

East Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 8th September, 2022

MEETING OF EAST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Alderman Sandford (Chairperson),
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Haire);
Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian and Rodgers; and
Councillors de Faoite, Flynn, Hanvey, Howard,
M. Kelly, Kyle, Maghie, Newton and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Ms. K. Watters, Neighbourhood Integration Manager;
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer;
Mrs. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Election of Chairperson

The Working Group was reminded that, since this was its first meeting since the Annual Meeting of the Council in June, it was required to elect a Member to serve as Chairperson.

Accordingly, Councillor Long was proposed as Chairperson and was seconded by Councillor McMullan. The vote was deemed carried.

Councillor Long was, accordingly, elected to serve as Chairperson for the period to end on the date of the Local Government Elections in May, 2023. Alderman Sandford thanked the Members of the working group for their support during his time as Chair of the working group.

(Councillor Long in the Chair.)

Apologies

Apologies for an inability to attend were received from Councillors Kelly and Smyth.

Minutes

The Working Group agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 31st May were an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Kyle asked that it be noted that he was chair of the Lagan Village Youth and Community Association. Councillor Newton asked that it be noted that his company provide support to Ulster Rugby.

Presentations

Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association (NICSSA)

The Chair welcomed Kieran Devlin and Gerry Kelly from the NICSSA Sport and Leisure. Mr Devlin thanked the Members of the working group for the opportunity to present to them their plans in terms of the capital development Programme to improve people's mental and physical health and well-being. They informed the Members that there were a number of priorities, including the development of shared sport facilities, growing participation, improving accessibility and to contribute to society. He added that they had been liaising with local groups in relation to their plans, including Cricket NI, Ulster GAA, Ulster Rugby and Netball NI.

A Member asked if there had been consideration given to accessibility in terms of changing places facilities. Mr. Devlin informed the meeting that they had submitted their plans to DSNI and changing places would be built into the project as mandatory.

After discussion, the members of the area working group noted the contents of the presentation. The Chair thanked Mr. Devlin and Mr. Kelly for their presentation to the group before Mr. Devlin and Mr. Kelly left the meeting.

Noted.

Ulster Rugby

The Chair welcomed Jonny Petrie and David Johnston of Ulster Rugby to the meeting. Mr Petrie thanked the members of the area working group for the opportunity to present to them their plans and priorities for the near future. Mr. Petrie advised Members of the working group that Ulster Rugby was responsible for the leadership, development and growth of the game of Rugby Union within the 9 counties of Ulster. He advised that their purpose was 3 fold as the Governing Body for Rugby Union in Ulster, elite playing functions for both male and female athletes and running the Kingspan stadium.

He went on to explain that Ulster Rugby occupied a unique position within mainstream sports as one that transcended the traditional community divide in Northern Ireland and that Ulster Rugby delivered a range of work in the fields of participation, social inclusion, health, education and justice. Mr Petrie stated that they were committed to strengthening their portfolio through innovative and sustainable programmes, via an Ulster Rugby Foundation.

He indicated that Ulster Rugby's aim was to inspire lifelong participation in Rugby, the community game people wanted to play. They believed that lifelong participation in Rugby could have a lasting and positive impact on people's lives. He informed the Members that they worked alongside clubs, schools, charities, local authorities and government departments to develop and promote opportunities to participate, coach and volunteer in Rugby.

Mr Petrie explained that Ulster Rugby faced a number of challenges, including jurisdictional challenges. Ulster Rugby faced also the unique challenge of being part of an all-island organisation (IRFU), but which fell within the jurisdiction of a different government to that of its counterparts. Clubs in the Republic of Ireland were at a competitive advantage as a result of higher levels of public funding and tax relief. Along with that challenge they also faced challenges in terms of their facilities and funding.

He explained that they had procured external consultancy and technical support and had developed a Facilities and Funding Strategy. The Strategy set out how they, as the

National Governing Body, would drive improvements and investment in rugby facilities, rugby participation and rugby performance across the province and, in doing so, how they would enhance the sustainability and resilience of rugby, embedding it as the community game that people wanted to play. He said that their top 3 priorities were enhancements to the Kingspan stadium, investment in a high performance centre and supporting the 50 clubs registered with Ulster Rugby to improve their facilities.

Several Members raised concerns they had received from residents living in the vicinity of the Kingspan stadium. They said that parking on match nights was still a major issue, particularly in the Cregagh Estate and at the front gates of Cregagh Primary School. They also raised the issues of litter and on street drinking. Mr Petrie agreed to invite East Belfast Councillors to their committee meetings and to look at enhanced match day enforcement teams.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Petrie and Mr. Johnston for their presentation, and both men left the meeting.

Noted

Update on Physical Programme

The Members of the working group considered the content of the report below;

“1 Introduction

The Council’s Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to note this update and:

- Note the projects that have recently been completed - Lisnasharragh Community Schools under BIF, Clarawood Playground under the Capital Programme, Pro-Kick Gym under Urban Villages, and Phase 1 of Covered Cycle Stands via DfI and DfC.**
- Note the update in respect of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church BIF project and the correspondence received as attached at Appendix 1 and confirm if they wish to undertake a further site visit, and;**
- Agree if they wish to undertake a site visit of Templemore as it moves into completion stage**

3. Local Investment Fund

In May 2022, Members confirmed the reallocation of the remaining LIF funding allocation for the area. The total LIF allocation for LIF 1 and 2 is now allocated, totalling £2,327,500. A total of 19 projects

received in- principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 18 have been completed, 1 project remaining at initial stage - the Lagan Village Youth and Community Association.

LIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / recommendation
ELIF2-17	Lagan Village Youth and Community Association	£15,000	Initial stage	Approved by SP&R Committee in October 2020. DfC funding commitment received of £35,000. The land for the project has now been transferred to the Group. A successful application was made to the Alpha fund for an additional £25,000. Design team have been appointed with planning approval granted. Subject to final Due Diligence approval anticipated soon, the works are expected to be completed in Autumn/Winter 2022.	Continue engagement with the group

Members will recall that a recommendation was agreed by Committee in June 2022 that remaining funds be reallocated as follows:

- £70,000 to Cycling Ireland towards the Henry Jones BMX/cycle track project;
- £70,000 to the Cregagh Sports Club;
- £30,000 to provide storage facilities for Bloomfield Football Club, Clonduff Football Club, East Belfast Football Club and Glentoran Academy;
- and the remainder was ringfenced for Bloomfield Community Association.

These proposals are currently going through the agreed LIF process.

4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration, partnership projects, with a minimum £250,000 investment from Council. In East Belfast 9 projects have received an in-principle funding commitment under BIF. There are 5 projects on the longer BIF list. Each of the 'In Principle' projects are taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Table below provides a summary of BIF allocated projects i.e. project stage; project title; and the funding allocated.

Summary of BIF allocated projects:

East	Stage 3—Willowfield—£560k; H&W Welders—£2.37m; Strand—£1.8m; Bloomfield—£440k Stage 2—Lagan Village Youth & Community—no commitment Stage 1—East Belfast Mission; Belmont Bowling Club; Bloomfield Presbyterian Church; St. John's Orangefield, Church of Ireland, Tullycarnet Community Support Services—no commitment / on long list
Outer East	Stage 3 —TAGIT- £434k; Braniel—£390k; Hanwood—£396k; Castlereagh Presbyterian Church—£382k; Lisnasharragh Community Schools—£398k

The table below provides an overview of the remaining projects. Members are asked to note the actions and recommendations

BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF12	Strand Arts Centre	£1,800,000	Stage 3 – design stage	In November 2021, Members noted the increase in cost estimates following the RIBA Stage 2 Design Report. The total cost estimate is £5,320,000 which includes construction inflation and theatre/ cinema specifics. The total project budget exclusive of these items is estimated at £4,657,000. Members agreed to progress to RIBA Stage 3 and submit to Planning – which was secured in August 2022. Additional funding from the Heritage	Continue engagement with the group. Council acting as grantee for development grant from the Heritage Fund.

				Fund has been secured. A Levelling Up application was also recently submitted with a decision anticipated in Autumn 2022.	
BIF13	Bloomfield Community Association	£440,000 plus £60,009 reallocation - £500,009	Stage 3 - Committed – In Principle	A new Economic Appraisal/ Business Plan was completed in July 2021. Cost of preferred option is £745,054. An application for match funding has been submitted to DfC but is contingent on budget availability. Officers are continuing to look at other options in relation to the funding deficit.	Continue engagement with the group and partners.

Outer East BIF Projects

BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF37	Lisnasharragh Community Schools Project	£398.00	Complete	Project complete	Post project evaluation
BIF25	Branial Church	£390.00	Stage 3 - On Ground	Works progressing well. Planned completion February/March 2023	Continue engagement with the group
BIF38	Castlereagh Presbyterian Church	£382.00	Stage 3 – Due Diligence	Costs of works currently estimated at £325.200 to cover building works including new heating system. Church approval for works now in place. See update below	Continued engagement with the group

BIF 38 Castlereagh Presbyterian Church

At the last AWG Members asked for an update on the Castlereagh Presbyterian Church to be brought into the next AWG and as part of this had requested that additional information be requested from the Church in respect of whether there would be any congregational funding or whether they had investigated other external funding streams and who the end users of the facilities would be. Officers subsequently liaised with the Group on this basis and a response was received from the Group (correspondence is attached at Appendix 1).

Members are asked to note that the Church has noted that they could *'provide some funding to assist with the programme'* however there is no commitment at this stage to a specific amount. In terms of the beneficiaries there is further detail but no specific detail on the numbers/targets etc.

It is recommended that the Castlereagh Presbyterian Church be invited into the next meeting of the AWG to present their updated plans specifically in terms of their funding strategy and contribution, as well as the outcomes of the project. Members are also asked to consider if they wish to undertake a site visit to the project in advance of this meeting, particularly for those Members who were unable to visit previously. The Church have highlighted in their correspondence that they are very happy to facilitate a visit. If Members agree, officers will work with Democratic Services to secure a suitable date.

5. Social Outcomes Fund

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. There is one project under SOF for East Belfast - Eastside Visitor Centre – with an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award.

Project	SOF Award	Status and update
Eastside Visitor Centre <i>SOF and UV</i>	£700,000	<i>Business case stage.</i> Partner project with Urban Villages. The project proposal is for the extension of the existing visitor centre at C.S. Lewis Square. Status remains as reported previously - Final draft OBC completed and is in the UV approval process. Council officers are investigating charges against the site and UV economists are continuing a VFM exercise.

6. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new assets. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. The table below provides an update on current live

projects in East Belfast. Members are asked to note the status and update.

East Belfast – Capital programme overview

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status and update</u>
LTP- Templemore- NLHF	<p><i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> On Ground. Construction on the leisure side of the building is anticipated to be completed by early November. GLL are currently working up programme for opening. The completion of the Heritage side of the building is anticipated to be March 2023.</p> <p>Propose that Members undertake a site visit as the project is nearing completion</p>
New Crematorium	<p><i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> RIBA Stage 3 Design has been completed and a planning application has been submitted to Lisburn and Castlereagh Council In June 2022. Technical Design is currently being progressed.</p>
Sydenham Greenway	<p><i>Stage 2 - Uncommitted.</i> OBC to be worked up.</p>
Shared Youth and Community Facility Inner East	<p><i>Stage 1- Emerging.</i> Officers to work jointly with the EA to develop business case/ plan on a potential youth facility at the council owned Ballymacarrett site. Strategic options study and discussions ongoing, initial mapping exercise complete and with Council officers for review.</p>
Ballymacarrett Area Masterplan	<p><i>Stage 1- Emerging.</i> Linked to Connswater Community Greenway. Link to the UV/Dfl funded Ballymacarrett Walkway Environmental and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement project.</p>
Playground Improvement Programme 2021/22 (City wide)	<p>Project complete at Clarawood Playground.</p>
Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	<p><i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> Engagement underway with Members to confirm locations.</p>

7. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long term difference in their communities. Members will recall that the fund was originally £8m and has been bolstered by an additional £2m via the reallocation of year end surpluses. The fund has attracted significant interest and an exceptionally high volume of applications was received. The Fund encompasses a three-stage process as approved by Council. Stage 1 is the application phase; Stage 2 is the development phase and Stage 3 is the delivery phase. The fund closed to applicants in May 2022. Members were advised that they would be updated on the outcome of the Stage 1 – Application stage once all the applications were collated and

reviewed by an assessment panel against the agreed project assessment matrix. An intensive period of eligibility review, validation, panel assessment and moderation has now been completed with final checks now underway. Reports will be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. Activity remains in line with the timeframe previously presented to Members.

8. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for a number of government departments on significant capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and the Urban Villages Initiative (UV) funded by the Executive Office, and number of schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to East Belfast.

Social Investment Fund

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status and update</u>
Pro-Kick Community Gym	Project complete. Council acted as Delivery Partner. This project has successfully been completed and handed over to Pro-kick. The new gym opened to the public at the start of August 2022. The official launch organised by UV as funder will take place on 12 Sept.
Pitt Park redevelopment Council asset	<p><i>Project underway.</i> This UV funded project is on a Council site and the Council is acting as the delivery partner. The business case for the park redevelopment has been approved. The design team has been appointed. Contractor procurement is underway and it is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed by Nov 2022. A planning application for some elements of the works is being prepared and will be submitted imminently. Transfer of lands from NIHE has now been ratified by full Council in September.</p> <p>Members are asked to note that recent community engagement information sessions have taken place with final designs shared with local community groups. This has been led by UV in partnership with the Council. UV are organising a Pitt Park stakeholder information session, to be held in October 2022 - date to be confirmed. This session will be supported by the Council and</p>

	chaired by an independent facilitator.
Pop EastSide- Landmark East SOF project 'Eastside Visitor Centre'	<i>Business case stage.</i> Partner project with Urban Villages. The project proposal is for the extension of the existing visitor centre at C.S. Lewis Square. Status remains as reported previously - Final draft OBC completed and is in the UV approval process. Council officers are investigating charges against the site and UV economists are continuing a VFM exercise.
Hosford Community HomesInclusion Hub (formerly East Belfast Mission Accommodation project)	<i>Business case stage.</i> Council is acting as Delivery Partner. The project is renamed Hosford Community Homes Inclusion Hub. The Business Case has been approved. Urban Villages are now providing the full funding package and no funding gaps remain. The draft LOO is with the Council for review. Design team procurement is underway until September 2022.
Portview (formerly Eastside Souk)	Emerging project at feasibility stage.
Titanic People Exhibition	<i>Business case stage.</i> Design options, surveys and costs have been reviewed and concerns remain regarding building safety, associated costs in making the site secure, viability of the project given available investment and project outcome measures. LIF funding was withdrawn in 2021. Members stressed their desire to continue to work with the Group to explore alternative funding sources and how the project can link with other projects in the area. The Council is waiting on a detailed project proposal and Business Case from UV. Options in relation to the funding gap are being explored with other funding bodies including DfC.

DfC and DfI funded projects

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure and/or the Department for Communities in East Belfast.

Dfl and DfC – East Belfast projects overview

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status and update</u>
Prokick Community Gym	Project complete – as above under Urban Villages. DfC contribution
Lagan Village Youth and Community Centre	Initial stage. As above at ELIF2-17. DfC contribution.
Playground Improvement Programme - Clarawood Play Park	Project complete. DfC contribution.
Covered cycle stands Phase 1 –East	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, Dfl)</i> Project complete. Belmont Park – complete. Inverary Community Centre – complete
Covered cycle stands Phase 2 –East	<i>Via Dfl Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> – Avoniel Leisure Centre - supplier/contractor appointment stage - due to be installed by Spring 2023. – Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre - supplier/contractor appointment stage - due to be installed by Spring 2023.
Expansion of Belfast Bikes Network - East	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, Dfl)</i> – Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre - complete – Upper Newtownards Road - design and planning stage – Castlereagh Road – design and planning stage”

The Director of Physical Programmes advised the Working Group of a number of projects which had recently completed, including the Lisnasharragh Community Schools project under BIF. The Director updated the Members in respect of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church BIF project and referred to the correspondence received from them. The Members confirmed that representatives of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church should be invited to the next meeting of the working group and that they wished to undertake a further site visit.

The Members agreed to undertake a site visit of Templemore as it moved into completion stage and in advance of its proposed November completion date. The Members were advised that an update on the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund would be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. In relation to the externally funded projects, the Director drew Members’ attention to the completion of the Pro-Kick Gym under Urban Villages, and Phase 1 of Covered Cycle Stands via Dfl and DfC. A Member asked if the side panels of these cycle stands could be used to promote active travel or other cycling information. The Director agreed to take this suggestion on board and explore if it would be feasible.

Noted

Neighbourhood Services Portfolios Update

The area working group considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of the report is to update Area Working Group members on the recent changes at Neighbourhood Services Manager (NSM) level in terms of portfolios.

2.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the content of the report, and the changes outlined within it, in relation to areas of responsibility (at NSM level), and key contact points (more detailed information included in the presentation at Appendix 1) within the Neighbourhood Services section of City & Neighbourhood Services Department.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

As we emerge from the pandemic and the need to restore services to pre-Covid levels, and following the departure of the fourth Neighbourhood Services Manager, Alison Allen back in February 2022 it was agreed that it would be timely to review the areas of responsibility and operational alignment, managed by each of the four Neighbourhood Services Managers to support and improve coordination going forward.

As a result of this review it was agreed at Director level within City and Neighbourhood Services, and then at Strategic DMT and CMT that, from April 2022 onwards, Neighbourhood Service Managers (NSMs) would be responsible and accountable for specific service/portfolio areas rather than geographical areas as they were previously.

3.2 Neighbourhood Service Managers (NSMs) are responsible and accountable for the service/portfolio areas as outlined below – namely

- Stephen Leonard for Open Space and Street Scene,
- Cate Taggart for Community Services and Community Support,
- Kelly Gilliland for Community Funding and Neighbourhood Integration,
- and the NSM currently being recruited will have responsibility for Community Safety, Good Relations and Partnership Working. *NB Kelly Gilliland is currently responsible for this portfolio area until someone is appointed.*

3.3 NSMs are supported by Lead Officers (LOs)

- Edel Mullan for Open Space and Street Scene.

Under Community Provision:

- Cormac McCann for Community Services and Community Support,
- Margaret Higgins for Community Funding and Neighbourhood Integration,
- Jim Girvan for Community Safety,
- There are also a number of service or programme area focussed posts who report direct to NSMs, namely Nicola Lane as Good Relations Manager, Stevie Lavery as Programme Manager and Noel Munnis as Partnerships Manager (See Appendix 1).

3.4 Member or partner enquiries, regardless of area of origin, should now be directed to the relevant NSM, Lead Officer or Manager within the service area.

3.5 Open Space and Street Scene Managers (OSS Managers) – David Salters (North), Currently vacant/being recruited (South), Liam McKinley (West) and Colin Willets (East) will continue to be available to assist with queries or concerns in relation to street cleansing or in relation to maintenance and upkeep of our parks and open spaces.

3.6 Neighbourhood Integration Managers (NIMs) – Eimear McCullough (North), Denise Smith (South), Alice McGlone (West) and Kathy Watters (East) will remain area focussed. The role of the NIMs is to work at a neighbourhood level to transform and integrate, both internally within Council, and externally alongside partners where it is clear that Council has a key role to play.

3.7 NIMs will work alongside colleagues, partners and/or members, on a specific timebound basis, to develop projects and initiatives with the aim of transforming how we provide support and services at a neighbourhood level. These priorities will be identified within our City & Neighbourhood Services business plan for 2022/23-2024/25 as well as via the Belfast Agenda Refresh (22-26) community planning process currently underway.

3.8 In summary, we are hopeful that this new way of working, with clear accountability and reporting lines, will result in greater clarity, improved communication, reduced duplication and better coordination going forward.

The presentation included at Appendix 1 outlines in more detail (and with visuals where available) how each of the portfolio/service area teams are comprised.

Financial and Resource Implications

None

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

None.”

The Neighbourhood Services Manager agreed to send a copy of the City and Neighbourhood services structure chart along with the contact number for each officer to the members of East area working group.

The Members of the working group noted the contents of the report.

**Verbal update from Landscape Planning
and Development Team**

The Neighbourhood Integration Manager gave a verbal update in respect of the Landscape Planning and Development Team. She advised that Inveraray Community Centre external improvements had been completed as had Clarawood Play Park. She informed Members that the King George V playing fields had been allocated £54,000.00 for a bitumen trim trail around the park boundary.

Noted

Chairperson