Open Minutes of Environment and Regeneration Committee held in the Chamber, Strabane Council Offices on Wednesday, 5 July, 2017 at 4.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Dobbins (in the Chair), Aldermen Bresland, Hussey, Ramsey and Warke, Councillors Campbell, Duffy, Hassan, Hastings, C Kelly, D Kelly, R McHugh, Reilly and Tierney.

Non-Members of Committee – Alderman Devenney and Councillor Gallagher.

In Attendance:- Head of Environment (Mr C Canning), Head of Capital Development and Building Control (Mr F Morrison), Parks Development Manager (Mr C Kennedy) and Committee Services Assistant (Ms N Meehan).

Representing Translink: Mr G McCloskey.

Representing Consarc Conservation Group: Ms B Lynch.

ER143/17 Notice and Summons for Meeting

The Head of Environment read the Notice and Summons for the Meeting.

ER144/17 Apologies

There were no apologies.

ER145/17 Declarations of Members’ Interests

Councillors Hastings and C Kelly declared an interest in item 15 – Tender Evaluation Report – Provision of Services for the Treatment of Bio-waste a North West Region Waste Management Group Tender – as members of the NWRWMG.

ER146/17 Chairperson’s Business

There was no Chairperson’s business.
Open for Decision

Confirmation of the Open Minutes

ER147/17 Minutes

Minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on 14 June 2017 (ER114/17-ER134/17) were confirmed and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

Matters Arising

ER148/17 Applications Processed Under Building Regulations (NI)

An Independent Member of Council who was a non-Member of the Committee advised that he had been contacted by a number of householders requesting a second food bin to deal with additional food waste and enquired if this could be provided. He expressed concern that food waste bins were not being emptied in the Strathfoyle and Fincairn Road areas and queried the current position regarding the roll-out of the food waste schemes in the rural area.

The said Member further queried if any action had been taken to address the current 4-5 week timescale in respect of the bulky waste collections.

A Member of the SDLP grouping said he understood that following discussion on this matter at the June Meeting of the Committee Officers would consult with those householders who required a second food waste bin and welcomed the fact that a number of families in the area had been accommodated in this regard.

Another Member of the SDLP grouping referred to a most productive meeting he had with a Council Officer regarding the roll-out of food waste bins in the Strathfoyle area.

A Member of the UUP grouping commended Officers for addressing the issues raised at the June Meeting of the Committee in relation to food waste bins.

The Head of Environment thanked Members for their comments. He advised that the food waste bin collection was currently operating on schedule. He explained that that had been clear operational issues
initially which had now been addressed. He assured that Council would facilitate the provision of additional food waste bins where required. Officers were also considering the introduction of larger food waste bins however a number of aspects must be considered in relation thereto including for example weight.

The Head of Environment acknowledged that there had been difficulties in relation to the bulky waste collection. He advised however, that additional crews and vehicles had been deployed in respect of this service and it was anticipated that it would be operating on schedule within the coming weeks. He advised that during the summer Council periodically carried out community clean-up schemes and anticipated that this would address any outstanding problems in this regard.

In response to a query from a Member of the UUP grouping, the Head of Environment advised that in regards to the provision of additional food bins, requests would be addressed based on individual circumstances.

In response to a query from a Member of the DUP grouping, the Head of Environment confirmed that households who were not in possession of a food waste bin were permitted to dispose of food waste in their black bin. However, it was anticipated that the roll-out would be completed throughout the Council district in the coming weeks.

In response to a query from a Member of the SDLP grouping, the Head of Environment acknowledged that difficulties might be experienced by householders in adapting to using the food waste bin. He assured that an introduction period would be afforded to those households following the delivery of their food waste bin. He stated that Council Officers would work with local communities to ensure the success of this service.

In response to a query from an Independent Member who was a non-Member of the Committee regarding the introduction of the food waste collection in the rural area, the Head of the Environment confirmed that the service would be rolled-out throughout the rural area where possible. However, there were exceptions and in some instances this might not be possible. Council would endeavour to facilitate rural householders where possible in this regard.
The Head of Environment said it was anticipated that the delivery of food waste bins would be completed by August with collections commencing thereafter.

**ER149/17 Proposed Bus Shelter Location at Listymore Park, Erganagh Road, Castlederg**

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 seek Members’ approval for a new bus shelter location at Listymore Park, Erganagh Road, Castlederg.

A Member of the Sinn Fein grouping welcomed the above report. He pointed out that it had been two years since he had been approached by residents regarding the need for bus shelter provision in this area. He expressed concern at the timescale involved in the delivery of this facility and anticipated that it would be on-site by September 2017.

A Member of the UUP grouping concurred with the above comments. He referred to the need to address the issue of outside agencies delaying progress on such projects.

The Committee

**Recommended** that Members endorse the entering of a Licence Agreement with NIHE with regard to a bus shelter at Listymore.

**ER150/17 Consultation received from DFE Minerals Branch in relation to Mineral Prospecting Licence Application (Dalradian Gold Limited)**

The Head of Environment 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 that a consultation has been received from the Department for the Economy (DFE) in relation to application from Dalradian Gold Limited for mineral prospecting rights in respect of lands in Counties Tyrone and Londonderry. The consultation is seeking that Derry City and Strabane District Council display the map showing the area over which the application has been made in our offices and to ask for any comments made by Derry City and Strabane District Council be forwarded to DFE by 1 August 2017.
An Independent Member of Council who was a non-Member of the Committee welcomed Council’s approach as outlined to deny the proposed Licence. He referred to considerable discussion which had taken place surrounding Dalradian’s proposals. He expressed concern at the effect the proposed mining would have on the surrounding areas and particularly rivers in Co Derry in Dungiven, Park and Feeney and Draperstown and in Co Tyrone in Glenelly, Dunamanagh, Owenkilloo and Gortin in terms of pollutants. He claimed that the proposed mining would discharge mercury, arsenic and copper and ultimately lead to poisoning. This could impact on a number of areas of outstanding beauty which would endure the effects of these poisonous substances.

A Member of the Sinn Fein grouping expressed concern that the Department had indicated that it was proposing to approve the licence prior to consultation having been carried out. He said it was totally inappropriate to make such a recommendation as this could be regarded as pre-empting the planning application and prove prejudicial.

The Member referred to a previous Motion passed by Council which highlighted that the Minister would hold a public consultation on any planning application in respect of such a development and council had supported a call for a public enquiry into what gold-mining would entail. He suggested that the reference to ‘water’ systems be amended to read ‘hydraulic’ systems.

A Member of the UUP grouping acknowledged general concerns regarding Dalradian’s operations. He referred to a previous speaker’s comments and enquired if there had been any investigation by Council’s Environmental Health Officers or the Rivers Agency in relation to pollutants into the water systems in the Council area.

A Member of the DUP grouping said he would require additional information regarding Dalradian’s actual proposals. Whilst acknowledging the prospect of inward investment he referred to the importance of protecting local communities. He suggested that representatives from Dalradian be invited to attend a future Meeting of the Committee to address Members to allay their fears regarding the proposed operations.

A Member of the SDLP grouping referred to a previous Council Motion that Council support the call for a Public Enquiry and suggested that it
might be more useful for Dalradian to put forward their case to a Public Enquiry rather than addressing Council given that there were a range of Council areas that would be affected by their proposed operations. He suggested that Council’s response to the Department outline its concerns regarding their decision to recommend approval of the Licence prior to the completion of the Public Consultation.

The Committee

**Recommended**

(a) that Members note the content of this paper and request from DFE alongside the draft letter for consideration and discussion and that Council outline its concerns at the Department’s recommendation to approve the Licence prior to the public consultation; and

(b) that representatives from Dalradian Gold Limited be invited to address a future Meeting of the Committee on their proposed operations.

**ER151/17 Regeneration of St Coumb’s Park**

The Head of Environment advised Members that the Parks Development Manager would give a brief power-point presentation on the emerging regeneration plans for St. Columb’s Park.

The Parks Development Manager gave the presentation a copy of which is attached at Appendix A.

Members from all Parties commended the Parks Development Manager on his presentation and looked forward to the final outcome of the project. Members then made the following comments:

- Welcomed this very exciting and engaging project.
- Referred to the positive impact the proposed regeneration would have on the Waterside area and further afield.
- Referred to the fact that St Columb’s Park House was a peace and reconciliation building and was an extremely valuable resource.
- Referred to the Ebrington Centre Peace Project and the Foyle Arena and the need to reflect the changing nature of the Park.
- Welcomed proposals for greater Park Ranger presence given recent reports of anti-social behaviour in the Park.
- Welcomed the proposed development of the Lavender Garden and given the historical aspects associated thereto referred to the possibility of this being incorporated into the Halloween Festival.
- Enquired as to the position regarding consultation with local residents?
- Enquired as to the proposed timeframe for the project?
- Welcomed the fact that the project incorporated both the historical and more modern aspects of the Park.
- Welcomed the project in terms of the overall regeneration of the Waterside area.
- Acknowledge that St Columb’s Park was a major part of the City’s heritage.
- Anticipated that the regeneration project would result in greater use of the Park and eradicate problems with anti-social behaviour.

The Parks Development manager thanked Members for their comments. He stated that it was incumbent upon Council to respect, protect and maintain its landscapes. He stated that Council was investing in the physical, social and economic regeneration of the area and the St Columb’s Project was an excellent example of how this could be achieved. He then made the following comments:

- Acknowledged the importance of consultation and confirmed that Council was working closely with the Board of St Columb’s Park House regarding the philosophical need.
- Confirmed that there had been considerable engagement with local residents to date.
- Understood that works would begin following the successful outcome of a planning application in respect of the works. However, considerable work would be carried out in the area prior to the submission of the planning application.
- Acknowledged the demand for the St. Columb’s Park allotments and through the progression of the project anticipated greater involvement with licence holders in due course.
- Confirmed that Council were engaging with Heritage Lottery Fund who he felt would be willing to enter into discussions with Council subsequent to Members approval having been granted.

The Committee
Recommended that authority be granted to approve the regeneration of St Columb’s Park as proposed subject to the successful outcome of subsequent planning applications.

ER152/17 Street Naming and Property Numbering – Development of 199 New Dwellings and 20 Apartments at Belt Road, 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 one hundred and ninety nine new dwellings and twenty apartments at a vacant site on Belt Road.

The Committee

Recommended that the proposed new development at a vacant site on Belt road be named Birch Hill as it complies with Council policy as it pertains to local geographical and environmental features.

ER153/17 Street Naming and Postal Numbering – Development on 78 New Dwellings at Trench Road, 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 on seventy eight new dwellings at the grounds of the former St Brecan’s High School on trench Road, Derry.

The Committee

Recommended that the proposed new development at the grounds of the former St Brecan’s High School on Trench Road, Derry be named St Brecan’s Park.

Open For Information

E154/17 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 advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of applications processed under Building Regulations (NI) between 1 May 2017 and 31 May 2017.

The Committee

**Recommended** that Members note the applications processed under the Building Regulations (NI) between 1 May 2017 and 31 May 2017.

The Meeting terminated at 6.15 pm

____________________________________ Chairperson

____________________________________ Date