The Derry Walls Management Group: Strategic Group

27 September 2019

Venue: CCI Derry/Londonderry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees:</th>
<th>Apologies:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iain Greenway (Chair – HED)</td>
<td>Odhran Dunne (Visit Derry)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manus Deery (HED – Advice and Regulation)</td>
<td>Aeidin McCarter (DCSDC – Events)</td>
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<td>Margaret Edwards (DCSDC – Heritage)</td>
<td>Niall McLaughian (FODW)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colin Greer (DfC – NWDO)</td>
<td>Tony Monaghan (DCSDC – Regeneration)</td>
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<td>Martin Graham (Tourism NI)</td>
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<td>Edward Montgomery (HIS)</td>
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<td>Bronagh Ramsden (HED)</td>
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<td>Jim Roddy (CCI)</td>
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<td>Paul Mitchell (HED- minutes)</td>
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The meeting began at 1:40

1. Introductions and apologies.

IG welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were received.

Action: IG said he would contact NM to discuss FODW’s representation on both management groups.


BR reported on the discussion and decisions of the earlier Implementation Group meeting.

3. Heritage conference – outcome of discussions

IG said that with the upcoming Heritage Trust Network Trust conference in November it was important to progress an HED/DCSDC response to the key recommendations of the October 2018 ‘Unlocking Prosperity through Heritage Led Regeneration’.

Action: ME and MD to meet to discuss recommendations and progress a response to the action points.

4. Site Evaluation Plan

BR said that a site evaluation plan for Derry’s Walls was in draft form.
There was a discussion on one of the key recommendations of Site Development Plan for Derry’s Walls – namely that there should be a single Derry Walls manager to ensure better managerial coordination, with streamlined and unified decision making.

CG confirmed that the business case for funding had been approved and JR confirmed that CCI Derry had filled the vacancy through an internal trawl process.

There was a discussion on the role of the Derry Walls Manager – taking over much of the remit of Belfast based operations staff – and how the role would fit into the wider running of the Walls, with the associated benefits of having someone on the ground who was more in tune with local issues and concerns and local heritage groups; how role would assist in the longer terms aspirations for Walls (e.g. the licensing of tour guides or developing a Walls brand for merchandise etc); and how the appointment would be seen as a positive news story for Derry/Londonderry.

IG said that this would be a pilot process and if successful it might be rolled out at other sites, e.g. Enniskillen Castle.

It was provisionally agreed – subject to discussion with Press Office – to announce the new arrangements in mid-November connected to the Heritage Trust Network conference in the city, with a presentation earlier in November to the relevant council committee, this being positioned as a chance to Council comment before finalisation.

**Action IG to contact DfC press office to arrange suitable publicity.**

**Action: ME to inform the DCSDC Environment and Heritage committee of appointment.**

**Action: PM to set up a meeting with HED and CCI Derry to discuss transition of operations process.**

Discussion on the appointment of a Walls Manager segued into how this could be a catalyst for change in Walls management – e.g. getting annual standard application permits for media companies; or helping to advance the proposed accreditation of tour guides, as means of enhancing the visitor experience and thus as a means of generating revenue. JR said that these tour guides could encourage large tour operators to visit the museum around the Walls and that accredited guides could lead to more investment, jobs and civic pride.

MG said that there would be approximately a 6-9 month lead in time to sell the narrative of accredited tour guides. IG said that therefore it would therefore be approximately 2021 before accredited tour guides would be licensed, with 2022 being when monetising would be visible. MG said he had a report on tour guides which he would share.

**Action: MG to share tour guide report with group.**
5. Key Actions for the next 1-3 years

MD said that he would need to update the Strategic Plan 2018-2023 to reflect past achievements and future ambition for the Walls.

The meeting commended the council for its excellent work on the Walls 400 project.

IG said this was a good opportunity to review the achievements of The Derry Walls Management Group, e.g. the installation of the lighting and regulatory signs.

**Action: PM to report to IG on the achievements of the working group.**

5. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes to the previous strategy group meeting were approved.

**Action: PM to place minutes on website.**

6. AOB

There being no other business the meeting ended at 3.20pm.