

West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 26th May, 2022

WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Corr (Chairperson),
Councillors Black, Canavan, Michael Collins,
Donnelly, Hutchinson and McCabe.

In attendance: Mr. S. Leonard, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Mr. G. Bell, Project Officer - Off Street Parking /Alleygating
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE IV Programme Manager;
Ms. A. McGlone, Neighbourhood Integration Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Matt Collins, Garrett, McLaughlin and Verner.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24th February were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

PEACEPLUS Update

The Neighbourhood Services Manager provided the Working Group with an overview of the emerging development of the overall PEACEPLUS programme. He highlighted the need for external resource to support the Co-Designed Local Community PEACE Action Plan which had already been presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Ms. T. Hogg, representing the SEUPB appointed consultants, Blu Zebra, who were currently supporting the Council, through the Shared City Partnership, to develop its approach to submitting a plan for a Local Community PEACE Action Plan for Belfast.

The representative provided the Members with an overview of the PEACE PLUS Programme and the €1.14bn investment in the social, economic and environmental development of Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. She outlined that the Programme comprised 6 themes and encompassed 21 individual investment areas of which Investment Area 1.1 Co-designed Local Community PEACEPLUS Action Plans had been allocated €110m. She provided further details of the programme timeframe and reassured the Members that Section 75 groups and geographical community engagement would be a key focus whilst shaping the design of the new Peace Plus Programme. She then proceeded to

provide the Working Group with further information in relation to the Local Authority PEACE PLUS Action Model and the 4 pillars contained within the Governance structure.

A Member referred to the co-design process and the need to ensure that pre application support would be available within the local community, highlighting the need for the application process to be community lead within the voluntary sector. Discussion also ensued as to how the process could overall be better aligned in terms of Community Planning and the Belfast Agenda.

The Members were advised that the design work would be being progressed through the Council's Shared City Partnership and noted that officers would be organising area information sessions with the consultant's consortium to update stakeholders on the emerging work with regards to PEACEPLUS Local Community PEACE Action Plans.

The representative suggested that the Members should read the PeacePlus Information Document available [here](#) as this provided detail on the draft content of the new programme and the 21 investments areas.

The Democratic Services undertook to e-mail a copy of the Powerpoint presentation to all Members of the Working Group.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for the presentation, and she left the meeting.

PEACE IV shared Space Project – Forth Meadow Community Greenway

The Working Group considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members of the Area Working Group on progress and key issues regarding the delivery of the PEACE IV Shared Space Project, Forth Meadow Community Greenway.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Following the update circulated to members via email in April 2022, this report provides a further update on progress of the PEACE IV Shared Spaces project, Forth Meadow Community Greenway.

Key Highlights

Capital element

- **Work in Section 1 (Clarendon / Glencairn / Forthriver) has completed with handover to council on Thursday 19 May 2022.**
- **Works in Section 2 (Springvale / INI site) are currently on hold.**

- Works in Section 3 (Whiterock / Falls Park) and 4 (Bog Meadows) is progressing and remains on schedule.
- A planning application for works in Section 5 (West-Link) has been submitted.
- An artist has been appointed for the three public art pieces.

Programming element

- Pupils from Springfield, Springhill and St Clare's primary schools participated in shared stories / history / heritage discussions.
- Volunteers are participating in training on all four volunteer training projects.
- A governance model discussion event on 27 April 2022 to consider suggested model options.
- 'Swamp Festival' with over 1600 people attending, on 14 May 2022 in Bog Meadows.
- Planned events along Forth Meadow Community Greenway in June 2022, will include a community cycle & picnic and colour run.

3.2 Funding and Timeframe

A request to extend the Letter of Offer for the Shared Spaces theme to June 2023 and to reallocate underspends from other PEACE IV projects (estimated at £900K) has been submitted to SEUPB. A decision is expected in June 2022.

3.3 Capital works element

3.3.1 Springfield Park

The site continues to be used regularly by all sections of the local communities, and by people from other areas of Belfast. The on-site modular building can be booked through Council's Outdoor Leisure Department.

3.3.2 Wider Greenway network (Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

Works in Section 1 (Clarendon / Glencairn / Forthriver) has completed, and the site handed over to Council by the contractor, on Thursday 19 May 2022. The design of the information panels is to be finalised ahead of installation over the summer.

Work on Section 2 (Springvale / INI site) are on hold following the recent JR process which was conceded by the Council earlier this month with next steps currently being looked at.

Works in section 3 (Whiterock & Falls) and Section 4 (Bog Meadows) are progressing and remain on schedule with the estimated completion date of June 2022 for Section 3 and September 2022 for Section 4.

Due to recent instances of anti-social behaviour, in Section 3, it is proposed that the specification of the paths around the Whiterock to Falls Park, is changed from buff SMA to black SNA.

Members are also reminded that a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Ulster Wildlife (UW) and BCC was approved by Council's SP&R meeting on 18th February 2022 and is being progressed by legal services.

The planning application for works in section 5 has been submitted.

Members should note there has been a significant increase in material costs and discussions are underway with SEUPB to reallocate underspend from other PEACE IV projects to meet the increased costs of the project.

3.2.3 Public Art Pieces

Following a public procurement exercise, artist Sara Cunningham Bell, has been awarded the contract to deliver art works along the Greenway on the theme of 'down to earth'. The proposed artworks will comprise of one large flagship artwork, at the junction of the Springfield Road and the Forthriver Business Park, and two smaller art pieces, whose locations are still to be agreed. The artworks will be further developed in conjunction with local schools. It is anticipated that the planning application for the artworks will be submitted by end June 2022.

3.2.4 Social Value Clause

As previously reported, a Civil Engineering apprentice and placement student, along with a General Operative, have been appointed by the contractor and sub-contractors, to work on this project. A second Civil Engineering placement student will be joining the team on 24 May 2022, for 12 months.

The contractor's site team working in sections 1,3 and 4 have issued letter drops to the surrounding properties outlining the works being undertaken in their local area.

Due to ongoing COVID restrictions any proposed presentations to local schools are not allowed until further notice.

3.4 Programming element

3.4.1 Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space

The delivery partners, Mediation NI and Osborne Partnership, continue to facilitate discussions with groups throughout all sections. The current focus is on establishing two groups in the communities around Section 5 (West Link) to help to develop narratives for information panels anticipated for this section.

As previously advised, pupils from Springfield, Springhill and St Clare's Primary Schools are participating in group discussions along with their parents and teacher to collate stories and bring an inter-generational aspect to the narratives.

The narratives for the Section 1 (Clarendon / Glencairn / Forthriver) information panels are being finalised with supporting photos / pictures being sourced.

3.4.2 Shared Space Volunteer Training

Sustrans currently has a group of 17 volunteers participating in volunteer training and utilising the Greenway.

Volunteer Now has commenced training of 8 Shared Space Ambassadors which started on 4 May. The volunteers assisted with the Swamp Festival event on Saturday 14 May 2022 in Bog Meadows.

The Conservation Volunteers have 8 Volunteer Nature Guides recruited, who are actively participating in training and have recently completed their First Aid training. The volunteers also attended the Swamp Festival event in Bog Meadows, assisting with bird ringing, pond dipping and mini-beast sessions. Further information / recruitment sessions to attract further volunteers are being planned for Springfield Park.

3.4.3 Governance / Management Model

Over 30 key community stakeholders participated in a facilitated community engagement workshop on 27 April 2022, in the Innovation Factory. The aim of the workshop, was to further consider and discuss suggested governance model/s.

Viatac Limited has provided an interim report on the development of the governance model, including an evaluation, outcomes and suggested next steps.

Model options

- **Coordination through a non-single identity organisation; Steering group function through a cross-community group of organisations: Day-to-day coordination and management responsibilities are passed to a neutral organisation. This organisation reports to a joint steering group made up of local organisations responsible for the strategic decisions and direction.**
- **Coordination through a cooperation between two or more existing community organisations in cooperation with council; Steering group function through a cross-community group of organisations: Day-to-day coordination and management responsibilities are passed to a consortium of local organisations from across the Greenway route e.g., a combination of the local Partnership Boards and/or Community Councils etc. This cross-community group reports to a joint steering group responsible for the strategic decisions and direction.**
- **Coordination through BCC; Steering group function in a newly-constituted body: Identified council officer(s)**

perform the day-to-day coordination tasks and the steering group function is delegated to a cross-community organisation that is constituted for this purpose from a list of relevant stakeholders.

- **Coordination through council contractor; Steering group function in a newly-constituted body:** An existing (non-single-identity) organisation from North/West Belfast or elsewhere is contracted to perform the day-to-day coordination tasks and the steering group function is delegated to a cross-community organisation that is constituted for this purpose from a list of relevant stakeholders.
- **Creation of a Community Interest Company (CIC) or other newly-constituted body for coordination and steering in cooperation with council:** A completely new cross-community body is constituted for both the day-to-day coordination tasks and the steering group function from a list of relevant stakeholders.

As engagement with key stakeholders has been challenging, it has been identified that further engagement sessions are necessary to address gaps. As such there is a requested to extend the Viatac Limited contract to July 2022 with a 10% uplift to their budget, subject to SEUPB approval. This uplift will enable the delivery of up to 4 engagement sessions and 2 workshops, which will be delivered during May / June 22 and enable final reporting by July 2022.

3.4.4 Youth Engagement & Civic Education

Youth Link NI continues to network with local youth organisations with commitment to participate in the project from 120+ young people. Young people from Nubia, Forthspring and Blackmountain began participation in the project in mid-May 2022.

Youth Link NI participated in the Governance model discussion on 27 April, providing input from a young person / youth sector perspective.

3.4.5 SSS Activities and Animation Programme Co-ordinator

The second large public spectacle event, a 'Swamp Festival', was coordinated on 14 May 2022, in Section 4 (Bog Meadows) with approximately 1,700 people attending. To address previous concerns of involvement of local communities, groups were given an 'early bird' opportunity to book tickets from Friday 29 April 2022, ahead of the public advertisement on Wednesday 4 May 2022.

The Peace IV team and Arts Ekta continue to review and agree the events calendar, ensuring that all communities along Forth Meadow Community Greenway are included and made aware of the up-coming events / activities.

- Community Cycle and Picnic – 28 May 2022
- Mini Colour Run (Falls Park) – 5 June 2022
- Mini Colour Run (Glencairn Park – 12 June 2022
- Large Colour Run event (Woodvale Park) – 18 June 2022
- Bog Meadow Foraging Walk – 19 June 2022
- Big Dig Potato Harvest (St James Community Farm) – 25 June 2022

Information on these events and booking tickets can be done through eventbrite at (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/forth-meadow-community-greenway-40614725793>)

3.4.6 **Resource Allocation**

As reported previously, the Resource Allocation element offers funding support of up to £6,000 for three community led activities per site, across 12 sites, to animate the spaces and encourage people to move between the different shared sites.

As works on four of the sites along the Greenway are completed, Springfield Park, Clarendon Playing Fields, Glencairn Park and Forthriver Linear Park, planning is underway to commence the Resource Allocation application process. The relevant application documentation is currently with SEUPB for review. On approval, a call for applications for activities on these four sites will be opened, with supported activities / events delivered by September / October 2022.

3.4.7 **Project Communications**

A monthly update on the progress of the Greenway, including events and activities, is being issued to key stakeholders. The first monthly update was issued on Monday 9 May 2022 and future updates will be sent to stakeholder on a monthly basis.

3.5 **Financial & Resource Implications**

All financial implications are covered through existing budgets

3.6 **Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment**

The recommendations of the Partnership promote the work of the Council in promoting good relations and will enhance equality and good relations impacts.”

Discussion ensued in regard to the Judicial Review and it was noted that an update on this would come before the Planning Committee in due course.

During discussion, the PEACE IV Programme Manager confirmed that the budget for Shared Spaces and Services (SSS) was overspent and that underspent budgets from other areas were currently being reallocated to the SSS theme to ensure that the committed works could be completed.

The Working Group noted the update provided.

Alleygating - Verbal Update

The Neighbourhood Services Manager drew the Members' attention to two reference lists that had been compiled and circulated with the agenda in respect of alleygate requests. He advised that, at this stage, these were indicative lists. He reported that both the South and North Area Working Groups had agreed to convene a workshop for their respective Groups to enable them to consider the numerous alleygate requests in more detail which would allow for any queries that the Members might have to be addressed before progressing towards making the final selection.

It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Services Manager would liaise with the Democratic Services Officer to identify a suitable date to convene a Workshop (sometime during June, given the timeline) to progress towards the final selection of the alleygates.

Chairperson