

West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 24th November, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE SPECIAL WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor McCann (Chairperson),
Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillors Corr, Canavan, Donnelly, Duffy,
Garrett, Hutchinson, McCabe,
McLaughlin, Thompson, Verner and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. M. Doherty, Project Manager;
Mr. F. Grant, Operations Development Manager;
Ms. A. McGlone, Neighbourhood Integration Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of Councillor Beattie.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the special meeting of 27th October were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thompson declared an interest in relation to Item 2 – Update on Physical Programme is that she was a Director of the following three organisations who were referenced within the report:

- Glencairn Community Project;
- Greater Shankill Community Council; and
- Shankill Woman's Centre

The Member left the meeting whilst the agenda item was being discussed.

Issue Raised in Advance by a Member

Presentation from Shankill Juniors – Councillor Verner

Councillor Verner sought the permission of the Working Group to receive a presentation from the Shankill Juniors.

The Working Group agreed to receive the presentation and agreed to take it as the first item on the agenda.

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. Craig Houston and Mr. Craig Fleck, representing the Shankill Juniors.

Mr. Fleck commenced by providing the Working Group with a background to Shankill Junior Football Club which was a community club established in 1987. He explained that the club was at the heart of the community and outlined the journey of a junior player from age 3-16, including detail regarding participation in the various leagues, including the National League and Irish League games. He also drew Members' attention to the club's core values which were to ensure that the players had fun, gave a commitment, and ultimately were young people who had integrity and strong moral principles.

He concluded by outlining the Club's Challenges as follows:

Facilities

- currently relies on 4 venues for training and highlighted that these were currently not enough due to the increase in numbers attending and overall demand; and
- extreme competition for training slots with clubs from all over Belfast and NI competing.

Costs

- training slots costing nearly £2000 per month (not sustainable); and
- noted that, if the club had home training grounds, the funds could be reinvested back into the club to provide the children with better opportunities.

Ability to Grow

- it was envisaged that the club would grow by at least 100 children in the next 3 years; and
- given the current demands, if it should grow at this anticipated level, there was concern as to where they would train.

Catchment Area

- the socio-economic area is one of the most deprived in Belfast and opportunities are limited for the children in the area;
- anti-social behaviour and crime figures in the area are high; and
- highlighted that the club aims to provide a 'safe space' for local children.

The Chairperson and several the Members thanked the representatives for their presentation and acknowledged the excellent work that the Shankill Juniors undertook with the local children in their community.

Councillor Verner thanked the Members for giving the representatives from the Shankill Juniors an opportunity to address the Working Group. She advised that she would be keen for the Council to consider the repurposing of the unused MUGA at Woodvale Park, this was currently a wasted space in the heart of the community which could potentially be repurposed as a training ground.

The Members discussed whether other funding avenues had been explored, for example, through the Department for Communities.

Several of the Members stated that they were keen not to build an unrealistic expectation that the project could be delivered.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a technical report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Group which would consider the costs in more detail and the logistics of delivering the proposal.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation, and they left the meeting.

Update on Physical Programme

The Members considered the undernoted report:

“1. Introduction

The Council’s Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- note the updates on the Physical Programme for West Belfast.**
- note the project movement for Greater Shankill Community Council project to *Stage 3 - Committed*.**
- recommend that £507,000 of SOF funding is allocated to Greater Shankill Community Council and £80,000 is allocated to the Woodvale Park project.**

3. Local Investment Fund

Members are reminded LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. (LIF 1 – West - £1,127,500 + Shankill £490,000 and LIF 2 - £1,400,000).

Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery

process: 50 projects have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 49 have been completed and 1 project at delivery stage. In total, 98% of all LIF West projects have now been completed. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – West	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/ Description	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	25 (100%)	£1,617,500	24 (96%)	£1,341,788
Number of Projects On-going Delivery			1 (4%)	£58,212
Number of Projects in Pre-construction				
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)				
Total Number of Approved Projects	25	£1,617,500	25	£1,400,000

The below table is a brief overview of the remaining live projects are shown below.

LIF Ref	Project	LIF Funding	Stage	Status	Action / Recommendation
WLIF2-04	St John Bosco Boxing Club	£40,000	Complete	Project recently completed. Snagging works ongoing.	Ongoing liaison with the group, Sport NI, DfC and DoF.
WLIF2-08	Berlin Swifts Football Club	LIF £65,085; SOF £113,000	On Ground	Modular changing building has been installed however utility connections remain outstanding. All utility connections applications now progressing well, with sufficient funding in place to complete project.	Continue engagement with utility companies and project partners.

4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration, partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment. The West AWG had a total allocation of £9m comprising £5.5m from the original allocation, an additional £1.2m which was ring-fenced for projects in the Shankill area when this became part of the West AWG following the Council elections in

2015 and £2.5m which was ringfenced for projects in the Colin area following LGR.

6 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF accounting for the full allocation. Each of the 'In Principle' projects are taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Table below provides a summary of BIF allocated projects.

Summary of BIF allocated projects

West	<p>Stage 3—Davitts GAC—£1m; Raidió Fáilte—£950k; St Comgall's-£3.5m; Colin Glen Forest Park—£2.5m Stage 2—Glencairn Community Project— £700k; Greater Shankill Community Council- Royal British Legion- £300k, St Mary's CBS— no commitment Stage 1— An Sportslann; Suffolk Community Forum; Belfast Hills- Black Mountain Access—no commitment</p>
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BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF29	Greater Shankill Community Council - RBL	BIF- £300,000; <i>SOF- tbc</i>	Uncommitted; Design stage	Project cost estimate following tender exercise has led to a funding deficit due to rising construction costs. Additional funding under SOF in the amount of £507,000, subject to WAWG recommendation and Committee approval.	Move to Stage 3- Committed. Continue engagement with the group.
BIF09	Glencairn Community Project	£700,00	Uncommitted; Due Diligence stage	Project cost estimate following tender exercise indicates a deficit. Group are investigating other funding and mechanisms. Awaiting date for meeting with Education Authority to resolve land transfer. CNS officer to provide support at sub-group.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.

5. Social Outcomes Fund

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 5 projects in West Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award.

SOF – West Belfast projects overview

West	<p>Stage 3— James Connolly Interpretative centre—£650,000; Rock Centre —£200,000; Belfast Orange Hall Museum- £80,000; Roddy McCorley Museum - £1,350,000</p> <p>Stage 1— Berlin Swifts Football Club - £113,000; Greater Shankill Community Council - £tbc; Shankill Road Environmental Improvement Project - £50,000; Woodvale Park - tbc</p>
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An overview of the remaining SOF projects is outlined in the table below –

SOF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / Recommendation
SOF05	Roddy McCorley Museum	£1,350,000	On Ground	Development of a modern interpretative museum and existing grounds. Project progressing well. Estimated completion December 2022.	Continue engagement with the group
SOF10	Shankill Road Environmental Improvement Project	£50,000	Initial stage	Small-scale environmental improvement project for the Shankill Road. Project is currently undergoing Due Diligence process.	Continue engagement with the group

Shankill SOF projects

Members will note that on 23 September 2022, the SP&R Committee agreed to allocate £750,000 SOF monies due to the withdrawal of the Shankill Mission project to Berlin Swifts FC (£113,000), Shankill Road Environmental Improvement project (£50,000), and to meet the funding deficit for Greater Shankill

Community Council (GSCC) project once the tender has been returned, and out of remaining allocation agreed in principle to support proposals for Woodvale Park. The GSCC tender exercise has now completed and the overall project costs is estimated at £807,000. It is noted that this is a significant rise which is due to the ongoing challenges in the construction sector. It is recommended that the funding shortfall of £507,000 is met via the reallocation of the monies from the Shankill Mission project. With the GSCC cost estimate confirmed, there is approximately £80,000 remaining monies for the Woodvale Park MUGA upgrade proposal. The Woodvale Park project is to be worked up with further detail to be brought back in due course. Members are asked to recommend that £507,000 of SOF funding is allocated to Greater Shankill Community Council and the residual amount is allocated to the Woodvale Park project.

6. **Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund**

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. On 7 November 2022, Members have considered the feedback on *Stage 1- Applications* in the West Belfast area and made recommendations to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on which applications they wish to move forward to *Stage 2 – Development Stage*. In line with the agreed process, the outcome of special AWGs have been taken through Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and are now subject to Council ratification on 1 December 2022.

7. **Capital Programme**

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new ones. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council’s Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. Table below provides an update on current live projects West Belfast area. Members are asked to note the updates on the Physical Programme.

West Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
City Cemetery – National Lottery Heritage Fund	Stage 3 – Committed. On ground. Contractor works are progressing well. The new service yard is completed. The restoration of the Mortuary Tower & exterior of Foxes Lodge is completed. Visitor centre is completed and work is ongoing in preparation for opening. In tandem with this the restoration works on several of the site’s key assets such as the Centre Steps and Victorian Fountains is well underway. Design and procurement works are underway with regards to Dual Language signage throughout the site with some external signage due for installation before

	Christmas. This will enable the visitor Centre to be opened for public use. Further dual language work (site signage, app, videos etc) is underway and engagement with Irish language groups is ongoing and will remain so until all dual language works are completed.
Playground Programme - Areema and Sally Gardens	Stage 3 – Committed. Works programmed for completion within 2022/23 financial year.
Alleygating Phase 5	Stage 3 – Committed. Approved at SP&R Committee in September 2022 including the list of alleygates to be taken forward subject to costs.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Business case procurement underway. Will also be considered within the wider study as below.
Black Mountain/Upper Whiterock Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Undergoing the business case review process. Will be assessed within the wider study.
Colin Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Draft Business case related to the development of the Colin Active Travel Routes prepared and under review.
Connectivity - Access to Hills Programme (city wide)	Stage 1- Emerging. Secured DAERA funding for the Access to the Belfast Hills Feasibility Study. Contractor has been appointed and study is underway.
Belfast Bikes Expansion	Further expansion – there is a separate report being presented to Members at this AWG on Belfast Bikes proposed locations.

8. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as several schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to West Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in West Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined West Belfast geography (Colin area).

West Belfast – UV overview

Project	Status and update
Páirc Nua Chollann	Project completed and opened to the public on 20 October 2022. Animation activity is underway. A celebration event is taking place on 24 November 2022.
Colin Valley Football Club	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. On ground. The contractor on site and the project is progressing well with an anticipated completion of end January 2023.
Healthy Living Centre (Sport in the Community PCA)	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. On ground. Council agreed 25-year lease and 25-year Deed of Dedication has been confirmed. The contractor commenced on site in September 2022. Anticipated completion date is March 2023.

PEACEIV – Capital Projects

Members are asked to note updates on the capital projects that are related to the PEACEIV Programme.

West Belfast – Peace IV Capital Projects overview

Project	Status and update
Forth Meadow Community Greenway	<p>On ground.</p> <p><i>Section 1 – Glencairn</i> – Works complete and handed over to City and Neighbourhood Services. Signage package to be installed to include feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights.</p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road</i> – Works commenced in October 2022 with the date for completion of June 2023.</p> <p><i>Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock</i> – Works now complete however, there is a delay with hand-over to Council due to issues with NIE connections for lighting columns. This to be resolved by the end of November 2022.</p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> – Phase 1 complete, Phase 4 underway, anticipated completion late 2022.</p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> – currently at detailed design stage.</p> <p>Members will note that work on the flagship piece is progressing with installation and a public unveiling planned for January 2023.</p>
Black Mountain Shared Space Project	<p><i>Phase 1.</i> Tender returned. SP&R approval 21st October 2022 for award of contract. Will be liaising with funders regarding reducing the deficit. Works to commence on site by end of November 2022. Project completion within the PIV funding programme is still a major risk.</p> <p><i>Phase 2.</i> Design team appointed. Design agreed with end user. Planning submission in preparation stage.</p>

Shankill Shared Women's Centre	On ground. Hoarding artwork unveiling took place on August 2022. Update on SSWC provided in SP&R report of 21 st October 2022 with regards to securing additional funding. Project completion extended to 30 June 2023.
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DfI funded projects

Below is the status update on projects funded by Department for Infrastructure in West Belfast.

DfI – West Belfast projects overview

Project	Status and update
Covered cycle stands Phase 1	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> Grosvenor Community Centre - Project completed – installed in September 2022
Covered cycle stands Phase 2	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Páirc Nua Chollan, Andersonstown Leisure Centre – currently in production and due for installation by May 2023. Potential additional location: Brook Leisure Centre.
Belfast Bikes (New Station at Kennedy Centre)	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Project completed – September 2022

DfC funded projects

Members are asked to note that the projects currently match funded by Department for Communities include: Páirc Nua Chollann (recently completed), Berlin Swifts Football Club, Forth Meadow Community Greenway and Black Mountain Shared Space Project.”

The Working Group recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee adopt the recommendations as outlined at 2.0 of the report.

Belfast Bikes Update and Location Agreement

The Operations Development Manager, Mr. F. Grant, took the Committee through a PowerPoint presentation which considered the Belfast Bikes Expansion scheme and the options and recommendations for each location for the next phase of the scheme, including pictures of the proposed locations.

The Members considered the suggested locations, as follows:

Options for St Mary's College

- St Dominic's Grammar School or Coláiste Feirste.

Options for Shankill Road

- Spectrum Centre or Woodvale Park.

A Member queried whether consultation had been undertaken with Coláiste Feirste to establish if it would be content with the proposed location, especially given that it would be erected in front of a statue.

The Members also considered the proposed Shankill locations and discussed the possibility of the final location being located nearer to Glencairn and requested that further consideration be given to this.

Following discussion, it was agreed to defer consideration of the final locations to the next West Area Working Group meeting to enable further consultation and consideration to be given to the proposed locations.

Chairperson