

# East Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 11th January, 2018

## MEETING OF EAST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: The High Sheriff of Belfast, Alderman Haire (Chairperson);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Copeland;  
Aldermen McGimpsey, Rodgers and Sandford; and  
Councillors Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Johnston,  
Kyle, Long, McReynolds, Milne,  
Newton and O'Donnell.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and  
Neighbourhood Services;  
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects; and  
Mrs L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Armitage and Mullan.

### Minutes

The Working Group agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 7th December were an accurate record of proceedings.

### Declarations of Interest

Councillors Kyle and Newton declared an interest in Item 5, Correspondence from Lagan Village Youth and Community Group, in that they were members of the Board and they left the room for the duration of the discussion.

### Building Capacity in Communities in Transition – Update

The Chairperson advised the Members that Mr. N. Jarman, Queen's University Belfast, Mr. J. Byrne, Ulster University, Ms. L. Farrell, Programme Director of Urban Villages, and Ms. A. Fitzpatrick, Department for Communities, were in attendance and they were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. N. Jarman provided the Working Group with an overview of the work which was being carried out through "Communities in Transition", which he explained was a two phase project to support The Executive Office in the delivery of action B4 of the Executive Action Plan on Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime.

He outlined to the Working Group that the project aims were to:

1. deliver long term prevention;
2. build confidence in the justice system
3. develop strategies and powers to tackle criminal activity; and
4. build capacity to support transition.

He advised the Members that eight target areas had been selected, with The Mount and Ballymacarrett having been chosen within East Belfast.

He outlined to the Members the details of Phase 1, which was to be completed by the end of February 2018, which involved costed Transition Plans being drawn up to identify the priority issues which underpinned the continued influence and coercive control of paramilitarism, as well as proposals on possible future interventions.

The Working Group was advised that the consultation had commenced and that they were operating within a tight timeframe. He emphasised to the Members that they would welcome input from all the political representatives.

In response to a Member's question regarding other areas of East Belfast which were not included in the Target areas, Mr. Jarman advised the Working Group that The Mount and Ballymacarrett had been identified through prior analysis and assessment but that he believed successes from the project could be rolled out and used in other areas in the future.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance and they retired from the meeting.

### **Strand Arts Centre - Update**

(Ms. S. Murtagh, Project Sponsor Officer, attended in connection with this Item)

The Chairperson advised the Members that Ms. M. Turtle, Chief Executive of the Strand Arts Centre, Mr. R. Gaston, Marketing Manager and Mr. J. Hegan, Chairman of the Board, were in attendance and they were welcomed to the meeting.

The Chairperson reminded the Working Group that it had agreed, in October 2016, to offer £1.8million of funding through the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) to the Strand Arts Centre project and that the offer would be ring-fenced for two years, with the option to extend for a further year, on the basis that the Strand Arts Centre would secure funding from other sources.

Ms. Turtle provided the Working Group with an overview of the Strand Arts Centre's End of Year Report for 2016/2017. She outlined to the Members the role which the Centre played within East Belfast and beyond, and highlighted that those who attended the Centre came from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. The Members were advised that the Arts Centre gifted activities and tickets to the Inner East Belfast Family Support Hub.

She advised the Working Group that she had met with the former Minister for Communities before the Northern Ireland Assembly had collapsed and that she had subsequently met with a number of Departmental officers who had advised that the Strand Arts Centre was a High Priority Project.

She explained to the Members that the Department for Communities had agreed to fund the procurement of an integrated design team. She also stated that the Esmee Fairbairn Fund had committed funding of £120,000 over three years.

In relation to a Member's suggestion that they should explore private funding and philanthropists within the Arts sector, the Marketing Manager advised that it was crucial that the pressure was kept on the Department for Communities for a significant amount of funding as private funders would not invest unless significant capital funding had been confirmed.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

In response to a further Member's question regarding the likelihood of the project going ahead in light of having no Assembly in place, the Project Sponsor Officer explained that if the Design Team was appointed then the design could be completed by the summer. The Director of Property and Projects advised that it would then be up to the Area Working Group to consider the next steps in relation to the offer of funding.

Noted.

### **Orangefield Park – Requests**

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised the Members that he had been contacted by both Bloomfield Football Club and Cycling Ireland, requesting that the Council considered making a capital investment at the grounds of Bloomfield F.C and the adjacent outdoor velodrome in Orangefield Park, in order to make the area a more usable space for both clubs.

The Director advised the Working Group that, while there was no current budget for such a project, he was seeking direction from the Working Group as to whether a feasibility study should be carried out for such a proposal in the east of the City. He outlined that, if the Working Group agreed, he would take a recommendation to the People and Communities Committee for its consideration.

After discussion the Working Group agreed that the Director submit a recommendation to the People and Communities Committee that a feasibility study should be carried out.

### **Public Access Defibrillator Pilot Programme**

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided the Working Group with an overview of the Public Access Defibrillator Pilot Programme. He explained that the People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 5th December, 2017, had agreed the third phase of installation across a further eight Council sites and that the proposed locations of the defibrillators would be brought to each Area Working Group for its consideration and approval.

He outlined that it was proposed that defibrillators be installed in Orangefield Park and in the depot area of Ormeau Park.

During a discussion, a Member offered to provide details of how residents in the Short Strand had raised money to install 5 defibrillators in the area and how 40 people had been trained in how to use them. She advised the Working Group that, through raising funds publicly for the defibrillators, it had also helped to ensure community support for, and ownership of, the defibrillators which was important.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed the Orangefield Park location for the placement of a defibrillator but requested that the Director investigate if there was a more suitable location within the Ormeau Park, other than in the depot area.

### **Correspondence from Lagan Village Youth and Community Group**

(Councillors Kyle and Newton declared an interest in this item and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion)

The Director of Property and Projects advised the Area Working Group that a request had been submitted by the Lagan Village Youth and Community Group for funding of £15,518 in order that they could repair the heating system in the building.

A Member stated that they were in support of using the Local Investment Fund (LIF) to fund this request.

The Director highlighted to the members that this request was for maintenance works and that this was not what the LIF should be used for. He advised that he would speak to the Director of Finance and Resources in relation to other funding streams which might be available to the Youth and Community Group.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed that consideration of the request for funding through LIF be deferred to allow the Director of Property and Projects to investigate if a more appropriate funding stream was available.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

The Working Group noted that the next meeting would take place at 5.00pm on Thursday, 8th February, 2018.

Chairperson