

Derry City and Strabane District Council

Open Minutes of Business and Culture Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Guildhall, Derry on Tuesday 12 February 2019 at 4.00pm.

Present:- Alderman Ramsey (Vice-Chairperson) (in the Chair); Aldermen Hussey, Warke; Councillors Cooper, Cusack, Fleming, M McHugh, McKeever, McLaughlin, McMahon, Mellon and O'Reilly.

Non-Committee Members: Councillor's Donnelly and Gallagher.

In Attendance:- Director of Business and Culture (Mr S Gillespie), Head of Business (Mr K O'Connor), Head of Culture (Ms A McCarter) PA to Director of Business & Culture (Ms J Galloway-Doherty) and Committee Services Assistant (Mrs J Short).

BC19 /19 Notice and Summons of Meeting

The Director of Business and Culture read the Notice and Summons for the meeting.

BC20 /19 Member Attendance and Apologies

The Director of Business and Culture completed the roll call and recorded apologies for Alderman R Hamilton and Councillor P Logue.

BC21 /19 Declarations of Members' Interests

Councillors M McHugh, Fleming, McKeever and Alderman Warke declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 23: Peace IV Small Grants (2nd Round).

Councillor Cooper declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 9: Arts and Culture Strategy.

Councillor Cusack declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 11: Allocation of ESF Match Funding Year 2.

Councillor Mellon declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 13: Youth 19 Summer Arts Festival.

Suspension of Standing Orders

BC22/19 Smyth's Mill, Derry Road, Strabane – Fire

Councillor McMahon referred to the deliberate fire at the former Smyth's Mill site, Derry Road, Strabane that took place the previous Sunday night. He expressed concern over the safety of the building and asked for the relevant Council Department to contact the owners and agencies to ensure that the building was made secure.

Alderman Hussey supported the previous speaker's comments and concern. He referred to the anticipated regeneration plans that the new Council had inherited from the legacy Council and alluded to the fact that this particular location was included in the plans.

Councillor Gallagher advised that he had contacted the owners and they assured him that they were taking steps to secure the building.

Open for Decision

Chairperson's Business

BC23/19 The Chairperson had no business to discuss on this occasion.

BC24/19 Confirmation of the Open Minutes of the Business and Culture Committee held on Tuesday 15 January 2019.

The Open Minutes of the Business and Culture Committee Meeting (BC1/19-BDC15/19) held on Tuesday 15 January 2019 were confirmed.

BC25/19 Matters Arising

Councillor Hussey referred to Item No. BC10/19: Cultural Grant Aid Programme 2019/20; he requested a report to be presented to update Committee on the endeavours to encourage applications for major events to be held in the towns and villages throughout the DCSDC area.

BC26/19 Rural Co-operation Project – Yellow Frames

The Head of Business presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to seek Members' approval to progress a 'Yellow Frames' project as part of the Rural Cooperation Scheme under the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

Councillor M McHugh expressed support of the above report. However he suggested that consideration be given towards the inclusion of Clady Bridge as a location to be included in the 'Yellow Frames' project trail.

Alderman Hussey endorsed the previous speaker's remarks and queried if there was scope within the project to extend the programme to include other relevant locations throughout the District area.

The Head of Business advised that DAERA had requested sites in the Council or other public ownership to facilitate progression of the programme. However as not all the Councils had taken up their full allocation, there may be an opportunity at a later stage to add more locations.

The Committee

Recommended that Council approves proceeding with the Yellow Frames project as outlined in the report including acceptance of Letter of Offer on receipt and pre-approval of the appointment of suppliers to be procured in line with Council and DAERA procedures and requirements.

BC27/19 Global Export Programme

The Head of Business presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to seek Members endorsement on the proposed Global Export Programme.

Councillor M McHugh expressed his support of the above report. He commended the work of Officers involved in the identification of market growth for SME's. He supported the partnership arrangement with Donegal County Council and commented that with the uncertainty over Brexit that such an arrangement would hopefully minimise impact on the local economy and also enhance and develop the skills to embrace the new market.

Councillor McLaughlin supported the report and commended the work of Officers. She referred to both Councils identifying the need for a bespoke programme for local companies to assist them internationalise however expressed concern that such a programme should be the remit of Invest NI and therefore queried why INI were not funding the programme.

The Head of Business advised that the programme provided the opportunity to increase awareness with potential export markets. He added that they were beginning to see prosperity evolve and believed that the programme would add value and compliment to existing programmes of a similar nature facilitated by other Agencies.

Alderman Hussey concurred with concern expressed regarding Invest NI's underperformance and their lack of commitment to the support of SME's in the District Council area. However he fully endorsed the report.

Councillor Cooper also expressed concern with the poor commitment from Invest NI and the change in approach in previous years regarding the involvement with cross border initiatives. He suggested that Council writes to the relevant agencies to make a formal request for funding towards the programme.

The Committee

Recommended that Council notes the contents of the above report.

BC28/19 Arts & Culture Strategy including 5 Year Action Plan

The Head of Culture presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to adopt the Arts and Culture Strategy including a 5-year action plan.

Councillor Cusack welcomed the report and commended the work achieved by Officers. She said that the Arts provided numerous benefits and in particular regarding mental health and wellbeing and it was important that Council provided a platform to support local artists.

Councillor Cooper also welcomed the report. He referred to the financial support from the Arts Council and suggested that they be invited back at an appropriate time to give a follow-on presentation from their previous representation to Committee, to give an outline of how they plan to align their own activity to support the strategy.

Alderman Hussey welcomed the report and in particular the establishment of a Co Delivery Group to oversee the implementation of the Arts and Culture Strategy. He referred to the proposed change of Cultural Venues Fund to Cultural Organisation Fund and the removal of the requirement to be owner/lease holder of a premises and said that this would be a catalyst in terms of encouraging participation from cultural organisations.

The Committee

Recommended

that Council;

i) adopts the Arts and Culture Strategy and 5 year action plan.

ii) approves the establishment of a Co Delivery Group to oversee the implementation of the Arts and Culture Strategy to include a Member and Officer participation.

iii) approves an increase of the Arts and Culture budget by £150,000 to deliver the key actions detailed within the report subject to the rates process.

BC29/19 Update on Natural Connections: Peace Tourism Project

The Head of Culture presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on the project activity of the PEACE IV Natural Connections Peace Tourism funded project being delivered by the Tourism Development Department.

The Committee

Recommended that Council;

- i) notes the contents of the report regarding the update on the PEACE IV Natural Connections: Peace Tourism Project.**
- ii) approves in advance the appointment of a provider to deliver the animation programme following both Council and SEUPB PEACE IV procurement.**
- iii) approves in advance, the appointment of an individual/organisation to undertake research into the Maritime/Migration Stories of the City and its hinterland.**

BC30/19 Allocation of ESF Match Funding Year 2

The Head of Business presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to ask Members to approve an ESF match funding allocation to five organisations for delivery of their project in year 2 subject to a rates allocation.

Councillor McLaughlin queried why Council was approving funding applications for next year, when a report further on the agenda identified an underspend in some groups for this financial year.

The Head of Business explained that this was only Quarter 3 results and Quarter 4 was traditionally a busier quarter and therefore he was confident that the figures would improve. He added that the allocation for next year was essential to allow the groups to accept their letter of offer from the Department as funds were claimed retrospectively there was always an opportunity to reallocate in year if a group underspends.

The Committee

Recommended that Council approves the year 2 match funding at the same level as year 1, subject to the agreement as part of the rates estimation process for 2019/2020.

BC31/19 Heritage Tourism Update

The Head of Culture presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on the range of programmes that are being delivered to support the heritage tourism development and the respective sector.

Councillor Cooper welcomed the report and supported the expansion of the success already achieved in the development of this sector. He referred to the Walled City Programme and said that whilst he had no issue with the marketing of the Walled City product he wanted to ensure that there was consideration given to the wider Walled City product as the development and promotion of the monument itself was sensitive to the different perspectives that each community had on its history.

The Committee

Recommended

that Council;

- i) notes the contents of the report.**
- ii) approves in advance the appointment of the suppliers to deliver all elements of the 'Summer Animation Programme' in line with Council's Procurement Policy.**
- iii) approves the Heritage Framework to support the development of this sector in going forward.**

Open for Information

BC32/19 Youth 19 Summer Arts Festival

The Head of Culture presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to provide an update to Members on progress regarding the Youth Led Arts Festival scheduled for summer 2019.

Councillor Mellon welcomed the above report. She commended the work by Officers and their commitment to attend and support the events. She said that the young people were encouraged by the provision of a pathway to show case their talents and skills within their peer groups.

The Committee

Recommended

that Council notes the above report for information.

BC33/19 In Strabane Gift Card

The Head of Business presented the above report, details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on the progress of the In Strabane Gift Card.

The Committee

Recommended that Council notes for information the above report.

BC34/19 Business Boost Update

The Head of Business presented the above report details of which had been previously circulate to Members. The purpose of the report was to provide Members with a progress update on Business Boost up to 11 January 2019.

The Committee

Recommended that Council notes the content of the above report circulated for information.

BC35/19 DEVISE Project

The Head of Business presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The report provided Member with an update on the funding secured through Interreg Europe re. DEVISE Project.

The Committee

Recommended that Council notes the content of the above report circulated for information.

BC36/19 ESF Match Funding Quarter 3 Update

The Director of Business and Culture presented the above report details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on progress to date on five ESF projects match funded by Council to deliver services to those unemployed/economically inactive.

The Council

Recommended that Council notes the content of the above report circulated for information.

BC37/19 Rural Development Programme Update

The Head of Business presented the above report, details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

The Committee

Recommended that Council notes the above report for information.

The meeting went into confidential business.

The meeting ended at 5.20pm.