

North Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday, 28th February, 2023

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE CONOR ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillors Bradley (Chairperson),
Councillors Cobain, Magee, Maskey,
McCullough, Murphy, Nelson, O'Hara and Whyte.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported for Councillor Doran.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 2nd and 29th November were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Presentation:

Department for Infrastructure – York Street Interchange

The Chairperson introduced Mr. P. King, Project Sponsor, and Mr. B. Hassard, Project Manager, representing the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), and Mr. J. McBride, Project Manager, Mr. P. Clarke, UK and Ireland Masterplanning Lead, Mr. A. Patterson, Landscape Architect, and Mr. J. Lu, Senior Urban Designer, representing AECOM, to the Working Group and they were admitted to the meeting.

The representatives reminded the Working Group that AECOM had been commissioned to carry out a Placemaking and Active Travel Review (PATR) of the York Street Interchange (YSI) scheme in 2021 and the purpose of the study was to undertake further analysis around placemaking to identify opportunities to deliver benefits for communities, particularly in terms of connectivity and the wider living places agenda, and to consider how DfI could maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits of the project and its contribution to the future development of Belfast.

Mr. Clarke advised that this had included an international best practice review, connectivity analysis and stakeholder engagement which had resulted in eleven placemaking guiding themes and thirty-one desired outcomes for the area.

Mr. McBride described the proposals for the new cycle infrastructure across the city and summarised the audit outcomes.

Mr. Clarke and Mr. Patterson informed the Working Group of the various placemaking scenarios which had been considered, which included mapping and illustrative sketches of the options, together with potential active travel, urban greening and streetscape improvements.

It was reported that the five scenarios had been evaluated against the 11 Guiding Principles, and Mr. Clarke provided an overview of the overall conclusions and recommendations of the refinement and development of three of the scenarios. He pointed out that, as part of the engagement strategy, it was recommended that consideration was given to the potential for a programme of stakeholder consultation, community involvement and co-design that could unlock further local insights, support buy-in and create long term social value.

Mr. McBride described the realignment options for the development of the M2 and provided illustrations of the Corporation Street studies.

He explained the potential delivery of the active travel network improvements, together with the next steps in the process. This included: Packaging and Phasing of Delivery; Engagement with Delivery Partners around delivery and long-term maintenance; Cost analysis of the interventions and wider economic benefits assessment; and Further engagement with stakeholders on selected topics. He pointed out that the preferred strategies would be developed for recommendations to the future Department for Infrastructure Minister.

During discussion, the representatives answered a range of questions in relation to the review of the transport objectives, timeframes, placemaking benefits and engagement with stakeholders.

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

Physical Programme Update

The Working Group 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 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 physical programme update for North Belfast,
- note the updates on projects that were issued with a letter seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process – Holy Cross Trust/ Houben Centre, Mercy Primary School, Crumlin Road, and Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church.

3. Local Investment Fund

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 with the North being allocated £1.127m under LIF1 and £800,000 under LIF2.

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: 43 projects in total have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 35 have been completed; 2 are at delivery stage; 1 are at pre-construction stage and 5 remain at due diligence / initial stages. In total, 80% of all LIF North projects have now been completed.

LIF breakdown – North	LIF 1		LIF 2	
	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	23 (92%)	£996,500	12 (67%)	£566,400
Number of Projects On-going Delivery			2 (11%)	£133,467
Number of Projects in Pre-construction			2 (11%)	£68,334
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	2(8%)	£131,000	2 (11%)	£30,000
Total Number of Approved Projects	25*	£1,127,500	18**	£798,201

**This includes additional funding for a LIF 2 project, Ballysillan Youth for Christ.*

*** This includes additional funding for two LIF 1 projects, Marrowbone Parochial Hall and Jennymount Church.*

The table below provide an overview of progress and actions around the remaining live projects. Members are asked to note the status of the current LIF projects and the ongoing actions.

LIF Ref	Project	LIF Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
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NLIF2-14	Star Neighbourhood Centre	£58,467	On Ground	On ground. Electrical works complete. Art piece has been installed. Quotation from supplier for playground equipment received. Waiting for final certificate from other works before order can be made.	Continued engagement with the group.
NLIF2-22	Sailortown, St. Joseph's Church Refurbishment	£75,000	On Ground	On ground. Heaters procured and installed. Contractor on site. Works on gallery paused pending HED consent. Architectural option drawings for HED.	Continued engagement with group and HED.
NLIF2-21	Somme Group – cross community memorial	£21,667	Tender preparation	Funding agreement to be finalised. Planning amendment to be agreed, contractor appointed with a view to commencement on receipt of approved planning amendment	Continued engagement with group.
NLIF2-19	Women's Tec	£46,667	Tender preparation	Tender for the works to secure contractor ongoing.	Continued engagement with Group
NLIF014	Westland Community Centre - new building <i>(Link to UV Project)</i>	£65,000	Due Diligence stage	Project originally agreed for LIF in January 2013. A revised community centre scheme has been agreed as an emerging UV capital project. A governance model is being explored and the Business Case is progressing.	Continued engagement with group and the Executive Office.
NLIF057	Ardoyne Holy Cross Boxing Club <i>(Link to UV project – ABC Trust H&L Hub)</i>	£66,000	Due Diligence stage	This project is part of the UV development of St Gemma's School - ABC Trust. Construction works on ABC Trust (Phase 1) ongoing. Boxing Club LIF project will be part of Phase 2.	Continued engagement with Group and with UV
NLIF2-03	Holy Cross Trust/ Houben Centre <i>(Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership)</i>	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed in June 2018. Project remains at Due Diligence stage. Letter was sent to group on 11 January. Group formally responded on 25 January 2023 and confirm that they would wish to remain in the LIF process. Confirmation has been received that they wish to remain in the process and are now actively working with the Council to progress. Proposal is for an outside sensory room as well as play equipment.	AWG to note the project update. Continue engagement with group.
NLIF2-05	Mercy Primary, Crumlin Road	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed June 2016. Letter was sent to group on 11 January. Mercy PS formally responded on 10 February 2023 and confirm that they are interested and keen to progress the project. They have updated their plans and are progressing the procurement of works and	AWG to note the project update. Continue engagement with group.

				recently received quotations from EA approved suppliers.	
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4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment from Council BIF – North Belfast was allocated £5.5m. In North Belfast, 7 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m: and 2 projects are on the longer BIF list. 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.

Members are asked to note the status update of these projects provided below. The table provides a summary of BIF allocated projects i.e. project stage; project title; and funding allocated.

Summary of BIF allocated projects

North	Stage 3 - Cancer Lifeline—£575k; Grace Family Centre —£1.3m; Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church Ireland - £900k; <i>Marrowbone Park</i> £750k; <i>Midland Boxing Club</i> £550k Stage 2- <i>Malgrove</i> - £950k, <i>Cultural Community Hub</i> - £350k Stage 1 - <i>Cliftonville Community Forum</i> , <i>Sunningdale Community Centre</i> - no commitment
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BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF41	Marrowbone Millennium Park <i>(Link to UV Project)</i>	£750,000	On Ground	Contractor appointed. Works progressing well onsite. Estimated completion date is early 2024.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF45	Midland Boxing Club	BIF £550,000; GWF £30,000	On Ground	Contractor appointed. Works progressing well on site. Aiming for completion by Summer 2023.	Continue engagement with the group.
BIF22/34	Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church	BIF £900,000; DoE £500,000	Design stage	Letter was sent to group on 11 January 2023 seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process, with the deadline set on 17 February, so that an update to be brought to next AWG. However, Elim Church responded that it has not been possible to convene the Board together to finalise their response. They have requested an extension to	AWG to note the project update. Continue engagement with group.

				get a completed response no later than 10 March 2023. Officer will be working closely with the group to secure the completed response. Members to confirm of they are happy to accede to the request for an extension by Basement/ Elim. If agreed officers will continue to engage with the Group and provide an update to a future meeting.	
BIF15	Malgrove	£950,000	Design stage	Business case completed - preferred pavilion option is for a 4-team changing. Detailed design progressing. It is proposed to submit a planning application for the whole sporting complex within the next few weeks.	Continue engagement with the group and the team to agree the design and submit the planning application.
BIF43	Cultural Community Hub	£350,000	Uncommitted – Due Diligence stage	Proposed new cultural hub community facility. Project will comprise of a 130sqm permanent brick facility on derelict Orange Lodge owned site. DD information is still being assembled by the group.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF49	Cavehill Tennis Club	£71,413	Due diligence stage	Sign-off at Due Diligence on 19 January 2023. Preparation for funding agreement progressing.	Continue engagement with the group.

5. 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 2 November 2022, Members considered the feedback on Stage 1- Applications in the North 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 have been ratified by the Council (December 2022).

The table below provides an overview of the projects that have progressed to *Stage 2- Development* and the projects that are on the reserve list at Stage 1.

North Belfast – NRF overview

North	Stage 2— Belfast Orange Hall, Ulster Supported Employment Ltd (USEL), Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum, Sailortown Regeneration Group, Ardoyne Youth Enterprises, Stage 1 (Reserve)— <i>Cumann Cultúrtha Mhic Reachtain, Indian Community Centre, North Belfast Working Men's Club, North City Business Centre, Quaker Service, Belfast Charitable Society, Sinclair Seamen's Presbyterian Church, Arts for All, Ligoniel Improvement Association</i>
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North Belfast – NRF projects at Stage 2- Development

Project name	Description	Status
Ardoyne Youth Enterprises – Community Hub	Creation of a Community Youth Hub totalling almost 1,000m ² . It will comprise three main zones – (i) a fully shared and inclusive Community Youth Hub comprising a range of facilities including a flexible activity/ youth space, counselling rooms, coffee point and rest area; (ii) a Creative Learning Centre (CLC) that will include digital and creative skills equipment and workspaces; and (iii) Office space and meeting rooms.	Link to UV project below. Business case being reviewed. The UV Letter of Offer received and being process. TEO and the Project Promoter are exploring additional funding opportunities to support this project. Design Team appointed.
Belfast Orange Hall Refurbishment	Refurbishment works to the Belfast Orange Hall, a Grade B listed building, to ensure it is fit for purpose. External and internal improvements to lighting, multiple rooms on different floors including kitchens as well as a new heating system.	Business Case stage. Consultant appointed to develop project business case.
USEL - Green Growth & The Circular Economy	Extension of the site through construction of a 600m ² purpose-built processing unit with storage for recycled and unrecycled materials increasing increase capacity to recycle a wide range of Dry, Mixed Recycling materials (DMR).	Business Case stage. Consultant appointed to refresh project Economic Appraisal.
Cliftonville Community Enterprise	Building a 750m ² social enterprise on Cliftonpark Avenue with a 2-storey childcare facility and 8 enterprise units.	Business Case stage. Consultant appointed to develop project business case.
St Joseph's Restoration project	Stabilising and reopening the Parochial House, a Grade B+ listed Italianate red brick building. Work to the Grade B+ listed Church space to assist with remaining water ingress and developing its potential for wider use.	Business Case stage. Procurement of consultant underway.

Members will note that activity at *Stage 2 – Development* (the equivalent to *Stage 2-Uncommitted* on the Capital Programme) will

include development of a business case/ economic appraisal (commensurate with the scale of the project) along with detailed designs and project costings. If a business case or economic appraisal has already been undertaken, then the findings will be tested. Due-diligence checks will be carried out in line with arrangements under LIF, BIF and SOF programmes. It is proposed that this stage will be timebound to 6 months to allow decisions on projects to be taken at the same time. The outcome of this development phase will then be reported to the relevant Area Working Group (AWG), along with a presentation on the project. The AWG will put forward recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, with a detailed update on each project, seeking approval for funding. Projects that receive committee approval will be issued with a Letter of Offer in principle and will move to *Stage 3- Committed*.

6. 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. The table below provides an update on current live projects North Belfast area. Members are asked to note the updates on the Physical Programme.

North Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
Belfast Zoo – Programme of Works (Works to the Large Cats Enclosure, Sea Lion, etc)	Stage 3 - Committed. On ground. Sea Lion works complete, H&S works complete. Picnic area has been constructed. Work on new lion enclosure has started and aim to complete by Easter 2023.
North Foreshore - Development Sites Infrastructure Works	Stage 3 – Committed. On ground. Storm Drainage Infrastructure Installation contractor appointed, started on site and completion expected in June 2023. The Landfill Gas Ring Main tender being reviewed in light of material price increases. Tender will be re-issued in March 2023.
Reservoir Safety Programme	Stage 3- Committed. Works to Alexandra Park, Waterworks Upper and Waterworks Lower. Consultants appointed and undertaking investigative work to assess the existing condition of the reservoirs and associated structures. Public consultation and planning application to be submitted in 2023. Proposals to take account and be integrated into Peace Plus application.
Cathedral Gardens (including Belfast Blitz)	Stage 3 – Committed. Design team is continuing to develop the project and prepare a RIBA Stage 2 Close Out report. Procurement of Design Team to deliver the project to completion will be underway by 3 March 2023. Aim to submit planning application in Summer 2023.

Playground Improvement Programme - Westland	Stage 3 – Committed. Works programmed for completion within 2022/23 financial year.
Alleygating Phase 5	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Consultation process and costs being prepared for each area. Engagement underway with Members to confirm locations. Order placed with Contractor and gates currently being manufactured.
LTP - Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility	Stage 2 – Uncommitted. DfC partnership project. Continued development of OBC for new leisure facility. Continued liaison with key stakeholders around options for new facility and overall development of the Girdwood site.
Relocation of Dunbar Link Cleansing Depot	Stage 2 – Uncommitted. OBC being worked up. Possible alternative site at Corporation Street Car Park being assessed by design team. Design to progress through capital process.
Glencairn Park/ Ligoniel Park Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Will be considered within the wider study as below.
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.
Connectivity - Access to Hills Programme (city wide)	Stage 1- Emerging. Secured DAERA funding for the Access to the Belfast Hills Feasibility Study. Consultant has been appointed and study and delivery plan will be complete in March 2023.

7. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office, Peace IV as well as a number of schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to North Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in North Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined North Belfast geography (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan).

Project	Status and update
Marrowbone Millennium Park <i>(links to BIF programme)</i>	On ground. As above BIF41. Contractor has been appointed and work progressing well and completion date is estimated as early 2024.
ABC Trust Health and Leisure Hub <i>(links to LIF programme)</i>	On ground. Partnership project with UV DfC, DfI and Flax Trust. Contractor has been appointed and works is progressing. Estimated completion of Phase 1 is early 2024 with Phase 2 to follow. Delays due to site issues have been mitigated and UV looking into how to increase budget to accommodate.
Ballysillan Playing Fields	Partnership project with UV, DfC and DfI Living with Water Programme. At design stage and the

	planning application is progressing. Land transfer issues are also progressing. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed and on-site in late 2023 pending planning approval. Currently working through options for dealing with large watermain with NIW as part of detailed design process.
Ardoyne Youth Enterprises (AYE) Social Enterprise Project	Council is acting as delivery agent. The final Letter of Offer is received. TEO has identified a funding gap in the sum of £500,000. TEO and the Project Promoter are exploring additional funding opportunities to support this project. Planning application approval pending. Design Team appointed. Project was taken to Due Diligence on 19 January 2023. Procurement of contractor progressing.
Sunningdale Community Centre	Council is acting as delivery agent, proposed on Council land. The project is being fully funded by TEO UV Programme. The Design Team has been appointed and gaining design sign off from end users. Planning application to be submitted around Easter 2023. Contractor expected to start on site by Spring 2024.
Westland Community Centre <i>(links to LIF programme)</i>	Partnership project with UV. This is an emerging project. A governance model is being explored and the Business Case is expected to complete by March 2023 with the LoO being issued thereafter.

Peace IV

Members are asked to note the update on Peace IV - Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.

Project	Status and update
Forth Meadow Community Greenway project	<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 with the completion date in June.</p> <p><i>Section 3 – Falls Park/Whiterock</i> – Works complete</p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> – All phases within this section now complete</p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> – currently at detailed design stage.</p> <p>Works on the flagship piece are progressing with installation and a revised plan for the public unveiling of March 2023. Discussions with Invest NI on the installation of the art piece are ongoing. DfC Levelling Up match funding received “</p>

The Working Group:

- noted the physical programme update for north Belfast;

- noted the updates on projects that had been issued with a letter seeking written confirmation on whether the group wished to either withdraw or engage in the process – Holy Cross Trust/ Houben Centre, Mercy Primary School, Crumlin Road and Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church; and
- agreed to accede to a request from Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church to extend its confirmation deadline to 10th March, 2023.

Chairperson