

Coleraine Future Town Fund Board Minutes

Date of Meeting: Thursday 23rd April 2026

Location: Council Chamber Cloonavin, Coleraine. **Present and Absentees:** List of Attendees detailed below on pages 7-9.

1.	Welcome / Apologies / Minutes & Matters Arising	Gerry McKenna		
	Actions	Lead NMG, JMA	Status	Remarks
	Matters Arising: confirmation of alignment with the new LEP grant to local businesses in terms of the match funding contribution from local businesses, whilst remaining flexible and responsive to individual grant schemes.	HK		
2.	Memorandum of Understanding from MHGLC	HK (SIB)		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	Controls to be put in place relating to stipulation in MOU in relation to any overspend on approved projects, which will be responsibility of person/organisation receiving the funding from CFTF.	HK/DW		
	This stipulation and any other relevant conditions set out in the MOU to be added to CFTF Risk Register.	HK		
3.	Update on the MAG Review 20 th April	TH HK (SIB)		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	MAG report to be shared to CFTF Board Members when available.	HK/TH		

4.	Enabling Projects Update	TH (SIB)		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	Report on feasibility studies and other reports required to inform Plan on a Page development to be brought to May Board meeting	HK/TH		
5.	CFTF project assessment panels	TH HK (SIB)		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	Proposed makeup of assessment panels & dates for meetings to be sent to board members	HK		
6.	CFTF 1st Monitoring return to MHGLC for approval	TH (SIB)		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	Draft CFTF 1 st monitoring return to be sent to Board members for review and comment before being submitted to MHCLG by 30 th April.	HK		
7.	Finance Review	HK (SIB)		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	Further information to be brought to the Board on proposed delivery structures for CFTF at a future Board meeting.	HK/TH		
8.	Communications Update	GB (SIB)		
	CFTF team to investigate attendance at Armed Forces Day in Coleraine on 26 th June.	HK		
	CFTF Board to release statement to press and send letter to UU and the Minister for DfE with reference to job losses at UU.	GB/GMcK		
9.	DONM & AOB	Chair		
	Actions	Lead	Status	Remarks
	DONM Thursday 28 th May 2026 Council Chamber Cloonavin.			

Red ■ Not yet commenced
Yellow ■ In Progress
Green ■ Complete

1.	Welcome / Apologies Matters Arising	Chair
<p>GMK chaired the meeting thanking members for attending at the new start time of 7.00pm. He noted that this change in start time was not universally suited to all Board members and proposed that it would be reviewed and discussed at the next Board meeting. Apologies noted, and minutes from March CFTF Board meeting shared and agreed. GMK asked board members to declare any conflicts of interest regarding tonight's meeting agenda, nil response.</p> <p>GMK noted that discussions were held at the March CFTF Board meeting in relation to a high-level portfolio budget split across the three Pride in Place objectives and proposed match funding contributions from the private sector. It had been noted that a 50% request for funding might raise affordability issues for small businesses. The LEP had just agreed a protocol for match funding from SME's for a new grant programme which could set a precedent which CFTF could be aligned to for a consistent approach. HK advised that a meeting had taken place with LEP Manager, and he confirmed that the LEP funding in question would request 30% match funding from the private sector. It was proposed that CFTF funding aligns with this 30% request with flexibility depending upon individual grant schemes. RS questioned if other funding streams could be used to make up the 30% required from the private sector. This was confirmed by HK & DW.</p>		
2.	Memorandum of Understanding from MHGLC	TH HK (SIB)
<p>GMK confirmed that the MoU had been received from MHGLC and that it had been signed and returned with the first payment due in May 2026.</p> <p>HK updated the board on MoU advising that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU with CCGBC has been received for the first investment period of the programme which spans the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2030, signed and returned to MHCLG 23rd April 2026. • The CFTF Board for Coleraine is not a formal party to this agreement, but a signatory in acknowledgement of the Neighbourhood Board's role and responsibilities. • As part of the delegated delivery model, the local authority will provide formal reporting on the use of Pride in Place Programme funding. • The grant payment and grant determination letters for 2026-27 will be made now as MoU is signed, with 2027-28, 2028-29 and 2029-30 grant payments paid Quarter 1 (April-June) of each year. Payments for financial year 2030-31 and beyond will be set out in separate MoU's. • Capital grant funding may only be used for capital expenditure, Revenue grant funding may be used for revenue or capital expenditure, in line with the local authority's accounting practices. 		

- The local authority accepts responsibility for meeting any costs over and above the Secretary of State's contribution, agreed in the annual grant determination. This includes potential cost overruns and the underwriting of any funding contributions expected from third parties. DW advised that in a grant programme the person/organisation receiving the grant would be responsible for any over run not the council. This would be included as a condition of any funding offer from CFTF. This condition of the MOU would be added to the CFTF risk register.
- Guidance will be issued on the Branding and Communication associated with the programme in due course.
- The local authority agrees to publish details of Neighbourhood Board membership, place governance arrangements and key documents regarding delivery of the programme in the local area, including copies of the monitoring returns.
- The arrangements under this MoU will be kept under review with amendments only made upon written agreement between the Parties.
- MHCLG will publish an evaluation strategy in due course setting out how the programme will be evaluated.

The Board noted the update on the MOU.

3. Update on the MAG Review 20 th April	TH HK (SIB)
<p>TH updated the board on the Ministerial Advisory Group Review Workshop held in Coleraine Townhall on Monday 20th April 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAG Panel of 5 with specialisms in: architecture, heritage, urban design, landscape, transport and movement and MAG Secretariat. • CFTF Chair - Gerry McKenna; Deputy Chairs - Karen Yates and Bjorn O'Brien; Members - Mark Lennox, Rhonda Williamson, Pat Mulvenna, Niall McGurk, Julienne Elliott; Council officers - Karen Dixon, Nial McSorley, Jayne McAleese; CFTF Team - Hazel King and Therese Hogg. • Draft MAG Report to be issued to CFTF team before end of April - confidential at the discretion of the Board Chair. <p>CFTF Ask of MAG The CFTF Board requested the MAG Review to highlight if there were fundamental things that need to be addressed to enable Coleraine to fulfil its vision and ambition to be a thriving place? And what would the sequencing be in order to maximise impact and catalyst for change.</p> <p>The MAG panel was asked to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • movement and access • people movement and wayfinding • increasing footfall • use of the river and other natural assets • heritage and culture arts • safety • shared space and inclusive place for all • Coleraine as a destination / tourism & regional hub. 	

- Harbour as an economic anchor
- UU & NRC roles
- Challenge of connecting disadvantaged areas with wider economy.

Alongside this were a number of cross cutting themes: climate change, adaptability, sustainability, green growth, behavioural change.

- The MAG Panel flagged key issues such as traffic flow and car parking, and the challenge for the Board to have ability and agility to acquire any land required for access and improving connectivity and movement in the town centre, should this be identified.
- GMK noted that the MAG Report would be shared with CFTF Board Members when available.
- KY noted the need for speed and flexibility for the CFTF Board to move swiftly re projects.
- RS suggested that it would be important for the MAG Panel members to visit the Harbour area.
- PM noted that the Market Yard was undergoing a final assessment from a health and safety perspective with a view to hiring this as key town centre space.
- DF noted the importance of identifying which projects will have the most transformative effect and will act as a catalyst for change. He also asked if the councils funding unit could advise of other funding programmes which along with CFTF could achieve more impact.
- PA asked if any local residents attended the MAG workshop. GMcK advised that it was Board members and council officers only.

4. Enabling Projects Update	HK TH (SIB)
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HK updated the board on the current CFTF Enabling Projects noting:

Riverside Blueway Phase 1 Scoping & Strategy Report contract had been awarded to Doran's Consulting by Waterways Ireland, with a further stakeholder workshop planned, and completion of the study due end of May 2026.

Multi Sport & Wellbeing Initiative Scoping & Strategy Report is currently out to tender with completion expected in 9-12 months.

Community Enabling Programme:

- Community Ambition Co Design workshops have taken place on 4th Feb, 2nd March, 19th March, 25th March, and 22nd April.
- To explore common issues, challenges, needs, themes and collate the relevant information to inform "Plan on Page".
- To agree the various scopes, approaches, and delivery routes to support the CFTF Board to identify opportunities to raise ambition and identify potential projects and programmes for communities in Coleraine.
- Identify and commission any feasibility studies required, engagement with statutory partners.
- Aligned with CCGBC new community development, arts and museum strategies.

Coleraine Town Centre Investment Task & Finish Group Established

Purpose:

- To collate the relevant information to inform “Plan on Page” (1 or more).
- To agree the various scopes, approaches, and delivery routes to support the CFTF Board to identify opportunities to incentivise re-purposing and maximising the use of vacant and under-used buildings and assets across Coleraine town centre.
- Consider the needs identified through the stakeholder engagement to establish sustainability of uses, cross overs between spaces by complementary uses / groups.
- Oversee a number of commissions / workstreams to inform the projects.

Other Feasibility Studies:

HK outlined the need for the Board to commission a feasibility study into to identify potential uses of Coleraine Town Hall as a key asset within the town centre. HK noted there may also be a number of other feasibility studies required, and further information on these would be brought to the May Board meeting for discussion.

5. CFTF Project Assessment Panels

TH HK (SIB)

HK updated the board on CFTF Project assessment panels, discussing the makeup of the panels (esp. conflicts of interests) and dates for meetings. Proposed makeup of panels to be sent to Board Members for review and confirmation. Proposal to hold the assessment panels starting Monday 8th June, with scope for additional panels in July. It was also proposed that a Departmental rep is included on each assessment panel, and a reserve panel member be identified for each panel.

- YB suggested a WhatsApp group be set up outlining panel members and dates/times of the panel meetings.
- DF requested to be removed from the High Street & Regeneration panel due to a Col.
- HK advised that the assessment panels would be reviewing Plans on a Page with a view to reviewing project proposals and prioritising projects for funding and inclusion within the first CFTF 4 year investment plan. Recommendations would be then made to the CFTF Board which would make the final decision on funding.
- TH suggested extra dates in July for assessment panels.

6.	CFTF 1st monitoring Return to MHGLC for approval	HK TH (SIB)
<p>HK updated the board on CFTF 1st Monitoring return to MHCLG due by 30th April 2026.</p> <p>MHCLG Monitoring Requirements</p> <p>In April 2026, local authorities, in their current role as the accountable body, have been asked to submit details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capacity funding activities • projects delivered using programme funding • projects planned using programme funding • neighbourhood board details • forecast capacity funding spend • forecast programme delivery funding spend • Outputs (Spreadsheet provided to capture this information) • Monitoring returns should be signed off by the CFTF Board and submitted to MHCLG by Thursday 30 April 2026. • Monitoring returns should be made publicly available following submission to MHCLG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HK advised that copies of the monitoring return will be sent to Board Members for comment before the submission date. • GMK asked board members to report back with any feedback. 		
7.	Finance Review	HK (SIB)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HK updated the board members on CFTF Capacity funding Spend to date. • GMK noted that further discussions would take place in due time regarding ongoing project funding and support for the future delivery of CFTF. 		
8.	Communications Update	GB (SIB)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HK provided an update on CFTF Comms & Marketing Key Milestones. • GMK reminded CFTF Board members to be advocates for the programme and to share details of events and programmes. • PA noted that the Armed Forces Day would be taking place on 26th June in Coleraine. HK replied that the team would investigate and try and get involved. JE advised that there will be information points at the Armed Forces Day in Coleraine. • GMK noted the importance of the University to Coleraine and suggested a letter is sent from the Chair to the UU and the Minister for DfE with reference to the job losses announced by UU. GMcK read out the draft letter, and the Board agreed this should be issued as proposed, with the letter forming the basis of a statement to be issued in the local press on behalf of the Board. • YB welcomed a CFTF Board statement. • GMK advised that they would he would finalise the letter with GB from comms, and issue this to the Minister and UU, with a press release then also to be issued from the Board on this matter. 		

9. DONM & AOB	Chair
	Next CFTF Board meeting at 7.00pm Thursday 25 th June, Causeway Enterprises, Coleraine

Contact Name	Code	Attendance	Organisation
Chair			
Professor Gerry McKenna	GMK	1	Independent
Board Members			
Karen Yates	KY	1	Causeway Chamber Commerce
Rob Skelly	RS	1	Harbour Commissioner
Inspector Bjorn O'Brien	BOB	1	PSNI
Elaine Donnelly	ED	1	Coleraine Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (Chair)
Ann McNickle	AMN	1	Causeway Rural & Urban Network,
Jonny McKane	AMK	0	Council of Churches
Ian Donaghey	ID	0	Chairman Coleraine BID, Harbour Commissioner
Jayne Taggart	JT	0	Enterprise Causeway
Duane Farrell	DF	1	The Honourable The Irish Society
Mark Lennox	ML	0	Northern Regional College
Victor Gault	VG	1	Ulster University
Mark Alexander	MA	0	NI Housing Executive
Graeme Stevenson	GS	0	Arts Council NI
Caitlin Bond	CB	0	CCGBC Youth Forum
Charlie Smyth	CS	1	CCGBC Youth Forum
Henry Taggart	HT	0	Coleraine Town Team
Riley McCahon	RMC	1	Coleraine Equality Forum
Local MP			
Gregory Campbell	GC	0	MP

Contact Name	Code	Attendance	Organisation
Elected Members			
Councillor Philip Anderson	PA	1	Coleraine DEA
Councillor Niamh Archibald	NA	0	Coleraine DEA
Alderman Yvonne Boyle	YB	1	Coleraine DEA
Councillor Tanya Elder	TE	0	Coleraine DEA (Teams)
Councillor Russell Watton	RW	1	Coleraine DEA
Councillor John Wisener	JW	0	Coleraine DEA
MLAS's Observers			
Caoimhe Archibald	CA	0	Sinn Féin Constituency: East Londonderry.
Maurice Bradley	MB	0	Democratic Unionist Party Constituency: East Londonderry
Cara Hunter	CH	0	<u>SDLP East Londonderry</u>
Claire Sugden	CS	0	Independent Constituency: East Londonderry
Departmental Observers			
Rhonda Williamson	RW	1	Department for Communities
Alan Keys	AK	1	Department for Infrastructure
Ann Marie Orr	AO	0	Tourism Ireland
Esther Dobbin	ED	1	Tourism NI
Justine Daly	JD	1	MAG Advisor Department for Communities
Yvonne McManus	YMM	1	PSNI
Council Officers			
Niall McGurk	NMG	0	Head of Prosperity & Place
David Wright	DW	1	Head of Finance
Pat Mulvenna	PMV	1	Director Leisure & Development
David Jackson	DJ	0	Chief Executive
Des Donnelly	DD	0	Secretariat to CFTF Board
Shane Mathers	SM	0	Principle Planning Officer
Julienne Elliott	JE	1	Town and Village Manager
Garry Mullan	GM	1	Community Planning Officer
SIB			
Hazel King	HK	1	CFTF PM

Contact Name	Code	Attendance	Organisation
Therese Hogg	TH	1	Community Engagement (SSU)
Gavin Boyd	GB	0	Communications
Total		24	

DRAFT