

# South Belfast Area Working Group

Monday, 19th August, 2024

## MEETING OF SOUTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE CONOR ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McKeown (Chairperson);  
Councillors T. Brooks, Brennan, Bunting,  
Kelly and McKay.

In attendance: Mr. D. Logan, Senior Programme Delivery  
Manager:  
Ms. D. McKinney, Programme Manager (Peace  
Programmes) and  
Mr. G. Graham, Democratic Services Assistant.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 20th May, 2024 were approved by the Working Group.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Brennan declared that her employer was an active participant in both the Neighbourhood Regeneration Funding Programme and the Urban Villages externally funded programme.

### **Physical Programme Update**

The Senior Programme Delivery Manager submitted the undernoted report for consideration by the Area Working Group.

#### **“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 on behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.**

#### **2. Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the Physical Programme update for South Belfast and the updated list of external capital funding opportunities attached at Appendix 1.

### 3. Local Investment Fund (LIF)

Members are reminded that 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 area; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding spend to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 24 projects received 'In Principle' letters under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 23 have been completed and 1 project is still at initial stage. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – South	LIF 1		LIF 2	
<i>Stage/ Description:</i>	<i>No. Projects</i>	<i>Amount (£)</i>	<i>No. Projects</i>	<i>Amount/ (£)</i>
Number of Projects Completed	12 (92%)	£1,053,600	11 (100%)	£796,000
Number of Projects in Delivery				
Number of Projects in Pre-construction				
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	1 (8%)	£30,000		
<b>Total Number of Approved Projects</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£1,083,600</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>£796,000</b>

The table below provides an overview of live and recently completed projects. Members are asked to note the status and ongoing actions.

LIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
SLIF017	Finaghy Bridge	£30,000	Design stage	Approved at SP&R Committee in May 2016 to undertake improvements to the bridge. Dfl Roads Highways Team are taking the lead on design and the Council will contribute the LIF funding to Dfl. High-level meeting with Minister of Infrastructure and Councillors held in April 2024. Outcome of meeting was that	Continue engagement with Dfl Roads.

				Working Group to be formed with Dfl. Working Group to be arranged. Awaiting confirmation of rep from DFI.	
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#### 4. **Belfast Investment Fund (BIF)**

Members are reminded that BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment from Council. BIF – South Belfast was allocated £5.5m; with additional £500k ringfenced for new areas (outer South) that had joined the District area under Local Government Reform. In South Belfast, 6 projects received an In-Principle funding commitment, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m, and £500k pot of funding. Each project is taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place.

##### ***Summary of BIF allocated projects.***

<b>South</b>	Stage 3—Lagan Gateway—£2.1m; Lanyon Tunnels—£1.3m; Bredagh GAC- £700k Stage 2— Coffee Culture - £286k; Arts & Digital Hub- £584k Stage 1— Sandy Row Open Space project- £479k
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<b>Balmoral DEA</b>	Stage 3 - Knockbreda Parish Church Hall—£250k Stage 2— Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC—£250k
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Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
<b>BIF04</b>	<b>Lagan Gateway</b>	£2.1m	Stage 3 - Committed	A Planning application was submitted for Phase 2 in May 2024. Detailed designs are ongoing. Procurement to start in Autumn 2024	Continue engagement with the public and key stakeholders.
<b>BIF07</b>	<b>Market Arches</b>	£1.3m	Stage 3 - Committed	Previously Lanyon Tunnels. A new Planning application was submitted in October 2023 and is progressing. Business case prepared and recently submitted to funders. A Project Board has been re-established.	Officer engagement with Executive Office and DfC as key funders, and stakeholders.

<b>BIF48</b>	<b>Sandy Row Arts &amp; Digital Hub</b>	<i>BIF- £584,167 UV- £706,856</i>	Stage 3- Committed	<i>On site. Work started on site as planned in June and is progressing well. The delivery timeline has been affected by the recent unrest and meeting to re-start to be held on 15 August. Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i>	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>BIF46</b>	<b>Coffee Culture</b>	<i>BIF- £286,519 SOF- £100,000 UV- £482,923 DfC- £100,000</i>	Stage 3- Committed	<i>Awaiting a Planning decision with one consultee outstanding. It is anticipated that the contractor will be appointed in Autumn subject to planning approval. Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i>	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>BIF33</b>	<b>Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC</b>	£250,000	Stage 3- Committed	<i>The option for Belvoir FC to lease land from NIHE is being explored.</i>	Continue engagement with the group and partners.
<b>BIF47</b>	<b>Sandy Row Open Space project</b>	£479,314*	Stage 1- Emerging <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects</i>	<i>A meeting is being arranged in September with stakeholders to explore potential opportunities in terms of final project composition based on community needs in the area. *The remaining balance of the ringfenced allocation for the Sandy Row Area projects</i>	Continue engagement with the group.

## 5. Social Outcomes Fund

**SOF is a £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 3 projects in South Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment, and 2 are completed. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. Members are asked to note the progress update of the remaining project in the table below.**

### ***SOF – South Belfast project overview***

Project	Award	Status and update	Action/ Recommendation
<b>SOF02 Coffee Culture</b>	£100,000	As above at BIF46. Awaiting a Planning decision with one consultee outstanding. It is anticipated that the contractor will be appointed in Autumn subject to planning approval.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.

## 6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF) is a capital fund with a current overall budget of £10,280,000 to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. The overall NRF allocation for South was £1,978,637, and 5 projects received an In-Principle funding commitment. Each NRF project is taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Projects remaining at Stage 2 continue to have the support of a Client Manager for their proposals.

### *South Belfast – NRF overview*

<b>South</b>	Stage 3 - Sólás New Build project, GVRT Branching Out project, Lagan Water Access Activity Hub, Redevelopment of former School of Music, Market Heritage Hub Stage 2 (Reserve) - Redevelopment of Riddel's Warehouse Stage 1 (Reserve) - The Avenue Arts Centre, An Droichead Annex, Lagan Legacy
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### *South Belfast – NRF projects at Stage 3 – Delivery*

Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
<b>Sólás New Build project</b>	£362,141	Stage 3- Committed	Planning application approved. Discussions ongoing with potential funders.	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>GVRT- Branching Out project</b>	£500,000	Stage 3- Committed	Planning application submitted. Discussions ongoing with potential funders.	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>Lagan Water Access Activity Hub</b>	£308,248	Stage 3- Committed	Draft lease agreement prepared by Legal Services. Architect has been appointed and Planning application for bridge submitted by DfC.	Continue engagement with the group.

<b>Redevelopment of former School of Music</b>	£308,248	Stage 3- Committed	Discussions ongoing with the group to develop a way forward in terms of design and approach to funders. Design team has been appointed.	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>Market Heritage Hub</b>	£500,000	Stage 3- Committed	Agreement with the vendor on the purchase of the property, although advanced, is still subject to final agreement. It is hoped this will be concluded in Autumn 2024, subject to receiving a funding decision from Community Investment Fund.	Continue engagement with the group.

## 7. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is a rolling programme to either enhance existing Council assets or build / buy new assets or facilities. Table below provides an update on current live projects South Belfast area. Members are asked to note status and update.

### *South Belfast – Capital programme overview*

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status and update</b>
<b>Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide</b>	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> In January, SP&R Committee agreed terms of reference for a local inquiry in the event that an objection to a proposed Gating Order is received. Members granted approval for the publication of a Gating Order in November 2023 for certain streets and to proceed with a ten-week consultation for the remaining streets. Committee agreed a number of gates in May which was ratified by full council in June. Approval will be sought to proceed at more locations in September and October 2024. 61 gates across all four areas of the city will be programmed to start within this financial year. Programme of delivery to be confirmed by the contractor.
<b>City Hall – Installation of Stained Glass Windows - NHS</b>	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Business case currently being worked up.
<b>City Hall – Installation of Stained Glass Windows - LGBT</b>	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Business case currently being worked up.
<b>City Hall External Christmas Tree provision</b>	<i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Strategic case is under review.
<b>Waterfront Hall Chiller Units</b>	<i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Procurement documentation is being prepared.

<b>Waterfront Hall Smoke Curtains</b>	<i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Procurement documentation is being prepared.
<b>Palm House, Botanic Gardens</b>	<i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> This early stage Council heritage asset project is being considered as a candidate for partnership working with the Heritage Fund.
<b>Belfast Bikes Expansion</b>	The contract with existing operator has been extended until the end of the year. The tender for a new provider/ operator is anticipated to go out in late Summer/early Autumn 2024.

## **8. Externally funded programmes**

The Council is the delivery partner for several government departments on key capital investment programmes, namely Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as a number of schemes with DfC and DfI. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to South Belfast.

### **Urban Villages Initiative**

The table below is the status update on UV projects in South Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined South Belfast geography (Sandy Row; Donegall Pass and Markets).

#### ***UV – South Belfast projects overview***

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status and update</b>
<b>The Lockhouse - Gateway to the River / Walkway</b>	Work started on site in April 2024 however works were halted due to a pipe detection. Negotiations with NI Water are ongoing.
<b>Sandy Row Arts &amp; Digital Hub</b>	As above at BIF48. Partnership project with UV. <i>On site.</i> Work started on site as planned in June and is progressing well. The delivery timeline has been affected by the recent unrest and meeting to re-start to be held on 15 August.
<b>Coffee Culture</b>	As above at BIF46 and SOF02. Awaiting a Planning decision with one consultee outstanding. It is anticipated that the contractor will be appointed in Autumn subject to planning approval.
<b>Donegall Pass Good Relations Hub</b>	Council to act as delivery agent for TEO. Project in development.
<b>Market Arches (was Lanyon Tunnels)</b>	As above at BIF07. Previously Lanyon Tunnels. A new Planning application was submitted in October 2023 and is progressing. Business case prepared and recently submitted to funders. A Project Board has been re-established.
<b>Accidental Theatre (Shaftesbury Square)</b>	Business Case not yet commenced, currently at good relations development stage.

### **DfC funded projects**

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Communities in South Belfast.

#### ***DfC – South Belfast projects overview***

Project	Status and update
<b>Holylands Alleygating and Cleansing Project</b>	Project progressing. Link to the citywide Alleygating Phase 5 project.
<b>Southwest Quarter Revitalisation Scheme</b>	Council is acting as delivery agent. Contract for funding/ Letter of Offer received. Works ongoing.
<b>2 Royal Avenue – Bank Square Enhancement</b>	Project aims to improve the linkages and connectivity between Royal Avenue and Bank Square. Works ongoing.

### **Dfl funded projects**

**Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure in South Belfast.**

#### ***Dfl – South Belfast projects overview***

Project	Status and update
<b>Lagan Gateway</b>	As above as BIF04. A Planning application was submitted for Phase 2 in May 2024. Detailed designs are ongoing. Procurement to start in Autumn 2024
<b>Finaghy Bridge</b>	As above at SLIF017. Design stage.
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 2</b>	<i>Via Dfl Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Funding has been received for Phase 3; locations are Lagan Towpath Lockkeeper’s Cottage, Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon Park, Finaghy Community Centre and P&R Blacks Road. Work is progressing.

### **Other externally funded projects**

Project	Status and update
<b>UPSURGE Project/ Access to community gardens on the demonstration site</b>	On ground – <b>infrastructure works completed</b> . Botanic Gardens. Supported via UK Shared Prosperity Fund and EU Horizon funding. City-centered approach to catalyze nature-based solutions through the EU Regenerative Urban Lighthouse for pollution alleviation and regenerative development. Works include research plots and a community garden. Works ongoing at the Community Garden.

## **9. Capital funding opportunities**

**Members are asked to note the updated version of the list of external capital funding opportunities attached at Appendix 1 which may be of assistance to groups and clubs.”**

In response to a question from a Member in regard to additional costs incurred by the contractor as a consequence of the recent civil unrest and damage to the development of the Arts and Digital Hub in the area, the Area Working Group was informed that the damage to property was slight and that minimal delay had been incurred by the contractor



and that it was anticipated that insurance cover would meet the majority of the costs to repair the limited damage to the infrastructure and the property.

A Member thanked the officer and the project team for their efforts in the development of the Sandy Row area which had delivered considerable investment into the area and had provided much needed educational and job opportunities for the local community.

Noted.

### **PEACEPLUS - Verbal update**

The PEACEPLUS Programme Manager informed the Area Working Group that the Local Area Plan had been approved. She outlined the steps necessary to mobilise the action plan and the timeframe associated with its implementation, including the opportunities for community engagement.

As part of the co-design process, it was reported that relevant stakeholders had stated a preference for a range of small projects rather than large scale flagship projects. The PEACEPLUS Programme Manager provided a detailed overview of the projects to be delivered under three themes, some of which had built upon projects delivered within the Peace IV Programme. She explained that the delivery of PEACEPLUS projects was delivered mainly on a city-wide basis and referred to some of those projects located specifically throughout the city.

The Working Group was provided with a detailed update on the various projects to be undertaken under each theme and of the need to secure community engagement. The PEACEPLUS Manager provided an update on the procurement and tendering process and a timeline culminating in the award of contracts.

The Members thanked the PEACEPLUS Project Manager for her detailed and informative presentation.

Noted.

Chairperson