

North Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday, 30th October, 2018

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Alderman Convery (Chairperson);
Aldermen Browne and L. Patterson;
Councillors Clarke, Campbell, Magee, Murphy
and Pankhurst.

In attendance: Mrs R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. D. Logan; Project Manager;
Mr. G. Dickson, Policy Analyst;
Miss E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer; and
Miss C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Spence and Councillor Corr-Johnston.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th September were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in relation to item 4. 'Physical Programme Update', in that she was linked to the the Grace Family Centre.

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 18th September.

Presentation – Ulster University Campus Update

The Working Group was reminded that it had previously agreed that representatives from Ulster University would be invited to attend the Working Group to deliver quarterly updates regarding its community engagement and programme of building work.

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting, Prof. D. Morrow and Prof. R. Folli, representing Ulster University.

Prof. Morrow provided an update on the progress of the construction works. He also gave an overview of the University's relationship with the surrounding communities and its intention to develop a communications plan. Dr. Morrow reported that he had been consulting with local residents to develop a plan that served both the University and local community and the University had also commenced a Programme of Civic Contribution which included events, lectures and resources for the wider community. .

He advised that once a completion date for the building works had been confirmed, he would notify the Working Group.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives from University of Ulster for attending and the Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

Physical Programme Update

The Project Manager provided an update on the progress of the Physical Programme under a range of funding streams, which included the Local Investment Fund (LIF), Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Capital Programme, Social Investment Fund and Urban Villages Initiatives, 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:

NLIF2-21 Somme Group – Cross Community Memorial

- The project had went through due diligence on 18th October, 2018 and would progress to the next stage which was a funding agreement and the Somme Group would be working alongside the Department for Infrastructure with regard to the land transfer.

Belfast Investment Fund (BIF)

- The Cancer Lifeline and Grace Family Centre projects had both passed due diligence on 24th October, 2018.
- The Old Grove/Midland Boxing Club Economic Appraisal had been returned as was under review.
- Dates for consultation were being finalised for the Marrowbone Millennium Park project, which had been added as a Stage 1 – Emerging Project by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd June, 2018 with a ring-fenced allocation of up to £500k and Urban Villages funding of £2.1m.

Social Investment Fund (SIF)

- Design development had been completed for both the Joanmount Methodist Church and PIPS Suicide Prevention Ireland projects. Preparation was underway for procurement of contractors, subject to SIF approval.
- The Westland Community Centre project had presented multiple due diligence issues which was holding up progress. Information had been requested by the end of October and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Urban Villages (UV)

- Procurement of consultant for both Glenbryn Playground and John Paul II Youth Club MUGA and Amphitheatre complete and the contractor was planned to be on site in the new year.
- It was hoped that a contractor would be appointed imminently for Benview Community Centre refurbishment and would be on site in November 2018.

During discussion, a Member raised a query in relation to Phase 2 of the Girdwood Complex and the the potential for future proofing the project with assets such as a wet centre. The Project Manager advised an update would be provided at the next meeting..

Noted.

Sports Programme at Cliftonville Playing Fields

The Director of Neighbourhood Services gave the Working Group a summary of the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To update Members on the successful delivery of expanded programme of use at the upgraded hybrid pitch at Cliftonville Playing Fields.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the ongoing level of partnership working which is increasing opportunities for participation in North Belfast.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The pitch at Cliftonville Playing Fields was upgraded to a hybrid synthetic pitch as part of Council’s pitches strategy and was supported with funding from the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA). A Partnership Agreement is in place at this and other sites with a Joint Management Board meeting regularly to ensure the appropriate agreed outcomes are achieved. This board is comprised of representatives from Ulster Council GAA, Co. Antrim Board GAA, Co. Down Board GAA, Belfast City Council Parks Operations and Sports Development.**
- 3.2 The Partnership Agreement requires GAA to maximise their sports development opportunities in line with GAA strategies and plan their requirements in advance, this takes the form of a 6 monthly Programme of Use. Council considers this Programme in advance of accepting the supporting bookings for each activity.**
- 3.3 The positive potential for this site to increase levels of participation in the area has been evidenced since opening.**

The scale and scope of bookings now available due to the synthetic surface and floodlighting is seen through facility bookings. The site now receives football bookings for games and training from clubs, community organisations, schools and recreational players including males and females with a wide range of ages. GAA bookings within the Programme of Use include matches and training for football, ladies football, hurling camogie, with county squad training session, girls' winter leagues and community programmes showing the huge positive benefits from working collaboratively to improve outcomes at the neighbourhood level.

3.4 A locally based football club, Crumlin Star, plays at Intermediate level in the premier division of the Northern Amateur Football League (NAFL) with their home pitch at The Cliff in Larne. They have been trying to find a home pitch location in Belfast for a number of years. An opportunity exists for Crumlin Star to be facilitated alongside the GAA Programme of Use at Cliftonville Road Playing Fields.

3.5 GAA, Crumlin Star and Council have reached an agreement which facilitates Crumlin Star's compliance with NAFL's tenure requirements and integrates with the GAA Programme of Use at the site. Council will be in a position to confirm Crumlin Star's tenure with NAFL. As stated at 3.1 a Partnership Agreement is in place with Ulster Council GAA and this side letter is an agreed adjustment to the programme of use.

3.6 Key Issues

This three way agreement will further extend usage of the site and facilitate a successful local club to play their home matches in North Belfast.

3.7 Financial & Resource Implications

Resources are available within existing Parks budgets to facilitate marking for the additional soccer bookings.

3.8 Asset & Other Implications

N/A

3.9 Equality, Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment

None"

The Working Group noted the contents of the report and that communication between the organisations involved would continue.

Future Agenda Items and Meeting Dates

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

- Information sessions on Inner North Belfast Projects;
- Zoo Update;
- Quarterly updates from Ulster University regarding its community engagement and programme of building work;
- Special Meeting – Mountain Biking on Cavehill Country Park; and.
- North City Business Centre.

The Working Group noted that the Harbour Commissioners (City Quays development) would attend the January meeting and the Department for Infrastructure (York Street Interchange) would attend the February meeting of the Working Group.

The Working Group also noted that representatives from Our Lady's Nursery School and the Department for Infrastructure (Living with Water Programme) had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Working Group scheduled for 27th November.

Chairperson