



MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (CPSP) MEETING
HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 10.01 AM

PRESENT: Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Director – Strategy and Performance, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (Acting Chair)

Aldermen
Kenneth Twyble

Councillors
Tim McClelland

OFFICIAL PARTNERS:	AMH	Colin Loughran
	BPA	Adrian Farrell
	Craigavon Food Bank	Chris Leech
	CVSP	Geraldine Lawless
	DfC	Simon Sloan
	EA	Paul Crooks
	HSCB	Caroline Cullen
	Invest NI	Ethna McNamee
	Libraries NI	Adrienne Adair
	NIHE	Catherine McFarland
	PHA	Colette Rogers
	SRC	Catriona Regan
	Tourism NI	Ainsley McWilliams

APOLOGIES:	CCMS	Majella Corrigan
	DfC	Sorcha Hassay
	HSCB	Sophie Lusby
	PSNI	Chief Inspector Bernard O'Connor
	SHSCT	Colin McCafferty
	Tourism NI	Martin Graham

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Councillor Peter Lavery
Roger Wilson, Chief Executive
Sharon O’Gorman, Strategic Director – Neighbourhood Services

IN ATTENDANCE: Elaine Gillespie, Head of Department: Community Planning
Jennie Dunlop, Community and Strategic Planning Manager
Michelle Markey, Community Planning Officer
Lynn Esler, Administrative Assistant
Patricia McParland, Democratic Services Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Deirdre McParland, HSCT
Dr Louise O’Kane, Community Places

Stephanie Rock, Age Friendly Officer, Armagh City, Banbridge
and Craigavon Borough Council
Mura Quigley, Urban Scale Interventions
Khadidja Salamah Konate, Urban Scale Interventions

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Welcome

The Acting Chair, Sharon McNicholl welcomed everyone to the thirteenth meeting of the partnership. She explained that the Chair, Roger Wilson Chief Executive was unable to attend today's meeting so she would take the position of Chair.

She welcomed and congratulated Geraldine Lawless from Portadown 2000 who had been re-elected as Panel Chair for another term.

She also welcomed and congratulated Colin Loughran from AMH who had been elected as Panel Vice-Chair.

Elaine Gillespie explained that Officers were not sure if the meeting was quorate but efforts would be made to ascertain this and to contact partners if required.

NOTED.

1.2 Apologies

NOTED: apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Peter Lavery, Roger Wilson Chief Executive and Sharon O'Gorman Strategic Director – Neighbourhood Services, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Majella Corrigan CCMS, Sorcha Hassay Department for Communities, Sophie Lusby HSCB, Chief Inspector Bernard O'Connor PSNI, Colin McCafferty SHSCT and Martin Graham Tourism NI.

NOTED.

1.3 Introductions

All partners introduced themselves.

Elaine Gillespie advised that the meeting was now quorate. She noted that Caroline Cullen needed to leave the meeting early and asked if any other partners also needed to leave to let Officers know.

NOTED.

2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting on 24 March 2021

Minutes of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership (CPSP) meeting on 24 March 2021.

AGREED: that the Minutes of the Community Planning Strategic Partnership (CPSP) meeting on 24 March 2021 having been previously circulated be confirmed and signed off as a correct record.

3. LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

3.1 Update from Catherine McFarland, NIHE

- **Report CPSP/LESC-21-02**

Catherine McFarland began by explaining that this was a very interesting Sub-Committee and a lot of excellent work had been done. She pointed out that she only Chaired the Sub-Committee and that an outstanding team of people did the work. There had been meetings in June and September 2021 and there were four key areas which they wanted to go through today. She referred to the partnership, highlighting that its approach and progressiveness made a big difference. She thanked everyone involved in the Sub-Committee and in rolling out the work from it. She explained that following the two Sub-Committee meetings she was struck by the impact of the stories being told as a direct result of the work that was being done through the partnership. Therefore rather than go through the report it was felt that it was more important for the wider partnership to hear from some of the people who had been involved in the work.

She explained that the four key areas were:

- Statement of Progress Part 3: Developing Our Partnership 2019 – 2021
- Community Engagement Strategy Update: TAK£500 Participatory Budgeting Project
- Shared Leadership Programmes
- Partnership Health Check 2019 – 2021

Community Engagement Strategy Update: TAK£500 Participatory Budgeting Project

A short video was then played which featured stories from people who had taken part in the TAK£500 project.

Catherine McFarland explained that the video brought projects to life and she thought it was important for the partnership to see that.

Dr Louise O’Kane went through the Powerpoint Presentation elaborating briefly on the following points:

- Shared Purpose
- TAK£500 Timeline
- Key Statistics
- TAK£500 Voter Feedback
- Quotes from Successful Groups
- Summary of Feedback from Successful Groups
- Celebration and Reflection Events
- Measuring the Process Standards for Community Engagement
- Improvements
- Preliminary Options to Take PB Forward – PB Working Group
- Concluding Comments

Catherine McFarland remarked on how useful it was to hear the experiences and benefits of the project. It was planned to look at the learning and strategic direction of travel for Participatory Budgeting, focus on the risks, challenges, benefits, opportunities and current research. It was hoped to pull this together into two part round table to look at how it could be taken forward.

Geraldine Lawless pointed out that she was aware of groups of people in the older communities who would have had difficulty in putting together a small video even though they had some help. She felt that the rest of the project was excellent and had enabled TADA to identify some groups which they had previously been unaware of.

Catherine McFarland was aware that when the project moved online, consideration had to be given to how people could put forward their ideas effectively and it was felt that a video was a good way to do that. A video explaining how to make a video had been created and she highlighted that there were now many devices which people could use to make videos. She added that some of the feedback showed that some people were very familiar with online technology and were well able to make videos. She acknowledged that there was a barrier for those who faced digital exclusion or lacked confidence and skills in this area. Restrictions in relation to Covid-19 had meant that the process was unable to take place face to face and had to move online and some learning had taken place which would enable more support to be provided in future processes.

Geraldine Lawless highlighted that going forward it was hoped that groups like TADA could go out and help those who required assistance. She referred to a newly formed group which had taken part successfully in the project.

Councillor McClelland thanked all those involved in delivery of the initiative. He had taken part in a Zoom call with a number of the groups over the summer and had found it very enjoyable and he remarked on their enthusiasm. He highlighted the great achievements despite the restrictions associated with Covid-19 and he felt that without these, even more could have been done. He asked if there had been a variation in participation across District Electoral Areas (DEAs) at the voting stage and he wondered if anything could be done to address this. In relation to production of the videos, he asked if any groups had requested help to do this.

Dr Louise O'Kane advised that there had been a number of requests for support and a number of the Participatory Budgeting Working Group members met with some groups and supported them with production of their videos. She added that all Participatory Budgeting Working Group members made themselves available throughout the process in order to support people to get involved as they were aware that production of the video could be a barrier. She added that libraries also provided access for people to go and use computers where required. In relation to the spread across the DEAs, she did not have those numbers but she understood that there was some variation.

Michelle Markey explained that there was some variation in levels across DEAs and this was reflected in the number of projects that groups could vote on. For example in some areas there were 15 projects that groups could vote for and in other areas there were only seven or eight. This was something that could be looked at more closely going forward.

Adrienne Adair commended Catherine McFarland and Dr Louise O'Kane for all their work in relation to this matter. She felt that it demonstrated the impact of what a small amount of money could do and how effective it was at getting people involved which was the purpose of Community Planning. It also addressed wellbeing and brought quick wins which meant people could see the benefits and she commended the results of the evaluation. She added that libraries offered access to IT and video making facilities, however during the period of the project, libraries had had to close due to the Covid-19 restrictions. She hoped that if the initiative was to run again, libraries could offer much more assistance.

Catriona Regan highlighted that there were a number of groups who previously may not have been supported through the financial assistance policy and she suggested that this group could promote financial assistance and working with the community team to help them to access funding for their work.

Elaine Gillespie confirmed that groups would be signposted on to Council's financial assistance policy as well as to small grants which were available through some of the other partners. A workshop session had also been offered to any groups who were not successful in getting a TAK£500 grant to help signpost them to other funding sources.

Catriona Regan was happy with this response.

Catherine McFarland thanked partners for their questions which she felt demonstrated the level of interest. It was important to capture the learning and move forward.

Shared Leadership Programmes

Catherine McFarland highlighted that partners were aware that work had been done with Carnegie UK Trust. There had been four Shared Leadership Programmes involving 55 participants from 34 organisations. A lot of work had been done to ensure support was given to those who were leading on actions. She explained that Chris Leech and Deirdre McParland who had attended the programme would provide an update on their experiences.

Chris Leech explained that he was part of the PB Working Group and he had found it a very worthwhile experience working alongside some of the statutory partners seeing at first hand how the project was rolled out in the community. He highlighted how successful it had been and stated that the impact that a relatively small amount of money had on communities was incredible.

He explained that in October 2020 he had been given the opportunity to participate in the Shared Leadership Programme as part of the Community and Voluntary Sector Panel. A number of groups participated at that stage from a wide variety of sectors. He explained that it provided an opportunity to evaluate the work that had been done during the first lockdown in offering food and community support. It also allowed discussion to take place in relation to what was going on in the community and how more help could be provided with different organisations working together. This had been very helpful and was facilitated by Anna Clarke and the group met on a weekly basis via Zoom. Technology had provided an opportunity for the group to connect with organisations and experts from around the world during the Covid-19 lockdown. This provided an opportunity for them to hear other experiences of community development and consider how it could be implemented together. A conference had taken place and this was open to the wider community sector and speakers from countries including Kenya and Australia which provided a high level of learning and exposure which he had found very useful. This learning had enabled him to begin working with other foodbanks in the community and they were also invited into conversations with Council in relation to designing and responding to emergency food need in the second lockdown. This enabled a sense of co-design with Council in relation to the most appropriate way to bring food support to the community and there were four foodbanks involved in that process. With the help of the Shared Leadership Programme, in February 2021 when additional funding became available through Brexit mitigation, it had been possible to invite 13 organisations in February, March and April accessing funding from DfC and linking with other organisations to get food provision out to the community. In the background the Shared Leadership Programme provided a place to discuss how this was done, how support was integrated and how they responded in real time to the needs of the community. The programme was very timely and beneficial and helped them to navigate the ups and downs of Covid-19 at that time.

Catherine McFarland stated that it was good to hear how beneficial the programme was and how it integrated with the work of the foodbank.

Deirdre McParland explained that she worked in Mental Health Promotion based in Southern Trust and she was the thematic action lead for Mental Health in the Community Plan. She had taken part in the latest Shared Leadership Programme. She worked on a joint action plan for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention across the Southern Area and a lot

of the actions that she was responsible for involved leading without authority. She had found the programme very useful and she had found lots of easy to follow and relevant content. From a personal point of view, she felt that the programme had given her the confidence to drive forward the actions in the Mental Health Action Plan as well as those within the Community Plan. She highlighted that the programme had provided confidence to lead on an action and to bring other people on board, whereas previously she had felt that she was solely responsible for actions. The programme had provided the information, knowledge and confidence to do this. It had also allowed her to get to know other partners outside of their job roles which had enabled them to build relationships. This meant that she now felt comfortable in approaching partners when required. She highlighted that she was involved in a TAK£5 interactive resource which was a PHA funded piece of work along with Mental Health Action Plan across the Southern Area to get the Take 5 message out into the community. Through the Community Plan they were able to bring key partners within the Community Planning agenda together to communicate that there were lots of ways the partners were contributing to Take 5 across the borough and short video had been developed which highlighted opportunities for people to participate. This would be part of the interactive resource and whilst it had been challenging to get to this stage, it had also been an excellent learning opportunity. The video would be launched soon and there was also a lot of additional information in relation to how citizens of the borough could connect, be active and take notice. She added that with the assistance of funding from DfC it had been possible to expand the project. She looked forward to the release of the final product and she felt that the Shared Leadership Programme provided a catalyst for this work.

Catherine McFarland remarked that the programme was about bringing Community Planning to life by building relationships and partnerships.

Catriona Regan outlined that discussions had been ongoing in relation to co-design and she welcomed that this had now been implemented with the foodbanks. She commended the partnership for creating an opportunity where this really worked.

Catherine McFarland added that there were Community Planning relationships across Northern Ireland but when it was possible to see the difference that this made within communities that was when Community Planning came to life. The programmes had been successful at bringing partnerships to life and making a difference to people. She outlined the benefits of hearing directly from those involved.

Partnership Health Check 2019 – 2021

Jennie Dunlop explained that two years ago when the first Statement of Progress was carried out, a Partnership Health Check had been completed. This was not a statutory requirement however it was felt that it would be very useful as it was known how important a strong partnership was to delivering the outcomes of the plan. It was useful to get the views of partners in relation to how the partnership was operating and rather than the impact of the actions, it related to the operation of the partnership and perceptions of the benefits of being part of it.

Jennie Dunlop then went through the Powerpoint Presentation elaborating briefly on the following points:

- Strengths and Improvements
- Issues to be addressed
- BUT, what we learnt from taking part
- We are not alone.....
- Partners and Covid-19

Catherine McFarland highlighted that the Health Check was beneficial in showing what was working and what was not. She highlighted that there were a number of issues coming from it which were included in the recommendation. She asked if partners were happy to approve the recommendations.

Partners were content to approve the recommendations.

Catherine McFarland thanked the Sub-Committee members and all partners involved. She thanked Dr Louise O’Kane, Chris Leech and Deirdre McParland for their contributions as well as the Community Planning team and the participants.

The Acting Chair, Sharon McNicholl thanked Catherine McFarland for all her work in leading the Sub-Committee.

AGREED:

- that the partnership approve the Statement of Progress Part 3: Developing Our Partnership for publication before the end of November to meet the statutory deadline.
- that the partnership agrees to hold a roundtable on Participatory Budgeting to inform the strategic direction and next steps.
- that the partnership consider committing to fewer actions under fewer themes and that the partnership provide support to those leading on actions.

Catherine McFarland retired from the meeting at 11.19 am.

4. BETTER OUTCOMES SUBCOMMITTEE

4.1 Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan – Update from Adrienne Adair Libraries NI and Stephanie Rock

Adrienne Adair began by explaining that like the Leadership and Engagement Sub-Committee, the Better Outcomes Sub-Committee had carried out a huge amount of work and she paid tribute to all the leads and Council Officers who had been involved in this and she thanked them for their contribution. She highlighted that a two year report on the Better Outcomes Sub-Committee would be presented to the Community Planning Strategic Partnership. She explained that the decision had been taken to focus on a recovery plan when dealing with the impact of Covid-19 which was still ongoing. The aim was to maximise the community response and partnership working to reduce the impact of the virus. Focus had been given to wellbeing programmes, nutrition and sport, business and employability, employment opportunities, tackling poverty and inequality and isolation and loneliness which had increased during the pandemic. She highlighted that work was ongoing and the sub-committee had last met in June when updates from partners had been received in relation to loneliness, unemployment and skills support which were major priorities. She remarked that people who were fully involved with or had experienced the outcomes of the work brought it to life. The June meeting had also highlighted that SH&SCT were leading on the loneliness network and she pointed out that loneliness and social isolation had been exacerbated during the pandemic. The network launch had been attended by 70 people and there was great interest across partners in working together to reduce loneliness in the borough. The network would develop a report to deliver together and was advancing plans for three “Chatty benches” to be installed. Updates were also received from DfC and Council in relation to the new labour market partnership which they were working on jointly to develop and deliver action plans and she encouraged any partners who were interested to get involved.

She highlighted that another new initiative from the partnership was the Age Friendly Borough Action and Stephanie Rock would provide an update on this. PHA had provided funding to Council to lead on the approach and an Age Friendly Alliance had been formed which followed the World Health Organisation model for age friendly places. It was important for all partners to be involved and Stephanie Rock, the Age Friendly Officer would provide more information.

Stephanie Rock explained that she was Council's Age Friendly Officer. The Age Friendly Programme was a framework developed by the World Health Organisation and was one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to demographic ageing. She explained that an Age Friendly Programme was needed due to the ageing population and living longer was a huge opportunity if neighbourhoods and communities could be adapted for people as they aged. As people grew older they often spent more time in their homes and communities so their immediate environment had a significant impact on their health, wellbeing and the quality of their lives. Age Friendly areas were essential for the ageing population, they were communities where age was not a barrier to living well and where the environment, activities, and services supported and enabled older people. This was needed now as this borough, like other areas had an ageing population with the number of people aged 65 plus projected to grow by 65% in the next 23 years and the number of residents aged 85 plus set to rise by 125%. It was also recognised that growing numbers of older people were living with dementia, multiple long term health conditions and in social isolation. Developing an Age Friendly borough was one of the most effective local policy approaches for responding to demographic ageing. In relation to the Age Friendly structure, she explained that delivering an Age Friendly borough was an action in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's Community Planning Response and Recovery Plan under the theme Target Hardship, Poverty and Inequality. The PHA funded Council to embed Age Friendly into its structure and Council was responsible for the development of an Age Friendly Strategy for the borough utilising a co-production approach and engaging a range of representatives from public, community and voluntary sectors including older people. In response to this an ABC Age Friendly Alliance was formed in March 2021 with 36 members attending the first meeting. This group would work together to meet the outcomes of the Community Plan in relation to Age Friendly and promote the best possible health and wellbeing, safety and quality of life outcomes for older adults living in this Council area. Following the framework as set out by the World Health Organisation Global Network on Age Friendly cities and communities, this group would develop and oversee the implementation and evaluation of an Age Friendly strategy and three year action plan for the borough. In line with the World Health Organisation framework, consultation with older people was probably the most important aspect of the entire Age Friendly programme. Capturing the voice of the older person was key to the entire process and in response to this an Age Friendly survey went live in July 2021 for residents aged 50 plus to share their views of what was working in their area to promote active ageing and what steps were needed to improve it. 593 surveys were received, 283 of which were hard copies and there had been a wide representation from all age groups from 50 plus to people aged 85 and over. Some more in depth interviews with older people had been carried out and to date over 50 questionnaires had been received and five focus groups had been held. In order for this strategy and action plan to be successful, all organisations had a role to play and the next Age Friendly Alliance workshop, scheduled for October 2021 would focus on the steps the Alliance could take to make ABC more age friendly and the input of all members into that discussion would help ensure that there was an action plan which was ambitious, deliverable and most importantly which made a difference to residents of the borough as they got older. She thanked partners for their commitment to the programme so far and as it moved to the action planning phase she asked for continued support. Working together, this was a great opportunity to make this Council area a place where older people could live full, active, valued and healthy lives.

Adrienne Adair thanked Stephanie Rock for the update and suggested that information regarding the event in October could be circulated to partners.

Colette Rogers remarked that it was very useful to have an update on the current position in relation to Age Friendly. She highlighted that the partnership was aware of the many issues facing older people in recent months and one of the big challenges was that a lot of older people had lost their level of mobility as they had been indoors. She stressed the importance of getting the Age Friendly strategy and plan right and she highlighted the support from partners which was in place. She added that before the Covid-19 pandemic it was a priority, however now the issues of wellbeing and healthier lives, social isolation and loneliness were

even more important. She highlighted the importance of being active and being able to get involved which helped with both physical health and wellbeing.

Catriona Regan highlighted the importance of providing older people with the opportunity to physically move and she gave the example of armchair aerobics. She felt that a barrier to getting older people to attend activities was transport and she was aware that many older people did not feel comfortable travelling in a taxi. She was aware that Council supported the DART service and she felt that any additional provision would also be very useful.

Stephanie Rock explained that the Age Friendly Alliance was supported by DART, Rural Transport and Translink. She added that initial indications from the Age Friendly survey had highlighted that social participation was an important issue with people wanting to get out and about and get involved.

Adrienne Adair added that Libraries NI had looked at the possibility of Age Friendly Libraries in one of the other boroughs prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was recognised that there were issues around social isolation and programming as well as the transport barriers. During the pandemic a lot of skills sharing had taken place and iPads had been lent out to people who were socially isolated and she added that Libraries NI would be interested in developing further opportunities in relation to this.

NOTED.

The Acting Chair, Sharon McNicholl thanked Adrienne Adair and Stephanie Rock for their comprehensive update in relation to the work of the Better Outcomes Sub-Committee.

Elaine Gillespie explained that due to some partners needing to leave at this point, the remainder of the meeting would not be quorate. She suggested proceeding with the last item on the agenda and if partners present were happy with the decision, Officers would send an email to other partners asking for their approval to proceed on that basis.

Partners were content to proceed on this basis.

The meeting adjourned from 11.32 am until 11.40 am.

Mura Quigley and Khadidja Salamah Konate from Urban Scale Interventions (USI) joined the meeting at 11.40 am.

5. LOCALITY PLANNING: Armagh Place Plan

5.1 Presentation from Mura Quigley and Khadidja Salamah Konate, Urban Scale Interventions (USI)

The Acting Chair, Sharon McNicholl highlighted that Locality Planning was an important item and she asked Elaine Gillespie to provide more information.

Elaine Gillespie explained that the Armagh Place Shaping Plan was an important piece of work for the partnership and work had been ongoing for almost one year. There had been discussions in relation to moving past the borough Connected: Community Plan, how it played out in different localities and how the link between the Community Plan and Spatial Planning could be improved. Consideration also needed to be given to previous masterplans and how they could be addressed in a place shaping pilot. It had been agreed to pilot this in Armagh and DfC and Northern Ireland Housing Executive had agreed to help finance the project and were involved in the steering group throughout.

Elaine Gillespie welcomed Mura Quigley and Khadidja Salamah Konate from Urban Scale Interventions (USI) who were working on this pilot. She added that they had attended the

previous meeting of the partnership and would today provide information on the first full draft of the plan. If partners were happy with the draft plan it would move through the Council Committee structure and it was hoped to go out to public consultation at the beginning of November. She explained that the four outcomes had not changed since the previous meeting and were still:

- A Connected City
- A Green City
- An Engaging City and
- A Healthy City

USI had carried out more engagement throughout the summer to backup what had already been done as many of initial consultation exercises had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Work had also taken place with partners in relation to the detail of some of the actions.

Mura Quigley then went through the Powerpoint Presentation elaborating briefly on the following points:

- Contents
- The story of Armagh
- Vision for Armagh
- Engagement Overview
- City Centre Health Check
- Engagement Feedback
- Plan Outcomes
 - A Connected City
 - A Green City
 - An Engaging City
 - A Healthy City
- Population Indicators
- The big ideas for Armagh
- Armagh City of Culture
- Housing for Armagh
- Build a Leisure Village at Mullinure
- Bring the Gaol Building Back into use
- Pilot a High Street Craft Kit in Armagh
- Increase Green and Blue Infrastructure in the city
- Armagh Streets Alive
- Armagh Backlands Project
- City Wide
- City Wide Key Actions
- Icons & Anchors
- Icons & Anchors Key Actions
- Journeys Key Actions
- High Street Key Actions
- Gateways Key Actions
- Open Spaces Key Actions
- Grey Spaces Key Actions

Mura Quigley advised that the meeting would now move to break-out rooms to enable discussion on the following questions:

- How is the plan?
- Do you agree with the outcomes and actions?
- Which ones can your organisation contribute to?
- Anything missing?
- Anything that shouldn't be there?

Elaine Gillespie added that any significant questions in relation to the plan could be taken at this stage before moving to break-out rooms.

Catriona Regan congratulated the team on their work in relation to the plan which she felt was deliverable, was at the right level and she welcomed it. She wondered if the Age Friendly element should have been included and she would also like to have seen play included. She asked where young people featured in the plan. She felt there was a great opportunity to do this through public art and telling stories and she gave the example of Gulliver's Travels where children were able to play.

Mura Quigley agreed with the Age Friendly and Child Friendly suggestions and she felt that some tweaks could be made which would bring those elements to the fore.

Adrienne Adair commended the plan and felt it was very interesting. She wondered if the possibility of pedestrianisation had been mentioned as she had understood that had been mooted at one stage in relation to some areas of the city centre.

Mura Quigley explained that many discussions and debates had taken place in relation to this and it had been included in previous plans over many years in relation to Armagh. There had been lots of barriers and sticking points in relation to this and as the word had become quite contentious they had avoided using it. If it was approached from the point of view of what was needed to make the key spaces of the city people centred, putting the pedestrian and cyclist first and the car last this may be better received. There was a specific action included and consideration could be given to how this could be strengthened going forward.

Adrienne Adair remarked that during the pandemic, many outside spaces in many cities had been utilised which had proven very successful in adding another dimension. In relation to Armagh City Library, she explained that they would be bringing the cultural heritage services with the public library. She added that there were many other libraries in Armagh for example the O'Faich and Robinson libraries and she wondered if reference should be made to them as part of the cultural heritage offering.

Mura Quigley advised that she would be happy to work with Adrienne Adair and the other operators in relation to how a more co-ordinated approach to cultural services around all libraries could be taken.

Elaine Gillespie highlighted that as there were a number of partners who had indicated that they wished to speak and there were not that many in attendance at the meeting it may be more appropriate to continue as a plenary session rather than go into break-out rooms.

Councillor McClelland referred to the excellent presentation and he welcomed the reference to agriculture and the food heartland which he felt had a lot of potential. He commended suggestions in relation to gateways into the city and was happy to see involvement of schools. He expressed a note of caution, however as he had raised this matter at full Council meetings recently and was aware that it was a difficult issue to navigate especially regarding the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) signing off in relation the location of signage as well as the safety aspect around these issues. He thanked everyone involved for their work in relation to the plan.

Mura Quigley was aware of the issues in relation to the gateways and she highlighted that consideration should be given to where the first presentations of the whole borough were and Armagh was one of these due its historic importance and rich heritage which attracted a lot of people. She outlined that there was some work to be done in relation to identifying sites and a number of meetings with representatives from DfI had taken place where the key actions of the plan were communicated. She was aware that it was important that DfI were involved from the outset so that they could advise what would be possible in relation to safety issues.

Elaine Gillespie added that Officers had recently discussed the importance of DfI's role in relation to Armagh Plan and consideration would be given to ensuring they could be brought closer to the partnership. It was hoped that they would become as involved as possible through the process.

Colette Rogers commended the plan and expressed her excitement as she highlighted the importance of the place and the environment, which were critical to health and wellbeing. She added that this did not just relate to walking but also feeling safe and other elements and she expressed her support for the plan. She acknowledged that public sector organisations needed to step up and take the lead including PHA and she highlighted that Tower Hill included PHA and HSCB and there was a site at St. Luke's hospital, all of which employed health service workers. She outlined that if there was a train service to Armagh, this would provide great benefits for many people included herself who lived in Belfast and worked in Armagh. She felt there was a role for health sector employees to look at the health and wellbeing of staff and using public spaces. She explained that the Tower Hill site featured some loops which were suitable for walkers, however she felt there would be benefits to being part of a network for safe city cycle routes. PHA had policies in place where staff could go out for an additional 15 minutes twice each week for physical activity. She added that they had volunteer walk co-ordinators in place and additional services which could be activated to support the infrastructure. She added that Tower Hill site also featured a ghost which was located in the former workhouse. There was also an old graveyard which could all be incorporated into a tour. She added that because the buildings were old, they faced challenges in relation to energy efficiency. She felt that it was important that the tenants of the building played their part and she highlighted that whilst there was no representative from the Trust in attendance at the meeting, she knew that it would be very supportive of the plan.

Mura Quigley highlighted the importance of bringing people along on the journey and she welcomed Colette Rogers' comments. She was aware of the large number of public sector institutions in Armagh and they could adopt all their own policies for sustainable behaviour. However if this was done on a city level it would be a way of co-operating across the city, given the opportunity which was in place with the large work base of people who were part of the community during the day.

Paul Crooks remarked that he had worked in Armagh for 33 years and he commended those involved in the plan and he looked forward to see it progress. As a father of three teenage sons he felt that focus needed to be given to what would make families come to Armagh. He also highlighted the importance to attracting staff to the city and he felt that re-establishing the train link would be vital to this. In relation to the leisure issue, he felt that Armagh had varying degrees of success and he highlighted that many of his staff went to places like the Cathedral Quarter or Carlingford. He highlighted that many young people on social media would travel to the next town or city to a popular food outlet and he suggested Armagh needed to consider providing this type of attraction which would encourage further cultural spend. He welcomed consideration being given to the Gaol and he gave the example of Crumlin Road Gaol's success. He highlighted that some investment needed to be directed towards the Planetarium as it had not changed in many years. The Education Authority would be willing to work with them in relation to this. He added that sport was an excellent way of bringing communities together and he commended Council for its work in relation to the development of Gosford Forest Park. He felt that the site at Mullinure provided an excellent opportunity for communities and sporting clubs to work together. He highlighted that Saint Patrick's Day in Armagh could be quite a divisive event and he felt it was important to bring communities closer in any way possible. He thanked those involved in the plan for all their hard work.

Mura Quigley thanked Paul Crooks for his comments and highlighted that they had heard many excellent ghost stories from children in relation to the Gaol which she felt demonstrated the attachment which they felt to special places and contributed to their pride in the city. She was aware that the train line was a major consideration for young people when they were deciding where to go and she pointed out that many people in Armagh did not have access

to cars. It was important to address those inclusivity issues in the public space and she also acknowledged the need for social cohesion in the city. She added that the areas around Mullinure, The Mall and The Gaol were shared spaces and it was important to enhance this to bring the whole of Armagh together and celebrate the city collectively.

Ainsley McWilliams congratulated Mura Quigley and Khadidja Salamah Konate for their work on putting forward proposals which she felt were at the right level and were very engaging. She felt that there were ways in which Tourism NI would want to become involved and to support the plan by assisting in relation to indicators for example visitor numbers, bed nights and visitor attitudes. The Insights Team had carried out work on the post-Covid-19 environment in relation to tourism and motivation to travel and this would also be made available. Tourism NI had funded all Northern Ireland Councils to implement an activation programme and the initiative for this borough would focus on the Armagh area and would cover the period October 2021 to March 2022. This would provide an opportunity to experiment with events which would take place during this time and the theme was centred around culture and heritage and reactivating the city through those mediums. It would include three signature events and a number of other animations, some of which would be based around the Planetarium. There would be opportunities to learn from the Armagh experience and the programme would also take place in other areas of Northern Ireland and following evaluation, some shared learning would be available. Tourism NI would also be the sponsor for the Mid South West Tourism Project going forward and engagement with colleagues on the Mid South West City Deal programme had begun and would continue. She added that some elements would centre around Armagh and the Gaol as well as other considerations. She was happy to support proposals going forward.

Mura Quigley remarked that she understood the activation programme would coincide with the public consultation of the draft plan and potentially this would provide opportunities to reach out to further audiences. She would liaise with the Community Planning team to identify potential to work together on future events in Armagh. In relation to the Mid South West City Deal programme, she highlighted that the Gaol was a high priority and if preparatory work was being done in relation to its restoration, it was important to engage with the wider community in relation to the correct use for that space and the area around it. She referred to the public realm around the Gaol, pointing out that due to the many lanes of traffic between it and The Mall, people felt disconnected. Therefore it was important to have a wider connection of the heritage aspects in the public space.

Ainsley McWilliams advised that public consultation was an important part of the City Deals programme and would be given consideration. She referred to a City Deal project in Carrickfergus which focussed on heritage led regeneration and as it had advanced further through the process it may be possible to learn from that programme.

Catrina Regan pointed out that she was aware that the Planetarium had put a business case together and were working with Council's Leisure team in relation to looking at the area of Mullinure as a single space. She pointed out that the significant benefit of the site was its proximity to education facilities which meant that leisure could be integrated with the education provision. She referred to a former DfC programme called "Living Over the Shops" which had been implemented in Dromore with great success and she felt it could be beneficial to Armagh. In relation to retro-fitting of buildings, she was aware that this may be included in the Mid South West Deal and she pointed out that SRC would be very interested in becoming a lead partner in relation to this and she felt there were opportunities for funding through the Community Renewal Fund. She added that she was aware that there were issues in Armagh in relation to the availability of bed nights at various scales. She highlighted that there had been plans for the Gaol to be developed into a hotel and she felt that if this did not happen there was a need for overnight accommodation to be provided elsewhere. She also suggested a possible alternative use for the Gaol could be as a regional hub which could accommodate people who were working remotely. She also highlighted that the St. Luke's hospital site may be suitable for this purpose. She added that the city needed bicycles similar to those in Belfast which would allow people to travel along the greenways. She understood

that SIB had carried out a plan for green routes across the city which could be shared.

Mura Quigley thanked Catriona Regan for her comments and remarked on the opportunities in relation to the area around Mullinure, SRC and the Planetarium and the green and blue infrastructure which could be developed further. She had accessed that SIB plan and added that work could be done to adapt it to suit. It was important to create an option where young people could access bicycles to go to college. In relation to the bed nights issue, work was ongoing with Tourism NI and it was recognised that there was a changing picture following the pandemic in what people were looking for in overnight visits which included hotels and Air Bnbs.

Jennie Dunlop explained that a large amount of research and engagement had taken place which had generated some rich information for the plan. She highlighted that it was difficult to get statistics and data at the level of towns and the city in the borough and she felt that there was an opportunity for the partnership, when considering the Statement of Progress and the impact of Covid-19, to gather service statistics from statutory partners and the community and voluntary sector. She felt that a place based approach could be taken in relation to the healthy city outcome and suggested that some partners come together to look at the service and population statistics which would enable insights to be gained. There may then be opportunities for partners to implement some low cost initiatives which would make a big difference.

Paul Crooks emphasised that on behalf of the Education Authority he supported the plan and was happy to play his part. He referred to the Mullinure development, he emphasised the importance of connectivity and he pointed out that the Special School was also located in that area and could also be linked in. In relation to Armagh Gaol, he felt that a change of use was not the most appropriate way to develop the building as he felt the historical value needed to be preserved. He continued that the Education Authority was looking at a blended working approach going forward which may lead to some smaller buildings no longer being needed.

Mura Quigley remarked that the key next step for consideration was to engage with the landowners whether they were public or private. She highlighted that a masterplan was a powerful piece of work as it showed who owned what land and this helped start conversations. She was aware of the issue with government assets and putting them to a use which generated economic, environmental and social value. There was a lot of publicly owned land in Armagh and once the plan was in place, engagement was a key next step.

Councillor McClelland referred to the engagement with landowners and pointed out that caution needed to be exercised in relation to those who owned the land along the route of the potential rail link. He was aware that some had raised concerns and he felt that consideration needed to be given to this.

Elaine Gillespie highlighted that efforts had been made to get a balance within the action plan with some elements which were realistic and could be done quickly and others which were long term, ambitious, aspirational and would take a considerable amount of work. The partnership needed to have a conversation in relation to how the plan would be brought forward and she suggested that the feedback given at this meeting would be looked at during the public consultation and consideration would be given to how it could be integrated. Following evaluation, consideration also needed to be given to whether the plan could be rolled out in other areas and how could this be done. She highlighted that there was no funding available for the plan, therefore attention needed to be given to how the bigger strategic actions could be brought forward for example by ensuring links with City Deals, Peace Plus, DfC and Public Realm scheme where there were funding opportunities. Consideration also needed to be given to how the plan was embedded into structures and this would be discussed at the next meeting in November.

She asked if partners were happy that the plan be circulated to partners who were not in attendance at this meeting to seek their permission to move ahead with the public consultation phase. The plan would also be brought through the Council's Committee structure in October which should enable the public consultation process to commence in November. This would last for 12 weeks and it was hoped that it would not be online only and that ongoing engagement with people on the ground could take place.

Jennie Dunlop added that a slightly updated version of the plan would be circulated to partners following the meeting.

Partners were happy to proceed on this basis.

The Acting Chair, Sharon McNicholl commended partners for their feedback in relation to the plan.

AGREED: as this part of the meeting was not quorate that the draft Armagh Place plan be circulated to all partners for approval, subject to any amendments.

6. AOB

Next meeting

Elaine Gillespie explained that it was hoped that the next meeting on 17 November 2021 would run slightly differently.

Jennie Dunlop advised that Part 3 of the Statement of Progress related to how the partnership was operating. She explained that the meeting in November would focus on:

- Part 1 – How is the borough doing in the round?
- Part 2 – Performance of the partnership (Better Outcomes Sub-Committee)

There was a statutory deadline at the end of November for publication of the statement. It was hoped to look at the strategic themes focussing on what had been achieved in the last two years and priority setting for the next two years.

Elaine Gillespie added that the meeting would be more workshop style where the direction of the partnership for the next two years would be set. There would be a focus on some of the recommendations from this meeting, for example looking at reducing the number of actions and themes whilst investing more in the support of those. She encouraged partners to attend the next meeting as it was important that the statement was signed off.

NOTED.

7. CLOSE

The Acting Chair, Sharon McNicholl thanked everyone for their input, highlighting that the meeting was a culmination of the hard work which had taken place across the various groups. She thanked the Community Planning team for their support and guidance through the complex matters dealt with by the partnership.

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 17 November 2021 at 2.00 pm.

The business having been completed, the meeting concluded at 12.55 pm.