

North Belfast Area Working Group

Wednesday, 29th March, 2017

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor McCabe (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Campbell;
Alderman Browne, Convery, McKee and Spence;
Councillors Clarke and Magee.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager;
Mr. D. Rogan, Head of Contracts;
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy Analyst; and
Miss E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Aldermen L. Patterson and Councillor McAllister.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 28th February were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Decision Tracker

The Group noted that the Decision Tracker document had been emailed to Members before the meeting and provided the Working Group with a brief overview of actions since the last meeting held on 28th February.

Girdwood Community Forum - Update

The Working Group was reminded that, at its last meeting, it had agreed that a report be submitted for consideration regarding the setup of the Girdwood Community Trust, to include the recent proposals to refresh the community engagement arrangements, review the terms of reference and the membership of the Girdwood Community Forum to ensure clarity of roles and responsibility and effective engagement., together with details of the engagement and consultation that had taken place by Strategem with North Belfast Councillors regarding the management of Girdwood.

The Community Development Manager provided the Working Group with an overview of the report which included the final draft proposals presented to the Girdwood Community Forum in February to refresh the community engagement arrangements for the Girdwood development project, including the Girdwood Community Hub.

She explained that she was the Chairperson of the monthly Forum meetings, which had a voluntary membership and remained open to other relevant organisations, as invited by the Chairperson. She advised that, in 2015, the Forum had agreed to review the terms of reference and the membership of the Forum to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities and effective engagement. In order to facilitate the review process, Stratagem had been appointed in August, 2015 to work as the independent facilitators working with Forum members to ascertain their views, to revisit the Community Forum Terms of Reference and membership, to ensure open and transparent representation of all communities in the surrounding area and address any inconsistencies. She advised that this engagement with the community representatives and stakeholders took place over several months.

She confirmed that the Stratagem paper was shared with the Forum in September, 2016 which included political engagement. She advised that responses had been received from Elected Representatives, as follows:

- William Humphrey and Nelson McCausland (MLA);
- Cllr JJ Magee;
- Cllr Julie-Anne Corr-Johnston;
- The Lord Mayor, Alderman Brian Kingston ;
- Nigel Dodds MP; and
- Nicola Mallon MLA.

She advised that further facilitated sessions by Stellar Leadership had taken place and confirmed that, at each stage of the process, the recommendations were amended to reflect stakeholder comment. She advised that a final draft proposal, which summarised the conversation to date and outlined proposals to refresh the community engagement arrangements, was formally considered by the full Forum at its meeting in February, 2017.

She pointed out that once the Forum was content with the proposal, it would be submitted to the appropriate Committee for approval.

She outlined the future community engagement arrangements proposal which illustrated amendments to the current model and the roles and remit of the proposed planning and oversight groups. It made recommendations in relation to the membership and frequency of meetings for the proposed groups, and the development of a communications plan to identify support channels.

She summarised the proposed two focused structures – one with a Girdwood Park planning remit and one with a Girdwood Hub and Pitches delivery remit. She highlighted that the proposal reflected the need to retain the identified best practice of the Forum whilst also addressing the need for an operational group to address the ‘day to day’ aspects of the facility which was managed by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL).

She reminded the Working Group that some community forum members had raised concerns around the potential to dilute the role of the Forum and others had continued to support the formal community feedback which supported a need for an operational group to co-ordinate the work of the various operational partners within the Girdwood Community Hub. She advised that GLL had indicated that any operational group would report back to the Girdwood Community Forum to record progress, alleviating any concerns.

She advised that the outcome of the full Forum meeting in February, noted the aforementioned concerns, however, had agreed to adopt the proposal on an interim basis subject to an ongoing review, including a 'lessons learnt' and outcome based planning workshop planned for April, 2017.

She highlighted that Community representatives also suggested that the model should be built upon and would be strengthened by the involvement of Belfast City Councillors on the Forum and that this request would be submitted in the Girdwood Community Hub progress report at the People and Communities Committee in April.

During discussion, the Working Group noted the success of the project illustrated by the recent celebration event 'Spring into Girdwood'. They also raised the issue of anti-social behaviour at Girdwood and agreed that any assistance by Park Wardens or GLL would be helpful.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the contents of the report and agreed to recommend to the People and Communities Committee that Councillors representing the Oldpark District Electoral Area be invited to attend the Girdwood Community Forum meetings, in the first instance.

Local Investment Fund Update

The Head of Contracts provided an overview of the report which included an update on the progress of those projects which had yet to be completed under the Local Investment Funds (LIF phase 1 and LIF phase 2).

He advised that there were three projects still under consideration under LIF 2, as follows:

- Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership;
- North Belfast Alternatives and Good Morning North Belfast; and
- Girls Model.

During discussion, it was noted that there had been a request to change the scope of the Ballysillan Youth for Christ project so that the funding could be used for new build equipment and to upgrade fixtures and fittings.

He advised that the Cavehill Bowling Club project also required an additional £17,000.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to the change in scope of the Ballysillan Youth for Christ project and noted the additional amount required by Cavehill Bowling Club for future consideration.

Belfast Investment Fund

The Head of Contracts provided a brief overview in relation to the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF). He tabled a document which illustrated the status and progress of the North Area projects.

Noted.

Future Agenda Items

The Working Group also noted the following future deputations and agenda items:

- Alexandra Park Steering Group – Wednesday, 26th April;
- Greenwich Leisure Limited Annual Report – Tuesday, 30th May;
- Queens University – Outreach Programmes -Tuesday, 30th May;
- Information sessions on Inner North Belfast Projects;
- Belfast Hills;
- Zoo Update;
- Harbour Commissioner Update;
- Yorkgate Interchange Update; and
- Update on the work of the support services/youth workers implemented by the DPCSP.

Chairperson