

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 8th May, 2024

MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nic Bhranair (Chairperson);
Alderman Lawlor;
Councillors Bunting, Canavan, S. Douglas, Duffy,
Maskey, F. McAteer, McCabe, McLaughlin, McKay,
Murray, Smyth and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Ms. L. O'Donnell; Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism;
Ms. L. Toland; Senior Manager, Economy;
Mr. S. Dolan, Senior Development Manager;
Mr. A. Cairns, Zoo Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Garrett, McCormick, McDonough-Brown, McDowell and McMullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the 10th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 7th May, subject to the following amendment under the heading *Notice of Motion Quarterly Update* - the Council agreed to retain the following two notices of motion which had been recommended for closure, and to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to request that funding be committed to the provision of nighttime services:

- Translink – Nighttime provision of services (ID 289); and
- Late Night Public Transport (ID 349).

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Nic Bhranair declared an interest in items 2.b) Update on Coach Parking and Hop-on/Hop-off Operators and 5.a) 2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans in that she had recently been employed as a Special Advisor to a Minister in the Executive and left the room whilst the items were under consideration.

Councillors Duffy and McCabe declared an interest in item 5.a) 2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans, in that the organisations they worked for were associated with the employment skills and tourism work plans and left the room whilst the item was under discussion.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the report associated with the following three items 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 items as, due to the nature of the items, 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.

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.

Vacant to Vibrant Scheme

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an update on the Vacant to Vibrant Programme and outlined the recommendations from the Vacant to Vibrant assessment panel following the recent receipt and assessment of applications.

She also provided an overview of the next steps for the Vacant to Vibrant programme and advised that a further update would be provided to the Committee in June, following further discussions with Party Group Leaders.

The Committee:

- I. Noted the update in relation to the city centre Vacant to Vibrant Programme;
- II. Agreed to the recommended grant awards as outlined within Section 3.12 of the report;
- III. Noted the update contained within this report relating to the Renewing the Routes programme; and
- IV. Noted the ongoing work on developing options for the Vacant to Vibrant Programme and that these options would be brought to Party Group Leaders for discussion prior to bringing back into the Committee, and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, as appropriate.

(Councillor Duffy in the Chair.)

**Update on Coach Parking and
Hop-on / Hop-off Operators**

The Senior Manager, Culture, Tourism and Events, provided an update on the availability of secure overnight coach parking and the current city provisions to service the market.

In relation to the provision of Hop on/Hop off sightseeing tours, she explained that Visit Belfast had advised officers of additional providers entering the market. While the licence to operate this form of service was within the remit of the Department for Infrastructure, the Council provided associated permits for street trading. She advised that, given a number of operators now in the marketplace competing for share of visitors, Visit Belfast had proposed requesting operators to sign a voluntary code of conduct.

During discussion, the Senior Manager, Culture, Tourism and Events, answered a range of questions in relation to enforcement, volume of coaches, cruise-ship operators and air pollution.

After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted the contents of the report;
- Agreed, in principle, to sign up to the draft Code of Conduct along with Visit Belfast, other statutory agencies and Operators;
- Agreed that restrictions to Coach engine idling in the City Centre and the impact on air pollution be discussed with the representatives for inclusion in the draft Code of Conduct; and
- Noted that officers would also explore the potential for a similar code of conduct for cruise ship related coach operators.

(Councillor Nic Bhranair in the Chair.)

Belfast Zoo - Collection Update

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy advised that approval was being sought to confirm the final plans for the relocation of two elephants from Belfast Zoo to Burgers Zoo in the Netherlands.

The Committee:

- Approved the final stage of the elephants transfer from Belfast Zoo to Burgers Zoo in the Netherlands; and
- Noted the estimated cost of the transfer.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

Request to Present - Belfast City and Region Place Partnership

The Committee considered the request to receive a presentation from representatives of the Belfast City and Region Place Partnership at its Committee Meeting in June 2024.

During discussion, the Committee noted that the Partnership would be invited to attend the Special Meeting in May, in the first instance. However, if this was not suitable, they would be invited to attend the Committee in June.

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from representatives of the Belfast City and Region Place Partnership at a future Committee.

Department for Communities Correspondence – Regeneration Powers

The Committee considered the correspondence which had been received by the Department for Communities in response to its request in relation to regeneration powers ([Appendix 2](#)).

The Committee noted the correspondence.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Belfast 2024 Update

The Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, provided an overview of the forthcoming Belfast 2024 events programme, together with a Communications Plan update and key milestones:

- May 24 - Little Amal opening spectacle event;
- June 24 - Launch Spring/Summer Programme Campaign – Safari in the City, Hearth, ROOTS, Boat Building, Lyric Midsummer, Alleyways;
- August 24 - Launch Autumn/Winter Programme Campaign - Shadowdock, Wiggle Room, Helen Hall, North Star, BBC Concert, Eco Arcade, An Droichead;
- Sept 24 - Host Eurocities Cultural Conference; and
- Nov 24 - Wrap Up/ Finale - Eden-Oliver Jeffers

During discussion, the Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism confirmed that all events would be incorporated and promoted in the final 'What's on' listings and signposting via associated social and campaign activity.

The Committee noted the update provided on the Belfast 2024 programme of events scheduled throughout the year.

**UNESCO Creative Cities
Network (UCCN) Annual Conference**

The Committee was advised that an invitation had been received to the XVI Annual Conference of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) to be held in Braga (Portugal), from 1st - 5th July 2024, under the theme “Bringing youth to the table for the next decade” which sought approval for council engagement in, and representation at the event.

The Committee noted the contents of report and agreed to the attendance of the Lord Mayor and relevant officials, up to a maximum estimated cost of £5000, at the Conference.

(Councillor Walsh in the Chair.)

Strategic and Operational Issues

2024/25 Committee Plan and Associated Work Plans

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the Report and associated appendices until its meeting on 29th May, to allow Members time to review the Committee and Work Plans further.

(Councillor Nic Bhranair in the Chair.)

Approval for 2 Markets at 2RA

The Committee approved the following two external markets to take place in 2RA:

- ‘Crafted with Pride’ Market on Saturday, 21st July 2024; and
- Belfast Potters Market on Saturday 10th August 2024

Minutes of the Belfast Stories Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the Minutes of the Belfast Stories Working Group of 24th April.

Chairperson