

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 21st February, 2018

SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor O'Donnell (Chairperson);
Aldermen Kingston and McGimpsey; and
Councillors Beattie, Boyle, Dorrian, Dudgeon,
Graham, Hargey, Hussey, Kyle, Magee, Mullan,
O'Hara and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development;
Mrs. N. Gallagher, Director of City Regeneration
and Development; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of the High Sheriff (Councillor Howard), Alderman Haire and Councillor Johnston.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Graham declared an interest in Item 3a – European Social Fund, in that she was employed by LEMIS+, which was being recommended for funding, and left the room for the duration of the discussion.

Presentation

Belfast City Marathon

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th February, it had agreed that Belfast City Marathon Limited be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss proposed changes to the City's marathon.

Accordingly, Mr. D. Seaton MBE, Chairman, Mr. J. Glover, Course Developer, Mrs. C. O'Neill, Event Manager, Mrs. E. Riddell, Marketing and Events Officer, and Mr. J. Allen, Board Member, were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Seaton informed the Committee that the Belfast City Marathon had first been held in 1982 and that it raised over £1 million annually for local charities. The event had since been expanded to include a Fun Run, an eight mile walk and a Team Relay. He explained that, following feedback from a number of sources, Belfast City Marathon Limited was proposing to change, from 2019 onwards, the route of the marathon, which he pointed out had remained unchanged for the past thirteen years. It was proposing also to stage the event on the Sunday immediately prior to May Day.

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He drew the Committee's attention to the revisions which had been made to the current route and pointed out that it was being proposed that the marathon would commence at the City Hall and would finish within the grounds of the Stormont Estate. He outlined the primary factors which had influenced those revisions, including the fact that the route was regarded as being more 'runner friendly' and that it would incorporate iconic landmarks such as The Queen's University, the Falls and Shankill Roads and the Titanic Quarter. In terms of running the event on a Sunday, there would be likely to be increased participation, resulting in additional hospitality and retail spend, and policing costs would be reduced.

In response to a number of issues which had been raised by the Members around Belfast City Marathon Limited's proposals, Mr. Seaton and Mr. Glover confirmed that:

- should the Ormeau Road be reinstated on the route and the event finish, as proposed, within the Stormont Estate, it would be likely that it would pass too early in the morning to benefit residents and businesses and would necessitate the crossing of several arterial routes;
- Belfast City Marathon Limited would be engaging extensively with local churches around both the revised route and the change in the day of the marathon and would be seeking to keep disruption to a minimum;
- that section of the route which passed through parts of West Belfast had changed little in the past ten years but now included the Peace Walls;
- the Stormont Estate had been selected as the finishing point, on the basis that it had been offered free of charge and there were increasing costs associated with the continued use of the Ozone Complex/Ormeau Park for that purpose;
- Belfast City Marathon Limited was limited in its choice of routes by restrictions imposed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and other stakeholders; and
- the Waterworks Park had been included within the marathon route as it provided an attractive backdrop for runners.

Mr. Seaton concluded by confirming that Belfast City Marathon Limited would, as part of the consultation process, take into account the comments which had been expressed by the Members, in relation to its proposals.

The Chairperson thanked the deputation for their contribution and they left the meeting.

After discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that officers provide, in advance of the consultation process, details of the Police Service of Northern Ireland's input into the choice of routes for the Belfast City Marathon and of the charges levied by GLL for the use of the Ozone/Ormeau Park.

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Restricted Items

The Information contained in the following four reports is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of the items as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42 (4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

European Capital of Culture Bid 2023

The Committee endorsed a press statement to be issued jointly on 28th February on behalf of the five United Kingdom cities which had submitted bids for European Capital of Culture in 2023.

The Committee noted that the Chairperson of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, together with Council officers and representatives of the other four competing cities, would, on 5th March, be meeting with the Minister for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to discuss future proposals. It noted also that the Chairperson of the aforementioned Committee and the leaders of the other Political Parties (or their nominees) would, on 10th April, be holding meetings in Brussels in connection with this issue.

European Social Fund

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th February, it had agreed to defer to this meeting consideration of a report on the allocation of the Employability and Skills European Social Fund match funding budget.

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that the European Social Fund (ESF) sought to reduce economic inactivity and increase workforce skills by primarily targeting those which were furthest removed from the labour market. He provided information on those projects which the Council had match funded for the period from 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 and confirmed that the Department for the Economy, which managed the Fund, had, in September, 2017, released a final funding call for projects to be delivered between April, 2018 and March, 2022.

He provided a brief overview of the ESF funding process and pointed out that the Council had set aside £240,000 annually for projects, with up to a further £100,000 being provided by Urban Villages. He reported that, following the aforementioned call, the Department for the Economy had advised of those projects which had listed the Council as a potential match funder and that those had been assessed by a panel of officers from the Council and from Urban Villages. Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee approve the following projects for funding under the European Social Fund:

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Rank	Organisation	Match Funding (Council)
1	Springboard	£27,255
2	Workforce	£54,699
3	Specialisterne NI CIC	£9,080
4	USEL	£50,000
5	Ashton Comm. Trust (LEMIS+)	£98,967
		£240,000

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation and noted that, in the event of any of the five projects listed above no longer requiring funding from the Council, funding would be awarded to the next highest ranking project until all of the £240,000 had been allocated.

Update on the Former Belfast Telegraph Building

The Committee noted an update which had been provided by the Director of City Regeneration and Development on the former Belfast Telegraph site and the proposed programme and planning strategy and noted also that it would have an opportunity to consider the options for the use of the building prior to the planning application being submitted.

UEFA Super Cup 2020

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that, over the last fifteen years, the Council had delivered a series of high profile national and international events. Such events required significant lead-in times in relation to the bid development process and the preparations involved.

He explained that the Irish Football Association had invited the Council to support its bid to host the UEFA Super Cup event in 2020. The event, which would involve the winners of the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League, would attract visitors to the City and generate significant media coverage. He pointed out that a draft bid was required to be formulated by 5th March to allow for a document to be finalised by 29th March and that Council support for the event would be subject to a full legal contract being put in place with the event organisers, at least one year in advance. Any default on the terms of that contract would immediately be brought to the attention of the Committee.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

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1. note the details of the 2020 UEFA Super Cup event;
2. agree to provide support for the IFA to bid and host the event and authorise officers to engage with the IFA in this process;
3. agree, in principle, to allocate a total of £200,000, which would be funded through the City Events baseline budget in 2020/2021, towards the UEFA City Bid fee, city animation and the event dinner; and
4. note that, should Belfast be short-listed for the event, a report would be submitted to a future meeting to provide an update on the progress of the project.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Chairperson