

North Belfast Area Working Group

Wednesday, 23rd February, 2021

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McCullough (Chairperson);
Councillors Bradley, Cobain, Ferguson, Magee, Maskey,
McCusker, Murphy, O'Hara, Pankhurst and Whyte.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Ms. N. Mulrine, Regeneration Project Officer;
Ms. E. McCullough, Neighbourhood Services Integration
Manager; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24th November, 2021 were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Presentations

University of Ulster - Mr. Duncan Morrow

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. Duncan Morrow, Director of Community Engagement, University of Ulster, to the meeting.

Mr. Morrow informed the Working Group that the University of Ulster build programme had remained operational for the majority of the pandemic and had been subject to ongoing monitoring and reporting.

He outlined how the new Belfast Campus had already changed the nature of the area, through placemaking and providing new links to north Belfast and how a collaborative project,

with the Council, was underway to develop a model for tracking community benefits in local areas, particularly those adjacent to the city centre area. He informed the Members that the aim of the project was to monitor medium and long term progress, as regeneration projects are developed and delivered.

He pointed out that the Ulster University had been working towards building collaborative partnerships with sustainable relationships with its local community, through engagement activities which included:

- Educational outreach;
- Community Benefit Framework;
- Neighbourhood Community Forum;
- Belfast Campus Community Safety Group; and
- Great Place North Belfast.

He reported that the Ulster University hoped to work collaboratively, with Belfast City Council, through various projects, to address issues that affect the city centre and north Belfast, which included:

- Educational inequalities;
- Placemaking;
- Inclusive growth;
- Active travel;
- Covid recovery;
- Bolder Vision – Cathedral Gardens;
- Culture and Tourism; and
- City Quay Gardens.

Following several questions from Members of the Working Group, the Chairperson thanked Mr. Morrow for his presentation, and he retired from the meeting.

Physical Programmes 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 new 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 physical programme update for North Belfast.

3. Local Investment Fund

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 with the North being allocated £1.127m under LIF1 and £800,000 under LIF2.

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: 43 projects in total have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 34 have been completed; 2 are at delivery stage; 2 are at pre-construction stage and 5 remain at due diligence / initial stages. In total, 79% of all LIF North projects have now been completed.

LIF breakdown – North	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/ Description	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	22 (88%)	£956,500	12 (67%)	£566,400
Number of Projects On-going Delivery	1(4%)	£40,000	2 (11%)	£133,467
Number of Projects in Pre-construction			1 (6%)	£21,667
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	2(8%)	£131,000	3 (17%)	£76,667
Total Number of Approved Projects	25 *	£1,127,500	18 **	£798,201

**This includes additional funding for a LIF 2 project, Ballysillan Youth for Christ.*

*** This includes additional funding for two LIF 1 projects, Marrowbone Parochial Hall and Jennymount Church.*

The table below provide an overview of progress and actions around the remaining live projects. Members are asked to note the status of the current LIF projects and the ongoing actions.

LIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / recommendation
NLIF066	Wishing Well Project	£40,000	On Ground	Project nearing completion.	Continue engagement with group re final account.
NLIF2-14	Star Neighbourhood Centre	£58,467	On Ground	Project on site. Electrical works complete. Artist appointed for mural on exterior wall. Art piece has been installed. Quotations from supplier for	Continue engagement with the group.

				playground equipment received.	
NLIF2-22	Sailortown, St. Joseph's Church Refurbishment	£75,000	On Ground	Project is progressing on site. Heaters procured and installed. Structural Engineer surveyed the internal roof structure and identified necessary works. Contractor for roof work has been appointed and work started 7 February 2022.	Continued engagement with group.
NLIF2-21	Somme Group – cross community memorial	£21,667	Tender preparation	Progressing through Due Diligence stage. Designs also completed and planning application approved. Ongoing work with Legal Services in order to get the funding agreement prepared. Change of Trustees so details to be included in management and maintenance agreement.	Management and maintenance agreement to be finalised and funding agreement signed off at next DD meeting. Requirement for street works licence to be resolved, work in progress with Dfl.
NLIF014	Westland Community Centre - new buildings	£65,000	Due Diligence stage	Project originally agreed for LIF January 2013. Since SIF support was withdrawn in 2019 Westland Community Group are being supported by partners, including UV, NIHE and BCC to build capacity, and provide programming funding support. A revised community centre scheme has been agreed as a UV capital pipeline project and a business case is progressing.	Continued engagement with group and the Executive Office in regarding to UV business case process and Due Diligence information.
NLIF2-19	Women's Tec	£46,667	Due Diligence stage	Agreed February 2017. Group is renewing their lease at the former Skegoniell Primary School. They have now signed the	Continued engagement with Group in terms of the lease.

				lease and it is with the Education Authority for signature.	
NLIF2-03	Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed in June 2018. Project remains at Due Diligence stage – lease issues to be resolved. Officers have had recent contact with the group and the project remains live – the group expect the lease shortly.	Continued engagement with Group.
NLIF057	Ardoyne Holy Cross Boxing Club	£66,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed April 2014 - This project is within the overall UV development of St Gemma's School - ABC Trust. The Business Case has been approved and a Letter of Offer is expected imminently from the Executive Office under Urban Villages. Complex legal matters are progressing well via legal teams and a tripartite MOU has been developed with the project promoter.	Continued engagement with Group and with UV
NLIF2-05	Mercy Primary, Crumlin Road	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed June 2016 - Reported to SP&R Committee on 19 th June 2020 confirming that information was received from the group and project is progressing. The title deeds for Mercy Primary School have been received and being reviewed by Legal Services.	Continued engagement with Group. To be presented at the future Due Diligence meeting.

4. **Belfast Investment Fund**

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment from Council BIF – North Belfast was allocated £5.5m. In North Belfast, 7 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m: and 2 projects are on the longer BIF list. 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.

Members are asked to note the status update of these projects provided below. The table provides a summary of BIF allocated projects i.e. project stage; project title; and funding allocated.

Summary of BIF allocated projects

North	<p>Stage 3 - Cancer Lifeline—£650k; Grace Family Centre —£1.6m; Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church Ireland - £1.5m</p> <p>Stage 2- Malgrove- £500k, Marrowbone Park £750k; Cultural Community Hub - £350k, Midland Boxing Club £400k</p> <p>Stage 1 - Cliftonville Community Forum, Sunningdale Community Centre - no commitment</p>
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BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / recommendation
BIF22/34	Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church (Old Grove)	£1,500,000	Design stage	<p>The updated Economic Appraisal and Business Plan has been sent to the Department of Education. This new proposal would see the demolition and rebuild of the building previously used by Basement Youth Club and owned by Elim Church on Gainsborough Drive.</p> <p>A meeting took place on 07.02.22 with the Minister of Education, local councillors, Elim officials, DE representatives and council officers to progress the project which is currently subject to scrutiny by the Departmental Solicitors Office.</p>	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF15	Malgrove	£500,000	Uncommitted	Business case completed - preferred pavilion option (2017) is for a 4-team changing at estimated cost of £1million. £500k funding deficit remains – avenues	Continue engagement with the group.

				to be explored incl. DfC. Positive response received from NIE re. availability of portion of their land to accommodate element of project carparking requirements - awaiting confirmation of boundary which will inform site design layout.	
BIF45	Midland Boxing Club	£400,000	Uncommitted -Design Stage	Planning permission obtained Dec 2021. Land transfer was approved by council in Feb 2022. Officers in Legal Services are liaising with Northern Ireland Housing Executive to complete the acquisition of land for the extension. Pre-tender estimates show the project may require further funding (approx. £144k) and project officers are working with group to address this, including approaching other funders. Tender package prepared and ready to issue, subject to funding. Aim to bring back to Due Diligence in March.	Continue engagement with the group, design team and funders.
BIF41	Marrowbone Millennium Park	£750,000	Uncommitted – Tender Stage	Partnership project with UV and DfC. A Letter of Offer was agreed in November 2021 and governance structures now in place. NIHE/ Council lease agreement regarding land transfer progressing. Planning has been approved. Procurement of contractor is underway.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF43	Cultural Community Hub	£350,000	Uncommitted	Proposed new cultural hub community facility.	Continue engagement with

				Project will comprise of a 130sqm permanent brick facility on derelict Orange Lodge owned site. As Upper Crumlin Road Cultural Association is recently constituted, it is proposed that the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast will be project guarantor. Discussed initially at Due Diligence in August 2021 with no major issues. Legal Services currently reviewing documents and the aim is to bring project to Due Diligence by April 2022.	the group and stakeholders.
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5. 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. Table below provides an update on current live projects North Belfast area. Members are asked to note the status and updates.

North Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
Belfast Zoo – Programme of Works (Works to the Large Cats Enclosure, Sea Lion, etc)	Stage 3 - Committed Project. On ground. Sea Lion works complete, H&S works progressing and to be complete in the next 4-6 weeks. New lion enclosure works under discussion.
Boodles Dam – Abandonment of the Dam	Stage 3 – Committed Project. On ground. Contractor is on site and is undertaking works. Planned completion in Spring 2022.
Playground Improvement Programme 2021/2022 (City wide)	Stage 3 – Committed Project. Cavehill Adventurous playground. Works to start on February 2022, completion expected early April 2022.
North Foreshore - Development Sites Infrastructure Works	Stage 3 – Committed Project. On Ground. Update reported to SP&R Committee in February 2022 regarding the Storm Drainage Infrastructure Installation.

Reservoir Safety Programme	Stage 3- Committed Project. Works to Alexandra Park, Waterworks Upper and Waterworks Lower. Consultants appointed and undertaking investigative work to assess the existing condition of the reservoirs and associated structures.
Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	Stage 3 – Committed Project. Update to be brought to future AWG
LTP - Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility	Stage 2 – Uncommitted Project. Continued development of OBC for new leisure facility. Continued liaison with key stakeholders around options for new facility and overall development of the Girdwood site.
Cathedral Gardens (including Belfast Blitz)	Stage 2 – Uncommitted Project. OBC being worked up
Relocation of Dunbar Link Cleansing Depot	Stage 2 – Uncommitted Project. OBC being worked up
Glencairn Park/ Ligoniel Park Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC to be worked up.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC to be worked up.

6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

Members are reminded that the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund has recently been launched and is a new £8m capital programme to support capital projects across the city. The fund is now open for Stage 1 applications via an open call process and will close on 12 May 2022. Communications activity is already underway via a variety of tools to promote the fund to as wide an audience as possible.

7. Externally funded programmes

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

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in North Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined North Belfast geography (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan).

Project	Status and update
Marrowbone Millennium Park (links to BIF programme)	Partnership project with UV and DfC. A Letter of Offer was agreed in November 2021 and governance structures now in place. NIHE/ Council lease agreement regarding land transfer progressing. Planning has been

	approved. Procurement of contractor is underway.
Ballysillan Playing Fields	Partnership project with UV, DfC and DfL Living with Water Programme. A Letter of Offer was agreed in November 2021 and governance structures are now in place. At design stage.
Beann Mhadagáin Family Centre	No Letter of Offer in place. Council is acting as delivery agent. The project has been moved to emerging / feasibility stage as the Project Promoter has paused work to consider governance and capacity. The draft Business Case has identified a potential funding deficit. Any future Letter of Offer is dependent upon confirmation of funding and Business Case approval.
Sunningdale Community Centre	No Letter of Offer in place. Council is acting as delivery agent, proposed on Council land. The Business Case has been approved and a Letter of Offer is expected imminently. TEO has confirmed that the funding gap previously identified will be met via the UV Programme. Sustainability issues that had previously been highlighted have been explored and Council is satisfied these have been resolved. Council is considering an in-principle agreement to transfer lands. The Design Team has been appointed.
Ardoyne Youth Enterprises (AYE) Social Enterprise Project	No Letter of Offer in place. Council is acting as delivery agent. The Business Case is progressing. TEO has identified a potential funding gap and has advised that it is exploring additional funding opportunities to support this project. The project designs and costs are being developed.
St Gemma's ABC Trust (links to LIF programme)	No Letter of Offer in place. Partnership project with UV. The Business Case has been approved and a Letter of Offer is expected imminently. Complex legal matters are progressing well via legal teams and a tripartite MOU has been developed with the project promoter. At design stage.
Westland Community Centre (links to LIF programme)	No Letter of Offer in place. Partnership project with UV. This is an emerging project at feasibility stage and Business Case is progressing.

Peace IV

Members are asked to note the update on Peace IV - Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.

Project	Status and update
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<p>Forth Meadow Community Greenway project</p>	<p>On Ground. The project is split into five distinct sections: <i>Section 1 – Glencairn</i> - Works are well underway at Section 1 with a planned completion of Spring 2022. <i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road</i> – works scheduled to start this month. <i>Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock</i> - works are scheduled to start in the next month. <i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> - Planning permission has been secured for Section 4 with works due to commence next month. <i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> - currently at detailed design stage. Members will be aware that the Council has recently been advised that an application for leave to apply for a judicial review in respect of the planning approval for Section 2 of the works has been lodged with the Courts. Business case submitted to DfI for further funding - decision pending. Estimated completion of SEUPB programme December 2023. Reported to SP&R Committee in February 2022 on the potential negative impact of any delay on the project.</p>
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DfC funded projects

Members are asked to note the update on projects funded by Department for Communities.

Project	Status and update
Girdwood Indoor Sports Site— ICT	Continued development of OBC for new leisure facility. Continued liaison with key stakeholders around options for new facility and overall development of the Girdwood site.
Voice of Young people In Care (VOYPIC) and Include Youth	Council is acting as delivery agent. On Ground. Refurbishment of 100 Great Patrick St, Belfast to provide a modern, fit for purpose youth space. Contractor started on site in January 2022. Funded by DfC and the group.
Ballysillan 3G Pitch (Carpet Replacement)	Tender stage. Replacement of 3G carpet. Match funded by DfC.

Living With Water Programme (LWWP)

Members are asked to note the update on projects under LWWP.

Project	Status and update
Belfast Castle Estate – SuDS pilot project	Project recently completed. Natural flood management scheme based on a sustainable drainage pilot project in the grounds of Belfast Castle. “

The Working Group noted the content of the report.

Alleygating Scheme Phase 5 - Verbal Update

The Director of Physical Programmes informed the Members that a report in respect of the Alleygates Scheme had been presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, where a number of omissions had been highlighted by Members, and that the Committee had agreed that the long list would be amended to reflect all of the proposals that had been put forward for the scheme, and a report would be brought back to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Chairperson