

# North Belfast Area Working Group

Monday, 20th August, 2018

## NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Alderman Convery (Chairperson);  
Aldermen Patterson and Spence;  
Councillors Clarke, Corr Johnston,  
Magee, Murphy and Pankhurst.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and  
Neighbourhoods;  
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mrs R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Mrs. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager;  
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy Analyst; and  
Ms E. McGoldrick, 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 Councillor Corr Johnston,  
Seconded by Alderman Patterson and

Resolved – that Alderman Convery be elected to serve as  
Chairperson to the North Belfast Area Working Group until the date of the  
Local Government Election in May, 2019.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Campbell and McAllister.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 29th May were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

### **Declaration of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Decision Tracker**

The Working Group noted that the Decision Tracker document had been emailed to Members before the meeting which provided Members with a brief overview of actions since the last meeting held on 29th May.

In relation to the Ligoniel Heritage Trail and the development of the Belfast Hills, the Director of Property and Projects advised that a Special joint meeting of North Area Working Group and the West Area Working Group would be scheduled in due course.

### **Physical Programme Update**

The Director of Property and Projects provided an update on the progress of the Physical Programme under a range of funding streams which included the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, Local Investment Fund (LIF), Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcome Fund, Peace IV and the projects that the Council was delivering on behalf of other agencies.

He outlined the status of the projects under the Physical Programme and highlighted the following information:

- **NLIF023 Fortwilliam and Macrory Church Hall** (refurbishment project completed in 2015). In relation to the forthcoming amalgamation of the parish, together with the closure and disposal of all assets, the Church proposed to transfer Macrory Hall to 174 Trust (subject to funder's approval). Their suitability was based on; 174 Trust's commitment to continue operations in McCrory Hall for the next seven years in line with conditions in the LIF funding contract (which would be novated over to them), their plans to develop the existing programme of work within the hall and the expansion of cross community work and partnership working in the area to increase hall usage. The Church intended to transfer Macrory Hall to 174 Trust for the nominal sum of £1 and the process of transfer must be completed in advance of 31st October, 2018 when the Parish would close/amalgamate. To ensure the Church could meet this deadline for the transfer, the Working Group was requested to note the proposed sale and agree that the funding novated to the new organisation to allow for continued operations in line with the original funding;
- **NLIF2-03 Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership** – On 22nd June, 2018, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had approved £15k LIF funding for the soft play area at Houben Centre. The Council had been informed that Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership had a short lease on the premises. However, Holy Cross Trust Ardoyne owned the Houben Centre and had agreed to act as the lead organisation. The Working Group was requested to note the change in project promoter from Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership to Holy Cross Trust Ardoyne.
- **NLIF2-07 White City Community Centre**– The improvement works to lighting and other facilities at White City Community Centre had been completed; and
- **BIF** - The North AWG had an outstanding unallocated amount under BIF of £500k and that a number of issues in relation to BIF projects had emerged across the Area Working Groups, largely due to a lack of match funding and a number of the projects exceeding their budget, which needed to be resolved.

During discussion, Members advised that they would provide updates on the progression of BIF projects to the Property and Projects Department in due course.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the contents of the report and agreed that the funding under NLIF023 Fortwilliam and Macrory Church Hall was novated to the 174 Trust.

### **Girdwood Community Hub - Community Management Proposal for the Youth Space**

The Working Group considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose**

**1.1 To further update the North AWG on the community management proposal to manage the youth space at Girdwood Community Hub.**

#### **2.0 Background**

**2.1 Given the stated ambition of the local community to develop the capability to support community management in the future, Council agreed that a useful first step to develop confidence by all parties would be to develop and consider a SLA for community management of the dedicated Youth Space. This identified pilot will in effect support the development of trust, relationships and capacity among the local community groups towards their aspiration of community management.**

**2.2 It was agreed that any submission to manage the youth space should ideally be cross community and representative and would receive input from the youth space working group (YSWG) in advance of consideration and formal endorsement by the Girdwood Community Forum. Any submission will then move to evaluation by BCC officers before proceeding to committee and Council for approval.**

**2.3 North Talks Too (NTT), which is a collaborative project involving Lower Oldpark Community Association, Lower Shankill Community Association and Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum, put forward an outline expression of interest to manage the Youth Space and this has been shared with the wider Community Forum. NTT indicate they have worked since 2008 with local partners to become the primary peace and reconciliation and good relations agency in this part of North Belfast. NTT has now established a new legal structure, which they have named the Girdwood Community Trust (GCT), in order to move this work forward. NTT/GCT, supported by Community Services, has been working to develop the detail of this proposal, taking into consideration**

the views of the Youth Space group and the wider Girdwood Community Forum.

- 2.4 GCT are now at the stage where they want to submit the Community Management Proposal to Council for assessment and so, as agreed from the outset, it was tabled with the Girdwood Community Forum in February 2018 for consideration and endorsement.
- 2.5 Members are reminded that, while it was noted that forum members are broadly supportive of the proposal and its detail, it was not endorsed. The primary recorded concern was noted as a lack of broader geographical representation via formal membership on the GCT board.
- 2.6 Representatives from the Greater New Lodge Community Empowerment Partnership (GNLCEP) noted that current membership includes Lower Shankill, Lower Oldpark and Cliftonville but raised concerns that the GCT board does not include a member representing the Greater New Lodge area. This view was reflected in separate correspondence from TDK.
- 2.7 The special meeting of the Forum concluded with no resolution reached regarding the governance issues.
- 2.8 The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services brought this update to members at the February meeting of the NAWG. Members agreed that officers would continue to engage with the community organisations involved to reach an agreeable resolution.

### 3.0 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services agreed to meet the organisations involved to discuss issues and potential solutions in an attempt to reach resolution. Separate meetings with each of the organisations have since taken place allowing representatives an opportunity to outline their concerns.
- 3.2 Officers have summarised the issues raised as follows:

#### Current Issues raised by NTT

When BCC sought expressions of interest from local community organisations via the Girdwood Community Forum, NTT were the only organisation to submit an outline proposal.

The expression of interest proposal submitted by NTT was endorsed by the Girdwood Community Forum who agreed that

NTT should work up a more detailed community management proposal. Hub endorsement included representatives from GNLCEP who raised no concern at that time.

GCT is the legal entity of NTT. GNLCEP are not a member of NTT therefore it is not straight forward for them to be included on the board of trustees for GCT.

Funding secured by NTT via a number of different funding streams will be invested in the youth space via the GCT. To date GNLCEP have not indicated that they will be investing any funding via their organisation.

GCT has indicated that the management contract is for 12 months only and is limited to managing the Youth Space. Currently there is no interest in managing the wider hub building. If the wider hub building becomes of interest in the future, new conversations involving all stakeholders would begin.

#### Current Issues GNLCEP

The current governance structure as laid out in the NTT/GCT community management proposal does not include representation from the GNLCEP.

Failure to include a representative from the GNLCEP on the board of trustees is perceived as exclusion of this community and this is against the ethos of why the hub was built in the first place.

There are four neighbouring communities on the doorstep of the Girdwood Community Hub and the pitch: Lower Shankill, Lower Oldpark, Cliftonville and Greater New Lodge. The only community not represented on the governance structure is the Greater New Lodge

Thus far representatives from the GNLCEP feel that they have not been provided with a reasonable explanation as to why they cannot be included in the governance structure. It is the view of GNLCEP that the explanation to date can be easily overcome or rectified by separating out the wider NTT programme governance from that of the Youth Space management.

- 3.3 At the meetings, Nigel Grimshaw reaffirmed Council's aspiration to support all stakeholders to reach a resolution and suggested a number of facilitated sessions. In particular the GNLCEP representatives were not in favour of this approach. They felt that enough meetings had taken place to date without

resolution and that the only resolution amenable to them is to be included on the governance and decision making structure for the management of the Girdwood Youth Space.

**3.4** Following the meetings with each of the organisations it was determined that Council officers would report back in to NAWG and seek political direction.

**3.5** Since the opening of Girdwood Community Hub in January 2016, and in advance of the development of a formal business proposal from a youth space provider, Council has been working with the Girdwood Community Forum and more closely with the Youth Space Working Group to ensure a service programme offer in the youth space and the wider hub. In order to ensure programme access and business continuity, the commercial panel have approved interim arrangements with our local delivery partners. This arrangement will be continued until such time as a SLA is in place with a community operator to manage the youth space and deliver the youth programme.

#### **4.0** Recommendations

**4.1** The North AWG are asked to note the content of the report and to consider appropriate next steps and related action.

**4.2** A potential scenario is to advise Girdwood Community Trust that their proposal cannot be considered as it has failed to secure the endorsement of the Girdwood Community Forum.

**4.3** Officers to consider and prepare alternative options to proceed, including but not limited to the following:

i. Invite representatives from GNLNEP and Girdwood Community Trust to a future meeting of the NAWG to share their perspective and consider future action.

ii. Defer the proposal for community management of the Youth Space and continue with the current arrangements i.e. GLL manage the facility and BCC Girdwood Community Engagement Officer continues to support and resource integrated programming via the Youth Space sub-group of the Forum.

iii. Abandon the current process and consider an open call for proposals to manage the Girdwood Youth Space against a tender specification with clear criteria for assessment and time-frame. In order to maintain relationships, any decision to proceed on this basis

**should follow prior engagement with the community representatives on the Forum perhaps through an invitation to NAWG meeting to explain the rationale for this approach.”**

During discussion, the Working Group raised concerns in relation to the budget and the continuation of the Youth Space Programme.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed that option 2, as outlined in the report, be endorsed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

#### **Cliftonville Pitch (Verbal update)**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services provided an update on the engagement that had taken place between the Council and user groups of Cliftonville Pitch. She advised that a report would be submitted to the People and Communities Committee in September in relation to the programme of use agreements for the Pitch.

The Working Group noted the update and that the report would be circulated to the Working Group for information.

#### **Future Agenda Items**

The Working Group noted the following future deputations and agenda items:

- Information sessions on Inner North Belfast Projects;
- Zoo Update;
- Harbour Commissioner Update;
- York Street Interchange Update;
- Quarterly updates from Ulster University regarding its community engagement and programme of building work;
- Special Joint Meeting – Belfast Hills; and
- Special Meeting – Mountain Biking on Cavehill Country Park.

The Working Group agreed that it would receive a maximum of two presentations at the next meeting to be held on Tuesday, 18th September at 4.30pm.

Chairperson