



## BRCDC Council Panel

<b>Subject:</b>	Minutes of Belfast Region City Deal (BRCDC) Council Panel
<b>Date:</b>	12.30 pm, 25 January 2023
<b>Councillors in attendance:</b>	<p>Councillor Alistair Cathcart – Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Councillor Stephen Dunlop- Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Alderman George Dorrian – Belfast City Council  Councillor Carl Whyte – Belfast City Council  Alderman Allan Ewart – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Alderman Amanda Grehan – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor Uel Mackin - Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor Barra O’Muirí – Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council  Councillor Robert Burgess - Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council  Councillor Pete Byrne - Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council  Alderman Audrey Wales MBE - Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Timothy Gaston - Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Robin Stewart – Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council  Councillor Matthew Magill – Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council</p>
<b>Officers:</b>	<p>Stephen Reid – Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council  John Walsh - Chief Executive, Belfast City Council  Damien Martin – BRCDC Programme Director, Belfast City Council  Valerie Watts – Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council  Marie Ward – Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  Hazel King – Portfolio Manager - Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Ursula O’Loughlin – Head of Economic Development, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council  Majella McAlister – Director of Economic Development and Planning, Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Jonathan McGrandle – City Deal Programme Director, 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  Lisa Caldwell – Director of External Affairs, Marketing and Communications, Belfast City Council  Jonathan McGilly, Andy Patterson, Conor Woods, Caolain Boyd, Conor McGeown, Michael Forster, Josephine Kelly, Veronica Keegan, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  Theresa Slevin, Ruth Rea, Stephen Wallace, Emer Husbands, Lorraine Beggs, Joanne Delaney – BRCDC Programme Office</p>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
1.1	Councillor Barra O’Muirí, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, welcomed the members of the BRCDC Council Panel to the meeting which was hosted by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and outlined the key areas of focus for the meeting.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
2.1	Apologies were received from: Alderman Stephen Ross – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council Alderman Mark Cosgrove – Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

	<p>Councillor Julie Gilmour – Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey Borough Council  Alderman Alan McDowell – Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Councillor Richard Smart - Ards &amp; North Down Borough Council  Councillor Michael Long- Belfast City Council  Councillor Ronan McLaughlin - Belfast City Council  Alderman Michael Henderson – Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Councillor Geraldine Kearns - Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council  Alderman Billy Ashe MBE – Mid &amp; East Antrim Borough Council</p> <p>Apologies were received from the following Officers:</p> <p>Jacqui Dixon – Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council  David Burns – Chief Executive, Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City Council  Ronan Cregan – Belfast City Council  Susie McCullough – Director Regeneration, Development and Planning, Ards and North Down Borough Council</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
3.1	Councillor Barra O’Muirí asked Councillors if they had any interests to declare in relation to the agenda. No interests were declared.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>
4.1	<p>Councillor Barra O’Muirí noted that the action to share the Social Value slides from the previous meeting had been completed and asked if the Panel agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate reflection of the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Pete Byrne proposed that the minutes from the last meeting were agreed.  Seconded by Councillor Robert Burgess  <b>Members agreed the minutes.</b></p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>BRC D Programme Report</b>
5.1	<p>Damien Martin (DM) presented the programme report, emphasising the progress made since the previous meeting in moving the deal into the delivery phase, despite the governance complexities and the challenging financial and economic environment. Key points of update included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracts for Funding (CfFs) have now been approved and signed for Carrickfergus Regeneration, Bangor Waterfront, and Newry City Centre Regeneration. The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) contract has been signed by DfE and QUB and is with BCC for final signing. The draft contracts for the Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH), the Global Innovation Institute and Mourne Mountain Gateway are being actively progressed.</li> <li>• A City &amp; Growth Deals Senior Stocktake meeting was held in October 2022, hosted by DoF to discuss progress to date across all Northern Ireland City and Growth Deals and key issues and challenges being experienced, such as the impact of construction inflation and concerns about the complexity of arrangements and pace of delivery. Following the Stocktake a number of key areas of change/action have been identified and engagement with senior officials in the key government departments is ongoing to seek to agree a plan of action, to underpin a more collaborative model of working, to help ensure a focus on delivery and avoid the introduction of additional complexity.</li> </ul> <p>Councillor Uel Mackin noted the number of projects in the Programme Update which are awaiting DoF approval and queried the role of DoF and if there was an issue within DoF which needed to be addressed.  DM noted that DoF have not prolonged the OBC approval process to date and generally DoF approval is granted with 2-3 months, provided no significant issues are identified. Engagement continues with DoF to keep this timescale as short as possible and in line with these timescales the DoF approval for Destination Royal Hillsborough would be expected in the near future.</p>

	<p>Councillor Uel Mackin also requested clarification on whether the Cff was a standard template, or if each Council would have to negotiate this separately and raised concerns about the Cff timescales and potential impact on costs.</p> <p>DM confirmed that the Cff is a standard template, but also has a number of project specific conditions included within the Annexes which need to be agreed with the Department and Partners. Cffs need to be agreed through Partners normal approval processes before signing. DM acknowledged that this has been a long process, but once the Cff is signed, funding will start to flow to projects.</p> <p>Councillor Alistair Cathcart welcomed the signing of the Cff for the Bangor Waterfront project. Cllr Cathcart expressed concern about construction inflation and the impact on costs, which could potentially lead to a reduction in benefits and queried whether this might result in withdrawal of support for projects?</p> <p>DM advised that he did not believe this would happen as inflation has been built into costs at OBC stage, with some projects increasing their Partner contributions to address these inflationary pressures. Whilst there will no additional Government funding to address inflationary pressures, Government Partners recognise that there is exceptional inflationary pressure and that ultimately money will buy less benefits as a result of this. DM also noted that there are options to reduce scope without having a significant impact on benefits and that other solutions are being explored including the potential to leverage additional funding.</p> <p><b>Members noted the report.</b></p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>BRCD – Delivering transformative investment in Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</b>
6.1	<p>Marie Ward, Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council delivered a presentation on the impact of the BRCD programme on Newry, Mourne and Down, the Belfast Region and Northern Ireland. The presentation highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new way of working and the collaboration across local and central government, universities and colleges and crucially engagement with private sector which will be key to delivery of jobs and economic growth, which is critical to recovery following the pandemic and economic crisis.</li> <li>• The importance of the Employability and Skills pillar in delivery of inclusive economic growth and ensuring we have the right people with the right skills to deliver on these objectives.</li> <li>• The three projects Newry Regeneration, Mourne Mountain Gateway and Newry Southern Relief Road, to be delivered within Newry, Mourne and Down and the benefits these projects will deliver.</li> <li>• The exciting investments within the digital and innovation pillars, that will grow and enhance the opportunities that exist across the region and will help to maintain our talent and young people within NI.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Bara O’Muir highlighted the importance of the employability and skills and digital projects, which he believes will make a significant difference to the region.</p>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>BRCD Website</b>
7.1	<p>Lisa Caldwell, Director of External Affairs, Marketing and Communications, Belfast City Council, provided a brief presentation on coverage in the media, including social media, of BRCD over the last few months and on the new BRCD website and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022/23 had been a positive year for the BRCD with a strong narrative and increasing good news stories as the year progressed. January was particularly good month with lots of coverage around the Cffs.</li> <li>• The launch of the new standalone website that represents all organisations and projects within the Deal and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Projects and links to project websites</li> <li>○ Latest News and Press Releases</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Public facing governance documents</li> </ul> <p>There were no questions or issues raised following the presentation.</p>
<b>8</b>	<b>Press Release</b>
	<p>Cllr Bara O’Muirí asked members if they were content to agree the draft press release circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Members agreed the press release.</b></p>
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Date of next meetings</b>
9.1	<p>Cllr Bara O’Muirí highlighted that a schedule of meetings has been circulated with the next meeting to be hosted by Ards and North Down Borough Council on 23 April 2023.</p>