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CITY DEAL**

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## BRCD Council Panel

<b>Subject:</b>	Minutes of Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) Council Panel
<b>Date:</b>	12.30 pm, 31 January 2024
<b>Councillors in attendance:</b>	<p>Councillor Ronan McLaughlin - Belfast City Council – Chair  Councillor Sarah Bunting – Belfast City Council  Councillor Michael Goodman – Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Councillor Jay Burbank - Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Alderman Alan McDowell - Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Alderman Allan Ewart – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor Tim Mitchell – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor Gretta Thompson – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor John Lavery – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor Robert Logan, Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Robin Stewart, Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Oonagh Hanlon - Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council  Councillor Pete Byrne - Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council</p>
<b>Officers:</b>	<p>John Walsh - Chief Executive, Belfast City Council  Sharon McNicholl – Deputy Chief Executive, BRCD SRO, Belfast City Council  Damien Martin – BRCD Programme Director, Belfast City Council  Richard Baker – Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council  Susie McCullough – Director of Place, Ards and North Down Borough Council  David Burns – Chief Executive, Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Jonathan McGrandle – City Deal Programme Director, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council  Conor Mallon – Director Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  Colin McKenna – Programme Co-ordinator, Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Wendy Langham - Director Belfast Stories, Belfast City Council  Eimear Henry – Strategic Lead, Belfast Stories, Belfast City Council  Theresa Slevin, Stephen Wallace, Emer Husbands, Jane Young, Lorraine Beggs– BRCD Programme Office  Chris Brown and Arlene O’Connor – Brown O’Connor</p>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
1.1	<p>Councillor Ronan McLaughlin, Belfast City Council welcomed the members of the BRCD Council Panel to the meeting hosted in City Hall, Belfast City Council and outlined the key areas of focus for the meeting.</p> <p>Ronan McLaughlin and John Walsh thanked Damien Martin for his contribution to City Deal and wished him success in his new role.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
2.1	<p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>Alderman Matthew Magill – Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Alderman Mark Cosgrove - Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Councillor Alistair Cathcart – Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Councillor Craig Blaney - Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council</p>

	<p>Councillor Ray McKimm - Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Councillor Emmett McDonough-Brown - Belfast City Council  Councillor Carl Whyte - Belfast City Council  Alderman Billy Ashe MBE – Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Timothy Gaston - Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Declan Murphy - Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council</p> <p>Apologies were received from the following Officers:</p> <p>Stephen Reid – Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council  Valerie Watts – Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council  Majella McAlister – Director of Economic Development and Planning, Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Marie Ward – Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
3.1	<p>Councillor Ronan McLaughlin asked Councillors if they had any interests to declare in relation to the agenda.  No interests were declared.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>
4.1	<p>Councillor Ronan McLaughlin asked if the Panel agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate reflection of the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Laverty proposed that the minutes from the last meeting were agreed.  Seconded by Cllr Ronan McLaughlin  <b>Members agreed the minutes.</b></p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>BRCD Programme Update</b>
5.1	<p>Damien Martin (DM) presented an overview of the programme update which was circulated with the papers, and presented the programme dashboard which provides an overview of the progress on the individual pillars of investment and an update on the business case approval and signing of contracts for funding. DM noted that significant progress has been made in relation to OBC approvals for I4C and Gobbins. The Innovation projects are most advanced and DM highlighted success across a number of innovation projects in leveraging additional funding.</p> <p>DM also outlined some of the challenges in relation to subsidy control which had been discussed at the previous meeting, and have impacted on signing of contracts for funding for the tourism projects. The subsidy assessment for Mourne Mountain Gateway was referred as a Subsidy of Particular Interest to the Competition and Market Authority (CMA) in November and the CMA concluded that overall, a well-reasoned case for the subsidy was made. The learnings from this process have been incorporated into the Gobbins subsidy assessment which was submitted to the CMA on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Colin McKenna confirmed that LCCC have received positive advice in relation to subsidy position of Destination Royal Hillsborough (DRH) project and these are not expected to need referral to CMA.</p> <p>DM reported that work is ongoing in relation to skills assessments and highlighted the work by NI Screen and Studio Ulster to ensure skills pathways are provided within the creative industry sector.</p> <p>Alderman Ewart wished DM well in his new role and queried when the Contract for Funding for DRH would be signed. DM confirmed that now the subsidy position has been confirmed, that following further engagement with Government Departments the contract should be signed within the coming months.</p> <p><b>Members noted the progress of the programme.</b></p>

<b>6.0</b>	<b>Communication and Engagement</b>
6.1	<p>Chris Brown (CB) from Brown O'Connor presented the proposals for strategic engagement and communication of the City Deal to raise awareness with key stakeholders and maximise the benefits of the deal. CB updated the panel on proposals for business engagement, which will start with a breakfast event in City Hall for the heads of NI business bodies and sectoral representative organisations. CB also discussed proposals for ongoing political engagement in NI and London, to ensure we maximise the full benefit of the deal.</p> <p>John Walsh noted the importance of this piece of work to ensure political support for BRCD and ensure the opportunities of the Deal are realised.</p> <p>Cllr Ronan McLaughlin thanked CB for the comprehensive update.</p> <p><b>Members noted the Communications and Engagement plans for the programme.</b></p>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Belfast Stories</b>
7.1	<p>Wendy Langham (WL), Programme Director for Belfast Stories presented to the panel the plans for Belfast City Council's flagship tourism project Belfast Stories and invited members to join her for a tour of the Belfast Stories site at the end of the meeting. WL highlighted the project objectives which include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grow Belfast's economy through tourism led regeneration and support for screen-based creative industries,</li> <li>• create and sustain a diversified, vibrant city where people want to live and work, visit and invest,</li> <li>• create a new shared city space to support a greater sense of connection and belonging.</li> </ul> <p>Belfast Stories will be a 3 in 1 space which will incorporate civic space, a visitor attraction and creative hub and will act as a springboard to the city and gateway to the region. The project has challenging aspirations for net zero exemplar, to ensure the project is socially and economically sustainable for future generations. The Design Team and Project Management and Design Assurance Team were appointed in November and a visitor experience team have been recently appointed to develop the design.</p> <p>In response to a query from DM on the social value aspects of the Belfast Stories project, WL noted that the inclusive growth ambitions have been communicated to design teams and these cover all social, economic and environmental aspirations.</p> <p>Cllr McLaughlin noted the importance of the social value aspects of these large capital projects to ensure the communities surrounding these projects are not left behind.</p> <p><b>Members noted the programme update.</b></p>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Press Release</b>
9.1	<p>Councillor Ronan McLaughlin asked members if they were content to agree the draft press release circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Members agreed the press release.</b></p>
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Date of next meetings</b>
10.1	<p>Councillor Ronan McLaughlin highlighted that a schedule of meetings has been circulated with the next meeting to be hosted by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council on 29th May at 12.30 pm</p>