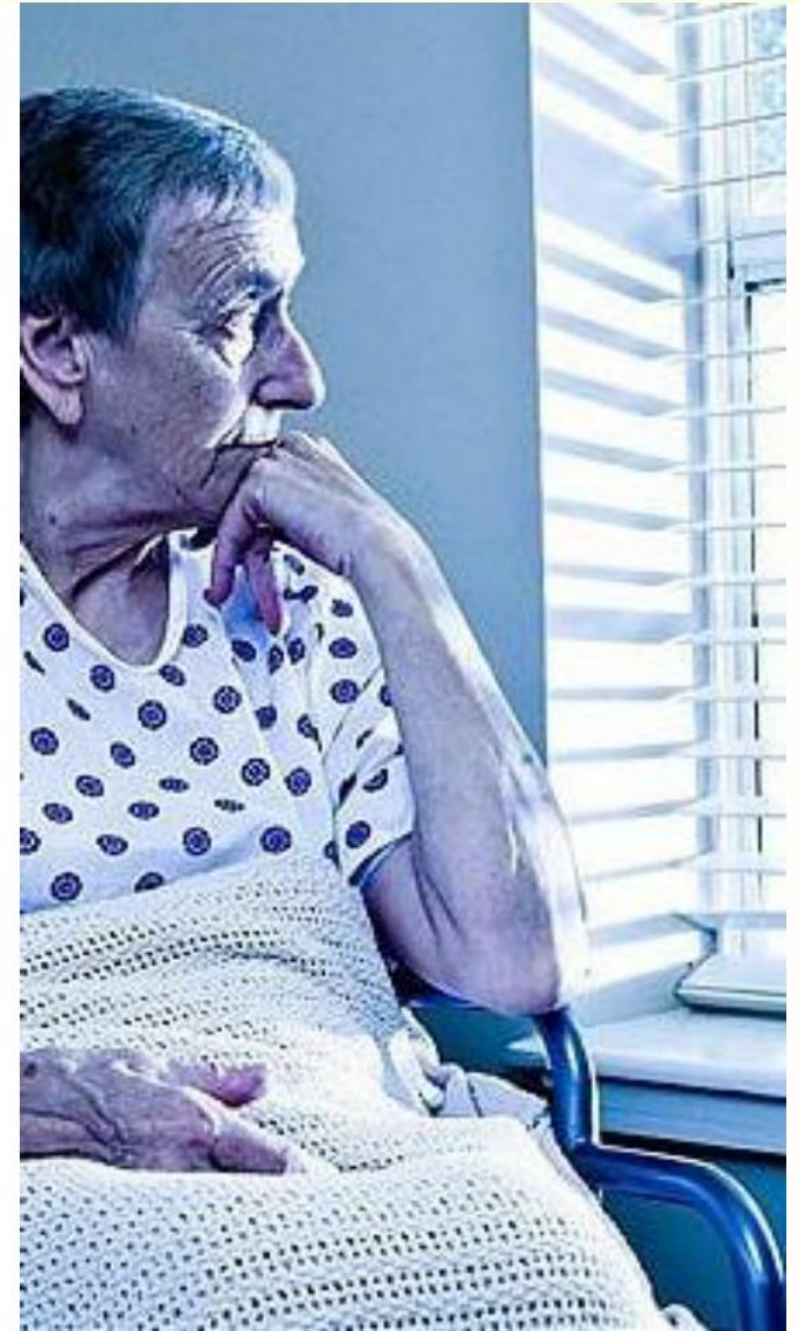
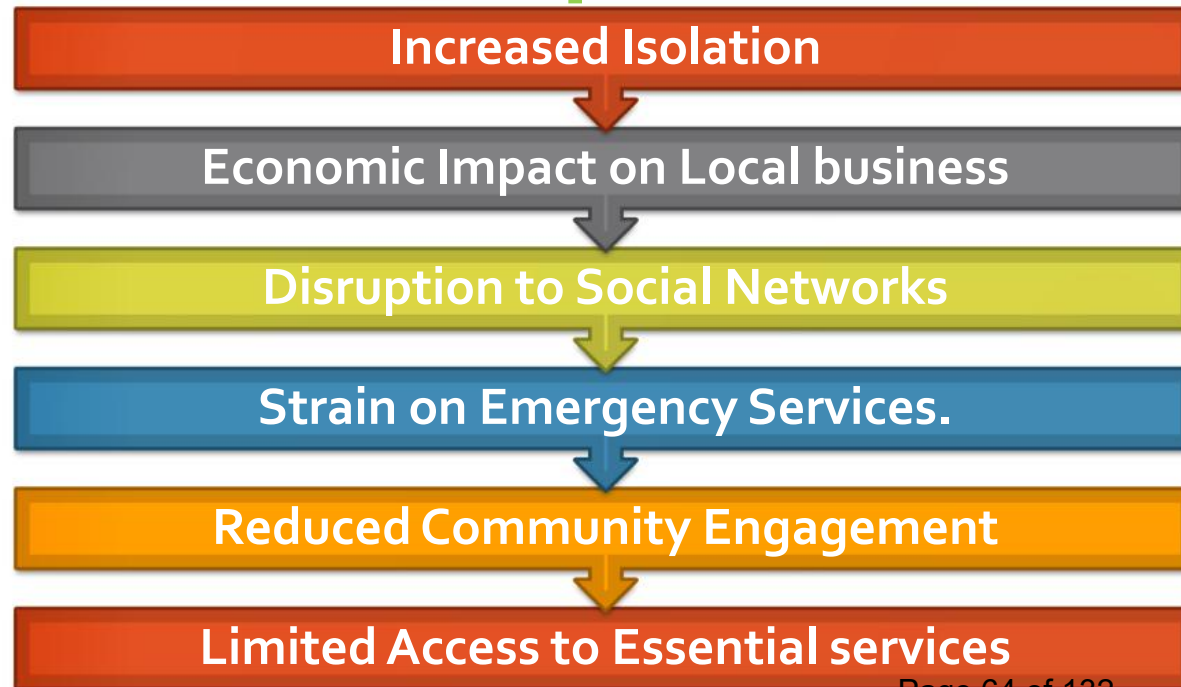
## Brendan

- 67-Year-old male with Diabetes & amputated foot.
- Previous bus driver, unable to work and unable to get around town.
- Uses Shopmobility scooter daily to get around the town
- “Enjoys Fish & chips in the park to get his head showered”

# Call to Action

- Urgent need for additional Core funding
- Costs to cover contractual obligations e.g. salaries and rent

## Impact







Helping to  
make Mid  
Ulster  
Accessible

THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
TIME  
ANY  
QUESTIONS?



<b>Report on</b>	Implementation of a new approach to food standards regulation by District Councils in Northern Ireland.
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Monica McDonnell, Principal Environmental Health Officer

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To update Members on the implementation of a new approach to food standards regulation by District Councils in Northern Ireland.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p>The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is responsible for the statutory Food Law Code of Practice, which sets expectations for District Councils (DCs) responsibilities under food law and how these are delivered.</p> <p>The FSA has devised a new approach to how DCs will deliver their regulatory responsibilities on food standards. This approach is intended to be more risk-based and intelligence-driven.</p> <p>Introduction of this new approach to food standards regulation is a significant programme of work and represents the biggest change to the delivery model for food law official controls in over 30 years.</p>
2.2	The FSA has been working closely with DCs that have responsibility for food standards to ensure it is implemented successfully and as smoothly as possible. The Code has been updated to reflect the changes required to introduce a new Food Standards Delivery model (FSDM).
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p>Ensuring food safety, including accurate labelling and composition of food, is a key aspect of protecting consumers.</p> <p>Implementation of the new approach will enable the risks to be identified more readily, (e.g.), those risks posed by lack of accurate or clear allergen information.</p> <p>The new approach also supports DCs in taking relevant follow-up action with a food business until any issues have been addressed, particularly where these pose a significant risk to consumers.</p> <p>The greater sharing and use of intelligence to inform food standards work by district councils recognises the resourcing pressures that authorities are facing and enables them to prioritise more effectively according to risk. This will in turn ensure a more targeted and responsive approach to food standards enforcement.</p>
3.2	The FSA undertook pilots with several district councils across England, Wales and one in Northern Ireland, in advance of finalising this new approach.

	<p>The changes required for the new model will be implemented in a phased rollout to DCs. Each district council has been assigned to a specific cohort for implementation of the new approach, with each cohort onboarding at a different stage of the year up to March 2025.</p> <p>Cohort implementation dates align with the essential updates that are being made to district councils Management Information Systems (MIS) to allow for the recording of food standards official control activity. This is a critical first step to ensure that local authorities can continue to record accurate information about the food businesses in their area and to support effective, risk-based planning of interventions in line with the new model.</p> <p>3.3 The roll-out date for district councils in Northern Ireland, using the Tascomi information management system, is currently scheduled to take place from now until the end of March 2025.</p> <p>There has been regular engagement between the food team within the Environmental Health Service at Mid Ulster District Council and the FSA throughout this period of preparation. A single point of contact within the FSA and a dedicated mailbox have been established to assist Councils throughout the transition to the new model.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial: In the 2024/25 financial year, the FSA provided core grant funding to District Councils in Northern Ireland. The implementation of the new Food Standards Delivery Model (FSDM) was stated in the core grant letter as one of the five key FSA priorities for the 2024/25 financial year.</p> <p>Human: Officer time.</p> <p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b></p> <p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	To note the contents of this report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix A: Letter received from FSA

From Katie Pettifer  
Interim Chief Executive

10a-c Clarendon Road  
Belfast  
BT1 3BG



E: [Katie.Pettifer@food.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.Pettifer@food.gov.uk)

Mid Ulster District Council  
By e-mail: [chief.executive@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:chief.executive@midulstercouncil.org)

12 November 2024  
Our ref: BC2024/00343

Dear Adrian,

**Implementation of a new approach to food standards regulation by District Councils in Northern Ireland**

I am writing to update you on the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) plans for rollout of a new approach to how District Councils (DCs) deliver their regulatory responsibilities on food standards which is more risk-based and intelligence-driven. This is a significant programme of work, representing the biggest change to the delivery model for food law official controls in over 30 years. The FSA will continue to work closely with district councils that have responsibility for food standards to ensure it is implemented successfully and as smoothly as possible.

Ensuring food safety including accurate labelling and composition of food is a key aspect of protecting consumers. Implementing the new approach will enable the risks to be identified more readily, such as those posed by lack of accurate or clear allergen information. It also supports district councils in taking relevant follow-up action with a food business until any issues have been addressed, particularly where these pose a significant risk to consumers.

The greater sharing and use of intelligence to inform food standards work by district councils recognises the resourcing pressures that authorities are facing and enables them to prioritise more effectively according to risk. This will in turn ensure a more

targeted and responsive approach to food standards enforcement. Our pilots<sup>1</sup> demonstrated that the new model is three times as effective in targeting non-compliant businesses than the approach previously followed. This means that your officers will spend less time dealing with already compliant businesses and more time affecting improvements in businesses where consumers are at risk.

We have worked closely with district councils throughout the design and development of the new model and feedback across authorities indicates that it is widely seen as a very positive development.

The FSA is responsible for the statutory Food Law Code of Practice, which sets expectations for district councils' responsibilities under food law and how these are delivered. The Code was updated in May 2023 to reflect the changes required to implement the new approach to food standards and we are now embarking on a phased rollout to district councils.

### **Implementation and rollout**

Each district council has been assigned to a specific cohort for implementation of the new approach, with each cohort onboarding at a different stage of the year (April 2024-March 2025). Cohort implementation dates align with the essential updates that are being made to district councils Management Information Systems (MIS) to allow for the recording of food standards official control activity. This is a critical first step to ensure that local authorities can continue to record accurate information about the food businesses in their area and to support effective, risk-based planning of interventions in line with the new model. The roll-out date for your district council is currently scheduled from the month of November.

The FSA has engaged regularly throughout this period of preparation with the team in your district council that is responsible for food standards enforcement, to keep them updated on progress. [A letter](#) (PLGNI24029) published on 16 September 2024 (an FSA

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.food.gov.uk/research/evaluation-of-food-standards-pilot-introduction>

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LINK account via registration is required to access) provided an update on the rollout programme and the support measures we have put in place to help district councils through the transition process. In the 2024/25 financial year, the FSA provided core grant funding to District Councils in Northern Ireland and the implementation of the new Food Standards Delivery Model (FSDM) was stated in the core grant letter as one of the five key FSA priorities for the 2024/25 financial year. A letter has been sent to your Head of Service for food standards to confirm the planned rollout date for your council and what is expected.

For more information on the new model, you can view a series of short digital clips titled [FSA Explains: Key elements of the Food Standards Delivery Model \(FSDM\)](#) that have recently been launched. These offer an overview of the new model, with more detailed training and support material being provided to food officers.

A dedicated email address for any queries regarding the rollout has been established. Should you or your officials wish to discuss any aspect of the model or how it will impact your council please contact our team at [FSDMenquiries@food.gov.uk](mailto:FSDMenquiries@food.gov.uk).

I have copied this letter to Andy Cole, as Director for FSA in Northern Ireland. Thank you for your council's support to date and your continued cooperation in implementing this positive step forward in modernising the food control system.

Yours sincerely,



Katie Pettifer  
Interim Chief Executive

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<b>Report on</b>	Corporate Events 2024 Update
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
<b>Contact Officer</b>	John Howard, Open Spaces & Recreation Development Manager Sharon Arbuthnot, Events & Promotions Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	✓

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide an update to Members on the corporate events programme from September 2024 to December 2024.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	In March 2024, Members at the Development Committee resolved to approve the schedule of corporate events for the 2024 year.
2.2	The approved schedule of corporate events for 2024 reflects the Council's commitment to delivering high-quality events that enrich the vibrancy and well-being of our district. While the Health, Leisure & Wellbeing service area oversees the coordination, these events are a shared responsibility across the Council. Their success depends on the collaborative efforts of multiple departments and services within council working together.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	From September to December 2024, a total of 10 events took place in our Town Centres or Council facilities, attracting impressive attendance and fostering vibrant community engagement.
3.2	<p><b>Maghera Party in the Garden Event</b></p> <p>The Party in the Garden event, held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024 in the picturesque Maghera Walled Garden, attracted thousands of attendees who enjoyed a day of outdoor activities under sunny skies.</p> <p>The family-focused event featured a variety of entertainment options for children, including the Rangers Quest, Paintball Target Shooting, a Bubble Bike, Jitterbug Jackson performances, LEGO activities, Garden Games, and a dance session with Jump Jiggle and Jive.</p> <p>A wide selection of food and refreshments was available, including sweet treats, ice cream, and a BBQ organised by Lurach Church along the garden lane.</p> <p>The event, organised in four time slots between 12 noon and 4 pm, offered free tickets that were quickly reserved, highlighting the event's strong appeal within the community.</p>

3.3	<p><b>Dungannon Halloween</b></p> <p>The Dungannon Halloween Event, held on Friday 25th October 2024, drew a large crowd and concluded with a spectacular fireworks display over The Hill of The O'Neill at 7:45 pm.</p> <p>The free, family-friendly event began at 6:30 pm and featured a variety of activities for all ages. Highlights included appearances by Halloween-themed walkabout characters, a fire juggler performance, music by a DJ and the Glasgowbury Samba Band, and face painting for children.</p>
3.4	<p><b>Cookstown Halloween</b></p> <p>A large crowd gathered at Mid Ulster Sports Arena to celebrate the Cookstown Halloween Event, on Saturday 26 October 2024 which finished in a stunning fireworks display at 8 pm.</p> <p>The event, running from 5 pm, featured a wide range of activities that catered to all ages. Attendees enjoyed live music, thrilling funfair rides, bumper cars, fire juggling displays and a soft play trailer. The Halloween Trail, crafts and colouring, magic shows, magician walkabouts, and street performances added to the atmosphere for families.</p>
3.5	<p><b>Maghera Hooley and Fireworks</b></p> <p>Thousands turned out for a night of Spooktacular family fun and fireworks in Maghera on Halloween night on Thursday 31st October 2024.</p> <p>Hosted at Maghera Leisure Centre, the event offered an array of activities for families, with plenty of mysterious and spooky fun. Families enjoyed Fun Fair Rides, face painting, Arts and Crafts, fire juggling performances, indoor inflatables, Magic Shows and an opportunity to visit Pirates Soft Play throughout the evening.</p> <p>The festivities concluded with a dazzling fireworks display that lit up the sky, providing a perfect finale to the Halloween celebrations launched from St Patricks College.</p>
3.6	<p><b>Coalisland Halloween Event</b></p> <p>A large crowd gathered for Coalisland's Halloween Event on Halloween Night on Thursday 31st October 2024, which featured funfair rides and a spectacular fireworks display.</p> <p>The evening began with a funfair at the Parochial Centre from 6 pm to 8 pm, for attendees of all ages. Big and little kids alike experienced the rides and attractions, with the festive atmosphere undeterred by the weather.</p> <p>The celebration culminated in a dazzling fireworks display at 8:45 pm, launched from Na Fianna G.F.C., lighting up the night sky in a breathtaking finale.</p> <p><b>The Town Centre Christmas Lights Switch On's officially marked the beginning of the festive season within Mid Ulster District:</b></p>
3.7	<p><b>Cookstown Switch On 2024</b></p> <p>Attended by thousands of people, the Cookstown Christmas Lights Switch-On event took place on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm on William Street.</p> <p>The event featured performances by Stewartstown Panto, Tullylagan Pipe Band, and musicians Ryan McGarrity and Alan McPhearson. A Showstoppers Parade was also part of the program.</p>

	<p>On-street entertainment included face painting, The Gaming Bus, and character walkabouts.</p> <p>Santa Claus arrived just before 7:30 pm to switch on the Christmas lights.</p>
3.8	<p><b>Dungannon Christmas Lights Switch On 2024</b></p> <p>The Dungannon Christmas Lights Switch-On event took place on Saturday 23th November 2024, attracting thousands of attendees to Market Square for a day of festive activities.</p> <p>The event began at 2:30 pm with family-focused activities, including music from an on-stage DJ and live musical performances. Free drop-in arts and crafts sessions were also available at Ranfurly House.</p> <p>A Christmas Pageant paraded through the streets of Dungannon, followed by a Santa Dash organised by Southern Area Hospice Services.</p> <p>Santa Claus arrived in style to switch on the Christmas lights.</p>
3.9	<p><b>Magherafelt Christmas Lights Switch On 2024</b></p> <p>Despite the weather, a large crowd gathered in Magherafelt for the annual Christmas Lights Switch-On event at Market Square on Saturday 23 November 2024.</p> <p>The event featured a Children's Christmas Village offering activities such as Christmas crafts, puppet shows, face painting, silent disco and an opportunity to meet the Grinch.</p> <p>Live entertainment was provided throughout the afternoon, with performances by local choirs and musicians.</p> <p>Santa Claus arrived to switch on the Christmas lights, followed by a fireworks display lighting up the night sky in a breathtaking finale to finish to the festivities.</p>
3.10	<p><b>Maghera Christmas Lights Switch On 2024</b></p> <p>Maghera kicked off the festive season on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024, with an afternoon of holiday cheer as Santa took up his annual residence in the potting shed at Maghera Walled Garden before officially switching on the town's Christmas lights.</p> <p>The event began with a range of festive activities at Maghera Walled Garden, including Christmas crafts at the Lurach Centre and a special visit from Mrs. Claus at Maghera Library.</p> <p>Friendly elves, along with Anna and Elsa, entertained the crowds throughout the afternoon, while attendees enjoyed festive treats like toasted marshmallows.</p> <p>Santa made his way to Hall Street via Fairhill, before he led the countdown to switch-on of the Christmas lights for 2024.</p>
3.11	<p><b>Coalisland Switch On Event</b></p> <p>A large crowd attended the Coalisland Christmas Lights Switch-On event, on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024.</p> <p>The event took place at the Cornmill in the town centre from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Festive activities included live Christmas music by Reverb on stage, face painting, walkabout characters, and the chance to meet Santa in his grotto, all running from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm.</p>

	<p>Craic Theatre performed on stage before Santa led the countdown to illuminate the town's Christmas lights and tree just before 7:00 pm.</p> <p>Additionally, the Coalisland Fianna GFC Annual Christmas Fair took place at the Parochial Centre from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm.</p>
	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p>Financial: Delivered within the departmental budget allocation as per the 2024/25 rates estimates process.</p>
	<p>Human: Delivered with staff from various departments/services.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: Risk Assessments to be continually reviewed with assistance from Council Corporate Health &amp; Safety team. Assessing each event needs to be considered on its individual merits - Events plans are also presented to the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) at relevant times in the year.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	<p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	To note the contents of the report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix A – Images from events held September to December 2024.

Party Walled Garden – 07 September

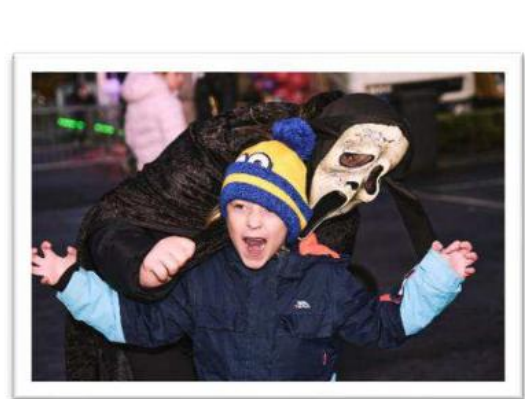




Dungannon Halloween – Friday 25 October

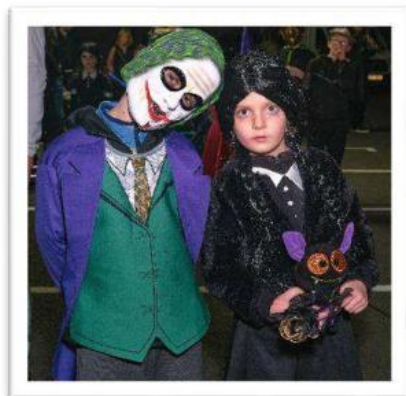


Cookstown Halloween – Saturday 26 October



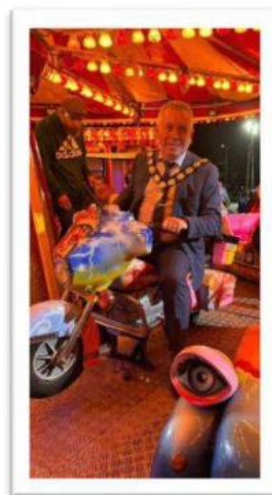


Maghera Halloween – Thursday 31 October





Coalisland Halloween – Thursday 31 October

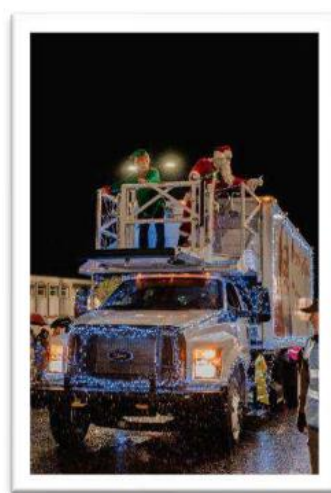


## Cookstown Christmas Lights Switch On – Friday 22 November





Dungannon Christmas Lights Switch On– Saturday 23 November



## Magherafelt Christmas Lights Switch On – Saturday 23 November





## Maghera Christmas Lights Switch On – Saturday 30 November



## Coalisland Christmas Lights Switch On





<b>Report on</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Minutes 25.10.24</li> <li>2. Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Annual Report 2023-2024</li> <li>3. A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Update</li> <li>4. Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 - Evaluation</li> </ol>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 16 January 2025
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Strategic Programmes Service Manager Economic Development Service Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
<b>1.1</b>	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<p><b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Minutes 25.10.24</b></p> <p>The Mid Ulster LMP was established by Council in October 2021 and aims to improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally by working through coordinated, collaborative, multiagency partnerships. The LMP provides a unique opportunity to greatly impact Council's priorities for skills and employability ensuring that an appropriate skills pipeline is available to local industries both now and in the future.</p>
<b>2.2</b>	<p><b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Annual Report 2023-2024</b></p> <p>It is a requirement of the Department for Communities (DfC) that LMPs produce an Annual Report which is readily available to the public. The Annual Report should include an assessment of the LMP's performance against targets, achievements and specific information on the LMP has carried out its functions.</p>
<b>2.3</b>	<p><b>A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Update</b></p> <p>The A5/N2 Cross Border Committee was established in 2019 to lobby for the delivery of infrastructure improvements and upgrades to the N2/A5/TEN-T route from Dublin to the Northwest serving the border region and Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The Committee comprises membership from five Councils: Derry City and Strabane District Council, Donegal County Council, Fermanagh and Omagh</p>

	District Council, Mid Ulster District Council and Monaghan County Council. Each Council nominates up to 4 Members to the Committee.
<b>2.4</b>	<p><b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 – Evaluation</b></p> <p>To coincide with Global Entrepreneurship Week 2024, Mid Ulster's sixth Enterprise Week comprised 14 events: 7 in-person events and 7 virtual, which took place between 18-22 November 2024. This year Council was supported by its delivery partner Dungannon Enterprise Centre in the event management, promotion and management of the webinars.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<p><b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Minutes 25.10.24</b></p> <p>Minutes of meeting of Mid Ulster LMP held on the 25 October 2024 are attached at <b>Appendix 1</b>.</p>
<b>3.2</b>	<p><b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Annual Report 2023-2024</b></p> <p>It is a requirement of the Department for Communities (DfC) that LMPs produce an Annual Report which is readily available to the public. The Mid Ulster LMP Annual Report 2023-2024 details all programme outcomes delivered within the 2023-2024 Action Plan. This report is available to the public on request via the Council's website and has been circulated across all key stakeholders. A copy of the report is attached at <b>Appendix 2</b>.</p>
<b>3.3</b>	<p><b>A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Update</b></p> <p>The Committee meets approximately quarterly, and the role of Chair is rotated annually each calendar year, usually alternating between the Northern and Southern Councils, with the Chair's Council acting as secretariat. Councillor Gael Gildernew from Mid Ulster District Council undertook the role of Chair for the year 2024, with Officers in the Economic Development section providing administrative support. Work undertaken during the year was detailed in the October 2024 Development Committee Report and included two Committee meetings held on 19 March and 30 April, and two Ministerial meetings (13 May 2024 and 12 August 2024) where Members lobbied at the highest level for the delivery of improvements and upgrades to the A5 / N2 / TEN-T route from Dublin to the Northwest, for the benefit of all stakeholders.</p> <p>The final Committee meeting of 2024 took place on 16 December 2024 at Canavan's and was attended by Seamus Keenan (A5WTC Project Sponsor) at the Department for Infrastructure who provided an update on the progress of the A5 project, following the Minister's Announcement (2 October 2024) of the beginning of the construction of the first stretch of the road. At the meeting with Minister O'Dowd in August 2024, the Minister agreed to the committee's request that Seamus Keenan (or other DfI senior representative/s) would attend the A5/N2 meetings at regular intervals to provide an update at key stages of the project's</p>



progress as well as discuss any issues raised by Committee members. As part of his update Seamus Keenan advised the following: -

#### **A5WTC – Current Status**

Following Executive agreement on 2 October 2024, the Minister announced the decision to proceed with the length of the scheme between south of Strabane and Ballygawley (55 of total 85km length). This was followed by a formal Notice published in the press, week commencing 21 October 2024, which initiated a legal challenge period of 6 weeks, expiring on 6 December 2024. As of 25 November 2024, the vesting orders became operative and the lands necessary for construction of this length of the scheme are now in the Department's ownership. On 13 November 2024, the Department received a formal legal challenge to the Minister's decision from the Alternative A5 Alliance (AA5A). Initial hearings have been heard in the High Court and the case is now listed for a full hearing on 3 March 2025. No further challenges have been received. Archaeological and geotechnical investigations have been underway across the 55 km length of the new road since April 2024 and are continuing. All affected landowners have received full details by post in relation to the vesting of their lands and all have been offered one-to-one meetings with DfI and LPS officials to discuss any issues and concerns they may have. Around 100 landowners have availed of this offer and around 80 meetings have taken place to date.

#### **A5WTC – Next Steps**

Work is now ongoing with officials and the Department's legal team to robustly defend against the recent legal challenge. It is expected that advance works in the form of site clearance, fencing, the setting up of compounds and the like will begin in January 2025, though contracts for full construction will be placed on hold pending a judgement from the legal challenge. This is expected in late March / early April 2025. Further work is on-going in relation to addressing the PAC recommendations on the remaining two sections of the scheme – i) south of Strabane to New Buildings and ii) Ballygawley to the border. These will be subject to separate decisions by the Minister in due course.

The meeting marked the end of Mid Ulster District Council's secretariat support and Councillor Gael Gildernew's role as Chair. It was agreed that for the next year 2025, the Committee would be supported by Donegal County Council, with a Chair yet to be nominated from that Council's representatives. Members are keen to secure a meeting in January/February 2025 with the new Minister for Transport, once appointed, to lobby for progress on the N2/A5/TEN-T strategic route.

The Committee expressed its thanks and appreciation to Councillor Gildernew for her leadership throughout a year which saw a great deal of progress in taking forward the identified key road infrastructure projects.

### **3.4 Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 – Evaluation**

Over 1300 people participated in Mid Ulster District Council's sixth Enterprise Week (18-22 November 2024), attending 14 free online and in-person events focusing on how to help businesses 'Create, Connect, Inspire', in today's ever-evolving economic landscape.

	<p>Events during the week included the popular launch event ‘The Road Ahead – Economic Insights and Trends for 2025’ which was hosted by Susan Hayes Culleton (The Positive Economist), alongside a panel of experts, including Catherine Martin (Cavanagh Kelly), Stephen McCammon (Menarys), Shannon McCaul (FRC Recruitment and Dr Juston Quinn (University of Ulster). During the in-person event at the Burnavon, Cookstown, attendees discussed key trends such as AI, automation, sustainability, changing consumer behaviours and the labour market.</p> <p>Assisting businesses to grow their sales and empowerment was a common theme throughout the week. Attendees heard from leading experts in their field with webinars on topics such as Mastering Paid Social Media Advertising, Tik Tok Tactives, Business Growth etc. This year’s programme also spotlighted the importance of encouraging young entrepreneurs with a webinar attracting post primary schools. The programme also included an in-person event held at Pomeroy with a focus on Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs hosted by Lynette Fay.</p> <p>In Dungannon, business owners across Mid Ulster had an exclusive chance to 'Meet the Experts.' Held in the new Connect Building located in Market Square. With over 40 experts spanning various business sectors all under one roof, businesses received one-on-one advice to tackle challenges head-on. From export and energy to marketing and finance, Mid Ulster Enterprise Week had businesses covered.</p> <p>Other important events were held by partners including MEGA, Intertrade Ireland, Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) and Council’s Tourism section.</p> <p>Chair of the Council, Councillor Eugene McConnell attended and engaged with businesses at a number of these events throughout the week, “The turnout from local businesses at this year’s Mid Ulster Enterprise Week has been the highest since we first launched the week back in 2019.”</p> <p>Recordings of the webinars are now available on Council’s YouTube Channel under Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024:  <a href="https://studio.youtube.com/playlist/PLzfkoqzAiZjUzHfzdQp2u-gGIZtqaQ6R5/edit">https://studio.youtube.com/playlist/PLzfkoqzAiZjUzHfzdQp2u-gGIZtqaQ6R5/edit</a></p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p><b>Financial</b> LMP activity is fully funded by the Department for Communities.</p>
	<p><b>Human</b> Officer time.</p>
	<p><b>Risk Management</b> The Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan is managed and monitored in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.</p>

4.2	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b> Equality and Good Relations Screening has been completed for the period 2024-2027.</p> <p><b>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications</b> Rural Needs Screening has been completed for the period 2024-2027.</p>
5.0	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members: -</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Minutes 25.10.24</b> <b>Note</b> minutes of the meeting of Mid Ulster LMP held on 25 October 2024.</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Annual Report 2023-2024</b> <b>Note</b> content of the Mid Ulster LMP Annual Report 2023-2024.</p> <p><b>A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Update</b> <b>Note</b> update on N2/A5 Cross Border Committee and minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2024.</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Enterprise Week - Evaluation</b> <b>Note</b> evaluation report on Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024.</p>
6.0	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> - Minutes of Mid Ulster LMP Meeting – 25.10.24</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> - Mid Ulster LMP Annual Report 2023-2024</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> - Minutes of A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Meeting – 30.04.24</p> <p><b>Appendix 4</b> - Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 Evaluation Report</p>





## Minutes of Meeting Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

**Date:** Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Time:** 10.00am

**Venue:** Online via Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

<b>Industry</b>	Damian Power (Chair) Sinead McErlain (Bloc Blinds) Anthony Quinn (Ionic IT)
<b>Education Sector</b>	Pamela Steele (Northern Regional College) Fintan McCann (CAFRE)
<b>JBOs</b>	Michael McCormick (Cookstown Jobs & Benefits Office) Lorna Currie (Cookstown Jobs & Benefits Office) Declan McErlean (Magherafelt Jobs & Benefits Office) Frances Herron (Dungannon Jobs & Benefits Office) Amanda McFarland (Omagh Jobs & Benefits Office)
<b>Public Sector</b>	Anne Richardson (DfE, Careers Service) Darran Long (Invest NI) Philip McCann (Invest NI) Nuala McVey (Northern Health & Social Care Trust) Edel Quinn (Southern Health & Social Care Trust)
<b>MEGA</b>	Maria Curran (MEGA)

**In Attendance:**

<b>MUDC Officers</b>	Marissa Canavan (Strategic Director of Organisational Development, Strategy & Performance) Paul McCreedy (Strategic Programmes Service Manager) Celene O'Neill (Community & Strategic Planning Officer) Shelly Grimes (LMP Manager) Colleen Bell (LMP Project Delivery Officer) Geraldine Daly (Multiply Officer)
<b>Elected Members</b>	Cllr Deirdre Varsani (MUDC)

<b>Apologies:</b>	Benny O'Hanlon (Todds Leap) Julie McKeown (Henry Bros) Fintan McAliskey (STEP) Martina Totten (MUDC) Paula Kelly (MUDC)
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<p><b>1. Welcome, apologies and introductions</b></p> <p>D Power (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>
<p><b>2. Conflict of Interest Declaration</b></p> <p>None declared.</p>
<p><b>3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were proposed by M Curran and seconded by A McFarland.</p>
<p><b>4. Matters arising</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
<p><b>5. Manager's Report – LMP and Multiply</b></p> <p>S Grimes reported that the 2022/23 and 2023/24 LMP Action Plans are complete and Evaluation reports for 2022/23 HGV Academy and Employer-led Disability Inclusion Programme have been finalised and presented to Council. These reports will be circulated to the LMP Board after the meeting.</p> <p>She advised that an Evaluation report for Sectoral Academies will be updated and resubmitted by South West College (SWC). An Evaluation report on the Childminder Academy is not yet due as the final two childminders were registered in October 2024.</p> <p>S Grimes continued to discuss the progress of 2024/25 Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding approved by minister June 2024</li> <li>• Letter of Offer received 30 August 2024: Mid Ulster allocation was £369,028</li> <li>• Delivery period for projects to 30 June 2025</li> <li>• Addendum to Letter of Offer received 17 September 2024 for DE Childminding Academy Provision – Mid Ulster Allocation was £23,895</li> <li>• The delivery period for the Childminding Academy, to include all relevant training and the application process, is 31 March 2025.</li> </ul> <p>With regards to the Childminding Academy S Grimes highlighted the tight delivery timeframe and reasoning for a higher number of Approved Home Childcare participants.</p> <p>S Grimes gave an overview of the 2024/25 LMP Action Plan:</p> <p><b><u>SP1.1 LMP Delivery and Development</u></b></p>

Target: 6 x LMP Meetings – Meetings are on schedule and will meet or exceed target.

### **SP1.2 Review of 3-Year Strategic Assessment (2024-27) and Development of a 1-Year Action Plan**

1 x Action Plan drafted to address identified local needs.

S Grimes reported that the process has been changed by DfC and Action Plans now have to be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 for 2025/26 and 2026/27. S Grimes and the Chair presented to the Regional LMP on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 to discuss the current Mid Ulster 3-year LMP strategy and it was agreed in principle to continue to deliver similar projects to that in the current Action Plan based on the strategic priorities identified.

She stated that a Planning workshop will be scheduled for late November 2024 to discuss and agree programmes for the next two years.

### **SP1.3 Construction Sector Working Group**

Invest NI have launched a new Cluster Acceleration Programme (CAP) which may benefit this group – work is ongoing.

### **SP1.4 Disability and Health Awareness Group**

Target: 4 x working group meetings. LMP staff are in the process of arranging the first meeting of the group involving stakeholders.

### **SP2.1 Employability Programme**

Targets:

- 60 x participants enrolled
- 36 x completers gaining new employment
- 36 x completers gaining new qualification

This programme was launched in late September 2024 with progress to date: 4 registrations, 1 into employment, 1 referral pending and 1 individual actively applying for vacancies.

### **SP 2.2 Childcare Training Academy**

Targets:

- 15 participants enrolled
- 9 completers to gain new employment or move into self-employment.

S Grimes currently awaiting confirmation of appointed provider by Belfast City Council who have procured same for all council areas.

A Childcare event will be held in the Royal Hotel, Cookstown on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 for advice on how to become a registered childminder.

### **SP 2.3 HGV/Coach Driver Training Academy**

Target:

- 20 participants;
- 12 completers to gain new employment.

This Academy is to be launched next week.

### **SP 2.4 Employer Support Programme**

Target:

- 30 employers engaged.

Work ongoing on this programme and C Bell reported that feedback from 8 employers already engaged has been very positive.

### **SP 2.5 Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering Upskilling Academy**

Target:

- 10 participants enrolled
- 1 Academy developed,
- 7 participants moved into higher paid employment,
- 7 gained a qualification as a result of participation on the project.

Academy currently being developed and will run from January to June 2025.

### **SP 2.6 Clean Tech/Green Energy Academy**

Procurement underway by Mid and East Antrim Council.

### **SP 2.9 Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme**

Target:

- 16 participants enrolled;
- 16 employers engaged;
- 9 completers secure employment.

This programme was launched in September with good progress to date.

### **SP 2.10 NEETs Workwell Programme**

Target:



- 20 participants enrolled
- 5 completers gain new employment
- 5 completers undertake further education/training.

Procurement closed on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October and a delivery agent will be appointed following council approval.

### **SP 3.1 Job Fair/Employability Events**

S Grimes reported that there are a number of events scheduled throughout the year. A successful 'Tech for the Future' Event was held at South West College (SWC) on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 and feedback was very positive.

A Mid Ulster Jobs & Apprenticeships Fair is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> November as well as a LMP Celebration event on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

S Grimes provided an update report on the Multiply Programme:-

### **Family Fun Days**

These events were held throughout July and August and proved to be very successful with 243 adults participating in a 'challenge zone'.

Over 1000 participants across 243 teams. Targets achieved.

### **Enhanced Learning for Industry**

S Grimes reported on meeting to take place today with South West College (SWC) to identify a suitable course to gain L2/L3 equivalent in Maths. This initiative has proved difficult due to participants having to pay up front for courses. The aim will be to support businesses who have staff currently on reduced hours or have redundancies.

### **Gamified Learning**

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is procuring a supplier and it is planned to launch this initiative before Christmas.

### **Financial Planning for Retirement Workshops**

S Grimes reported that 4 out of 5 drop in days have been completed with females representing a significant attendance in comparison to their male counterparts.

### **Financial Wellbeing Workshops for Speakers of other languages**

Quotation exercise to close on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

### **Financial Wellbeing 1 to 1 Bootcamps**

Quotation exercise to close on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

### **Financial Wellbeing Small Group workshops**

Quotation exercise to close on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

### **Health & Nutrition 1 to 1 Bootcamps**

To be launched in January 2025.

### **Health & Nutrition Small Group workshops**

Healthy Kidz/Lifestyle have been appointed to deliver this initiative. First group will commence in Cookstown Leisure Centre on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

### **Money Matters Workshops**

Launched in Pomeroy Forest Building on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024: Nutritional meals on a budget. During November, three workshops will be held on Wills and Power of Attorney Service.

S Grimes stated the Multiply initiatives are progressing well and all providers have been approached by DfE to explore additional funding options. Therefore, the LMP team is currently costing a project highlighted by Magherafelt Jobs & Benefits Office to work in partnership with Magherafelt school students to provide basic IT support to job claimants - this has already been successfully piloted in Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council.

She reported that staff are also looking at providing 3-5 webinars on topics within the Money Matters workshops which will be beneficial in terms of their longevity and accessibility.

D Power enquired if there was an easier method of engaging employers through the Employer Toolkit, for example, would a small group webinar be of benefit with employers on the MEGA network. C Bell stated she would be happy to contribute to a sectoral webinar which could be of benefit to smaller employers.

A Quinn stated that the Employer Toolkit is a great resource but a lot of employers don't know it is available and therefore a webinar would be a great idea.

S Grimes and C Bell to consider ways of engaging with businesses and promoting the Employer toolkit.

## **6. Jobs and Benefits Office Employer Services Branch – Presentation**

S Grimes advised that unfortunately there was no officer available from the Jobs & Benefits Offices to present today but there is a short video which would be circulated to all members after the meeting. This video aims to show how DfC Employer Services Branch can be of benefit to everyone.

## 7. Sub Regional Economic Plan

P McCreedy reported on the 'Sub Regional Economic Plan' which was published earlier this month by the Economy Minister. This document sets out a new strategic approach to economic policy in Northern Ireland building a more regionally balanced, sustainable, productive, and prosperous Northern Ireland economy.

He advised that among the proposals include the formation of 'Local Economic Partnerships' (LEPs) to be led and established by local councils. The focus of the LEPS will be productivity improvements and any identified local economic projects or interventions will need to align to DfE and PfG priorities. The funding to the local economic partnerships will be determined by need, however the funding allocation model has not been agreed by the Department. It is anticipated that similar to DfC funding, that the Council will be responsible for providing the administrative and financial management function and governance to the LEP. It is expected DfE and Invest NI will provide support in research/analysis and support LEPS to identify suitable projects.

P McCreedy stated that DfE are currently working out the details on how LEP will function and operate and there has been some recent engagement with local councils. The Department will in due course produce guidance for Councils on the establishment, composition and governance of LEPs. He reported that the Council's Chief Executive and himself had met with officials from DfE and Invest NI to discuss setting up a LEP. There is an agreed direction of travel that rather than set up a new standalone partnership, that we utilise an existing structure, such as the LMP, where many key stakeholders including industry and colleges are already in situ. P McCreedy reported that other relevant key agencies e.g. DfE would be invited to join the LEP as required but at this juncture council officials believe there is merit in basing the LEP within the LMP structure and DfE and Invest NI are supportive. He requested the Board's approval to participate in the SREP using the structure of the LMP, which would be subject to approval by Council.

In response to query, P McCreedy stated that industry would be included within the LEP.

D Power said his recommendation would be to engage and asked members to raise their hand if they were in favour of Mid Ulster LMP engaging with the LEP.

20 hands raised in favour.

D Power asked if there were any objections. None raised.

<p>S Grimes confirmed that a copy of the Sub Regional Economic Plan would be circulated to board members following the meeting.</p> <p>P McCreedy agreed to keep the board updated on progress.</p>
<p><b>8. Any other business</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
<p><b>9. Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>S Grimes advised that a LMP Planning workshop will take place late November 2024 and details and venue would be confirmed shortly.</p> <p>D Power stated that the next board meeting is scheduled for Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 10am via Microsoft Teams to approve Action Plans developed at the workshop.</p> <p>He thanked everyone for their time.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 10.48am.</p>



**MID ULSTER  
LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP  
Annual Report 2023-24**



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#### LMP Chairperson Foreword



The Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) was formed in October 2021. This 'local' partnership is charged with improving Mid Ulster's employability outcomes and labour market conditions by working with a wide range of partners, being flexible to meet local needs and helping to connect employers with employees.

In the 2023-24 year we saw the successful implementation of several key initiatives identified in our Action plan. These include a dedicated programme for Women Returners, Sector Based Academies in Construction, Tourism and Hospitality and

Classroom Assistant/Health and Social Care. We also saw the continuation of the highly popular HGV Academy and Employer Led Disability Programme. In total we have seen 81 participants gaining employment to date as a result of these employability programmes. Through the assistance of the various jobs fairs and other employability events organised by Mid Ulster LMP throughout the year, we envisage that over 100 local residents will have gained employment while further individuals will be inspired and supported to continue their journey back into the labour market; either through a return to education, undertaking voluntary work or through referrals to other support programmes such as UK Shared Prosperity Fund projects.

This year, we also launched the Employer Support Toolkit and have engaged with over 50 local businesses to assist with employability issues, aiding and educating employers on how to go about offering internships and work experience; develop mentorship roles for those close to or in early retirement; develop appropriate HR policies to assist with recruitment and retention including flexible working and terms and conditions; and provide best practice to employee wellbeing.

We continue to work to meet the needs of our stakeholders in Mid Ulster and while this year has been challenging with increased budget constraints on many public services, we are delighted to have secured continued funding from the Department for Communities (DfC), who have supported this initiative from the beginning.

We look forward to building upon our success in 2024-2025.

**Damian Power**  
LMP Chairperson

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#### MID ULSTER LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP (LMP)

Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC) established the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) in October 2021, as part of the Department for Communities' (DfC) Employability NI programme.

Mid Ulster LMP developed an Action Plan for its inaugural year in 2022-23, with administration and operational costs supported by DfC and complementary funding provided by the Department for the Economy (DfE). Following a very successful first year, an Action Plan for 2023-24, fully funded by DfC, was rolled out and successfully delivered. This year, as a result of extensive research and stakeholder consultation, an ambitious 3-Year Strategy with a 1 Year Action Plan for 2024-25 was developed and approved. This Action Plan will enable Mid Ulster LMP to move forward into 2024-25 with a continued commitment towards reducing the number of job claimants through targeted interventions, supporting employers to improve local labour market conditions and upskilling/reskilling Mid Ulster residents so that they can enjoy more meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities.

To measure its impact and improve accountability, the Mid Ulster LMP Action Plan for 2023/24 has been defined using an Outcomes Based Approach (OBA) to deliver against its strategic goals:

**Strategic Priority 1** – To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area.

**Strategic Priority 2** – To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally.

**Strategic Priority 3** – To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally.

OBA is a valuable way of structuring planning to improve outcomes for whole populations and for improving services.

Mid Ulster LMP aims to better understand local market needs; improve employability outcomes; reduce economic inactivity; improve local labour market conditions; and design and deliver targeted interventions. The LMP's 2023-24 Action Plan targeted Mid Ulster District Council residents who are:

- of working age;
- unemployed/long term unemployed, under-employed or at risk of redundancy and reside in Mid Ulster; or
- economically inactive for any reason (including due to long term ill-health or disability, caring commitments, early retired, or any other reason).

Each quarter the LMP submit Report Cards to DfC to record performance and accountability for the expenditure to ensure impact is measured and that the right projects are being delivered to meet identified needs.

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#### Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership Membership

Stakeholder Group	Organisation
Local Council	Mid Ulster District Council
Department for Communities	Jobs & Benefits Office Magherafelt Jobs & Benefits Office Cookstown Jobs & Benefits Office Dungannon
Public Sector	Invest NI Department for the Economy Southern Health & Social Care Trust Northern Health & Social Care Trust Mid Ulster Enterprise Partnership
Education sector	South West College Northern Regional College College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise Magherafelt Area Learning Community Dungannon & Cookstown Area Learning Community
Community/Voluntary sector	Mid Ulster Strategic Community Forum
Industry	Bloc Blinds ABP Linden Henry Brothers Mid Ulster Tourism Development Group Ionic IT Newell Stores Todds Leap Emerson MEGA
Elected Members	Mid Ulster District Council
Trade Union	NIPSA

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#### Action Plan Report

This Annual Report covers the funding period 1st April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, although delivery of some projects continued into 2024/25 due to a delay in receiving a Letter of Offer from the Department for Communities. All programmes have now been completed with six month light touch mentoring underway to ensure sustainable employment outcomes are maximised.

During the reporting period, Mid Ulster LMP implemented its 2023-24 Action Plan which includes the following three strategic priorities.

#### Strategic Priority 1: To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership

Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC) established the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) in October 2021, as part of the Department for Communities' (DfC) Employability NI programme. Building on the success of the Mid Ulster Skills Forum, MUDC has designed the local LMP as an industry-led initiative which is inclusive of all relevant government, education, and labour market stakeholders. Mid Ulster LMP aims to help improve employability outcomes and labour market conditions locally by working through coordinated, collaborative, multi-agency partnerships, achieving regional objectives whilst being flexible to meet the needs presented by localised conditions and helping to connect employers with employees.

The LMP Secretariat manage LMP activity on a day-to-day basis working directly with delivery agents, creating partnerships where possible to assist delivery and ensuring the LMP Board are actively involved in decision making. A fully functioning LMP secretariat ensures that all service areas meet the standards required in a progressive and effective manner, contributing to the inclusive growth and economic recovery of Mid Ulster. In the absence of funding, Board members were kept updated via email and the first Board meetings then took place in September 2023, with regular meetings held thereafter as well as workshops to develop a 3 Year Strategy and Action Plan for 2024-25.

#### Key Outcomes – SP 1

##### SP1.1: LMP Delivery

What did we do?	How well did we do it?
Due to delays in funding, board meetings were placed on hold until receipt of Letter of Offer in Quarter 2 2023. Four meetings were held between September 2023 and April 2024.	LMP Board meetings had a 55% attendance rate at meetings (122/216)  During the hold period, the Board was regularly updated via email and one to one calls took place with the Chair and Vice Chair every few weeks.
Is anyone better off?	
An annual review of the LMP was carried out via a survey of board members to determine whether they thought that the LMP is making a positive difference.	

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19 responses were received and of those who responded, 18 (95%) felt that the impact of LMP Programmes was either positive or very positive. Mid Ulster LMP continue to deliver a sustained PR campaign to inform residents and employers across the district of supports available within the labour market. A web presence has now been established with newly updated and refreshed webpages on MUDC's website, Facebook social media account to better reach residents and a LinkedIn account to target employers as well as a YouTube playlist to house all videos, webinars and good news stories. This will allow Mid Ulster LMP to be the first port of call for anyone requiring information on local and regional programmes in relation to skills and employability. Knowledge and awareness of Mid Ulster LMP is growing as a result of such promotional activities.

#### SP1.2: Development of a 3-Year Strategic Assessment and 1-Year Action Plan

What did we do?	How well did we do it?
<p>An extensive scoping study and consultation exercise took place in Q3 resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x Action Plan drafted to address identified local needs and approved by Regional LMP</li> <li>1 x Three Year Strategic Assessment developed on time to inform LMP Action Plan 2024/25</li> </ul>	<p>An annual review of the LMP was carried out via a survey of board members to determine whether they felt that their views were taken into account.</p> <p>19 responses were received and of those who responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>95% of LMP Members felt that their views have been taken into account with regard to the Action Plan</li> <li>95% of LMP Members felt that their views have been taken into account with regard to the Strategic Assessment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Is anyone better off?</b></p> <p>79% of LMP members reported increased awareness of local employability and labour market issues.</p> <p>A Strategic Assessment was carried out using a three-fold approach – desktop research of all relevant labour and skills data available for the district, a consultation process with all board members and other key stakeholders, and an employer survey. This provided an extensive range of data which was presented to the board at a Planning workshop. As a result of increased knowledge on the relevant local issues, a robust three year Strategy has been developed by the LMP Board to steer LMP Programmes from 2024 to 2027. Subsequently, a 2024-25 Action Plan for Mid Ulster LMP was agreed which addresses the key issues identified and maximises impact on the local labour market issues. A copy of the Action Plan is available on the LMP web pages or on request through the LMP mailbox.</p>	

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#### Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally

Strategic Priority 2 forms the basis of programmes with direct interventions to improve the local labour market focusing on three key areas:

- Economically Inactive
- Skilled Labour Supply
- Disability

##### SP2.1: Sector Based Academies

Four academies were developed to meet shortages in labour supply across key sectors – Tourism and Hospitality, Construction, HGV and Coach, and Health and Social Care/Classroom Assistants. Following a procurement exercise People 1<sup>st</sup> and Network Personnel were appointed to deliver these programmes on behalf of Mid Ulster LMP.

Sector focused employability academies target a swift reduction in the number of job claimants and improve economic activity rates through to reduce unemployment and encourage the unemployed and economically inactive into the workplace. Academies aim to ensure all participants achieve training and an accredited qualification in the relevant sector as well as providing a dedicated mentor who will support the participant back to work through employability skills support and barrier removal. Light touch mentoring goes on for a period of six months post employment so that participants can feel supported as they transition back into work.

What did we do?	How well did we do it?
<p>101 Participants have been enrolled across all academies against a target of 92.</p> <p>Four academies have been delivered as planned.</p>	<p>82% (83 Participants) completed the academies and achieved either an accredited qualification or employment as a result against a target of 75%.</p>
<p><b>Is anyone better off?</b></p> <p>79 participants (95% of completers) gained qualifications as a result of the academies against a target of 75%.</p> <p>62 participants (75% of completers) have gained employment in line with targets. Evaluations will take place in Q4 2024/25 to determine levels of sustained employment.</p>	

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#### SP2.2: Women Returners Programme

This pilot initiative aimed to improve Mid Ulster's position as a region with one of the largest gender employment gaps in NI by investing in an employer-led employability programme to support women into employment across the MUDC area. As well as assisting residents back into employment, the programme engaged local employers on a 1-1 basis in a targeted Employer led and focused programme to increase awareness of benefits of flexible working policies most beneficial to Women Returners, providing training and advice where appropriate.

What did we do?	How well did we do it?
21 Participants were enrolled within the Women Returners Programme. 30 employers engaged in the programme.	16 participants completed the academy and all 30 employers received support and advice on how to implement flexible work policies.
Is anyone better off?	
Barriers for this cohort are high due to caring responsibilities, mental health issues and other concerns. Despite this, targets were achieved with 9 achieving employment, 1 returning to full time education and 1 undertaking a placement to start their pathway back towards the labour market.	

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### SP2.3: Employer Support Programme

Research and consultation with local employers highlighted that many businesses struggle with simple HR policies, as well as access to information to help consolidate and grow their businesses. As a result, Mid Ulster LMP undertook the development of a toolkit which provides step by step guides across a range of key topics and subject areas. These include offering internships and work experience and developing mentorship roles for those close to or in early retirement; developing appropriate HR policies to assist with recruitment and retention including flexible working and terms and conditions; provide best practice to employee wellbeing, offering Apprenticeships and HLAs and general best practice guidance.

The toolkit was developed with the input of industry as well as our key stakeholders and departments in the public sector and provides a wide-ranging support to micro, SME and large businesses.

An 'Employer of Choice' event was held in June 2024 to launch the toolkit and further support local industry with best practice examples, introductions to free initiatives delivered by the public sector and a short training session on Leadership or Change Management.

Employers who sign up to receive the toolkit will be given one to one signposting sessions with the Project Delivery Officer highlighting the most beneficial parts to them and how they can maximise its use to help sustain and grow their business.

An explainer video to highlight the key functions of the toolkit can be viewed [here](#).

What did we do?	How well did we do it?
The Employer Toolkit was developed during Q4 2024 and formally launched in June 2024.	10 local employers from across industry sectors and of various sizes were consulted in regards to the design and functionality of the Toolkit.

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### Is anyone better off?

The Toolkit aims to help employers feel more confident that their business will be more successful and to assist those who would like to implement a work experience programme, mentorship programme or graduate programme, or hire an apprentice both at Level 2/Level 3 or at HLA level. By introducing initiatives such as these, Mid Ulster businesses can retain the youth talent particularly at Level 6 and above within their local area strengthening the skills base which provides opportunities to sustain and grow business across the district.

Here are some testimonies from employers who engaged within the programme:

- "Toolkit is perfect for employers - bitesize info, easy to digest and all in one place. In process of attaining Responsible Business accreditation and also very interested in workplace culture and wellbeing."
- "will be a useful resource for their business as they are going through a transition phase. Need help with flexible working, HR policies and placements."
- "Great resource - valuable particularly as it will be updated to stay current."

### SP2.4: Employer-led Disability Inclusion programme

Research in 2022-23 highlighted that the Mid Ulster Council region, at just 24%, continued to have the lowest employment rate for disabled people in Northern Ireland.

Following the success of the pilot Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme in 2022-23, Mid Ulster LMP has once again prioritised disability inclusion, recognising that need for this to be included as a core programme going forward. The Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme aims to improve employers understanding of disability employment needs, to raise awareness of the benefits of tapping into an under-utilised and capable labour pool, and to support local companies through an employability programme that will result in a number of job opportunities being created that are suited to employees with a long term disability or health condition. Network Personnel were appointed to deliver the Disability Inclusion Programme for 2023-24. A target of achieving 10 participants into employment and engaging over 20 employers has been exceeded and a testimonial from one of the participants is included below.

What did we do?	How well did we do it?
22 Participants and 32 Employers have completed the Employer Led Disability Inclusion Programme	32 employers were actively supported by Network Personnel to maximise employment outcomes. Training was provided as well as support for the recruitment process. Some employers were in a position to progress with employment opportunities whilst others took part to gain knowledge, advice and support for future recruitment.

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	22 participants actively engaged with Network Personnel who provided support to assist in their journey back to the labour market with 21 completing the programme.
Is anyone better off?	
By the close of the programme in June 2024, 11 participants had gained employment as a result of the programme and one further participant was undertaking work experience. Since then, this individual has also secured long term employment with the support received through the project invaluable in helping him secure his new role. Participants and employers continue to receive support to ensure employability outcomes are sustained.	



*"I would recommend this programme to anyone who needs help in finding a job. The support and advice I received was invaluable and was key to helping me have the confidence to get myself back out and into employment. I knew I was good at cleaning so that's where I focussed my job search efforts. I do believe that being OCD in my approach to cleaning helps manage my anxiety as I'm constantly on the move and getting things done. I'm so pleased that things are working out for me and am excited to have starting my additional role in St. Mary's in September."*

Sarah McErlean



Employer Disability Training, February 2024

**Strategic Priority 3: To promote and support delivery of existing employability or skills provision available either regionally or locally**

It is important that Mid Ulster LMP supports delivery of Employability NI by promotion and referral to existing regional initiatives as well as upcoming Mid Ulster LMP programmes to maximise labour outcomes for the district. To this end, work has been on-going to build partnerships with all stakeholders to maximise employment outcomes to all residents and businesses.

To achieve this, Mid Ulster LMP rolled out a series of targeted events supporting residents and businesses throughout the district.

Tech for the Future	4 Oct 2023	Partnership with South West College, MEGA, the Construction Industry and Bring It On to increase awareness of the IT roles required in Mid Ulster and to provide an event for post primary students and their parents to understand the various pathways available to study this key subject.
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Mini Jobs Fairs	28 April 2023 31 May 2023 6 Sept 2023 29 Sept 2023 13 Oct 2023	A range of localised jobs fairs were delivered in partnership with the Jobs and Benefits Offices in Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon.
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Employment Matters Workshop	14 Nov 2023	Employer Training on Recruitment and Retention practices.
LMP Celebration Event	15 Nov 2023	Recognising the achievements of participants and employers who benefited from the 2022-23 Action Plan projects.

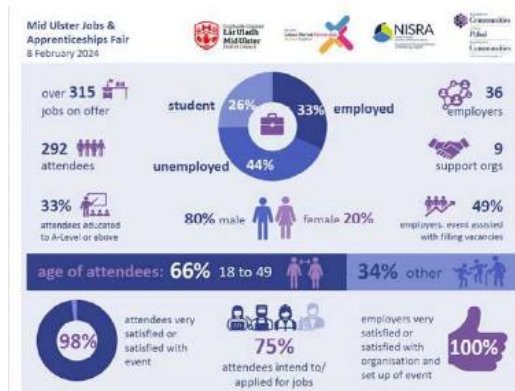
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Disability Inclusion Event	1 Dec 2023	Providing employer training for Disability Awareness alongside access to support organisations for those with a disability who wanted to return to the labour market.
Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair	8 Feb 2024	Large Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair, held in the Burnavon Cookstown, promoting employment opportunities across the whole district.



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Webinar – Flexible Working	15 Feb 2024	Providing best practice ideas and expert advice on how to implement flexible work policies.
Webinar – Menopause in the Workplace	26 Mar 2024	Providing best practice ideas and expert advice on how to address issues encountered by women in the workplace as a result of Menopause.
Employer of Choice	13 Jun 2024	Panel discussions providing best practice on becoming an employer of choice, and introducing key free supports to employers followed by a short training session on Leadership or Managing Change Support organisations provided one to one advice after the event.

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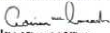


Key Outcomes across all events	
Number of residents at events	1185
Satisfaction levels across all events (positive or very positive)	97%
Number of employers receiving training and support	139
Number of employers and support organisations engaged for jobs fairs	108

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## Financial Statement

An Audit of Mid Ulster LMP was completed in May 2024. The report concluded that there is a satisfactory system of governance, risk management and control.

Statement of Income & Expenditure				
Mid Ulster District Council Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership Statement of Income & Expenditure Year to 31 March 2024				
	Total Funding	Expenditure Charged	Expenditure Accrued	Total Expenditure
	£	£	£	£
<b>Funding</b>				
Funding from DfC (Administration)	111,434.10	111,434.10	0.00	111,434.10
Funding from DfC (Operational)	275,076.61	112,449.08	162,627.53	275,076.61
Funding from DfE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contribution from Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contributions from (Other Please state)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contributions from (Other Please state)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<b>386,510.71</b>	<b>223,883.18</b>	<b>162,627.53</b>	<b>386,510.71</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Salaries	107,734.52	107,734.52	0.00	107,734.52
Self Costs	289.42	289.42	0.00	289.42
Telephones	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Printing and Stationery	1,410.16	1,410.16	0.00	1,410.16
Audit Fees	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
Photocopying	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total DfC Administration	111,434.10	111,434.10	0.00	111,434.10
Strategic Priority 1 (Operational)	23,143.80	22,544.80	599.00	23,143.80
Strategic Priority 2 (Operational)	235,054.11	77,760.58	157,293.53	235,054.11
Strategic Priority 3 (Operational)	16,878.70	12,143.70	4,735.00	16,878.70
Total DfC Operational	275,076.61	112,449.08	162,627.53	275,076.61
Payments - DfE (Admin)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - Council Contribution (Admin)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - xx	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - (Other Please state) (Admin)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other (Admin)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - DfE (Operational)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - Council Contribution (Operational)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - xx (Operational)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments - (Other Please state) (Operational)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other (Operational)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<b>386,510.71</b>	<b>223,883.18</b>	<b>162,627.53</b>	<b>386,510.71</b>
Certificate of Chief Financial Officer				
Subject to the central charges shown above properly reflecting actual costs incurred by the Council on behalf of the Labour Market Partnership. I am satisfied that the expenditure shown has been wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred by the Council on the Labour Market Partnership and that the grant receivable is in accordance with the regulations and conditions applicable.				
		18.4.2024		
Chief Financial Officer		Date		

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**APPENDIX 3****MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

<b>Meeting of:</b>	A5 N2 Cross Border Committee
<b>Date and Time:</b>	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 16:30
<b>Location:</b>	via MS Teams
<b>Chair:</b>	Councillor Gael Gildernew
<b>Councillors Present:</b>	<b>Derry City and Strabane District Council</b> Brian Harte, Ruairi McHugh, Paul Gallagher
	<b>Donegal County Council</b> Johnny McGuinness, Paul Canning
	<b>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council</b> Bernard McGrath, Paul Robinson, Glenn Campbell, Cllr Allan Rainey MBE
	<b>Mid Ulster District Council</b> Mark Robinson, Gael Gildernew, Kevin McElvogue, Eugene McConnell
<b>In Attendance:</b>	<b>Monaghan County Council</b> Brian McKenna, Paudge Connolly
	<b>Donegal County Council</b> Bryan Cannon (A/Director of Service, Roads and Transportation)
	<b>Mid Ulster District Council</b> Paul McCreedy (Strategic Programmes Service Manager)
	Shirley McIntyre (Business & Investment Officer) Emma Hughes (Meeting Secretariat)
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Monaghan County Council</b> Roisin Moore (N2 Project Liaison Officer)
	<b>Derry City and Strabane District Council</b> Cllr Jason Barr
	<b>Donegal County Council</b> Cllr Gary Doherty
	<b>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council</b> John News (Director of Environment and Place)
	<b>Monaghan County Council</b> Cllr David Maxwell, Cllr Seamus Coyle, Robert Burns (Chief Executive) Gareth McMahon (A/Director of Services, Roads and Transportation)

No	Item	Action By:
1.	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>	
	Cllr G Gildernew welcomed everyone to the meeting.	Note
2.	<b>Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>	
	<b>AGREED:</b> Proposed by Cllr B McKenna Seconded by Cllr B Harte The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 were a	Note

	true and accurate record of proceedings.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	There were no matters arising.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Terms of Reference Discussion</b>	
4.1	Cllr G Gildernew sought approval from Members with regards to reverting the Committee name to the original name. Following a discussion, Members agreed to revert the Committee name back to A5 N2 Cross Border Committee.	Note
4.2	<p>Cllr G Gildernew advised Members that following the last meeting, the Terms of Reference had been reviewed and some minor changes made. The revised Terms of Reference were presented to Members highlighting changes.</p> <p>Cllr G Gildernew asked Members for comments. Cllr M Robinson asked about keeping landowners updated. Cllr G Gildernew advised that she ask DfI for updates periodically that can then be shared with landowners.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proposed by Cllr B Harte Seconded by Cllr P Canning</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the name change, and revised Terms of Reference are adopted by this Committee.</p>	MUDC
<b>5.</b>	<b>Meeting with Minister Ryan, Minister for Transport</b>	
5.1	<p>Cllr G Gildernew informed Members that since the last meeting, a meeting with Minister Eamon Ryan had been secured for Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in Leinster House. She recommended that each Council put forward a delegate to attend the meeting. Cllr G Gildernew suggested that Roisin Moore, N2 Project Liaison Officer, Monaghan County Council also attend the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr E McConnell asked if the Chair is included as part of the proposed number of delegates allowed to attend the meeting with Minister Ryan. Cllr G Gildernew stated that she will seek confirmation for the number of delegates permitted to meet Minister Ryan.</p> <p>Cllr G Gildernew proposed that a meeting is arranged for the week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to confirm the nominated delegates.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>MUDC</p>
5.2	Cllr P Canning asked Cllr G Gildernew if there would be a briefing paper to present to Minister Ryan. Cllr G Gildernew advised that a briefing paper would be prepared for the meeting and asked Members to consider what to include in the paper and report back at the next meeting.	All
<b>6.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	Cllr G Gildernew has spoken to and received an update from the	Note



	campaign group Enough is Enough	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	The next meeting of the A5 N2 Cross Border Committee will be arranged for the week commencing 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2024. Each Council to nominate delegate for the Ministerial meeting.	All
	The meeting concluded at 17.08	



## **Introduction**

To mark Global Entrepreneurship Week 2024, Mid Ulster District Council's sixth Enterprise Week took place from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024.

Based on feedback from last year Mid Ulster District Council made the decision to retain a blend of in person and online webinar formats for the 14 events of the week: an increase from the 11 events of 2023. 7 webinars and 7 in person events took place with almost 1300 attendees in total. The week was launched on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November with 'The Road Ahead: Economic Insights and Trends for 2025'; a topical panel discussion hosted by The Positive Economist, Susan Hayes Culleton with a panel of 4 experts representing Mid Ulster business sectors. This year's theme and strapline was 'Create, Connect, Inspire'.

## **Synopsis and Programme of Events**

14 events in total were offered as part of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 under the theme of 'Create, Connect, Inspire'.

Topics were carefully considered based on research and feedback from the local business community in advance of selection of topics and speakers. The high numbers of attendees and the overall feedback clearly indicates the value of the events that Mid Ulster District offered to the business community this year.

Topics included local economic insights and trends, scaling businesses, paid social media advertising, use of TikTok and neurodiversity in the workplace to name a few.

The topics were selected strategically to ensure that subjects were relevant to all business sectors.

A specific event for hospitality and tourism (Tourism Business Engagement) was included to support this local industry, in addition to Flourish: Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs, an event to support development of women in local business.

This year a new webinar was include specifically for all post primary schools across Mid Ulster; From Passion to Proft: Business Tips and Ideas for Young Entrepreneurs attracted an audience of 605

## Marketing and Promotion

Marketing and promotion were carried out across a range of platforms using various mediums as detailed below. A primary objective of all the PR and marketing efforts was to use all marketing channels to direct people back to council website for event information and booking. The statistics below of where attendees heard about events indicates that this was again a successful strategy. Taking on board the learnings and evidence from the evaluation of 2023 it was decided not to use paid newspaper or radio adverts as part of the marketing efforts.

2024 Marketing actions included:

- News release and launch photo with MUDC Chair.
- Social media – channels (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook) were continuously used in the run up to MUEW24 both on MUDC, DEC platforms and also those of speakers, networks and other stakeholders such as Local Enterprise Agencies, local businesses and other support organisations.
- Digital programme – featured engaging content including speaker videos, explainer video etc.
- MUDC website – marketing and promotion including social media was targeted to encourage as many people as possible back to MUDC website to click on booking links
- Explainer and Highlights videos produced and promoted.
- Speaker videos and bios – shared across social media and web platforms including the digital brochure.
- Testimonial videos – attendees from MUEW24 produced testimonial videos to support promotion of this year's events including Carma Coffee, The Glenavon House Hotel, Mid Ulster Speech Therapy and Property People.
- Newsletters/online – information was disseminated to organisations to support awareness raising and promotion. This included 32 LEAs, Invest NI, nibusinessinfo, COSTA, CWSAN, NI Chamber of Commerce, Dungannon and South Tyrone Chamber, NI Councils, Go Succeed (Belfast City Council), NIRWN, Evolve Women, Women in Business, InterTradelreland, Shareit-Biz, FE Colleges, Armaghi and Queens University.
- Eventbrite – event descriptions and visuals were created and booking links set up for each event to facilitate promotion and online booking.
- Direct marketing – face to face and email marketing campaigns were successfully used to engage with businesses across the Mid Ulster district to ensure a broad range of business sectors attended events.
- Mid Ulster District Council E-Zine

**Statistics gathered from social media activities are as follows:**

**Council's Mailchimp:**

- No. of emails send out- 1010
- Emailed opened- 473
- Links clicked- 82

Webinar recordings were uploaded to MUDC YouTube channel.

By 30<sup>th</sup> November 5 videos had a total of \_49\_\_views.

**Social Media Engagement (From 18 October – 22 November)**

- X is no longer primary channel for the Council as engagement on it is minimal. This year we primarily focused on Facebook and LinkedIn for Enterprise Week promotion while also profiling to a lesser extent on X and Instagram.
- **X** – 4 posts, 978 impressions and 47 engagements.
- **MUDC Facebook** – 15 posts (excluding those shared from DEC) 59,414, people reached, 348 interactions, 19,932 video views including 3 boosted posts totalling £150.
- **MUDC Instagram** – 2 posts, 2,252 views, and 11 interactions.
- **MUDC LinkedIn** – 15 posts, 21,127 people reached, 1,682 people engaged and 1,750 video views and 1,733 link clicks.
- **MUDC website analytics** – 1,082 page views and 670 users (the new term for unique page views).

When considering link clicks, it needs to be taken into that account that due to privacy settings on Google Analytics some tracking information isn't shown. Therefore, the link clicks from social media channels may be more reliable and authentic than those taken from Google Analytics.

## Business Feedback

Google Forms was effectively used to capture attendee feedback post webinars. Hard copy evaluation forms were collected at the two mains in person events that week and responses transferred digitally to allow for easier collation and analysis. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from respondents. A full breakdown on feedback has been included separately to this report but a headline breakdown is provided here:

**98%** of respondents stated they were either **very satisfied or satisfied** with both the speakers and the content of the events.

How they heard about Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024:

- Social Media – 36.8%
- Email – 24.6%
- Mid Ulster District Council website – 8.8%
- Newsletter – 5.3%
- Word of Mouth – 14.9%
- Other – 9.6%

Some of the positive comments included:

**Beyond The Boost** – “Fantastic Webinar with a very informative host, Meghan really knew her stuff and it’s great to see a more advanced webinar for digital marketing. I would love to see more advanced marketing webinars or in person events like this. I really got a lot from it as a photographer, and it will help my small business a lot!”

**Scaling Up**- “The information about mind set and attitude was very helpful and thought provoking. I enjoyed the candid straightforward approach from the speakers.”

**TikTok Tactics** – “Great webinar about TikTok and the TikTok shop, would love another in depth session with Rhea to get more out of it! It is a much bigger subject than I thought it would be! Lots to learn and excited for that journey. Thanks to Mid Ulster Council and all involved in putting on this fantastic webinar.”

**The Road Ahead** – “Great event. Very informative. Plenty of relevant information.”

**Flourish** – “Lynette was amazing as a host. So natural and welcoming. Panel was brilliant, so varied with lots of tips and key takeaways. So glad I came!”

**From Passion to Profit (post primary schools webinar)** – “Thank you for the incredibly insightful webinar on 'From Passion to Profit.' Julie and Leon were knowledgeable and engaging, providing practical tips and real-world examples that were relatable. Leon is a wonderful role model and excellent entrepreneur, making the session even more inspiring. Overall, it was a well-organised and highly informative session for inspiring Year 8’s looking

to deepen their understanding of what skills and qualities it takes to be a successful entrepreneur in today's world.”

**Tourism Business Engagement workshop** - team included comments:

The team noted the following feedback from participants:

- All participants preferred the workshop to be in-person as opposed to hybrid or online
- Would like greater use of case studies to be able to apply these to their business
- Now recognise the importance of having a business plan and how this feeds into your businesses overall PR and marketing plan
- Enjoyed that the workshop was informal, relaxed and interactive. Lots of opportunity for Q&A's.
- Lots of great information that can be practically applied
- Facilitator was excellent, presenting great content, ideas and solutions

Additional external events were included as part of the MUEW line up including Dungannon and South Tyrone Chamber of Commerce and Industry's **Meet the Experts** and MEGA's **Annual Director's Breakfast**.

**Meet the Experts** - The Chamber noted that this was once again a valuable event for local businesses with all sectors represented. Attendees noted that they found it extremely useful to have such a wealth of business information and support readily available in the one location and referred to the impact it had on extending business networks and in many cases making actual sales on the day itself.

**Annual Director's Breakfast** – MEGA noted that 90% of attendees were senior leaders within their companies. The event featured insightful presentations and discussions from esteemed speakers and a dynamic fireside chat that underscored the benefits of the MEGA network from an industry perspective.

# MID ULSTER ENTERPRISE WEEK

2024

Event	Speakers	Format	Attendance
The Road Ahead – Economic Insights and Trends for 2025	Hosted by The Positive Economist, Susan Hayes Culleton. Panellists: Catherin Martin (CavanaghKelly), Dr Justin Quinn (University of Ulster) Shannon McCaul (FRC Recruitment), Stepehn McCammon (Menarys)	In Person	41
LMP Neurodiversity in the Workplace	Hosted by NOW Group	Webinar	46
Beyond the Boost – Mastering Paid Social Media Advertising	Hosted by Meghan Semple, Digital 24	Webinar	87
From Passion to Profit: Business Tips and Ideas for Young Entrepreneurs	Faciliated and hosted by Julie Hanna, BEAM Creative NEtowrk with guest speaker Leon Hughes, Artfunkle	Webinar	605
Meet the Experts	A Dungannon Chamber event. Over 30 experts included Invest NI, Ulster Bank and many local business experts.	In Person	78
Tourism Business Engagement Workshop	Rachael Harriott	In Person	11
MEGA Annual Directors' Breakfast	Invite Only	In Person	118
IntertradeIreland Trade Export Clinic	IntertradeIreland	In Person	14
Scaling Up: Building a Mindset for Business Growth	Hosted by Canice Nicholas and Scott Millar, ActionCOACH NI with guest speaker Benny O'Hanlon, Todd's Leap	Webinar	43
TikTok Tactics	Hosted by Rhea Daly with guest Patricia McMahon , Saltmarine	Webinar	97
LMP Job and Apprentice Fair	LMP	In Person	169
Mid South West:Technology and Renewable Energy	MSW	Webinar	23
Go Succeed Grow: Effective Use of AI in Digital Marketing	Hosted by Nuala Advies, Profile Tree	Webinar	32
Flourish: Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs	Hosted by broadcaster Lynette Fay Panellists: Lisa McCloskey (The Lady Accountant), Denise Leacock (Denise Leacock Photography), Lisa McAllister (LMA Coaching), Siobhan Kearney (Menopause NI)	In Person	54



## Events Manager Feedback

The outcome of Mid Ulster Enterprise Week 2024 was highly successful, marked by record attendance once again this year. This success can be attributed to several factors, including the event management team's extensive local business knowledge and connections, enhanced direct marketing efforts, MUDC's consistent and visible social media campaigns, and event team's local business networks.

A critical element of this achievement was the effective collaboration between the MUDC team and the event managers, facilitated by regular and clear communication. The initial PR and marketing plan, along with the agreed Gantt chart developed collaboratively by MUDC and DEC, provided a clear framework for activities and requirements, ensuring the week proceeded smoothly and as planned.

The topics and speakers were of a high standard, offering both variety and clear relevance to the needs of the local business community. This alignment was reflected in the strong attendance levels and the diverse range of businesses that participated throughout the week, with many attending multiple events. The mix and scheduling of in-person and online events proved to be highly effective. Anecdotal feedback suggested that extending the duration of in-person events could further enhance opportunities for networking among businesses. This feedback was also noted for MUEW 23.

Although attendance was high; adverse weather conditions with the onset of Storm Bert on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November, hampered attendance at Flourish in Pomeroy Forest and the InterTradelreland Export Clinic in Cookstown. InterTradelreland noted a number of planned attendees sending apologies due to the snow and ice. However, despite icy conditions and a drop off in attendance for Flourish there was still a great attendance rate, and it was noted that there were 14 'drop ins' that came to the event that had not planned to attend.

Some further observations are noted below to help inform future planning:

Earlier marketing and promotion once again are noted as being key to attracting sign ups.

Unlike last year, there are now a number of businesses supports available to the business community including many webinars and it was noted that a greater direct marketing effort was required this year to maintain levels of registration and attendance.

MUDC implemented feedback from the previous year regarding the limited effectiveness of newspaper advertisements, redirecting efforts towards direct marketing strategies such as email campaigns. This approach proved highly successful, as reflected in the strong attendance figures. With increased competition for the attention of the business community this year, direct marketing emerged as a critical component of the event management plan and is likely to remain equally important in future years.

MUDC implemented feedback from the previous year and the event management team supported the provision of material for Comms as and when needed such as notes for the Chair of MUDC etc. This works well this year as often the event managers will have a working knowledge of the specifics of the events and can be a useful resource for the MUDC

Communications team. It also alleviates any delays or miscommunication and ensures a consistent and timely marketing message.

Anecdotal feedback from the events highlighted the value of practical in-person sessions, such as *Meet the Experts*, which was praised as an excellent opportunity for networking and learning. It is recommended that similar sessions be included in future programs. Feedback also suggested that marketing-focused topics should prioritize practical, hands-on learning sessions over guest speaker formats. For example, attendees expressed a preference for the style of *Beyond the Boost*, delivered by a single digital marketing expert, over *TikTok Tactics*, which featured a guest speaker. While feedback for both sessions was generally positive, attendees indicated that the former offered more substantial learning opportunities.

Like 2023, feedback from the female focused event both during and after the event indicates a further need in Mid Ulster for specific tailored business support to female business owners.

Earlier, pre summer planning of MUEW is key as putting together the programme is the most important piece of ensuring a well-attended, relevant and impactful series of events. It is increasingly difficult to secure high profile, relevant speakers from the end of August onwards and this was a challenge for the team this year also. It is recommended that MUDC consider earlier recruitment of event managers and get a plan in place well in advance of summer 2025. This will also ensure that other organisations who plan their activities well in advance can be included to ensure a wider reach of audience e.g. MEGA, FE Colleges, Invest NI etc.

Zoom Webinar was used to facilitate the online events and this proved successful and highly effective in providing an effective media for audiences and also timely reports on attendance. It also allowed for a greater number of attendees without any disruption to service. The technical team worked diligently to ensure an effective digital set up for attendees, hosts and speakers and ensure the webinars ran according to plan and they provided timely reporting on all required elements such as chat, Q&A, managing attendees etc.

It is recommended that the event management team be provided with clear guidelines on the use of social media by MUDC, including specified tags from the outset. During MUEW, the event managers incorporated MUDC branding in additional social media posts (recommendation adopted from 2023 feedback), which successfully created an appealing and cohesive aesthetic for Council. However, many of these posts were flagged as “spam” by Facebook and, in some cases, removed from the platform. Feedback from partner organisations revealed similar issues when attempting to share posts to boost attendance. Although social media is not the responsibility of the appointed event managers it has proven that additional social media reach has boosted numbers of attendance. Some planning around a varied approach to social media marketing should be considered in advance of MUEW 25 to avoid repetitive content being flagged. Ensuring diverse and shareable posts will be essential to maximise engagement and encourage broader sharing by businesses.

## SWOT Analysis: Mid Ulster Enterprise Week (MUEW) 2024

### Strengths

1. **Record Attendance:** Achieved high participation despite challenging weather conditions affecting some in person events.
2. **Strong Collaboration:** Effective partnership between MUDC and event management teams ensured smooth execution.
3. **High-Quality Content:** Topics and speakers were well-aligned with the local business community's needs.
4. **Marketing Success:** Enhanced direct marketing strategies, including email campaigns, effectively drove registrations and attendance.
5. **Diverse Event Formats:** A mix of in-person and online events catered to various preferences and logistical needs.
6. **Responsive Adaptation:** Feedback from prior years implemented successfully, such as reducing reliance on newspaper ads and streamlining communication.
7. **Digital Tools:** Zoom Webinars and Eventbrite enabled seamless online sessions, enabling greater reach without technical disruptions.
8. **Practical and Relevant Sessions:** Hands-on sessions like "Meet the Experts" and "Beyond the Boost" received high praise.

### Weaknesses

1. **Weather Impact:** Storm Bert adversely affected attendance at certain in-person events.
2. **Late Planning Challenges:** Later summer planning and recruitment made it difficult to secure high-profile speakers and optimise the program.
3. **Social Media Issues:** Repetitive and flagged posts reduced the efficacy of social media campaigns, with partner organisations encountering similar difficulties.
4. **Event Duration:** Limited networking time during in-person events constrained opportunities for deeper engagement.
5. **Competition for Attention:** Increased availability of business support webinars and supports required heightened marketing efforts to maintain audience levels.

### Opportunities

1. **Earlier Planning:** Pre-summer preparation for 2025 could enhance speaker recruitment and program relevance.
2. **Expanded Female-Focused Support:** Tailored events for female entrepreneurs remain in demand and present an opportunity to address a niche need.

3. **Enhanced Social Media Strategies:** A more varied and less repetitive social media approach can boost engagement and mitigate flagged content issues.
4. **Networking Expansion:** Extending the duration of in-person events could foster stronger networking opportunities among participants.
5. **Continued collaboration with organisations:** Involving groups like MEGA, FE Colleges, and Invest NI in early planning could widen the event's reach.

### Threats

1. **Weather-Related Risks:** Future adverse weather could again disrupt in-person events.
2. **Increased Competition:** The rise of alternative business support programmes challenges MUEW to maintain its distinct value proposition.
3. **Digital Marketing Saturation:** Over-reliance on social media marketing and email campaigns could face diminishing returns due to audience fatigue.
4. **Platform Limitations:** Dependence on social media platforms with unpredictable content moderation policies risks reduced visibility.

This SWOT analysis highlights the successes and areas for improvement from MUEW 2024, offering a framework to inform and enhance planning for future events.

### Conclusion

MUEW 2024 was a significant success and serves as a model for similar initiatives to support local businesses across Northern Ireland. The enhanced local marketing efforts again this year played a crucial role in increasing engagement within the local business community, particularly with increased competition for the attention of local businesses. This enabled MUDC to deliver a relevant and impactful series of events for Mid Ulster in a time where other Council areas have perhaps scaled back on similar initiatives. The combination of in-person and online events proved both effective and well-attended.

The strong levels of engagement and positive feedback from participants demonstrate the success of this initiative and provide MUDC with a solid foundation to build upon. With continued effective planning and investment and a strong collaborative team, MUEW has the potential to achieve even greater impact in future years.

# Mid Ulster Enterprise Week

18th - 22nd Nov 2024

Create, Connect, Inspire



Canice Nicholas



Lynette Fay



Rhea Daly



Dr Justin Quinn

Register Online

**MON** 18th November

## The Road Ahead - Economic Insights and Trends for 2025

9.30am arrival  
(Breakfast served)  
9.50am start - 11.00am  
The Burnavon, Cookstown

Join Susan Hayes Culleton, and a panel of experts, for an exclusive event where they will share insights on 2025 trends like sustainability, AI, and automation to help your business stay ahead.

## LMP Neurodiversity in the workplace

12.30pm - 1.30pm  
Hosted on: Zoom  
Speaker: NOW Group

Join the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership webinar to learn more, address misconceptions, and gain tips for supporting neurodiverse employees.

## Beyond the Boost: Mastering Paid Social Media Advertising

1.30pm - 2.30pm  
Hosted on: Zoom  
Speaker: Meghan Semple

In this webinar, we'll unpack the latest trends, tools, and tactics to help you navigate the world of paid social media advertising with confidence.

**TUE** 19th November

## MEGA Annual Directors' Breakfast\*

Venue: Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown  
An exclusive event bringing together industry leaders to discuss the future of manufacturing & engineering.

## From Passion to Profit: Business Tips and Ideas for Young Entrepreneurs\*

9.15am - 10.00am  
Hosted on: Zoom  
Speaker: Julie Hanna  
This webinar is for post-primary schools. It introduces students to the world of enterprise, inspiring them to develop entrepreneurial skills.

## Meet the Experts

1.00pm - 3.00pm  
Venue: CONNECT, Market Square, Dungannon  
Join us for an opportunity to connect with over 40 experts across business sectors, all under one roof.

## Tourism Business Engagement Workshop

1.00pm - 4.00pm  
Venue: Magherafelt Council Offices  
Speaker: Rachael Harriott  
This workshop will help you tell your story & show you how communications and PR can help build your business.

**WED** 20th November

## Scaling Up: Building a Mindset for Business Growth

9.30am - 10.30am  
Hosted on: Zoom  
Speakers: Canice Nicholas & Scott Millar

Join coach Canice Nicholas and his associate Scott Millar, for this webinar on mindset & scaling your business with guest Benny O'Hanlon.

## IntertradeIreland Trade Export Clinic

Drop in 10.00am - 12.00pm  
Venue: Cookstown Enterprise Centre

Get ready to start your cross border export journey and grow your business with IntertradeIreland.

## LMP Job and Apprenticeship Fair

Drop in 12.00pm - 3.00pm  
Venue: The Burnavon, Cookstown

Looking for work, a career change, or upskilling? Visit the Mid Ulster Jobs & Apprenticeship Fair!

## TikTok Tactics

1.30pm - 2.30pm  
Hosted on: Zoom  
Speaker: Rhea Daly

For content that clicks join TikTok expert Rhea Daly and discover innovative ways to leverage TikTok's features to grow your business.

**THUR** 21st November

## Flourish: Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs

9.30am arrival (Breakfast served) 9.50am start - 11.00am  
Venue: Pomeroy Forest Park Building

Join well known broadcaster Lynette Fay as she explores the synergy between health, wealth, and business growth with a panel of local women entrepreneurs. Dress code: casual and comfortable!

## Mid South West: Technology & Renewable Energy

1.00pm - 2.00pm  
Hosted on: Zoom

Join us online as we delve into the world of sustainable practices and technologies in the field of renewable energy.

## Go Succeed Grow: Effective use of AI in Digital Marketing

1.30pm - 2.30pm  
Hosted on: Zoom  
Speaker: Nuala Davies

This workshop will explore the practical knowledge you need to embrace AI and stay ahead of the curve.

**FRI** 22nd November  
Attend our events for a chance to win great prizes! Winners announced on Friday, November 22, 2024.



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
Mid Ulster  
District Council

All events are free to attend.

**Register at:** [midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek](https://midulstercouncil.org/enterpriseweek)

\*Invite Only. All information is correct at time of publication. Please confirm details online when registering.

## **News Release**

11 October 2024

### **Businesses learn to 'Create, Connect, Inspire' this Enterprise Week**

Mid Ulster District Council's Enterprise Week returns this year from Monday 18 – Friday 22 November.

During the week, 14 events for local businesses, both online and in person, will take place. This year's theme, 'Create, Connect, Inspire', will explore the incredible journey local businesses will take to get ahead in today's ever-evolving economic landscape.

To set the stage, we dive into the future of the local economy with 'The Road Ahead: Economic Insights and Trends for 2025.' Join us as we explore key developments and trends shaping the business landscape for the year ahead. Hosted at The Burnavon in Cookstown, this event is not to be missed.

Join The Positive Economist, Susan Hayes Culleton and panellists, including Catherine Martin, Shannon McCaul, Stephen McCammon and Justin Quinn as they discuss key trends such as AI, automation, sustainability, changing consumer behaviours and the labour market.

Enterprise Week's online events will help boost your business's brand awareness and increase sales; with webinars like 'TikTok Tactics' with Rhea Daly, TikTok Content Creator and Brand Manager, and 'Beyond the Boost' with Meagan Semple from Digital 24.

Learn about the importance of mindset when it comes to scaling your business with renowned coach and entrepreneur Canice Nicholas at the 'Scaling Up: Building a Mindset for Business Growth' webinar.

Join us for **Flourish: Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs**, an inspiring event dedicated to empowering women in business to prioritize both their financial success and personal well-being. Hosted by well-known broadcaster **Lynette Fay**, you'll hear firsthand from a panel of local businesswomen who will share their personal journeys of building wealth and nurturing their wellness along



the way. Taking place at the newly opened **Pomeroy Forest Building**, this event is the perfect space to focus on you and your business's growth.

**Meet the Expert** is back by popular demand! Join us for an exclusive opportunity to connect with over 40 industry experts, all under one roof. Whether you're looking for advice on **marketing, banking, exporting, staffing**, or other key areas of your business, this event has you covered.

From neurodiversity and renewable technology to marketing and the economy, Mid Ulster Enterprise Week has you covered.

Launching this year's Enterprise Week, Councillor Eugene McConnell, Chair of the Council, said:

"I am thrilled to endorse this year's Enterprise Week, and its very timely theme, 'Create, Connect, Inspire'. This programme, now in its sixth year, highlights the creativity, collaboration, and innovation that drive our local businesses and entrepreneurs. In these challenging yet exciting times, Enterprise Week serves as a powerful reminder of the limitless potential we have when we come together as a community to foster growth and opportunity.

"By creating new ideas, connecting with key stakeholders, and inspiring the next generation of business leaders, we can continue to build a thriving, resilient economy for all. I encourage everyone to take part in the events and activities throughout the week, as this is a fantastic opportunity to learn, share, and inspire one another. Let's work together to build a brighter future!"

Dr Justin Quinn, Director for the Centre of Engineering and Renewable Energy, University of Ulster, commented:

"I am thrilled to join The Road Ahead panel session, where I will share my experience of the influences of changing technology and how the art of the impossible is very much within reach for Mid Ulster businesses."

Lisa McCloskey, The Lady Accountant, added:

“Mid Ulster Enterprise Week is packed with fantastic events and webinars – whether you’re looking for practical advice on enhancing your businesses marketing or scaling your business, Mid Ulster Enterprise week has something for all sectors.

“I can’t wait to share my story with my fellow panelists Siobhan Kearney, Denise Leacock and Lisa McAllister at the ‘Flourish’ event in Pomeroy Forest. I’d encourage all businesses across Mid Ulster to check out the week’s events and get registered!”

To view the full programme of events for the week, and to register your place, go to:  
[www.midulstercouncil.org/EnterpriseWeek](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/EnterpriseWeek).

**ENDS**

**Cap:**

Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, Councillor Eugene McConnell, launches the 2024 Mid Ulster Enterprise Week with.

For more information contact Mairead McNally, Mid Ulster District Council, E: [mairead.mcnally@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:mairead.mcnally@midulstercouncil.org) or tel: 03000 132 132 Mob: 07816 339825.



## ***News Release***

22 November 2024

### **Businesses learn to 'Create, Connect, Inspire' at Successful Enterprise Week**

**Almost 1300 people participated in Mid Ulster District Council's sixth Enterprise Week (18 - 22 November), attending 14 free online and in-person events focusing on how to help businesses 'Create, Connect, Inspire' to get ahead in today's ever-evolving economic landscape.**

The week kicked off with the popular 'The Road Ahead: Economic Insights and Trends for 2025' event which was hosted by The Positive Economist, Susan Hayes Culleton, alongside panellists, including Catherine Martin, Shannon McCaul, Stephen McCammon and Justin Quinn. During the in-person event at the Burnavon, Cookstown, attendees discussed key trends such as AI, automation, sustainability, changing consumer behaviours and the labour market.

Online events over the week helped boost businesses brand awareness and increase sales; with webinars like 'TikTok Tactics' with Rhea Daly, TikTok Content Creator and Brand Manager, and 'Beyond the Boost' with Meagan Semple from Digital 24.

Attendees learned about the importance of mindset when it comes to scaling your business with renowned coach and entrepreneur Canice Nicholas at the 'Scaling Up: Building a Mindset for Business Growth' webinar.

Women entrepreneurs were empowered at the Flourish: **Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs event**, an inspiring event dedicated to empowering women in business to prioritize both their financial success and personal well-being. Hosted by well-known broadcaster **Lynette Fay**, attendees heard firsthand from a panel of local businesswomen who shared their personal journeys of building wealth and nurturing their wellness along the way.

The popular event took place at the newly opened **Pomeroy Forest Building**, the perfect space for focusing on you and your business's growth.

**The Meet the Experts** event was back by popular demand! The event provided an exclusive opportunity to connect with over 40 industry experts, all under one roof. Whether you were looking for advice on **marketing, banking, exporting, staffing**, or other key areas of your business, this event had you covered.

From neurodiversity and renewable technology to marketing and the economy, Mid Ulster Enterprise Week had something for everyone.

Chair of the Council, Councillor Eugene McConnell was delighted with the turnout and engagement of businesses throughout the week, "The turnout from local businesses at this year's Mid Ulster Enterprise Week was fantastic. The level of interaction is testament to this year's theme – 'Create, Connect, Inspire' – and how this struck a chord and resonated with businesses.

"Businesses used phrases including 'motivational', 'inspirational' and 'informative' in their feedback, showing the week really did make a positive difference - emphasising the Council's continued support of the business sector and that Mid Ulster's enterprising spirit is very much alive and well!"

**If you missed any of the events, you can watch them on the Council's YouTube channel.**

ENDS

Caps:

1. Pictured at the launch event of Enterprise Week 2024, 'The Road Ahead: Economic Insights and Trends for 2025, are, l-r, Susan Hayes Culleton, Host; Catherine Martin, Cavanagh Kelly;

Stephen McCammon, Menarys; Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, Councillor Eugene McConnell; Shannon McCaul, FRC Recruitment; and Dr Justin Quinn, University of Ulster.

2. Pictured are the Host and panellists of The Road Ahead event, Susan Hayes Culleton, Catherine Martin, Cavanagh Kelly; Stephen McCammon, Menarys; Chair of Mid Ulster District Council, Councillor Eugene McConnell; Shannon McCaul, FRC Recruitment; and Dr Justin Quinn, University of Ulster.
3. Pictured are panellists at the Flourish: **Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs event, I-r**, Lisa McCloskey, The Lady Accountant; Siobhan Kearney, Menopause NI; Denise Leacock Photography and Lisa McAlister, LMA Coaching.
4. Pictured with the panellists at the Flourish event, Lisa McCloskey, The Lady Accountant; Siobhan Kearney, Menopause NI; Denise Leacock Photography and Lisa McAlister, LMA Coaching are Host Lynette Fay and Cahir of Mid Ulster District Council, Councillor Eugene McConnell.
5. Attendees at the Flourish event gathered for a guided wellness walk in Pomeroy Forest.
6. Some of those who attended the Flourish: **Wealth and Wellness for Women Entrepreneurs event at the new Pomeroy Forest Building during the Council's sixth Mid Ulster Enterprise Week.**

#### **Note to Editor**

For more information contact Mairead McNally, Mid Ulster District Council, E: [Mairead.Mcnally@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:Mairead.Mcnally@midulstercouncil.org) or tel: 03000 132 132 Mob: 07816 339825.

