

North Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday 29th January, 2019

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Alderman Convery (Chairperson);
Aldermen Browne and Spence; and
Councillors Campbell, Clarke, Corr-Johnston, Magee,
Murphy, Pankhurst

In attendance: Mrs. R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. R. Black, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Mrs. D. Smith, Safer City Assistant Manager;
Ms. K. McIvor, Project Manager, Peace IV
Mrs. D. McKinney, Programme Manager
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy Analyst;
Miss C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman L. Patterson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th December were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Decision Tracker

The Working Group noted that the Decision Tracker document had been emailed to the Members before the meeting which provided a brief overview of actions since the last meeting held on 18th December.

Presentation – Belfast Harbour Commissioner

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. J. O'Neill, Chief Executive, and Mr. G. Johnston, Property Director, from Belfast Harbour.

Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Johnston provided an overview of their vision for a new waterfront environment for Belfast on a 20 acre site at City Quays. They informed the Group that the development was Belfast Harbour's response to a demand for Grade A office space in Belfast.

They informed the Members that City Quays 1 was one of the most advanced office buildings in the region and included a £1.2m waterfront walk and cycle way which linked the City Quays with the 'Big Fish; and onward to the Convention Centre. In addition, Members were informed that City Quays 2 was a new office development, which had received BREEAM Excellent Office accreditation and comprised of 124,000 square feet with a rate contribution was £635k per annum.

They told Members that they were delighted to be bringing to Belfast, the first new-build Marriott hotel in Ireland which targeted the entrepreneurial-minded business and urban-leisure markets and which comprised of 188 rooms and a Jean Christophe Novelli restaurant with a rate contribution of £200k per annum.

They added that, in order to support the City Quays development, they were required to build a multi-story car park to accommodate parking requirements. This would be a 900 space car park with electric vehicle charging points and was being managed by NCP.

Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Johnston gave an overview of Belfast Harbour's proposed City Quays 3 development which had just received planning approval from the Department of Infrastructure and it was envisaged that, when completed, the building would generate an estimated rate contribution of £1.2m per annum. They informed Members of other future projects, including a build to rent apartment proposal and their Public Realm project to drive extra tourism from Belfast's heritage legacies for both the Belfast side of the river and the Titanic side of the river and create an iconic waterfront for Belfast.

During discussion, a Member asked about the possibility of a footbridge around the Pilot Street area that would allow people from north Belfast to access the Titanic Quarter and therefore create a link between north and east Belfast. Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Johnston informed the Members that they were aware of the connectivity requirements in that area and that Belfast Harbour was taking the development of a footbridge in this area into consideration as it was integral to their maritime mile tourism project.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to the possibility of a biannual update meeting for the purpose of keeping Members informed about progress and future planning, Mr. O'Neill informed the Working Group that a meeting was due to take place and that Belfast Harbour and Belfast City Council were developing a Memorandum of Understanding to enable both organisations to work together on a whole range of initiatives, including a significant expansion of the North Foreshore Studios which could produce an array of employment opportunities from hairdressing and carpentry to engineering. Mr. O'Neill added that he would be grateful to come back to the working group in the near future to make a presentation specifically around Belfast Harbour's plans for the North Foreshore.

The Chairman congratulated Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Johnston on the progress made with the City Quays scheme and thanked them for their presentation.

Peace IV – Transform for Change Update

(Mrs. D. McKinney, Programme Manager, Peace IV and Ms. K. McIvor, Project Manager Peace IV, attended in connection with this item).

The Programme Manager provided the Members with an overview of the Peace IV Programme, a European Union (EU) funded programme that was managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). She advised the Members of the range of

projects that Belfast City Council, as Lead Partner, was delivering under the PEACE IV Programme and outlined alignment with the Belfast Agenda. She informed the Members of the key objective of the Building Positive Relations (BPR) theme was focussed on promoting good relations within communities, about promoting respect and where cultural diversity was respected and celebrated and people could learn, live and socialise together.

The Project Manager provided the Members with details of the Transform for Change project that the Council is leading on. She explained that the aim of the project was to build the leadership skills of citizens, the political sector, public and statutory providers to work together collectively and develop new, innovative and collaborative approaches to peace building and reconciliation.

She advised that the Transform for Change project would focus on creating a new strategic model of cohesive working on an area basis, across 15 cluster areas in the City, targeting 960 participants. She outlined 12 indicative target areas as follows:

1. Suffolk/Lenadoon;
2. Springfield Road;
3. Falls/Shankill;
4. The Village/Westlink;
5. Inner Ring;
6. Duncairn Gardens;
7. Limestone Road/Alexandra Park;
8. Lower Oldpark/Manor Street;
9. Crumlin Road/Ardoyne/Gkenbryn;
10. Ligoniel;
11. Whitewell Road/Longlands; and
12. Short Strand/Inner East.

During discussion, the Members noted that the targeted interface clusters were indicative and provided feedback with regard to identifying other potential target areas.

The Project Manager added that Working Group was being asked to note the approach for the delivery and consider political participation and representation with regard to the Project. The Programme Manager advised the Members that the basis for selecting the indicative target areas was directly linked to the Belfast Interfaces Project.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Members that their views would be taken on board to ensure a focussed approach criteria for the selection of the target areas. She advised The Working Group that the Shared City Partnership will consider all of the points made at the Area Based Working Groups, criteria for selection of the target area and agreement of the areas.

The Chairman thanked Mrs. McKinney and Ms. McIvor for their attendance and presentation.

Amazing Spaces Smart Places Small Business Research Initiative

The Working Group considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the ‘Amazing Spaces Smart Places’, Small

Business Research Initiative (SBRI) challenge. £120,000 of funding for Small Medium Enterprises (including community and voluntary organisations) was awarded by the Department for Economy to a partnership between Department of Justice and Belfast City Council to explore the use of innovative digital technology and data-driven solutions to help manage parks and open spaces.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Area Working Group Members are asked to note the update, in particular the assurance arrangements in place to manage potential privacy and data protection implications.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 People and Communities Committee have been updated in recent months as part of the quarterly ASB Update on the progress of this initiative. Since the last update to Members, the challenge was officially launched, expressions of interest received and shortlisted.

3.2 The final selection panel involved range of Council Officers (Community Safety, Parks, Business Development and Smart Cities) as well as the Department of Justice, Department for Economy and the Strategic Investment Board. Dublin City Council have been in attendance throughout as through their own Smart Cities Team identified the similarities in the challenges Belfast and Dublin are experiencing. Dublin City Council also made a small financial contribution to the project to allow them to work with successful companies on testing in Dublin if appropriate.

3.3 Members should note however, the majority of testing and solution development will take place within Belfast.

3.4 A number of well attended information sessions were rolled out across the city and sixteen applications received & reviewed, including from SME's based in Belfast. As a result of the final selection process five awards have been made to SME's working in the following areas:

3.5

1. An Internet of Things (IoT) network anonymously logs presence of smartphones in the park. Analytics provided on a cloud-based platform to inform park managers of usage/resources and interventions needed.

3.6

2. A real time solution for the public and park managers detailing what is happening in parks and open spaces. Company plans to provide insights using a variety of data including Wi-Fi data. It will also test the use of QR

codes on park signage to encourage greater engagement.

3.7

3. A dashboard with real time information for park users and managers on usage of facilities to support booking, allocation of resources and planning. The proposal builds on an existing pitch booking solution that collects data on 'organised' usage of facilities and will add data on 'ad hoc' usage. 'Ad hoc' data gathered via Wi-Fi probe devices or dongle and software will anonymously log when a device sends a Wi-Fi request.

3.8

4. A solution that encourages 'civic' action to ensure parks and open spaces are well maintained. Individuals who earn 'Civic Dollars' as a reward for use of parks & reporting issues etc. Devices carried by individuals will connect to beacons that use Wi-Fi or IoT technology. Small, temporary beacons installed onto lampposts. Citizens who sign up will gain rewards via a social digital currency built on Blockchain.

3.9

5. A flexible low cost system located on street furniture that uses artificial intelligence and machine vision to provide real time alerts to relevant agencies when unusual activity is taking. This is not a human-operated CCTV system – rather it is a less-invasive rules-based system that will train itself to generate alerts based on unusual activity.

3.10 In the coming weeks Officers will support the successful SME's in engaging directly with community, residents and 'friends of' groups who have interests and/or are users of the parks/open spaces the technology will be developed to support.

A primary focus of the project is to discover how technology may innovate open space management and help address the challenges and impacts of anti-social behaviour as well as encouraging positive usage.

3.11 The technology will be developed with communities at a small number of parks and open spaces in North, South, East and West Belfast. The site list is being finalised but the following factors are being considered in the selection:

- Current priorities being managed within the department
- A site which maximises the potential return
- Community interest/ support
- ASB hotspots
- Geographical suitability

- Type of activity being targeted e.g. transient/ ASB or utilisation etc.

3.12 Each test will be completed in Phase 1 (end March 2019).

3.13 The objective of the Phase 1 funding is to determine the viability of the technological solutions proposed in achieving the project objectives of promoting safe and positive parks and open spaces.

3.14 An end of Phase 1 update will be brought to both People and Communities and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in due course.

Privacy Impact/Data Protection

3.15 Real and perceived concerns about any privacy/data protection impacts from the project were identified at the initiation stage and a full privacy/data protection screening exercise was completed.

3.16 Additionally, an element of the essential criteria within the assessment process was that SME's making an application had to demonstrate how they would manage any privacy/data protection implications and put control measures in place.

3.17 Council's Information Governance Unit (within Legal Services) are actively engaged in providing support to Officers and the successful SME's in ensuring ongoing and full compliance with legislation and Information Commissioner Officer Guidance.

3.18 **Financial & Resource Implications**

The total available project budget is £120,000. The Department for Economy have provided £100,000 of this funding with Dublin City Council providing another £10,000. Given the potential for this work to have a positive impact on reducing anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces and encouraging positive use, City and Neighbourhood Services have contributed £10,000.

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

As mentioned in the main report, equality and privacy implications have been proactively managed & mitigated on an ongoing basis. This includes avoiding bias or stereotyping in the project. The equality and privacy impact screening process remains under review.”

Several Members raised concerns regarding data protection and the possible collection and storage of personal information without the permission of park users.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Safer City Assistant Manager assured the Members that the aim was to collect the number of mobile phones present in

a park at any one time and assurances would be sought from any third party companies that were involved, that personal information would not be retrieved or stored and that the data security of park users would not be compromised.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the report.

Future Agenda Items

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

- Information sessions on Inner North Belfast Projects;
- Zoo Update;
- Quarterly updates from the Ulster University regarding its community engagement and programme of building work;

The Working Group was informed that Urban Villages would be presenting at the February meeting of the Working Group and was reminded that, at its meeting in December, it was agreed that the Department for Infrastructure's deputations regarding the York Street Interchange and the Living with Water Programme would also attend the February meeting.

The Working Group noted that the North City Business Centre and the North Belfast Heritage Cluster would attend the March meeting of the Working Group and that Ulster University would also be delivering a quarterly update regarding its community engagement and programme of building work.

In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the working group that an update with regard to mountain biking in Cavehill Country Park would be added to the agenda for its meeting in February.

In the context of BIF - Upon a proposal made by a Member, the Working Group agreed that officers would investigate the feasibility of transferring the BCC owned land opposite Kilcoole Park to Urban Villages/ Sunningdale Community Centre to enable Urban Villages to develop a new community hub.

The Working Group further agreed that officers would investigate the feasibility of developing a cultural community hub at 952 Crumlin Road (land currently owned by County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast). This hub would facilitate boxing, highland dancing and also have a café.

Chairperson