



BRC D Council Panel

Subject:	Minutes of Belfast Region City Deal (BRC D) Council Panel
Date:	12:30 pm, 28 April 2021
Councillors in attendance:	<p>Councillor Stephen Ross – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council Alderman Mark Cosgrove – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council Councillor Trevor Cummings – Mayor, Ards & North Down Borough Council Councillor Alistair Cathcart – Ards & North Down Borough Council Alderman Alan McDowell – Ards & North Down Borough Council Councillor Richard Smart - Ards & North Down Borough Council Councillor Stephen Dunlop- Ards & North Down Borough Council Alderman Brian Kingston – Belfast City Council Councillor Eric Hanvey - Belfast City Council Councillor Ronan McLaughlin - Belfast City Council Alderman Allan Ewart – Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Councillor Sorcha Eastwood – Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Alderman Michael Henderson – Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Councillor Uel Mackin - Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Alderman Billy Ashe MBE – Mid & East Antrim Borough Council Alderman Audrey Wales MBE - Mid & East Antrim Borough Council Councillor Robin Stewart - Mid & East Antrim Borough Council Councillor Timothy Gaston - Mid & East Antrim Borough Council Councillor Charlie Casey – Newry, Mourne & Down District Council Councillor Robert Burgess - Newry, Mourne & Down District Council Councillor Pete Byrne - Newry, Mourne & Down District Council</p>
Officers:	<p>Marie Ward – Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Jacqui Dixon – Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Stephen Reid – Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council Suzanne Wylie – Chief Executive, Belfast City Council Ronan Cregan – Deputy Chief Executive, Belfast City Council Damien Martin – BRC D Programme Director, Belfast City Council Majella McAllister – Director of Economic Development and Planning, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Susie McCullough – Director Regeneration, Development and Planning, Ards and North Down Borough Council Padraic Murphy – Programme Co-ordinator, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Nicola Rowles – Interim Director of Development, Mid & East Antrim Borough Council Ursula O’Loughlin – Head of Economic Development, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Conor Mallon – Director Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Amanda Smyth – Head of Regeneration and Business Development, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Professor Frank Lyons - Professor of Music and Associate Dean of Research and Impact in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Ulster University Emer Husbands, Stephen Wallace, Ruth Rea, Theresa Slevin – BRC D Programme Office</p>

1.0	Welcome and Introductions
1.1	<p>Mayor of Ards & North Down Borough Council, Cllr Trevor Cummings welcomed the members of the BRCD Council Panel to the meeting which was hosted by Ards & North Down Borough Council.</p> <p>Stephen Reid, Chief Executive of Ards & North Down Borough Council, outlined the key areas of focus for the meeting.</p>
2.0	Apologies
2.1	<p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>Cllr Glenn Finlay (Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council)</p> <p>Alderman Phillip Brett (Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council)</p> <p>Councillor Robert Logan (Mid & East Antrim Borough Council)</p> <p>Councillor Willie Clarke (Newry, Mourne & Down District Council)</p> <p>Apologies were received from the following Officers:</p> <p>David Burns – Chief Executive, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council</p> <p>Anne Donaghy (Mid & East Antrim Borough Council)</p>
3.0	Declarations of Interest
3.1	<p>Cllr Cummings asked Councillors if they had any interests to declare in relation to the agenda. No interests were declared.</p>
4.0	Minutes of Previous Meeting
4.1	<p>Cllr Cummings asked if the Panel agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate reflection of the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Dunlop proposed that the minutes from the last meeting were agreed.</p> <p>Seconded – Cllr Burgess.</p> <p>Members agreed the minutes.</p>
5.0	BRCD Programme Progress Update & Deal Development
5.1	<p>Programme Progress Update</p> <p>Stephen Reid, Chief Executive of Ards and North Down Borough Council and Damien Martin, BRCD Programme Director for BRCD provided a progress report to the Council Panel highlighting the progress in completing Outline Business Cases (OBCs), the majority of which had now been submitted for formal review by NI Government (and UK Government where applicable).</p> <p>Specifically, four of the five projects under the Innovation Pillar had been submitted for formal review and had started to progress through Casework Committee, including the Screen Media Innovation Lab, which Members</p>

	<p>would receive a specific update in relation to at the meeting. The final project, the Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology was expected to be submitted in late May/June 2021.</p> <p>Stephen Reid explained that all projects within the Tourism & Regeneration pillar had been formally submitted to NI Government for review ahead of the scheduling of Casework Committees for the most advanced projects.</p> <p>A digital innovation programme business case had been submitted to NI and UK Government in January 2021 and detailed and constructive engagement with Government had been occurring in recent months ahead of an updated programme business case being completed in May 2021.</p> <p>In relation to the Infrastructure pillar, one OBC, relating to the Lagan Bridge had been approved and interim OBCs for the Belfast Rapid Transit Phase II and Southern Relief Road projects had been completed.</p> <p>Stephen Reid explained that employability & skills had also been progressing well, with positive engagement with the private sector taking place in recent months. A final draft Employability & Skills proposition would be brought to the Employability & Skills Advisory Board during May.</p> <p>Stephen Reid set out the recent positive engagement that had taken place with a range of senior political representatives, including Executive Ministers, regarding the BRCD and noted the support for City & Growth Deals which had been included within the Department for Economy Economic Recovery Action Plan. Stephen Reid explained that plans for enhanced business engagement were also being progressed.</p>
5.2	<p>Deal Document</p> <p>Stephen Reid explained that positive progress had been made in relation to development of the draft Deal Documentation, including the development of an overall draft Deal Document. Progress had also been made on a draft Implementation Plan and Financial Plan. Work on the Deal Documentation was taking place in parallel to the development and submission of Outline Business Cases – and members were reminded that a signed deal document was required in order to establish the Accountable Body and allow funding to flow to projects which had OBCs approved.</p> <p>Stephen Reid outlined the contents of the Deal Documents and explained the approach taken by the BRCD, including that there has been a recognition of the impact of Covid-19 across the programme and projects. The Deal Document has been based on best practice from other Deals across the UK and a draft governance framework has been developed which builds on existing structures and includes the BRCD Council Panel remaining as an important element, providing political leadership for the next phase of the Deal.</p> <p>Stephen Reid also outlined progress on a draft Implementation Plan which focuses on key milestones, risks and benefits of projects and explained that the next step was further engagement with NI Departments in relation to the Deal Documentation.</p>

Alderman Kingston noted the long-term nature of Belfast Rapid Transit Phase II and Southern Relief Road projects and asked for assurances that these could be delivered within the BRCD timescales. Damien Martin explained that these projects were being led by the Department for Infrastructure and were still in early stages of development and there are ongoing discussions with officials on next stages which would include updated timescales.

Alderman Ewart requested clarification around the submission of OBCs and the timescales for Casework Committees. Damien Martin explained that 4 projects within the Innovation pillar (the Screen Media Innovation Lab, the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre, I-REACH and the Global Innovation Institute) had either attended the Casework Committee or had a date scheduled during May. The final innovation project, the Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology, was also expected to be submitted for Casework by June.

In relation to Tourism & Regeneration, the Carrickfergus Regeneration and Newry Regeneration projects were expected to attend Casework Committee in the next month with the most advanced Tourism projects progressing to Casework during June. Damien Martin further explained that the Belfast Destination Hub and Destination Hillsborough, had produced OBC1s and therefore would not attend Casework Committee but would be reviewed by a Departmental Panel.

Alderman Ewart asked how a project moved from a Project Type B to a Type A. Damien Martin explained that a Project Type B reflected the current stage of development of a project and an OBC1 would demonstrate the strategic and economic case of a project, with further work required, for example relating to commercial and operating/management models which are required for a full OBC. Damien Martin noted that an approved OBC1 would still release capital BRCD funding to support further development of the project (such as detailed design), but an OBC2 would be required before the project could move to procurement of a construction contractor.

Cllr Casey stated that Southern Relief Road was a key project for their Council area and welcomed the clarification on the process provided.

Cllr Hanvey noted the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our economy and welcomed that the BRCD has been conscious of this in its development of projects and programmes. Cllr Hanvey urged expenditure to be released as soon as possible due to the criticality of City & Growth Deals to NI. Cllr Hanvey asked for clarification of the role of CPD in the BRCD.

Damien Martin welcomed Cllr Hanvey's comments and stated that a lot of work had gone into developing approaches which can also help in the short-term, pre signing of Deal Document, including the Digital Futures programme. He further explained that CPD were currently engaged in providing cost validation advice on

	<p>BRCD projects to the NI Departments and that the Executive had agreed to fund these costs. CPD will also have a role in advising on procurement going forward – but more clarity will be provided in due course.</p> <p>Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive of Belfast City Council, highlighted that there remained an affordability issue in relation to delivery of all of the projects, at their current scale, within the NI Executive funded Tourism & Regeneration and Infrastructure pillars – and wished to highlight that there may be some difficult decisions to be made by partners – with discussions ongoing with DoF, DfI, DfE and DfC.</p> <p>Members noted the programme update and the next steps- proposed by Alderman Henderson and seconded by Cllr Smart.</p>
6.0	Impact of Innovation Investment- example of Screen Media Innovation Lab
6.1	<p>Cllr Trevor Cummings introduced Professor Frank Lyons, Professor of Music and Associate Dean of Research and Impact in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Ulster University.</p> <p>Professor Frank Lyons provided a detailed presentation outlining the impact of BRCD investment within the innovation pillar, through the Screen Media Innovation Lab, a project focused on virtual production which could place NI as a world leader, leveraging significant private sector investment and providing local employment opportunities.</p> <p>Cllr Byrne welcomed the presentation, stating that the benefit for the whole Belfast Region and beyond is extremely exciting and that projects like this should be highlighted more strongly.</p> <p>Cllr Casey also strongly welcomed the presentation and thanked Prof Lyons.</p> <p>Alderman Henderson reiterated the views of Cllr Byrne and Cllr Casey, strongly welcoming the presentation and exciting project.</p> <p>Alderman Kingston emphasised that the project was an excellent example of future proofing and stated that he agreed with the comments of others in their support.</p>
7.0	Press Release
7.1	<p>Cllr Cummings asked members if they were content to agree the draft press release circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposed – Ald Kingston Seconded - Ald Henderson</p> <p>Members agreed the press release.</p>

8.0	Schedule of Meetings
8.1	The next meeting would be hosted by Belfast City Council and it was noted that a date would be agreed and circulated amongst Members.