

# South Belfast Area Working Group

Monday, 25th March, 2019

## MEETING OF SOUTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillors Boyle and Dudgeon.

In attendance: Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mrs. C. Reynolds, City Regeneration and Development  
Lead Officer; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Chairing of Meeting**

In the absence of the Chairperson (Councillor Craig), it was agreed that Councillor Dudgeon take the Chair.

(Councillor Dudgeon in the Chair)

### **Apologies**

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of the Chairperson (Councillor Craig).

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 21st January were approved.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

### **Presentations**

#### **Belfast Tidal Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Working Group was reminded that, at its meeting on 21st May, 2018, it had received from representatives of Atkins Global, project consultants, and Dfl Rivers a presentation on the Belfast Tidal Flood Alleviation Scheme.

It was reported that Mr. P. Aldridge and Ms. R. Murray, Atkins Global, and Mr. I Coulter, Dfl Rivers, were in attendance in order to provide a further update on the scheme and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Aldridge reminded the Members that 1,000 properties in the City were considered to be at risk currently from tidal flooding and that that figure would be likely to rise significantly in future years, as a consequence of climate change. In order to address the issue, Dfl Rivers had commissioned Atkins Global to deliver a flood alleviation scheme

along the tidal reach of the River Lagan, stretching from the Stranmillis Weir to the Harbour Estate. The line of flood defences would, he pointed out, follow existing boundary fences and walls to the rear of the towpath, with the width of the towpath, current access points and property security being maintained. He reviewed the types of flood defences which were being proposed at various points along the river and, in terms of future steps, confirmed that further engagement was planned with stakeholders and would be followed by a tendering exercise to appoint a contractor to design and deliver the scheme. It was envisaged that construction would commence in late 2019/early 2020 and take around one year to complete.

Mr. Coulter confirmed, in response to a Member, that the Council would, in its next update, be briefed on the outcome of discussions which were taking place currently around responsibility for removing any graffiti from the flood defences.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives, following which the Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

### **Update on Weavers Cross/Belfast Transport Hub**

The Working Group was reminded that, on 28th January, it had agreed that it would be beneficial to obtain at its next meeting an update on the Weavers Cross/Belfast Transport Hub project.

It was reported that Mr. B. Gallagher, Mr. L. McComb, Mr. B. Mulgrew and Mr. M. Wray, representing the Belfast Transport Holding Company, were in attendance and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. McComb confirmed that Weavers Cross, which was one of the Northern Ireland Executive's Flagship projects, was a transport led regeneration project focusing on an area around the existing Europa bus centre and Great Victoria Street train station. He provided an overview of the project, which, in addition to the transport hub, would include a central area, to be known as Saltwater Square, and mixed used development. He reported that planning approval had on 21st March been granted for the transport element of the project and it was anticipated that construction work would commence towards the end of this year. Overall, the scheme would take around five years to complete and would cost in the region of £200 million. He pointed out that the project would provide a range of key benefit in terms of integration and connectivity, regeneration and job creation and would support the aims of the Belfast Agenda.

The other representatives then provided details of the significant outreach work being undertaken with local communities and of its work with partners, including the Council, and concluded by addressing a number of issues which had been raised around the project.

The Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

### **South Belfast Corridor**

The Director of Property and Projects circulated a map which highlighted up to sixty projects which had been identified along the 'South Belfast Corridor'. He reported that the Lord Mayor had recently held discussions with a broad range of public and private stakeholders to share details of various emerging development proposals and initiatives

and that officers were arranging follow-up meetings with each stakeholder to assess the impact of the various proposals.

Noted.

### **Update on Physical Programme**

The Director of Property and Projects submitted for the Working Group's consideration the following report:

#### **“1. Introduction**

**The Council's Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, LIF, BIF, Social Outcome Fund (SOF) and the projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.**

**Members will be aware, through the recent round of Party Group briefings and the Strategic Policy and Resources report in November 2018, that the key issue going forward for the physical programme is the overall affordability of the programme with no agreed future allocations for LIF/ BIF and limited amount of capital funding to support the programme. Currently, there is a 'wish list' of over 50 potential capital programme proposals, which have come forward through the AWGs / Party Group, and there is no capacity to deliver these – both from a financial and resource perspective. In addition, there is a growing list of community projects that are seeking support and there is no mechanism under which to fund these projects going forward. Members are therefore asked to consider this going forward – particularly in respect of any new project proposals – under the capital programme or from Groups.**

#### **2. Recommendations**

**The Working Group is requested to:**

- note the contents of this report and the updates on LIF projects;**
- note the update on LORAG – John Murray Lock House project, which has been scored and met the minimum threshold and agree that this project is progressed to Due Diligence stage; and**
- note the update of BIF projects – Knockbreda Parish Hall and Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC.**

#### **3. Local Investment Fund**

**To date, 24 projects have received in principle support under LIF1 and LIF2. A summary of the status of the LIF projects is**

outlined below and a full progress report has been circulated to the Working Group.

Stage/ Description	LIF 1		LIF 2	
	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	12 (92%)	£1,053,600	9 (82%)	£676,000
Number of Projects in Delivery				
Number of Projects in Pre-construction			1 (9%)	£80,000
Number of Project in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	1 (8%)	£30,000	1 (9%)	£40,000
<b>Total Number of Approved Projects</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£1,083,600</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>£796,000</b>

**SLIF2-13 LORAG – John Murray Lockhouse – AWG will note that the SP&R Committee on 16th February 2018 has agreed to ring-fence a LIF budget of £40k to LORAG towards the John Murray Lockhouse. Members will note that the John Murray Lockhouse Development feasibility study and economic appraisal has now been completed. The overall development proposal includes the establishment of a community garden, which the LIF money will be used. The LORAG – John Murray Lockhouse project has been scored by officers and has successfully met the minimum threshold. It is recommend that this project now proceed to the Due Diligence stage of the LIF process.**

#### **4. Belfast Investment Fund**

To date, six projects have received an in-principle funding commitment under BIF. There is one project on the BIF list that has no commitment.

<b>South</b>	Stage 3—Lagan Gateway—£2.1m; Lanyon Tunnels—£1.3m; Bredagh GAC- £700k Stage 2— Gilpins— £1.3m Stage 1— <i>Belfast Islamic Centre—no commitment</i>
<b>Balmoral DEA</b>	Stage 2— <i>Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC—£250k; Knockbreda Parish Church Hall—£250k</i>

**Brief updates on the projects that have received in-principle funding are provided below:**

Project	Status and update
Lagan Gateway	Project works on site has been stopped as the contractor went into administration. Procurement of new contractor ongoing.
Lanyon Tunnels	Project has been delayed due to legal proceedings regarding the adjacent development. Officer has looked at the feasibility for an alternative solution with a single access from the Lanyon side. However, MDA have made it clear that they are not willing to look at another option – has potential impact on the BIF and SIF funding. Awaiting decision on adjacent Planning Application before determining next steps.
Bredagh GAC	A draft access agreement has been drawn up and agreed – just awaiting signatures from all parties. Producing programme for the design team appointment. PQQ will be issued early April 19.
Gilpins	Meetings took place with Department for Communities and community stakeholders. DfC to formally confirm commitment as Lead Partner. There is a requirement to fully scope out project in terms of community and political requirements for the scheme. Awaiting DfC to convene the roundtable discussion.
Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC *	See below
Knockbreda Parish Church Hall *	See below

\* Outer South projects

**The South AWG made the following recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in relation to the ringfenced BIF allocation of £500k for projects in Outer South (Balmoral). These projects are at Stage 2- Uncommitted so it is recommended that they are progressed to Stage 3 – Committed. It should be noted that all are on the basis of a maximum budget allocation, going through the Council's due diligence processes and are subject to return of satisfactory tenders.**

Project	Update	Recommendation
BIF33 Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC	<p>BIF support to focus on Phase 1A of the sports hub project i.e. replacement of Belvoir FCs grass football with associated widen of adjacent road access and resurface of existing car park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stage 1- Emerging – Strategic Policy and Resources 18th November 2016- project with up to £250k to be ringfenced</li> </ul>	Moved to Stage 3- Committed subject to satisfactory Due Diligence process, return of a satisfactory tender and the Council acting as delivery agent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stage 2- Uncommitted – Strategic Policy and Resources 22nd February 2019</li> </ul> <p>Project due to be discussed at Due Diligence on 28th March 2019 on the view of progressing the project to detailed design stage and procurement of design team</p>	
BIF35 Knockbreda Parish Church Hall	<p>Project involves extending the current Parish Halls to improve accessibility and increase capacity to deliver its programme of community activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stage 1- Emerging – Strategic Policy and Resources 24th March 2017- project with up to £250k to be ringfenced</li> <li>· Stage 2- Uncommitted – Strategic Policy and Resources 22nd February 2019</li> </ul> <p>Procurement of design team ongoing. PQQ is currently being issued. Design Team will be appointed in March 2019</p>	Moved to Stage 3- Committed subject to satisfactory Due Diligence process, return of a satisfactory tender and the Council acting as delivery agent

**5. The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new ones. Updates on the projects under the programme in South Belfast are provided below:**

Project	Status and update
Pitches Programme- Ulidia Playing Fields	Stage 3 – Committed. Project works complete. Handed over to City & Neighbourhood Services
LTP- Olympia	Stage 3 – Committed. Project completed and operational
Alleygating Phase 4 – City wide	Stage 3 – Committed. On Ground
Playground Refurbishment Programme 2018/2019 – City wide	Stage 3 – Committed. On Ground Fullerton and Barnetts Playground – to be completed by March 2019
Palm House, Botanic Gardens	Stage 1- Emerging. Link to Tropical Ravine

**6. Social Outcome Fund**

**To date, projects have received an in-principle funding commitment under SOF. Below are the brief updates on the projects.**

Project	Status and update
Assembly Buildings Conference Centre	Exhibition and Genealogical Research Space – project is substantially complete. Launch event planned for 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2019.
Coffee Culture	Development of a social economy café designed to support investment in tourism infrastructure including the Transport Hub and Gilpins. Discussions ongoing with the Group. Urban Villages agreed to prioritise the business case which will be completed in March 2019.
Sandy Row Community Forum	Development of a Tourism Trail (with digital element) to complement the Transport Hub. The project was discussed at Due Diligence and number of issues raised that need to be resolved including the project concept, delivery on site and future maintenance arrangement. Project concept needed significant development. Ongoing engagement with group and design team

## 7. Externally – funded programmes

**Social Investment Fund – The overall SIF programme has been significantly delayed however considerable progress on outstanding issues has been made recently and a number of projects are moving forward. Below is a status update on SIF projects in South Belfast.**

Project	Status and update
South City Resource and Development Centre (St. Simon's)	Project at design procurement stage. PQQ/ ITT process ongoing with the view of appointing the contractor by April 2019. The conveyancing process is underway
Mornington Community Project	Design and survey work underway. PQQ/ ITT to be completed by June 2019
Lanyon Tunnels	Project has been impacted by the JR decision— MDA have made it clear that they are not willing to look at another option—has implications for the BIF funding

**Urban Villages - Members are asked to note that works on two projects, Rev Robert Bradford Memorial Park and Sandy Row Play Park, are both underway. In addition, Officers are continuing to work with UV on emerging projects.**

Project	Status and update
Rev Robert Bradford Memorial Park	Contractor has been appointed. On site March/ April 2019
Sandy Row Play Park	Contractor has been appointed. Project on site in April 2019

After discussion, those Members present agreed to note the contents of the report and to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the LORAG – John Murray Lockhouse project proceed to the Due Diligence stage of the LIF process.

### **Expression of Thanks**

The Chairperson referred to the fact that this would be the last meeting before the Local Government Elections and thanked the Head of Property and Projects and other officers for the significant contribution which they had made to the work of the Working Group over the course of the current Council term.

Chairperson