

North Belfast Area Working Group

Wednesday, 5th April, 2023

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

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

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. B. Coyle, Project Sponsor Officer; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported for Councillors Cobain and Whyte.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 28th February were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Presentation:

Urban Scale Interventions (USI) – Update on Upgrade of Waterworks and Alexandra Parks

The Director of Physical Programmes outlined the background to the meeting noting that the Council had agreed that the redevelopment of the Waterworks and Alexandra Park had been agreed as one of the Council's potential projects under Theme 1.4 of the Peace Plus Programme. She noted that the Council had engaged USI (Urban Scale Interventions) to assist with this work and that USI were attending today to outline the next steps. The Chairperson introduced Mr. J. Spencer, Partner, USI, to the Working Group and he was admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Spencer informed the Working Group that the Council had engaged USI to scope the development of a new vision for the Waterworks and Alexandra Park to provide better connectivity, integration and to develop a coherent and compelling vision for an ambitious community centred asset that aligned with Belfast's bold vision for the future.

He explained how USI had conducted desk research and engagement and outlined the four-stage process, which had been designed to open up new opportunities by engaging key stakeholders throughout the process and ensure design solutions were grounded in real

insight to have the maximum impact upon delivery and to serve the needs of the greatest number of people as possible.

He reported the initial insights through mapping assets, challenges, opportunities and stakeholders, and he provided creative examples from other major cities around the world.

Mr. Spencer referred to the key themes which had emerged from the initial desktop research and internal workshop, which were to be tested and refined, and he outlined the following next steps to the Working Group:

- Desk research and engagement planning;
- Online webpage and survey launch;
- Discovery workshop and site visit;
- Interviews and focus group discussions;
- Co-design workshop; and
- Final analysis and reporting.

During discussion, Mr. Spencer received a number of suggestions from the Members in relation to engagement with stakeholders and design considerations.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked Mr. Spencer for his presentation and he retired from the meeting.

The Director of Physical Programmes thanked Members for their comments and noted that further updates would be brought back to the North AWG and SP&R in due course.

The Working Group noted the presentation.

Chairperson