

West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 23rd February, 2023

HYBRID MEETING OF THE SPECIAL WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor McCann (Chairperson),
Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillors Canavan, Mathew Collins, M. Donnelly,
R.M Donnelly, Duffy, Garrett, Hutchinson, McCabe,
McLaughlin, Verner and Walsh.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. S. Kalke, Project Sponsor;
Mr. F. Grant, Operations Development Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology was recorded on behalf of Councillor Thompson.

Minutes

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

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were reported.

Physical Programme Update

The Working Group considered the undernoted report:

“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 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 the updates on the Physical Programme for West Belfast.

3. Local Investment Fund

Members are reminded LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. (LIF 1 – West - £1,127,500 + Shankill £490,000 and LIF 2 - £1,400,000).

Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 50 projects have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 49 have been completed and 1 project at delivery stage. In total, 98% of all LIF West projects have been completed. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – West	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/ Description	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	25 (100%)	£1,617,500	24 (96%)	£1,341,788
Number of Projects On-going Delivery			1 (4%)	£58,212
Number of Projects in Pre-construction				
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)				
Total Number of Approved Projects	25	£1,617,500	25	£1,400,000

The table below shows an overview of the remaining live project:

LIF Ref	Project	LIF Funding	Stage	Status	Action / Recommendation
WLIF2-08	Berlin Swifts Football Club	LIF £65,085; SOF £113,000	On Ground	Utility connections to the completed modular changing building remain outstanding. All actions are sitting with NI Water and their utilities connections. NI Water continue to be extremely slow to respond and progress their design and pricing to date.	Continue engagement with utility companies and project partners.

4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration, partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment. The West AWG had a total allocation of £9m comprising £5.5m from the original allocation, an additional £1.2m which was ring-fenced for projects in the Shankill area when this became part of the West AWG following the Council elections in 2015 and £2.5m which was ringfenced for projects in the Colin area following LGR.

6 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF accounting for the full allocation. 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.

Summary of BIF allocated projects

West	Stage 3—Davitts GAC—£1m; Raidió Fáilte—£950k; St Comgall's- £3.5m; Colin Glen Forest Park—£2.5m Stage 2—Glencairn Community Project— £700k; Greater Shankill Community Council- Royal British Legion- £300k, St Mary's CBS— no commitment Stage 1— An Sportslann; Suffolk Community Forum; Belfast Hills- Black Mountain Access—no commitment				
BIF29	Greater Shankill Community Council - RBL	BIF- £300,000; SOF- £507,000	On Ground	Recently approved at Due Diligence. Contractor has been appointed and works are progressing.	Continue engagement with the group.
BIF09	Glencairn Community Project	£700,000	Uncommitted; Due Diligence stage	Updated cost estimate is £1.8m which is an increase of over £750k since 2020. Options for land transfer being explored. GCP has progressed to Stage 2 of Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund. Meeting to progress matters held in Jan 2023 with NIHE, EA and political representatives.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.

5. Social Outcomes Fund

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 5 projects in West Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award.

SOF – West Belfast projects overview

West	<p>Stage 3— James Connolly Interpretative centre—£650,000; Rock Centre — £200,000; Belfast Orange Hall Museum- £80,000; Roddy McCorley Museum - £1,350,000; Berlin Swifts Football Club - £113,000; Greater Shankill Community Council - £507,000</p> <p>Stage 1—Shankill Road Environmental Improvement Project - £50,000; Woodvale Park - £80,000</p>
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An overview of the remaining SOF projects is outlined in the table below –

SOF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / Recommendation
SOF05	Roddy McCorley Museum	£1,350,000	On Ground	There were delays in the supply and manufacture of elements of the museum fitout as well as a small number of contractor issues. Project progressing. Following a delay related to issues with supply and manufacture, the revised completion date is April 2023.	Continue engagement with the group
SOF10	Shankill Road Environmental Improvement Project	£50,000	On Ground	Approved at Due Diligence in December 2022. Project progressing.	Funding Agreement to be issued to the group.
SOF13	Woodvale Park	£80,000	Initial stage	Proposed MUGA upgrades and development of a sensory garden. Project	Meeting to be arranged with project promoter

				scoping exercise ongoing.	
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6. 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. On 27 October 2022, Members considered the feedback on Stage 1- Applications in the West Belfast area and made recommendations to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on which applications they wish to move forward to *Stage 2 – Development Stage*. In line with the agreed process, the outcome of special AWGs have been taken through Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and have been ratified by the Council (December 2022).

The table below provides an overview of the projects that have progressed to *Stage 2- Development* and the projects that are held on the reserve list at Stage 1.

West Belfast – NRF overview

South	<p>Stage 2— The Mountainview Hotel, Michael Davitt's Community Heritage Centre, Croí na Carraige - 'The Heart of the Rock' - Phase 1, The ACT Initiative Community Hub & Visitors' Centre, The Road, Glencairn Community Project (Hub)</p> <p>Stage 1— <i>Improving the Environment at Patrick Sarsfield's GAC, Corrigan Park Redevelopment Project, WCC New Purpose-Built Childcare and Family Support Centre, Curam Leanaí na Fuiseoige, Conway Mill - redeveloping for the future, Westcourt Uplift Project, Lamh Dhearg Renewable Energy & External Lighting Improvement scheme, St. Gall's Milltown Community Development, Colin Glen Eco Air-Cruizer, CNP Regeneration of Cloona House</i></p>
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West Belfast – NRF projects at Stage 2 - Development

Project name	Description	Status
The Mountainview Hotel	Building a socially owned environmentally friendly 65-bedroom hotel located on the new Glenmona development in West Belfast. This is promoted by Fáilte Feirste Thiar.	Business Case stage.
Michael Davitt's Community Heritage Centre	Transforming a large redundant site adjacent to Páirc Mac Daibhéid located in Beechmount, West Belfast. Creation of a museum/ exhibition space, multipurpose hall and supporting ancillary services.	Business Case stage.
Croí na Carraige - 'The Heart of the Rock' - Phase 1	Development of a flagship multi-purpose youth, community, family and heritage hub on the derelict land adjacent to our current community hub Gael-Ionad Mhic Goill in the Upper Springfield Area of West Belfast. It will incorporate their existing building and provide space for Irish language youth provision, a heritage exhibition	Business Case being reviewed.

	gallery and office space. This is promoted by Glor na Mona.	
The ACT Initiative Community Hub & Visitors' Centre	Purchase and development of ACT's central office and Community Hub to include a Visitors' Centre that features a historical exhibition.	Business Case stage.
The Road	Development of a capital tourism project based around the shared history of the Shankill Road and its contribution to Belfast. This is promoted by Lower Shankill Community Association.	Business Case stage.
Glencairn Community Project (Hub)	Link to BIF project (BIF09) above. Development of a purpose-built community and youth facility within the Glencairn estate to meet both the needs of the community and provide statutory youth provision within the area.	Business Case being refreshed. Work ongoing to seek agreement regarding transfer of land.

Members will note that activity at **Stage 2 – Development** (the equivalent to **Stage 2-Uncommitted** on the Capital Programme) will include development of a business case/ economic appraisal (commensurate with the scale of the project) along with detailed designs and project costings. If a business case or economic appraisal has already been undertaken, then the findings will be tested. Due-diligence checks will be carried out in line with arrangements under LIF, BIF and SOF programmes. It is proposed that this stage will be timebound to 6 months to allow decisions on projects to be taken at the same time. The outcome of this development phase will then be reported to the relevant Area Working Group (AWG), along with a presentation on the project. The AWG will put forward recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, with a detailed update on each project, seeking approval for funding. Projects that receive committee approval will be issued with a Letter of Offer in principle and will move to **Stage 3- Committed**.

7. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building/ buying new ones. 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 on the Council's Capital Programme in the West Belfast area.

West Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
City Cemetery – National Lottery Heritage Fund	<i>Stage 3 – Committed. On ground.</i> The new service yard is completed. The restoration of the Mortuary Tower & exterior of Foxes Lodge is completed. Visitor centre is completed and officially opened to the public. In tandem with this the restoration works on several of the site's key assets such as the Centre Steps and Victorian Fountains is well underway and

	aiming for completion by Summer 2023. Design and procurement works are underway with regards to Dual Language signage throughout the site with some external signage on centre now complete as well as the APP and research stations. Further dual language work (site signage, videos etc) is underway and engagement with Irish language groups is ongoing and will remain so until all dual language works are completed.
Playground Programme - Areema and Sally Gardens	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Works programmed for completion within 2022/23 financial year.
Alleygating Phase 5	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Consultation process and costs being prepared for each area. Engagement underway with Members to confirm locations. Order placed with Contractor and gates currently being manufactured.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Business case procurement underway. Will also be considered within the wider study as below.
Black Mountain/Upper Whiterock Greenway	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Undergoing the business case review process. Will be assessed within the wider study.
Colin Greenway	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Draft Business case related to the development of the Colin Active Travel Routes prepared and under review.
Connectivity - Access to Hills Programme (city wide)	<i>Stage 1- Emerging.</i> Secured DAERA funding for the Access to the Belfast Hills Feasibility Study. Consultant has been appointed and study and delivery plan will be complete in March 2023.

8. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office, Peace IV, Dfl as well as schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to West Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in West Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined West Belfast geography (Colin area).

West Belfast – UV overview

Project	Status and update
Colin Valley Football Club	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. On ground. The contractor on site and the project is progressing well. Project completion expected in February 2023. Communications activity is being planned.
Healthy Living Centre (Sport in the Community PCA)	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. On ground. Contractor appointed and work progressing well on site. Lease agreement being finalised. Construction anticipated to complete by March 2023.

PEACEIV – Capital Projects

Members are asked to note updates on the capital projects that are related to the PEACEIV Programme.

West Belfast – Peace IV Capital Projects overview

Project	Status and update
Forth Meadow Community Greenway	<p>On ground.</p> <p><i>Section 1 – Glencairn</i> – Works complete and handed over to City and Neighbourhood Services. Signage package to be installed to include feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights.</p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road</i> – Works commenced with the completion date in June.</p> <p><i>Section 3 – Falls Park/Whiterock</i> – Works complete</p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> – All phases within this section now complete</p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> – currently at detailed design stage.</p> <p>Works on the flagship piece are progressing with installation and a revised plan for the public unveiling of March 2023. Discussions with Invest NI on the installation of the art piece are ongoing. DfC Levelling Up match funding received.</p>
Black Mountain Shared Space Project	<p>On ground. <i>Phase 1.</i> Works progressing well. Will be liaising with funders regarding reducing the deficit. Project completion will be outside the PIV funding programme. SEUPB are exploring the use of a bond so that the funding deficit and those works claimed outside the programme can be discharged.</p> <p><i>Phase 2.</i> McAdam appointed as design team. Design agreed with end user. Planning application submitted.</p>
Shankill Shared Women’s Centre	<p>On ground. Contractor works ongoing. Project completion revised to 31 December 2023.</p>

Dfl funded projects

Below is the status update on projects funded by Department for Infrastructure in West Belfast.

Dfl – West Belfast projects overview

Project	Status and update
Covered cycle stands Phase 2	<p><i>Via Dfl Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i></p> <p>Páirc Nua Chollann, Andersonstown Leisure Centre – currently in production and due for installation by May 2023. Potential additional location: Brook Leisure Centre.</p>

DfC funded projects

Members are asked to note that the projects currently match funded by Department for Communities include: Berlin Swifts Football Club, Forth Meadow Community Greenway, Black

Mountain Shared Space Project and Paisley Park Sportsplex refurbishment (see below). All these projects are progressing well.

Project	Status and update
Paisley Park Sportsplex refurbishment	<i>On ground.</i> Refurbishment of the existing 3G pitch, provision of floodlighting, changing facilities and associated amenities. Project progressing well. ”

The Working Group noted the update provided.

Belfast Bikes Update

The Working Group considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To agree the final locations for next phase of expansion on the Falls Road and Shankill Road area.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- to agree the final locations for the next phase of expansion on the Falls Rd and Shankill Rd

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

At CG&R on 9 June 2021 it was agreed to proceed with 15 docking stations outlined in the expansion proposal in Appendix 1. An investment of approximately £525,000 is required, based on cost estimates from previous network expansions. At SP&R on 18 June 2021 members agreed for £500,000 to be invested in the expansion proposal.

Eight stations will be installed in the upcoming phase, which should be completed by 31 March 2023. Seven stations will follow in the next phase the following year (2023/24).

The following areas were agreed previously by SP&R Committee, with the final locations of each docking station to be agreed through Area Working Groups:

- North: Yorkgate and Shore Road
- West: St Mary’s College and Shankill Road
- South: Lisburn Road and Malone Road
- East: Castlereagh Road, Upper Newtownards Road.

In the previous West AWG meeting, the location options for St. Mary’s College and the Shankill Rd have been discussed.

3.2 St. Mary's College

Two potential locations at St Dominic's Grammar School and Coláiste Feirste were presented. It was queried if consultation with Coláiste Feirste has been undertaken to establish if the school would be content with the location considering that it would be close to a public art piece.

It was agreed to defer the decision to enable further consideration regarding the proposed location.

Since then, officers have been on site and met with a representative from Coláiste Feirste.

In general, they are content for a Belfast Bikes docking station to be placed on their land. However, the land was previously transferred from BCC to Coláiste Feirste. A gentleman's agreement was put in place at the time to maintain the entrance to the school however over the intervening years due to changes in management and an integration of services into OSS, the gentleman's agreement is no longer being implemented. The area has fallen into disrepair and the present state of it is neglected. The group would like the Council to tidy up the entrance and maintain it as part of the OSS schedule of operations in the area before the bike's docking station is installed.

Officers have liaised with Open Spaces and Streetscene and they have agreed to maintain the area. Arrangements in relation to liability for the differing assets within the small space need to be reflected in the Belfast Bikes licence agreement between Council and Coláiste Feirste.

BCC legal team needs to be instructed to add these arrangements to the licence agreement.

3.3 Shankill Road

Members also considered the proposed Shankill locations and discussed the possibility of the final location being located nearer to Glencairn and requested that further consideration be given to this.

Officers identified as a potential new location the entrance to the Glencairn Park at Forthriver Rd that forms part of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway. They are liaising currently with officers who are involved in the Forth Meadow Community Greenway and believe that the proposed location for the docking station will provide good linkages for residents and visitors to the area.

Financial & Resource Implications

Finance

There are no specific financial or resource implications contained within this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

None”

The Working Group agreed the final locations for the next phase of expansion on the Falls Road and the Shankill Road, as outlined in the report.

Chairperson