

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 9th July, 2025

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Brennan (Chairperson);
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bunting, Cobain,
de Faoite, R-M Donnelly, Ferguson, Garrett,
Maghie, McDonough-Brown, I. McLaughlin,
R. McLaughlin, Murphy, Ó Néill and Smyth.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director
of Corporate Services;
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services;
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Mr. D. Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood
Services;
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. J. Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. P. Hamilton, Lead Officer – Community Safety; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance
Coordinator.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and Councillors Long and Nelson.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following two item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Members were also reminded that the content of 'restricted' reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as 'confidential information' and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

Bonfire Update

The Committee was informed that the Bonfire Panel had requested that the bonfire located at Broadway Industrial site, Belfast be referred to the Committee for its consideration.

The Chief Executive provided the Committee with an update on the site.

Proposal

Proposed by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Councillor R. McLaughlin,

That the Committee approves the use of a contractor to remove bonfire materials from the Broadway Industrial site and to secure the site for the interest and well-being of residents.

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconded by Councillor Smyth,

That the Committee agrees that aforementioned proposal and also agrees to write to the Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to ensure that the Northern Ireland Environment Agency would fulfil its obligations in relation to the site.

On a vote, twelve Members voted for the proposal and four against and it was declared carried. The amendment was thereupon put to the Committee as the substantive motion and passed.

Accordingly, the Committee approved the use of a contractor to remove bonfire materials from the Broadway Industrial site and to secure the site for the interest and well-being of residents and agreed to write to the Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to ensure that the Northern Ireland Environment Agency would fulfil its obligations in relation to the site.

The Committee also noted, in accordance with Standing Order 48 (a) (2) (c), that the aforementioned decision would not be subject to call-in.

City Centre Regeneration Scheme

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an update in relation to various matters associated with the Assembly Rooms, following various Council decisions.

During discussion, the Director of City Regeneration and Development confirmed that member engagement would take place before further engagement with stakeholders on the future use of the site.

After discussion, it was

Proposed by Councillor R. McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown and

Resolved - That the Committee agrees to approve the recommendations, as outlined in the report.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- i) Noted the update as set out in the report, including the draft Heads of Terms which set out the conditions for the proposed acquisition of the Assembly Rooms and adjacent lands to be reflected in a Contract for Sale;
- ii) Agreed that a without prejudice/conditional offer was made to acquire the Assembly Rooms and adjacent assets/lands on the basis as outlined in the report;
- iii) Subject to the offer being accepted by the vendor, agreed to acquire the property on terms to be agreed by the City Solicitor and the Director City Regeneration and Development subject to legal due diligence and relevant building surveys; and
- iv) Subject to approval to this acquisition, noted that a further report would be brought back on a strategy and next steps on the future use proposals for the Assembly Rooms and adjacent lands, including focused engagement with Members and other stakeholders.

Chairperson