

Derry City and Strabane District Council

**Minutes of Meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Committee (Open)
held in the Guildhall, Derry on Wednesday 10 October 2018 at 4.00 pm**

Present:- Councillor Reilly (Chairperson); Aldermen Bresland, Hussey and Warke, Councillors Campbell, Dobbins, Duddy, Duffy, Hastings, Jackson, D Kelly, R McHugh and Tierney.

Non-Member of Committee – Alderman M Hamilton.

In Attendance:- Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs K Phillips), Head of Environment (Mr C Canning), Head of Capital Development and Building Control (Mr F Morrison), Regeneration Manager (Mr T Monaghan), Head of Planning Performance and Improvement (Mr E Molloy), Heritage Development Officer (Ms M Edwards) and Committee Services Assistant (Ms N Meehan).

ER203/18 Notice and Summons of Meeting

The Director of Environment and Regeneration read the Notice and Summons for the Meeting.

ER204/18 Apologies

The Director of Environment and Regeneration completed the roll call and recorded an apology for Alderman Ramsey.

ER205/18 Declarations of Members' Interests

There were no Declarations of Members' Interests.

ER206/18 Deputation - To receive Mr D Scott and Ms B Gallagher, Woodland Trust to discuss the Faughan Valley Project

The Committee received Mr Scott and Ms Gallagher, Woodland Trust to the Meeting to discuss the Faughan Valley Project. Mr Scott gave a power-point presentation highlighting the following:

Resilient Landscapes

Bigger, better, more and connected

The Faughan Valley

Project Aims:

- Restore 60 ha of damaged ancient woods
- Undertake 45 ha of riparian planting
- Restore, extend and plant 8,000 metres of hedgerows
- Undertake biological, species surveying and evidence collection, provide a wide-range of volunteer and accredited training opportunities
- Develop infrastructure at key sties, enhancing the visitor welcome, extending access
- Develop an enhanced schools offer, involving local schools in its co-design and co-production

How much Woodland is there?

Work in Partnership with Others

Trees and woods provide...

- Ecosystem services – flood protection
- Climate change mitigation
- Wildlife
- Recreation
- Wood fuel
- Heritage
- Natural capital/infrastructure

Riparian Issues

River changing course – land loss

Risk of soil erosion and watercourse pollution

Field margins – erosion of banks

Trees and woods for people

Only 43% of children in NI are achieving the Chief Medical Officer's recommendations of 60 mins of exercise every day

Regular users of woods/forest for physical activity are approximately half the risk of poor mental health

Trees on Farms

- Shade and shelter
- Lamb mortality can be reduced compared to housed lambs – lower exposure to disease
- Improve grass growth – windburn and drought
- Outdoor lambing or early turnout and improved bonding

The Chairperson thanked Mr Scott for his presentation. He expressed concern that Northern Ireland had only 8% of woodland in comparison with other countries.

Councillor Hastings, as Chairperson of the Faughan Valley Partnership, acknowledged the work carried out by the Woodland Trust and the organisation's wealth of knowledge in terms of building woodlands. He referred to the considerable time and effort which had been invested in replanting the woodlands around the Faughan Valley.

Councillor D Kelly welcomed the presentation which he felt was both enlightening and exciting. He referred to the fact that this was World Mental Health Day and to the specific benefits to mental health of woodlands and the outdoors. He said the lack of woodland in this area was a matter of concern but welcomed the scope of the project in terms of addressing this problem. He anticipated that many benefits would be felt across the Council district especially in terms of dealing with floods. He said it was interesting to note the impact that trees had on floods in terms of changing the watercourses and waterflows. He believed that this should be of key interest to Council's LDP team and anticipated Council working with the Trust to develop a co-ordinated approach based on their findings. This could subsequently be incorporated into Council's plans with a greater focus being placed on developing land in a manner which would assist tree growth and would not be detrimental to hedgerows. He welcomed the work carried out by the Woodland Trust to date and the aesthetic benefits thereof and, looked forward to further progress in this regard.

Councillor Tierney queried if the Woodland Trust perceived working with Council primarily through the Local Development Plan or were there other possible opportunities through which this work could continue.

Mr Scott felt the Woodland Trust could work with Council on a number of levels and had already been working with Council Officers on a

number of initiatives He anticipated that opportunities would arise to provide a more focused approach in terms of the Faughan Valley and he said he would welcome an opportunity to work with Council Officers to determine if the Trust's projects could be incorporated or delivered in conjunction with Council's plans.

Mr Scott and Ms Gallagher were thanked again for the presentation and they withdrew from the Meeting.

ER207/18 Deputation - To receive Mr B Toal and Ms C McGee, Foyle River Gardens Trust to discuss the Foyle River Gardens Project

The Committee received Mr Toal and Mr Deane, Foyle River Gardens to discuss the Foyle River Gardens Project.

Mr Deane thanked Council for the opportunity to address the Committee and provided Members with an introduction to the Foyle River Gardens Project.

Mr Toal referred to the fact that he had addressed Council on previous occasions however, this was the first time in open business. He presented a short film showing the scale and grandeur of this unique piece of landscape. He then gave a joint power-point presentation highlighting the following issues:

Foyle River Gardens Project Mission

"To be a symbol of regeneration, transforming spaces and communities to create a sustainable world-class asset for Derry-Londonderry"

So, what does the Foyle River Gardens do that's different?

Education & Health & Employment Environment Skills Wellbeing

Tourism	Heritage, Culture & History
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Community

Foyle River Gardens Charitable Trust

The Masterplan – Our Principles

- Integrate with the natural landscape
- Visually and physically, connect to the river
- Iconic Architectural Interventions
- Create an open and accessible knowledge network
- Weave a sensory water narrative through the site
- Activity every couple of minutes
- Celebrate the site's untouched natural beauty
- Legacy
- Enhance Heritage Assets
- Connect the Public to the River Foyle

The Zones

Site Opportunity

Boom Hall – A Romantic Ruin

The Walled Gardens Trail – A unique network of heritage and productivity, some even older than the City Walls

The Ice House – A Subterranean Dining Experience accessed from the River

Forest Cabins – experience nature at first hand

The Canopy – Learning is fun in the iconic submerged structure concealed within the Landscape

Riverside Lido and Theatre – heated by biomass, enjoyed by the many

Third Level Educational Campus open to the public

Greenhouse, Laboratory and Soil Testing Site

A Co-working community hub for ecoentrepreneurs

Innovative transport through the site

Making the River Foyle come alive

Connecting with nature through landscape trails

Bringing the Gardens into the sky

Connecting young people through the Youth Gateway Park

Instilling drama into the landscape

Our Five Core Themes

- **Economic Activity**
- **Creativity**
- **Play Activity**
- **Productivity**
- **Connectivity**

Mr Toal referred to a joint announcement earlier that day from Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University that they were collaborating to explore the potential of working with the Eden Project to develop a new world-class research project as part of the Foyle River Garden project. He stated that planning was at an early stage however they were committed to progressing this exciting proposal which would have significant benefits for the North West and Northern Ireland.

Mr Toal stated said this was a major announcement which it was felt would offer a huge advantage to the further and higher education provision within the City. He stated that the Trust were delighted and excited at the interest displayed by both universities in this site and their decision to collaborate for the benefit of the City and for their students. He referred to the potential this offered in terms of attracting international students to the City to study. He stated that the proposals had been discussed and agreed by the Vice Chancellors of both universities and this was clearly a very innovative and ambitious way forward. He continued that a Development Committee would be established to drive forward this project which would include both Vice Chancellors together with a number of senior figures from various arenas and he requested that a Senior Director from Council be also nominated to sit on this Committee. He concluded that this was a major project which would provide a wonderful experience for tourists and locals alike.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Toal and Mr Dean for their presentation and commended them on this project. He said this was extremely ambitious and was positive news for the City and referred to the potential of the decision by both universities to collaborate on the site. He said he would welcome more detailed information from the universities regarding their proposals for the site.

Councillor Dobbins congratulated the deputation on their plans for the area which were exciting, ambitious and boundless. She remarked on the current under-utilisation of the River Foyle particularly in terms of sports, eco-activities and water travel and said this would be a tremendous legacy for the City. She referred to the existing Boom Hall site which, in its current state presented a danger. She stated that the plans which had been presented utilised every aspect of the area and she hoped that these would be realised and the project would come to fruition. She said this would prove a major contribution to the City both in terms of tourism and education. She also welcomed the earlier announcement from the two universities which would provide amazing opportunities for students.

Councillor Duffy congratulated the Trust on its vision in developing the project which was exciting and ambitious and emulated Council's observations for the future of the City and integrated well with the various elements in terms of innovation in moving forward. She stated that the area in question provided the perfect canvas for the various aspects contained in the project and certainly had an elevated quality. She welcomed the collaboration of the two universities. She queried the current position in relation to the dispute regarding land ownership. She also sought clarification on the source of the proposed investment into the project of £60m over seven years.

Mr Toal explained that from the Trust's perspective the availability of the land in question had been the main inspiration and inception behind this project which the Trust hoped to maximise to the fullest potential of the area. In response to suggestions regarding the inclusion of other walled gardens, he referred to the possibility of creating a walled garden trail leading upstream which could be marketed by Council. He pointed out that the project did have the potential for cross border development which the Trust wished to investigate and discussions had already taken place in this regard and any opportunities which arose would be promoted. He referred to the potential for opportunities as a result of Brexit and to meetings which had taken place with representatives from both the Dublin government and Donegal County Council to discuss this possibility and how it could

be progressed. He referred to the possibility of developing water cruises which could link the entire North West. He stated that the emphasis was on developing tourism and encouraging tourists to remain in this area.

Mr Toal referred to discussions which had taken place with the Loughs Agency who had indicated that there were more salmon in the River Foyle than in the entire Scottish Lochs which provided a major opportunity in terms of licensed fishing. He stated that to agree a focal point through which to market and sell the City would be a tremendous achievement with unlimited potential.

In relation to what was being sought from Council, Mr Toal said the Trust were hoping for a Senior Council Officer to help drive forward this project. He stated that this had already been discussed with Council however, the vision was now becoming a reality. He stated that any costs in respect of works carried out to date had been met from within the Trust's budget however they did not have limitless funding. He said they believed if they had the support of Council in terms of attracting funding this would prove a major feat. He referred to the fact that any forthcoming City Deal would be based on innovation and as this project was both refreshing and unique it presented a major example of social innovation which was accessible for all whilst providing opportunities for the public. He also referred to the need to examine alternative ways of bringing innovation into further and higher education. He referred to the possibility of having the project included in the City Deal proposals given its innovation and accessibility and potential for social inclusion.

Councillor Tierney said this project had the potential to create amazing opportunities for the City. He acknowledged the Trust's request for a senior Council Officer to become involved and queried the impact of such a move on Council and the role of the Officer involved.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration, having heard the presentation and the request for Council's involvement, advised that Officers would prepare a report based thereon for presentation to the November Meeting of the Committee when a decision could be made regarding Council's involvement based on the information presented. She advised that Council Officers had been working with the Trust and would continue to do so particularly in relation to obtaining information from them to include in the innovation proposal of the City Deal proposition.

The Chairperson queried how the collaboration of the two universities, would conform with or compliment Ulster University's proposals for a post graduate entry Medical School and if it would detrimentally impact on maximum student numbers for Magee.

Mr Toal referred to discussions which had taken place regarding this issue. He pointed out that when Queen's University had initially expressed an interest in becoming more involved, it was clearly indicated that the proposals would not affect either the proposals of the Ulster University or its growth plans for the City nor would it impact on the maximum student numbers at Magee. He said the proposals were to attract a mix of undergraduate, postgraduate and foreign students. He advised that Queen's University had been in contact with the Permanent Secretary regarding these proposals as a major project going forward and had received assurances that consideration would be given to additional student places over and above maximum student numbers for Magee. He referred to the planning process which must be undergone and the need to secure the required funding which could possibly take 2-3 years, at which stage it was hoped the Stormont Executive would have returned to power.

Mr Toal referred to discussions which had taken place with the Strategic Investment Board and pointed out that an outline business case had now been prepared and consideration given to various design aspects. He said it would be amazing to secure formal funding for the project. He pointed out that the £60m figure did not include the university aspect of the project and was solely in respect of the Foyle River Gardens. He anticipated a possible involvement with the City Deal proposition and SIB however this remained to be seen.

Members thanked the deputation for their presentation and they withdrew from the Meeting.

ER209/18 Confirmation of the Open Minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on Wednesday, 12 September 2018

The Open Minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on 12 September 2018 (ER186/18-ER199/18) were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

ER211/18 APSE Energy

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He

advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval to renew membership of APSE's Energy Association.

The Committee

Recommended that approval be granted to renew membership of the APSE Energy Association at a fee of £2,000 excluding VAT.

ER212/18 Review of the Recruitment of Additional Park Rangers

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to (a) update Members on the additional Park Rangers employed in the parks over summer months; (b) review the resource contribution and (c) seek feed-back from Members on their views on the provision of additional Park Rangers moving forward.

Councillor Jackson referred to the invaluable service provided by Park Rangers and the assistance they provided for persons using Council facilities. He referred to the significant reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents in St Columb's Park during the previous summer which he felt was due to the presence of Park Rangers together with the collaboration of the other agencies involved. He suggested that this scheme be rolled out throughout the Council area.

Alderman Warke referred to comments made by the PSNI the previous week regarding the reduction in the levels of anti-social behaviour in St Columb's Park and commended the Park Rangers, the PSNI and Council on the introduction of family focused projects which had all contributed towards this.

Councillor Tierney, whilst acknowledging the importance of the service provided by Park Rangers, said it would be wrong to assume that they could address the issue of anti-social behaviour in St Columb's Park. He said that although they assisted in diffusing potentially difficult situations, it was vital that any issues beyond their control were referred to the appropriate agency for consideration. He stated that in attempting to combat anti-social behaviour, particularly in St Columb's Park, it was necessary to reclaim the Park and introduce a range of initiatives. He reiterated that it was not the responsibility of Park Rangers to deal with anti-social behaviour and expressed concern at

comments which might suggest that they were tasked with preventing anti-social behaviour. He agreed however with the proposed plan and the recommendations contained in the report.

Councillor Hastings referred to the need to assess the extent of Council's estate with particular emphasis on lands which had become Council's responsibility in recent years. He made further reference to the number of parks/facilities in Council's ownership and its responsibility in terms of health and safety provision. He stated that whilst Park Rangers could address some issues they were not responsible for addressing anti-social behaviour. Councillor Hastings reiterated the importance of ensuring that all Council facilities were fit for purpose in terms of health and safety provision and were regularly attended by Park Rangers.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration undertook to include Members' comments when putting forward proposals for the consideration in the Rates Estimates Process. She apologised for any misunderstanding regarding the role of the Park Rangers acknowledging that they were neither Community Safety Wardens nor Police Officers. Officers had realised the need for collaboration between all of the agencies involved to address the problem of anti-social behaviour and had endeavoured to achieve this during the current year. This together with additional security e.g. CCTV cameras and the introduction of a number of various initiatives had been delivered as a package to address the problem of anti-social behaviour and whilst having proved successful had not tackled the problem of anti-social behaviour in its entirety. However, it was hoped that this action would help provide a model in going forward to address the problem.

Alderman Hussey referred to 2.3 of the report and endorsed the suggestions contained therein to extend the provision of Park Rangers to cover the former Strabane District Council area. He said however that the protocol regarding where a Park Ranger might operate may need to be re-defined given that the nature of park provision in the Strabane District differed from the City. He further endorsed the remarks that the Park Rangers did not perform the duties of the Police suggesting that Park Rangers had a more educational role. He welcomed the measures which had been taken to address anti-social behaviour however in going forward he referred to a number of issues which had to be addressed particularly beyond the City area.

Councillor D Kelly said it might be opportune to dovetail discussion on getting Park Rangers included for the Sperrin's Area of Natural Beauty and there was an opportunity to collaborate with other agencies who were recruiting for similar type roles.

The Committee

Recommended (a) that the provision of the Park Rangers service be extended to cover the former Strabane District Council area; and

(b) that Council and all of the Agencies involved be commended on their hard work and endeavours to address anti-social behaviour in St Columb's Park.

ER213/18 Street Naming and Property Numbering - Development of 17 New Dwellings at Lands Adjacent to Bracken Gate, Curlyhill Road, Strabane - Request of Development Name

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to gain Members' consent to name a new development of seventeen new dwellings at a site adjacent to Bracken Gate, Curlyhill Road, Strabane.

The Committee

Recommended that approval be granted to the proposed first name 'Bracken Hill' as it complied with policy as it was named after an adjacent street and pertained to the elevated geographical location.

ER214/18 Street Naming and Property Numbering - Development of 4 New Dwellings at Lands to the Rear of 11 Ebrington Park Derry - Request for Development Name

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to gain Members' consent to name a new development of sixteen new apartments at a site to the rear of 11 Ebrington Park, Derry

The Committee

Recommended that approval be granted to the proposed first name 'Ebrington Lane' as it complied with policy and was named after an adjacent street.

ER215/18 Street Naming and Property Numbering - Development of 48 New Dwellings at Crescent Link, Derry - Request for Development Names

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to gain Members' consent to the proposed names for two new streets within an existing development at site adjacent to crescent Link, Derry.

The Committee

Recommended that approval be granted to the proposed names 'Oak Country Way and Oak Country Avenue' which complied with council policy as the names were connected to the previously approved name of Oak Country Manor, Park and Green for Phases 1, 2 and 3 of development.

ER216/18 Proposal to Establish the DCSDC Heritage Delivery Partnership

The Regeneration Manager presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of the proposal to establish a Council area heritage stakeholder forum, to be known as the Heritage Delivery Partnership. This is one of the targets for the joint initiative between DCSDC and Department for Communities – Historic Environment Division (HED) under the Heritage Development Officer Pilot Project.

The Committee received The Heritage Development Officer and Mr Deery, Historic Environment Division who gave a joint power-point presentation on the subject highlighting the following areas:

The Historic Environment Division

- Records
 - Protects
 - Conserves and
 - Promotes
- Our historic environment.

What is important and why?

Draft Programme for Government

- No mention of heritage
- Yet heritage can contribute to all of the outcomes

How can we achieve potential?

Working with stakeholders

- Agreed joint actions for PfG
- Sectoral message
- Joint Investment in EYCH
- Seeking opportunities across Government
- Historic Environment Division investment in strategic work:
 - . Heritage at risk
 - . Empowering community action
 - . Churches Trust
 - . Heritage Development Officer Pilot

Joint Heritage Development Project

- DCSDC and DfC (Historic Environment Division) joint initiative
- Co-ordinate series of historic environment activities and assist with policy development
- Establish Council area heritage stakeholder forum
- Heritage Framework

Historic Environment Stakeholder Group

- HED regional model
- Brings the sector together to help realise the benefits of NI's historic environment

- Organisations in the historic environment sector
- Interested parties from outside the sector such as Tourism NI, funders, educational bodies
- Chaired by HED and meets quarterly

Heritage Delivery Partnership

- Realise the economic and social regeneration potential of the historic environment in the Council area
- Help the area stand out as a place of quality and best practice in the custodianship of its heritage assets
- Encourage innovation in the management and co-ordination of the historic environment
- Encourage and develop community pride and involvement in caring for the historic environment
- Link and support heritage businesses and initiatives

Role of Heritage Delivery Partnership

- Provide a collective, representative voice for the historic environment sector of the City and District
- Help develop and implement the Council's Heritage Framework
- Delivery of heritage actions identified in the Strategic Growth Plan (2017-22032) and Local Growth Plans (2017-2022)
- Other DCSDC strategies such as Tourism Strategy (2018-22025), Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy, Village Renewal Plans and any relevant regional policies and initiatives.
- Provide a platform for communication for heritage stakeholders and encourage debate around best practice, innovation, access, participation and regeneration of the City and District.

Methodology

- Meet 4 times per annum, though additional meetings may be held if required
- Elect a Chair and Co-Chair who will serve for a maximum of 2 years
- Meeting will review the progress and actions as outlined in the Heritage Framework

- Technical advice and secretariat support for the Partnership will be provided by the Council
- Member organisations will cover travel expenses
- Responsibility of the Partnership to develop over time and promote and protect heritage through community engagement, conservation and celebration
- Operate on the basis of real and meaningful partnership

Membership

- Membership of the Partnership will be for the period of the Heritage Framework, usually 5 years
- Drawn from organisations in the historic environment sector and other parties with an interest in protecting and developing heritage across the Council area. Include representation from a range of sectors such as
 - . Local Government
 - . Government agencies
 - . Educational institutions
 - . Heritage organisations/groups
 - . Rural organisations

The Committee

Recommended that approval be granted to establish the Heritage Delivery Partnership as outlined in the report.

ER217/18 Applications Processed Under Building Regulations (NI)

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He pointed out that the purpose of the report was to advise Members of applications processed under Building Regulations (NI) between 1 August and 31 August 2018.

Members noted the content of the report.

ER218/18 Update - Combined Food and Green Waste Collections Strabane

The Head of Environment presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the

report was to update Members with regard to the introduction of combined food and green waste collections within the Strabane area.

Members noted the content of the report.

ER219/18 Removal of Public Telephone Kiosk

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She pointed out that the purpose of this report was to advise Members on a consultation exercise carried out by BRT with regards to a removal of a public telephone kiosk.

Members noted the content of the report.

ER220/18 Play Plan Update

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the development of a Play Plan for the City and District.

Members noted the content of the report.

ER221/18 Proposed Disabled Parking Bays

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She pointed out that the purpose of the report was to advise Members of correspondence received in September 2018 from Transport NI, Network Development Section, regarding proposed disabled persons' parking bays at various locations throughout the district.

Members noted the content of the report.

ER222/18 Health and Safety Works to the War Memorial

The Head of Environment presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members with regard to health and safety works required at the War Memorial located at the Diamond, Derry.

Members noted the content of the report.

ER223/18 Bilingual Signage

The Head of Capital Development and Building Control presented the Above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of the outcome of recent applications to provide bilingual signage at Glenfada Park, Harding Street, Lisfannon Park, Thistlewood Park and Westland Street, Derry.

Members noted the content of the report.

The Meeting went into Confidential Business

The meeting terminated at Time Not Specified