

# East Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday, 10th April, 2018

## MEETING OF EAST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Alderman Haire (Chairperson);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Copeland;  
Aldermen McGimpsey, Rodgers and Sandford; and  
Councillors Dorrian, Graham, Kyle,  
McReynolds and O'Donnell.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mr. C. Campbell, Divisional Solicitor; and  
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the High Sheriff of Belfast, Councillor Howard, and Councillors Armitage, Johnston, Long, Mullan, Newton and O'Neill.

### **Minutes**

The Working Group agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 8th March were an accurate record of proceedings.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were recorded.

### **Presentation**

#### **Belfast Rapid Transit - Glider Update (DfI)**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr C. de Burca and Mr. P. McParland, Department for Infrastructure, who were in attendance to provide the Working Group with an update on the works which were being carried out in preparation for the launch of Belfast Rapid Transit in September, 2018.

The Working Group was provided with an overview of a number of temporary weekend road closures which were necessary for works to be undertaken along the Belfast Rapid Transit route throughout the east of the city, as well as some overnight closures which were required in the city centre.

Mr. McParland advised the Members that there would be 50 halts along the east and CITI route corridor, all of which would be installed by July. He advised the Working Group that ticket machines and validators would be installed this month, with real time passenger information installed at each halt before August.

The Working Group noted that a list of upcoming events where the public could see the new glider vehicle and speak to Translink staff about BRT would be circulated.

In response to a Member's question, the representatives outlined to the Working Group that a number of pedestrian enhancement measures had been installed along the route, which included entrance bollards on the pavements close to the halts to prevent cars from mounting the pavement and a number of ramps installed on the roads close to the halts, in order to slow vehicles down.

In response to a further Member's question regarding how the BRT buses would impact upon the metro buses and cyclists, Mr. de Burca outlined that the current number 4 metro would no longer be necessary and would be completely replaced by the BRT line in the east of the city. He also outlined that the Department was investing a significant amount of money into the Comber Greenway, with a hope to greatly improve it as a cycling route in and out of the city for residents of east Belfast.

A Member raised an issue regarding the paving which had been laid at the new halts. Mr. McParland explained that they had ordered paving of a certain slip resistance, but that anecdotal evidence in the recent icy conditions had shown that a higher level of slip resistance would be preferable. He advised the Members, therefore, that they had sought to flatten the gradient of the original paving stones which had already been laid and that they had ordered new paving with a higher slip resistance for the remaining halts.

During discussion, Mr. de Burca outlined that, after public consultation, a four-hour loading window for deliveries would operate between 10am and 2pm.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

### **Templemore Baths Update - Leisure Transformation**

The Chairperson welcomed Ms. S. Morrow and Mr. J. Gilchrist, Morrow Gilchrist Associates, to the meeting. He explained that they were in attendance to provide the Working Group with an update on the Management Options Appraisal which had been undertaken on the Templemore Baths.

Ms. Morrow provided the Working Group with an overview of the range of Management options which had been considered for the Templemore Baths.

Mr. Gilchrist advised the Members that, having worked in conjunction with the Council's Legal Services Section, an appraisal had been carried out to determine the feasibility of each option. He explained that four of the options were either not legally viable or would not be possible within the required timeframe which was required to secure the Heritage Lottery Funding.

Ms. Morrow outlined to the Members the criteria for shortlisting the remaining options, which considered each option in terms of acceptability in the context of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application, the likely efficiency it would bring and in relation to consistency with the principles of the Council's Leisure Transformation Programme.

Mr. Gilchrist advised the Working Group that the HLF had expressed a desire for the Templemore Users Trust (TUT) to be involved in the future management, in some form, given their historical links with the building. He explained that, on the basis of the feasibility exercise, outsourcing the entire Templemore Baths to a single operator ('Option 6') had been deemed to be the most efficient model. However, he explained that this option would ignore the TUT's historic and heritage connections with the Baths and that, on balance, they were therefore recommending 'Option 4', namely, that the Council would enter into a contractual relationship with the TUT for the original building only, that being

the interpretative area and the existing pool, with the new build being outsourced for management by the Council's strategic partner.

The Director of Finance and Resources clarified to the Working Group that, in addition to final legal confirmation that Option 4 was possible, a number of essential Heads of Terms would need to be agreed by the TUT, including an agreement to apply Council policies in relation to pricing, a commitment to the Council's monitoring arrangements and full co-operation with both the HLF and the Council in relation to the design, funding application and maintenance.

The Working Group noted that the issue would be submitted for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee's consideration at its meeting on 18th May. The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that Option 4 be adopted as the future management option for the Templemore Baths. The Working Group, however, also noted the tight timescale and the potential impact that a loss of HLF funding would have on the overall leisure provision in East Belfast, and further agreed that Option 6 would be the fall back option in the event that consensus on Option 4 could not satisfactorily be reached. It was further agreed that the Council would continue to use Morrow Gilchrist Associates, as an independent body, to agree the Heads of Terms between the Council and the Templemore Users Trust.

**Request to Address the Working Group:**  
**Short Strand Community Forum**

The Working Group agreed to receive a presentation from the Short Strand Community Forum at its next meeting, on Thursday, 3rd May at 5pm.

Chairperson