

North Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday, 22nd August, 2023

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor Bradley (Chairperson);
Alderman McCullough; and
Councillors Anglin, Bradley, Cobain, Doran,
Magee, Maskey, Nelson, Ó Néill
and Whyte.

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

Election of Chairperson

The Area Working Group noted that it was required to elect a Chairperson for the coming year.

Moved by Alderman McCullough,
Seconded by Councillor Cobain, and

Resolved – that Councillor Bradley be elected to serve as Chairperson to the North Belfast Area Working Group until the date of the Annual Meeting.

Apologies

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th April were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Update on the Expansion of the Belfast Bikes Network

Ms. S. Kalke, Client Manager, provided an overview of the Belfast Bikes scheme and highlighted to the Working Group that a new station at Waterworks Park had been installed through funding which had been received through the Revitalisation Programme and had been operational since March, 2023.

She provided the Working Group with an update on the installation of the temporary station at Whitla Street car park, that would be placed at the site while the agreed location, Yorkgate Train Station, was under construction.

She explained that the drawings had been completed and that approval from DfI Roads would be required as the preferred location was on the wide adopted footpath, she added that the permanent site at Yorkgate Train Station had been agreed with Translink.

Ms. Kalke added that the station at Grove Leisure Centre had been installed and was operational.

She pointed out to the Working Group that NSL continued to operate the Belfast Bikes Scheme, until March 2024, and that Council staff were reviewing the scheme and a recent expression of interest had been completed as a market testing exercise and to inform the tendering process.

She stated that work had been undertaken with regard to the tender documents for a new Belfast Bikes contract, that would consider the following:

- the introduction of e-bikes;
- working with social enterprises and charities;
- transition period between existing and new contract to ensure no gap in operation; step by step mobilisation;
- expansion in the agreed areas and beyond; and
- managed service model i.e. BCC would still control locations and prices.

She concluded by informing the Members that the expression of interest exercise had shown strong interest from suitable, experienced bike share companies, the majority of which, had indicated that they could operate a fully contracted service where the Council would pay a fixed annual fee for the scheme supply and operation.

The Members noted the update and that a further report would be submitted to the Area Working Group in due course.

Update on Physical Programme

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,
- the project movement for Cavehill Tennis Club (BIF49) to **BIF Stage 3- Committed**,
- the update on Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church BIF project and that no further information has been received from the Group and consider next steps including whether the AWG wishes to continue to support the project and if not then the potential for reallocation of funding, and;
- the details for the scheduled site visits for NRF Stage 2 Projects.

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; 2 are at pre-construction stage and 4 remain at due diligence/ initial stages.

LIF breakdown – North	LIF 1		LIF 2	
	Projects	Value (£)	Projects	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
NLIF2-14	Star Neighbourhood Centre	£58,467	On Ground	On ground. Final certificate from previous works has now been received and exact remaining budget confirmed. Group has been instructed to order the play equipment.	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 designed and submitted for HED approval.	Continued engagement with group and HED.
NLIF2-21	Somme Group – cross community memorial	£21,667	On Ground	On ground. Works nearly complete.	Continued engagement with group.
NLIF2-19	Women's Tec	£46,667	Pre-construction	Lease renewal is signed by group and is with Education Authority for signature. The quotation for works exceeds the budget. The team are working with the group and EA to bring the project back within budget.	Continued engagement with Group
NLIF014	Westland Community Centre - new building <i>(Link to UV Project)</i>	£65,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed in January 2013. Partnership project with UV. This is an emerging project. The Group is exploring a suitable governance model. A revised community centre scheme has been agreed as an emerging UV capital project. Land ownership issues are progressing. The Business Case has been approved and the Letter of Offer is anticipated in the next few months.	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 which will be commencing in Spring 2024.	Continued engagement with Group and with UV
NLIF2-03	Holy Cross Trust/ Houben	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed in June 2018. Project remains at Due Diligence stage. The	Engage with the group to ensure amendment to

	Centre (The Parents Room)			group wish to continue to engage in the project. Officers are working with the group on the detail of the proposal – likely now to be internal improvements as opposed to external play equipment – group to confirm their requirement so it can be reviewed.	project fits within the eligibility of AWG funding.
NLIF2-05	Mercy Primary, Crumlin Road	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed June 2016. The group wish to continue to engage in the project. Discussed at DD in July 2023 where officers requested more information on the community use and benefit along with details on the logistics of opening the playground to the community within a school facility.	Engage with the group when they return in Sept 2023.

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; Midland Boxing Club £550k; Marrowbone Park £750k; Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church Ireland - £900k; Stage 2- Malgrove- £950k, Cultural Community Hub - £350k Stage 1 - Cavehill Tennis Club- £71k; Cliftonville Community Forum, Sunningdale Community Centre - no commitment
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BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF45	Midland Boxing Club	BIF- £550,000; GWF- £30,000	Complete	Project completed. Project launched on 28 June 2023	Continue engagement with the group re post monitoring.

BIF41	Marrowbone Millennium Park	BIF- £750,000; DfC- £700,000; UV- £2,535,086	On Ground	On ground. Regular community liaison ongoing. SP&R agreed to the installation of Irish language signage in June 2023. Completion date anticipated in September 2023.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF49	Cavehill Tennis Club	£71,413	On Ground	First phase of installing the flood lights has been completed. Second phase is court refurbishment. Quotations have been received and instruction to proceed will be issued shortly.	Move to Stage 3- Committed. Continue engagement with the group.
BIF22/34	Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church	BIF £900,000; DE- £500,000 (unconfirmed)	Design stage	Letter was sent to group in Jan 2023 seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process, with the deadline set of Feb and extended by AWG until March. However, officers have not yet received a response to that request. Recently, the Department of Education said that they will not have any capital spend for Basement YC this year which will impact on the deliverability of the project in its current scope. DE are keeping it on their list but are reducing spend commitments across the youth sector this year.	AWG to note the project update and that no further updates were received from the Group. AWG to consider if they wish to continue to support the project and if not then to consider next steps including potential reallocation of funding. Continue engagement with group.
BIF15	Malgrove	£950,000	Design stage	Business case completed - preferred option (2017) is for a 4-team changing pavilion via BIF allocation. Detailed design now agreed with group, meaning that officers can move forward with a planning application submission for the whole sporting complex. Planning to be submitted in September.	Continue engagement with the group.
BIF43	Cultural Community Hub	£350,000	Uncommitted – Due	Proposed new cultural hub community facility on a derelict Orange	Continue engagement with

			Diligence stage	Lodge owned site. Discussed at Due Diligence on 17 August 2023 and DD Board agreed to the appointment of a design team to work up designs to planning stage.	the group and stakeholders.
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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. The NRF Programme is currently at **Stage 2- Development Stage**. In line with the agreed process, the AWG made recommendations on which projects should move forward to **Stage 2 – Development Stage** and this was agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The table below provides an overview of the projects that have progressed to **Stage 2- Development**.

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.	Linked to UV project below but other funding still required. Business Case has been approved by TEO and UV Letter of Offer received.
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 complete.
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	Business Case complete.

	recycle a wide range of Dry, Mixed Recycling materials (DMR).	
Cliftonville Community Enterprise	Building a 750m ² social enterprise on Cliftonpark Avenue with a 2-storey childcare facility and 8 enterprise units.	Business Case complete.
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 nearing completion.

On 26 June 2023, Members will recall that the SP&R Committee received a detailed update on next steps in respect of the NRF programme including the allocation model, outcome of *Stage 1- Application Stage*, updates on *Stage 2- Development Stage* which is underway and updated programme timeline for delivery timeline. Members also agreed to arrange an area-based site visits to Stage 2 projects in September.

Members of the AWG are asked to note the details for the scheduled site visits for NRF Stage 2 projects:

Date	Time	Sites
Tues 5 Sept 2023	9:30am – 12:30pm	South Site visits to three projects – Sólás New Build Project, Lagan Water Access Activity Hub, and the Redevelopment of Riddel's Warehouse project
Wed 6 Sept 2023	1:30pm – 4:30pm	South Site visits to three projects – GVRT- Branching Out, Redevelopment of Former School of Music, and Market Heritage Hub project.
Wed 13 Sept 2023	9:30am – 12:30pm	North Site visits to three projects – AYE Youth and Community Hub, USEL- Green Growth & The Circular Economy, and Belfast Orange Hall Refurbishment project
Thurs 14 Sept 2023	1.30pm – 3.30pm	North Site visits to two projects – CCRF- Cliftonville Community Enterprise and SRG- St Joseph's Restoration project.
Wed 20 Sept 2023	9:30am - 12:30pm	West Site visits to three projects – The Mountainview Hotel, Croí na Carraige and Michael Davitt's Community Heritage Centre
Thurs 21 Sept 2023	9:30am - 12:30pm	West (Shankill) Site visits to three projects – Glencairn Community Project, The ACT Initiative Community Hub & Visitor Centre, and The Road
Tues 26 Sept 2023	9.30am – 1.30pm	East Site visits to four projects – EastSide Container Hotel, Portview Exchange, Impact Belfast and Nevin Spence Centre (NSC) Visitor Experience

Members will also note that the outcome of the Stage 2 - development phase, preparations of business cases along with the detailed designs and projects costings are nearing completion. There will be a special AWG meeting to be held in October / November to consider the outcome of *Stage 2- Development* and recommend to SP&R Committee which projects are progressing to the next stage

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)	<i>Stage 3 - Committed. On ground.</i> Sea Lion works complete, H&S works complete. Picnic area has been constructed. Work on new lion enclosure is now complete and open to the public. The lion enclosure is now considered to have the largest glass viewing area in a European zoo.
North Foreshore - Development Sites Infrastructure Works	<i>Stage 3 – Committed. On ground.</i> Storm Drainage Infrastructure Installation contractor appointed, started on site and nearing completion. The Landfill Gas Ring Main tender being reviewed in light of material price increases. Tender to be re-issued in Sep 2023.
Reservoir Safety Programme	<i>Stage 3- Committed.</i> 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 under Theme 1.4. Alexandra Park planning application due to be submitted Summer/Autumn 2023. Waterworks pre-application community consultation to commence in Autumn 2023.
Cathedral Gardens (including Belfast Blitz)	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> 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 is now complete and the team is in place. Aim to submit planning application in Autumn 2023.
Playground Improvement Programme	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Works programmed within 2023/24 include Loughside Park and New Lodge playgrounds. Loughside playground refurbishment is planned to start by November 2023, New Lodge works are currently planned to start by March 2024.

Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> The consultation period was extended due to a low response rate and has now closed. The output is being reviewed prior to submission to Legal Services. If clearance is given to proceed, then Committee approval will be sought to advertise the notice of intention to install gates. If it is found that there is not enough support or evidence via this consultation then further consultation may be necessary.
LTP - Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility	<i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> 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	<i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> OBC being worked up. Viable alternative site at Corporation Street Car Park being assessed by design team. Designs progressing to RIBA Stage 3-4 up to Planning application stage. Agreeing design requirements with C&NS and communicating with CR&D.
Glencairn Park/ Ligoniel Park Greenway	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Project outline details submitted to DfI as part of the Greenway Development priority projects.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> Will also be considered within the wider study as below.
Waste Plan – Waste Transfer Station Upgrade	<i>Stage 2- Uncommitted.</i> OBC being worked up. Link to Duncrue Masterplan and city wide kerbside scheme.
Connectivity - Access to Hills Programme (city wide)	<i>Stage 1- Emerging.</i> Secured DAERA funding for the Access to the Belfast Hills Feasibility Study. Study and delivery plan has been completed in April 2023. Ongoing consultation with other stakeholders. Presentation to Members of outcomes of the study expected in autumn 2023.
Belfast Bikes Expansion	Further expansion – there is a separate update report being presented to Members at this AWG on Belfast Bikes Scheme.

7. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, including Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office and Peace IV under SEUPB. 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).

North Belfast – Urban Villages Initiative overview

Project	Status and update
Marrowbone Millennium Park <i>(links to BIF programme)</i>	On ground. As above BIF41. Contractor has made good progress on site with expected completion date in September 2023.
ABC Trust Health and Leisure Hub <i>(links to LIF programme)</i>	On ground. Partnership project with UV DfC, Dfl and Flax Trust. The Contractor has made good progress on site with Phase 1 works completing in August / September 2023. Demolition works in relation to Phase 2 expected to progress in Autumn 2023 with Phase 2 completion anticipated late 2024.
Ballysillan Playing Fields	Partnership project with UV, DfC and Dfl Living with Water Programme. Planning approval was secured in June 2023 and the design stage is ongoing. Land transfers issues are progressing. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed and on-site in Summer 2024.
Ardoyne Youth Enterprises (AYE) Social Enterprise Project	Council is acting as delivery agent. The LoO has been signed. Demolition works have commenced on site and are expected to complete by end of August 2023. Outstanding legal issues are being progressed. The tender is expected to issue in October 2023. Initial project estimates indicate that the cost estimates will rise, and measures are being discussed with the funder. An NRF application has been submitted and moved to Stage 2.
Sunningdale Community Centre	Council is acting as delivery agent, proposed on Council land. The project is fully funded by TEO UV Programme. Legal matters in relation to land transfer remain ongoing and a lease / rental agreement is being discussed. The Design Team has been appointed and planning application has been submitted. It is anticipated that a main contractor will be appointed and on-site Spring 2024.
Westland Community Centre <i>(links to LIF programme)</i>	As above at NLIF014. Partnership project with UV. This is an emerging project. The Group is exploring a suitable governance model. A revised community centre scheme has been agreed as an emerging UV capital project. Land ownership issues are progressing. The Business Case has been approved and the Letter of Offer is anticipated within the next few months.

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 C&N Services;</p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road</i> – Works complete;</p> <p><i>Section 3 – Falls Park/Whiterock</i> – Works complete;</p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> – Works complete; and</p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> – works to commence once signage package agreed.</p> <p>Signage package to be installed to include to all sections feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights – subject to language proposals and agreement via Committee and Council. Artwork public unveiling held on 17 August 2023.</p>

PeacePLUS Theme 1.4 – Reimagining Communities

PEACEPLUS Investment Area 1.4 (Reimagining Communities) is now open for applications. The Reconnected Belfast proposal focuses on the redevelopment of the Waterworks and Alexandra Park. The proposal will enhance and improve connectivity within and between the two parks as well as enhance linkages with other parts of the city and to the Belfast Hills. This also links to Investment Area 1.1 the Local Community Peace Action Plan and builds on the legacy of other Peace funded projects. Activity to date for the Waterworks and Alexandra Park proposal has included a scoping study, visioning exercise, joint workshops with local stakeholder groups, dedicated youth and older person focus groups and a co-design workshop, as well as individual stakeholder meetings. The public consultation exercises generated 1,250 responses. The output from the consultation is now being analysed to identify key priorities, commonality and eligible activity. Next steps include feedback on the consultation, development of detailed designs, coordinate with reservoir safety requirements, ongoing engagement with stakeholders, programming development with good relations and preparation of the bid including cost estimates. The bid is looking at a number of key areas for both Waterworks and Alexandra Parks is being a place to 1. Enter and Connect; 2. Perform and Play, and 3. Reflect and Relax. The AWG is asked to note the ongoing activity for the Reconnected Belfast (Waterworks and Alexandra Park) capital proposal under PeacePLUS Investment Area 1.4.”

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor Cobain,

“That the £900,000 which had previously been allocated to support the Basement Youth Club/Elim Church, be withdrawn and reallocated to the Malgrove project.”

On a recorded vote, eight Members voted for the proposal and two no votes and it was declared carried.

<u>For 8</u>	<u>No Vote 2</u>
Councillor Bradley (Chairperson); Alderman McCullough; and Councillors Anglin, Cobain, Doran, Magee, Maskey, and O'Neill.	Councillors Nelson and Whyte.

The Working Group noted the physical programme update for North Belfast and the project movement for Cavehill Tennis Club (BIF49) to BIF *Stage 3- Committed*.

Chairperson