

BOARD MEETING NO. 90 – 14 APRIL 2025 @ 09:00

MINUTES

ACTING CHAIR: Diana Fitzsimons (DF)

BOARD: Maurice Johnston (MJ) Kevin Gamble (KG) Cathy Gormly-Heenan (CGH)
(Exited at 11:00)

STAFF: Neil McIvor (NM – Acting up Interim CEx/Director of Development); Mark Smyth (MS - Director of Finance & Corporate Services)

GUEST: David Burns (DB) Chief Executive LCCC (0900-0930 only)

MLKDC SECRETARY: Jon Craig (JC)

REF	DISCUSSION	ACTION BY
90.01	<p>CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR</p> <p>(DF) was confirmed as acting Chair for the meeting with Kevin Gamble taking over as Chair after the end of the meeting.</p>	
90.01.01	<p>DAVID BURNS CHIEF EXECUTIVE LCCC</p> <p>(DB) On a broad level during the normal run of council business DB had noted that there was ongoing positive, national and international interest in the MLK site.</p> <p>The Local Development Plan Strategy for the Council area had been scrutinised, approved and plan policies are now being worked on in parallel with public consultation. The planning application had been approved for the Knockmore Link Road.</p> <p>There is good potential for connecting the Halftown Road across to the Knockmore Link Road, but the risk is that whilst we wait for a way forward on the overall MLK site, the land needed for the road is purchased by developers thereby making it more difficult to acquire for MLKDC.</p> <p>Sprucefield development continues at pace, and the fact that MLK sits strategically on the Belfast Dublin corridor is highly significant.</p> <p>DB views the MLK site as the most important strategic site in NI. LCCC maintains interest in the Eikon Centre and is using it regularly for events.</p> <p>The most important thing is in continuing the partnership between LCCC and MLKDC, and</p>	

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	<p>in this regard MLK regularly appears on agendas within various council meetings. It is also appreciated that the Council's role is to try and influence MLAs/MPs.</p> <p>In terms of representation from the Council it was mooted by the Chair that perhaps a senior officer could attend the Property and Development Committee as an observer.</p> <p>(DB) exited the meeting at 0925.</p>	
90.02	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>None</p>	JC
90.03	<p>DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS</p> <p>None</p>	N/A
90.04	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>90.04.01 Approval of Minutes</p> <p>The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2025.</p> <p>Approved: (KG), Seconded: (MJ)</p> <p>(CGH) remarked upon whether the minutes were a little light in terms of content, in comparison to other ALBs minutes, but also commented that the balance should be kept right.</p> <p>(DF) asked if there had been any development in terms of Board payments for extraneous meetings/events and it was confirmed that there was not.</p> <p>AP1 – (MS/NMI) Review of content of minutes</p> <p>90.04.02 Matters Arising</p> <p>AP2 – (DF) Close out “Programme For Government” query – Check TEO received MLKDC submission</p> <p>(DF) updated the Board on a proposal to hold the Property and Development Committee,</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>NM</p>

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	ARAC and the Board meeting all on one day, which in principle was welcomed.	
90.05	<p>CHAIR'S BUSINESS</p> <p>Approval for NM as Acting Up Interim Chief Executive and Interim Accounting Officer.</p> <p>This had been approved by BG and the permanent Secretary.</p> <p>Approved: (DF); Seconded: (KG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - STRATEGY DAY OVERVIEW AND NEXT STEPS <p>(DF) noted that it had been a useful event with Board members learning about past efforts and agreements and the key requirements for development of the site going forward. A number of options on the way forward for the Development Corporation had been discussed by Board members but further discussion was required.</p> <p>It was disappointing that MLK had not been included in the draft Programme for Government. In relation to the required road infrastructure MLKDC needed to use the positivity of the Council and the requirements of RUAS for much better transport connections to ensure their viability. If the proposed road to the site was included in the NI Investment Strategy list some projects higher up the list might drop out over time freeing up money, but these road plans needed to be ready for implementation which would take some time. From talking to TEO officials she was confident that the Events Paper would be approved at ministerial level. The officials wanted the DC to work closely with the current tenants on site and considered that the Board and Executive had a role to play in confidence building about the future of the site.</p>	

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	<p>AP4 – (NM) Invite new independent members for site visit and briefing</p> <p>OTHER MEETINGS/EVENTS SUMMARISED BY THE CHAIR THAT SHE HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN WITH OTHERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LCCC - Resurgam - TEO Permanent Secretary - TEO Senior Regeneration staff - The Strategy Day - Board Zoom Meeting x2 - Clyde Shanks re application by Neptune at Blaris for 1300 homes and their approved Knockmore Link Road. - RUAS. They had no plans to develop further buildings at this time. Their ambitions for a larger event schedule was restricted by access issues. <p>NMI sought Board approval to write to Neptune to support the new planning application and the development of the approved Link Road.</p> <p>AP5 – (DF) Letter of support required for NEPTUNE's application</p> <p>Approver: (DF) Second: (MJ)</p> <p>(DF) advised that she had been approached by media on MLK and had discussed this with other Board members who had also been approached by the media. NMI recommended that SIB are contacted for advice on future responses. The Board discussed the programme on MLK that had been aired on TV and the messages from those people interviewed.</p> <p>AP6 – (DF) Ask SIB (Jean Wylie) to draft press “lines to take” with regard to future media interest.</p>	<p>NM/MS</p> <p>NM</p> <p>NM</p>
90.06	<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2024/25 YEAR END TIMETABLE <p>Acting CEx updated on the various processes/dates that should be adhered to in run up to end of year</p>	

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	<p>timetable. At this time MLKDC is running to schedule.</p> <p>MS advised that NIAO expect the draft accounts delivered on 4 July, which include the chair's report. The final signed accounts will be presented to ARAC in September for recommendation for board approval.</p> <p>- 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS DELAYED LAY</p> <p>CEx updated on the current status, namely that the 2023/24 Annual Report and Accounts were currently with NIAO for review. It is expected that the accounts will be laid in early May.</p> <p>The Q4 Annual Assurance report was noted as being complete and returned to TEO. Going forward, the Board has agreed to approve the Annual Assurance Statement by correspondence in order to meet TEO deadlines.</p> <p>- Staffing update & Beaman's report (MS and JC left the room)</p> <p>Closed session</p> <p>AP15-CEx to draft a report on staffing matters, analysing options.</p> <p>NMI advised that he would draft a thank you letter to be sent by the Chair for Iain's time supporting ARAC. DF advised this was a good idea.</p> <p>AP7 (NM) – Iain Greenway thank you letter to be drafted</p> <p>NMI advised that he would contact the 2 new Independent ARAC members for an introduction to MLK</p>	<p>NM</p> <p>NM</p>

REF	DISCUSSION	ACTION BY
	<p>AP8 (NM) – Invitation to site visit and briefing independent members of ARAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Risk Register - NMI presented the corporate risk register to the Board. MS advised that a new risk was added based on the ARAC Chair's resignation. NMI noted that this was a temporary risk as we would expect board approval for new temporary ARAC Chair at this meeting. <p>The Corporate Risk Register was noted by the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder Mapping <p>(NM) explained what stakeholder mapping entailed and how useful it could be to have it already completed should proper stakeholder consultation on the MLK site re-commence. It would be ideal to have an up-to-date categorised list of the relevant groups to talk to and who were the key contacts within those organisations/agencies/communities. A lengthy debate ensued. Some Board members suggested that the Board should be building up relationships in anticipation of a political decision on the future of the site. Others considered that in the absence of political agreement on the site, Board members could not engage in meaningful consultations as this would raise false expectations. The Executive team could, however, continue to keep in touch with stakeholders in the normal course of their work.</p>	<p>NM</p>

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	<p>AP9 (NM) – Endeavour to explore ideas for a solution to the former prison.</p> <p>NMI recommended Invest NI should come to the next Board Meeting.</p> <p>AP10 (DF) – Invite Invest NI to next board meeting</p>	<p>NM</p> <p>NM</p>
90.07	<p>FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DASHBOARD. - - MS advised the board that year end finances came in within permitted tolerance levels, and there were no fraud or governance issues to report <p>The board noted the update(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2025/26 BUSINESS PLAN/BUDGET <p>The Board discussed the business plan and budget in some depth and agreed both subject to (MS) to taking forward. It was recommended by the Board that “additional asks” for funding were costed and made clear on the return to TEO – projects that were necessary to fulfil the MLKDC Business Plan’s objectives. These might attract further funding in year.</p> <p>Approved: (KG); Seconded (MJ)</p> <p>AP11 (NM) – (DF) asked for a list of projects to be completed if increased budget approval is received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amendment to board standing orders – quorum reduced <p>Approved: (DF); seconded (MJ)</p>	<p>NM</p>

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	<p>AP12 (CGH) –The Board agreed that subject to cross referencing the SIRS Order/MSFM in respect of board quorum, the amendment was approved.</p>	<p>NM</p>
90.08	<p>PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DASHBOARD AND MINUTES <p>The Board noted the dashboard. (NM) confirmed that capital spend was delivered. A workplan meeting with CPD was planned for this year's capital projects. A G4S security review was in progress.</p> <p>The Board discussed several short term licence applications and the potential to raise some funds to help with funding shortfall elsewhere eg site security.</p> <p>AP13 (NM) to follow up on Events Paper and potential licences with Perm Secretary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary paper for maintenance of listed and retained buildings Approved: (DF); Seconded: (MJ) - Summary paper for AANI lease extension Approved: (MJ); Seconded: (KG) - Summary paper for amendments to Development Committee Terms of Reference Approved: (MJ); Seconded: (KG) 	<p>NM</p>

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90.09	<p>ARAC MATTERS</p> <p>(MJ) appointed Temporary Chair of ARAC</p> <p>Approved: (DF); Seconded: (KG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change to ARAC TOR Already approved - Appointment of independent members to ARAC by TEO Noted - Risk Training Expenditure Noted and approved by Board Approved: (DF); Seconded: (MJ) - Change to internal audit scheduling Noted and approved by Board Approved: (DF); Seconded: (MJ) 	
90.10	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>The Board discussed the provision of iPads and IT Security processes and retention and access to official documents.</p> <p>AP14 – Confirm forward work plans for ARAC and Board</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>MS</p>
90.11	<p>Date of Next Meetings:</p> <p>Board – tbc</p> <p>ARAC – tbc</p> <p>Development Committee – tbc</p>	<p>ALL</p>

The meeting closed at 11:45