

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 31st January, 2024

SPECIAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nic Bhranair (Chairperson);
Alderman Lawlor;
Councillors Canavan, Douglas, Duffy,
Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Lyons, Maskey,
F. McAteer, McCabe, McCormick, McDowell,
I. McLaughlin, McMullan, Murray and Walsh.

Also in attendance: Councillor G. McAteer

In attendance: Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Ms. L. Toland, Senior Manager – Economy;
Ms. C. Cassin, Markets Development Manager;
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor McDonough-Brown.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Restricted Presentation

The information contained in the report associated with the following item was 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 meeting during discussion of the following item as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Members were also reminded that the content of ‘restricted’ reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as ‘confidential information’ and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

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Translink - Belfast Grand Central Station

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. D. McAllister, Head of Belfast Grand Central Station Programme, Mr. D. Curry - General Manager Bus Services, Mr. D. Bannon, Central Area Manager, and Ms. L. Shannon, Corporate Communications Manager, representing Translink to the meeting.

The representatives provided an update of the Belfast Grand Central Station/ Weavers Cross Transport Led Regeneration Project which included details of the Street Works Programme and Public Transport Interventions.

During discussion, the representatives described further the Communication Plan and stakeholder engagement which had been undertaken.

In response to a Member's question in relation to the potential for the donation of the foundation cores of the Boyne Bridge, Mr. McAllister advised that this could be investigated.

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

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that, where relevant, Translink would provide further information on the issues raised.

Presentation

St. George's Market Traders

The Chairperson welcomed Ms. C. McLaverty, Mr. S. McCann, Ms. D. Whan and Mr. P. Lynn, representing St. George's Market Traders, to the meeting.

Ms. McLaverty described the success of St. George's market. She suggested that the Traders had had communication issues with the Markets management team, however, since the pandemic, there had been substantial improvements in the cascading of information. She highlighted that there was still scope to improve communication further.

She suggested the following objectives to improve the Market:

- The Council, Market Management, Staff and Traders act as one team for the ongoing success of the market;
- Regular Team Meetings between traders and the Markets Management Team/wider consultation days;
- Collective Working – embrace ideas, allow the Traders to share plans and ideas, collaborate, acknowledge and celebrate success;

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- Measure Success – For example: ongoing increase in footfall, increase revenue on non-market days, online reviews; and
- Leadership – inspire and challenge for a shared goal, encourage dynamic input, setting goals and achievable targets for all.

During discussion, Ms. McLaverty clarified the communication issues which had taken place and the need for consultation in the decision making process. She pointed out that a greater notice period of events taking place within the market was required to alleviate the disruption to Traders, and an events calendar would be useful.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

During further discussion, the Director of Economic Development explained the challenges in regard to compliance of the attendance and storage policies. He highlighted the utilisation rates and provided an overview of external events.

The Markets Development Manager described the engagement that currently took place and advised that staff met with the traders regularly but the Team would explore further how to communicate and engage on a wider basis and plan ahead. She explained further the Markets Committee model, wider operational issues and work undertaken with stakeholders to measure the success of the Market.

The Senior Manager – Economy highlighted the success factors and the market development plan ambitions to include customer insights.

The Director of Economic Development advised that work would be undertaken with the Traders Forum to explore how to improve the Market. He also thanked the Markets Development Team and the Traders for overcoming the recent challenges for the benefit and success of the Market.

After discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and the commitment from the Director of Economic Development to ensure further engagement with the Market Traders took place to improve communication and consultation.

Chairperson