

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

17th December, 2020

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COIMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following items will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 a.m. on Friday, 18th December, 2020.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. Restricted Items

- (f) Update on DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme (Pages 1 - 4)

3. Matters referred back from Council/Motions

- (c) Motion - Access to Maternity Wards for Birthing Partners – Response from Minister of Health (Pages 5 - 10)

- (d) Commercial and Procurement Service - Pricing Policy (Pages 11 - 16)

To consider further the minute of the meeting of 20th November which was referred back to the Committee by the Council on 1st December (minute attached).

6. Finance, Resources and Procurement

- (c) The Five C's Public Realm Catalyst Project (Pages 17 - 28)

8. Operational Issues

- (e) Minutes of Meeting of Active Belfast Limited Board (Pages 29 - 44)



Subject:	Update on DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme
Date:	18th December 2020
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director City Regeneration & Development John Greer, Director Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Senior Officer Economy Sean Dolan, Senior Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide an update to Members on a further Letter of Offer received from DfC on the 8 th December for additional capital support for Business Grants as part of the DfC Revitalisation Fund.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ note that £3.585m has been received through the DfC Covid-19 Programme to date with work packages in place to roll out the Tranche 1 & Tranche 2 work streams as per Committee approvals received to date; ▪ note that a further Letter of Offer for £454k for business grant support was received on 8th December, ▪ agree to extend the Covid-19 Business Support Grant by up to £154k to meet the demand already in the system; ▪ agree to extend the Business Cluster and Community Grants by up to £300k and to extend the grant to include business clusters within the city centre on the allocation basis as outlined below; and ▪ agree that this paper should not be subject to call-in (as indicated above) because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests given that the formal acceptance of the funding is required by DfC by 4th January 2021
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	As per agreements through the SP&R and CG&R Committees, the Council has received £3.585m to date through the DfC Covid-19 Revitalisation Programme through the Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 Letters of Offer. The detail of this Revitalisation Programme has primarily been brought via the CGR Committee.
3.2	On 8 th December 2020, the Council received a further Letter of Offer from DfC with an offer of £454k aligned to the Councils 'Covid-19 Business Support Grant scheme, bringing the total funding of this programme to £4.039m. This letter of Offer is for capital support only based on spend by March 2021. A formal acceptance of the funding is required by DfC by the 4 th January 2021. Council currently have two business support grants in place as outlined below that could utilise this additional allocation.
	<u>Covid-19 Business Grant Scheme Update</u>
3.3	The Covid-19 Business Support Grant, with an allocated budget of £800k and aimed at individual businesses across the city, is now closed and fully committed through mini grants up to £2.5k per application. To date £238,000 of funding has been directly delivered to businesses and officers are continuing to work on distributing the remaining funding.

- 3.4 Following the closure of the grant scheme due to achieving the budget limit there are 7 applicants whose applications have been fully assessed as being eligible but who were not able to receive funding as the £800k commitment was exhausted. In addition, there were around 65 applications that had only made it to the first eligibility assessment but that were not assessed any further. If all of these applicants were to be assessed, it is likely that the allocation would be in the region of £154,000 (£138,000 of which is subject to initial eligibility checks).

Business Cluster and Community Grant Scheme Update

- 3.5 The Business Cluster & Community Grant Scheme, with an allocated budget of £330k, opened on the 4th December inviting proposals from business clusters and communities for area based environmental improvement schemes to come forward to apply for capital grant funding of between £10k & £25k in line with the objectives of the DfC Letter of Offer. The scheme, which is open to businesses outside the city centre, is due to close on the 18th January, or on the full allocation of the funding available. Within the city centre, environmental / public realm improvement schemes are being taken forward by or in conjunction with the Business Improvement Districts (BID's).
- 3.6 The Business Cluster & Community Grant Scheme was launched in acknowledgement of the need for general environmental improvement works to support businesses and communities on the arterial routes and areas outside the city centre. It was also acknowledged that due to the potential number of locations, varying area based needs and geographical spread that Council do not currently have the resources to deliver out these proposals in-house.
- 3.7 Demand for this scheme and the capacity to deliver is yet to be fully understood, although members, officers and community/trader groups have been actively promoting the scheme throughout the city. At the time of writing this report 65 application forms have been requested with no applications returned to date.
- 3.8 Subsequent to the opening of this grant scheme some queries have been raised regarding the omission of city centre businesses to apply. This was based on the acknowledgement that a number of city centre based interventions were committed to through the Revitalisation Programme including a number of priority interventions proposed, and been delivered, by or in conjunction with the three Business Improvement Districts.

	<u>Allocation of Additional £454k of Business Grant Support</u>
3.9	<p>Given the requirements for in-year capital spend within the DfC Letter of Offer it is proposed that this additional funding is aligned to the existing grant schemes already in operation. To achieve this it is proposed to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the Covid-19 Business Support Grant by a maximum of £154k to meet the demand of applications from individual businesses already in the system. This will be subject to completion of the eligibility assessment as outlined within the conditions of the scheme. • Extend the Business Cluster and Community Grant scheme by a maximum of £300k and open the scheme up to business clusters within the city centre. It is proposed that this is on the basis of up to £150k for the city centre and up to £150k towards the business cluster grant scheme for the arterial routes. This will be subject to completion of the eligibility assessment as outlined within the conditions of the scheme. • It is recommended however that these extensions are kept under review depending on the level of demand and capacity to deliver as the scheme progresses.
3.10	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>All financial commitments will be met from the DfC Revitalisation Programme with no further capital or revenue implications for Council.</p> <p>The grant schemes will be administered by the Place and Economy and Physical Programmes departments in conjunction with Legal and Financial Services.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Equality Impact screening carried out for the overall programme and the grant schemes. Officers will continue to monitor this as the programme is implemented.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None



Subject:	Motion: Access to Maternity Wards for Birthing Partners – Response from Minister of Health
Date:	18th December, 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider a response from the Minister of Health in relation to a motion on Access to Maternity Wards for Birthing Partners.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the response.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee will recall that the Council, at its meeting on 2nd November, passed the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor T. Kelly and seconded by Councillor Bunting:

	<p>“This Council notes with concern the current restrictions placed around access to maternity wards for birthing partners due to COVID-19. Furthermore, it recognises the varying measures across the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area and the additional availability of 15 minute COVID-19 testing, agrees to write to the Health Minister asking that further consideration is given to a consistent approach thus allowing birthing partners to be afforded increased access to antenatal, maternity and neonatal services.”</p>
3.2	A response has now been received from Minister Swann, a copy of which is attached.
3.3	The Minister explains that the restriction of visitors to hospitals has been a key strategic component of managing the Covid-19 pandemic and that it had been introduced to protect patients, visitors and staff from the risk of infection.
3.4	<p>As a result of the Executive’s decision to invoke limited additional restrictions across Northern Ireland, in response to increasing Covid-19 transmissions, updated visiting guidance for maternity services was published and took effect from 23rd September. A copy of that guidance can be accessed via this link https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/Covid-19-visiting-guidance. The guidance confirms that the specific restrictions for each care setting are aligned to the pandemic alert levels/R value and is based on the best scientific advice available, with restrictions applying in line with the current regional alert level position. The Minister points out that the alert level is currently at Level 4, which is defined as “a high or rising level of transmission – enforced social distancing”. This means that for expectant mothers:</p> <p><i>“Birth partners will be facilitated to accompany the pregnant women to dating scan, early pregnancy clinic, anomaly scan, in the event of pregnancy loss and bereavement, Fetal Medicine Department, when admitted to individual room for active labour (to be determined by midwife) and birth and, to visit in antenatal and postnatal wards for up to one hour once a week.”</i></p>
3.5	The Minister refers to the fact that the motion states that varying measures are being applied across the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area. He points out that these restrictions apply equally to all Health and Social Care Trust maternity settings across Northern Ireland. However, it should be noted that the decision to permit visitors into a facility on a day-to-day basis still lies with the midwife in charge and that it will be based on a risk assessment of that specific setting and is dependent upon the ability to ensure the safety of patients, staff and visitors.
3.6	The Minister then addresses the request for clarification on whether an additional availability of fifteen minute Covid-19 testing would allow for further consideration to be given to the restrictions. He explains that one of the key priorities of the Department of Health is to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to test everyone in Northern Ireland who require a test, in line with current policy. This, he points out, includes anyone who has symptoms, as well as testing to support the risk assessment and management of clusters and outbreaks. Routine Covid-19 testing, including fifteen minute testing, has not been implemented for partners of expectant mothers and there are no plans to do so. However, this position will be kept under review as new scientific evidence and new technologies become available.
3.7	The Minister stresses that these restrictions are not just in place to protect patients and their visitors but are necessary due to the need to protect the safety of others, including other families, all health and social care staff and the wider population, through social distancing

3.8	<p>and the following of all infection control procedures. He confirms that the visiting guidance, which is structured to take account of variances in the ongoing rate of infection across Northern Ireland, will remain in place for the duration of the pandemic. The guidance has been written in such a way as to require different levels of restriction, based upon the regional position in terms of surge assessment and that, whilst his officials keep the guidance under review, no significant changes were anticipated currently.</p> <p>The Minister concludes by recognising that this has been a challenging time for all families and that the management of the crisis has meant that many difficult requests have been made and will continue to be made of the public around all aspects of health service provision. Normal maternity care provision, in particular, has had to be adapted to reduce the spread of infection and to protect expectant mothers, their families and those staff providing care.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Document Attached
	Copy of response from the Minister of Health

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Eilish McGoldrick

McGoldrickE@BelfastCity.gov.uk

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 2556
Email: private.office@health-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref: EMcG 02112020

Our Ref: COR/3740/2020

Date: 9th December 2020

Dear *Eilish*,

Thank you for your correspondence of 16 November in which you asked me to consider a motion proposed by Councillor Tracy Kelly and seconded by Councillor Sarah Bunting, regarding visiting restrictions in relation to maternity services during the COVID-19 crisis. The motion requested that further consideration be given to a consistent approach to restrictions across the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT).

The restriction of visitors to hospitals has been a key strategic component of managing the pandemic and it was introduced to protect patients, visitors and staff by reducing the risk of infection.

As a result of the Northern Ireland Executive's decision to invoke limited additional restrictions across Northern Ireland in response to increasing COVID-19 transmissions, updated visiting guidance for maternity services has been published and is available here: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/Covid-19-visiting-guidance>, and took effect from 23 September 2020.

The visiting guidance outlines that the specific restrictions for each care setting are aligned to the pandemic Alert levels/R value, which represents the risk of the virus spreading from one infected person to another, on average. The guidance is based on the best scientific advice available, with restrictions applying in line with the current Regional Alert Level Position – we are currently at Level 4, defined as **“a high or rising level of transmission - enforced social distancing”**. This means that for expectant mothers:

“Birth partners will be facilitated to accompany the pregnant woman to dating scan, early pregnancy clinic, anomaly scan, in the event of pregnancy loss and bereavement, Fetal Medicine Department, when admitted to individual room for active labour (to be determined by midwife) and birth and, to visit in antenatal and postnatal wards for up to one hour once a week.”

The motion indicated that varying measures are being applied across the BHSCT area. These restrictions apply equally to all HSCT maternity settings across Northern Ireland, however it must be noted that the decision to permit visitors into a facility on a day to day basis will still lie with the midwife in charge. This decision will be based on a risk

assessment of that specific setting and will rely on the ability to ensure safety of patients, staff and the visitor.

The motion sought clarification over whether an additional availability of 15 minute COVID-19 testing would allow for further consideration to be given to the restrictions. One of the key priorities of my Department is to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to test everyone in Northern Ireland that requires a test in line with current policy. This includes testing of anyone who has symptoms as well as testing to support the risk assessment and management of clusters and outbreaks. Routine COVID-19 testing, including 15 minute testing, has not been implemented for partners of expectant mothers and there are currently no plans to do so, however, this position will be kept under review as new scientific evidence and new technologies become available.

I wish to stress that these restrictions are not in place simply to protect patients and their visitors, but are necessary due to the need to maintain safety for all others, including other families, all our HSC staff and therefore the wider population, through social distancing and ensuring appropriate Infection Control Procedures are followed across all healthcare settings.

The visiting guidance is structured to take account of variances in the ongoing rate of infection transmission across Northern Ireland, and will remain in place for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance is written in such a way as to require different levels of restriction based on the regional position in terms of surge assessment, and while my officials keep the guidance under review, no significant changes are currently anticipated.

I recognise that this is a very anxious time for all families. I acknowledge that the approach to managing this crisis has meant that many difficult requests have been and will continue to be made of the public around all aspects of health service provision. Particularly, the normal maternity care provision has had to be adapted in order to reduce the spread of infection and to protect expectant mothers, their families and staff providing care. This is not the experience I would hope for expectant mothers and their partners, and I sincerely apologise for this but do hope that you understand.

I hope that this is helpful and has provided an explanation for the difficult decisions that have been taken during these challenging times.

Yours sincerely



Robin Swann MLA
Minister of Health

Extract from minutes of:-

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

20th November, 2020

Commercial and Procurement Service - Pricing Policy

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or summary of Main Issues

The 3-year Transformational Strategy prepared by the Commercial and Procurement Service (CPS) is due to be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee in November.

1.2 This Strategy includes details of our first Commercial Plan, which formalises our future ambitions relating to commercialisation and income generation.

1.3 To support our specific ambition to generate additional income, the Commercial team within the CPS has developed:

- A corporate Pricing Policy; and
- A framework document, 'Setting Prices - Getting it Right', to guide Council officers when introducing pricing or increasing/decreasing prices.

1.4 The above policy and framework was presented to the SP&R Committee on 23rd October.

1.5 At that meeting, the Committee agreed to defer any decisions relating to the above in order to allow the policy and framework to be considered alongside the Commercial Plan.

1.6 The purpose of this report is to:

- provide members with an update on the pricing policy and framework;
- provide further details on the rationale for selecting the four priority projects in order to support the decision-making process; and
- obtain approval on related actions (detailed below).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- 1. approve the Commercial Plan and Pricing Policy, as detailed in Appendices I – III; and**
- 2. agree that the following priority areas be researched in line with the above policy and framework (all findings and proposals to come back to the SP&R Committee).**
 - a. Malone House - explore possible alternative commercial uses for the building to maximise asset and reduce annual operating costs;**
 - b. Events - develop a Council-wide events policy & procedures to include establishing transparent, fair and consistent pricing options;**
 - c. Bulky waste - explore potential pricing options for the bulky waste service to reduce annual operating costs; and**
 - d. Pest control - explore potential pricing options for the pest control service to reduce annual operating costs.**

3.0 Main Report

Introduction

- 3.1 The Commercial Plan detailed at Appendix I formalises our future ambitions relating to commercialisation and income generation.**
- 3.2 Fundamentally, this is about integrating commercial activities and a commercial mind set into the core of how we operate as an organisation.**
- 3.3 The overarching aim of our Commercial Plan is to generate a greater financial return that contributes to the Council's investment plans and its efficiency programme, and assists to safeguard services that are delivered in our local communities.**
- 3.4 To support our specific ambition to generate additional income, the Commercial team, in partnership with relevant individuals/departments, has commenced a strategic programme of work that includes (amongst other things):**
 - Preparing a Corporate Pricing Policy and associated procedures;**
 - Developing a Council-wide Advertising and Sponsorship Strategy;**
 - Supporting the development of an agreed Asset Management Strategy;**

- Identifying commercial best practice across other local authorities and organisations; and
 - Creating a framework to identify, develop and deliver existing and new (and innovative) income generating opportunities across the Council's commercial operations.
- 3.5 Alongside this, work has also commenced to enhance our commercial culture and competency, including the roll-out of a competency training programme and commercial awareness raising sessions.

Corporate Pricing Policy

- 3.6 The charges and fees levied for our services represent an important source of income each year, which is used to support the delivery of our corporate objectives. Whilst charging for services is, therefore, a recognised feature within the Council, some demand-led services are provided at little or no direct charge to the user. The provision of services at low, or no, charge (or fee) means that all ratepayers are subsidising the cost of delivery.
- 3.7 The recent financial uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic and 'Brexit' have now made it essential that the Council makes best use of pricing and charging opportunities and to recognise the importance of using pricing as a means of recovering the costs of delivering our services.

3.8 To support this, the Commercial team has developed:

- A corporate Pricing Policy; and
- A framework document, 'Setting Prices - Getting it Right', to guide Council officers when introducing pricing or increasing/decreasing prices.

3.9 The key aims of the policy include:

- Promoting consistency and fairness in the treatment of service users; and
- Striking a balance addressing the financial needs of the Council through optimisation of income and the social needs of customers.

3.10 Any decision to vary or introduce charges must be aligned to strategic priorities and financial objectives. Council officers must adhere to the following principles set out in the policy:

- Efficiency – charges are simple and not cumbersome to administer.
- Transparency – the nature and use of the service are understood by users
- Effectiveness – the charges provide value for money.
- Clarity – users are clear about when and how charges apply.
- Equity – the charges are fairly applied across a range of users.
- Ethics – users with special needs are charged appropriate fees.

Priority Projects

3.11 We currently provide many discretionary services (i.e. those that are not required to be provided by law but are provided at our discretion) that all ratepayers are subsidising the cost of delivery. The table below provides some examples¹:

¹ Based on budget figures for the 2019/20 financial year.

Service	Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure i.e. cost to the Council
Events ²	£1,464,026	£89,700	£1,374,326
Bulky Waste	£993,851	£19,534	£974,317
Zoo (including Shop)	£2,842,409	£1,902,035	£940,374
Pest Control	£289,702	£5,137	£284,565
Bike Scheme	£478,594	£245,254	£233,340
Belfast Castle	£450,397	£256,000	£194,397
Malone House	£332,626	£186,000	£146,626
Mary Peters Track	£137,040	£0	£137,040
Consumer Advice	£106,725	£0	£106,725
Home Safety	£178,976	£82,610	£96,366
Catering Services	£463,917	£399,280	£64,637
City Hall Tours	£53,400	£18,850	£34,550

3.12 If approved, it will not be possible, in the current circumstances, to review all of the Council's services and activities (such as those set out above) at this point in the context of the policy.

3.13 That being the case, it is recommended that the following four projects be examined in the first instance:

- **Malone House** - explore possible alternative commercial uses for the building to maximise asset and reduce annual operating costs;
- **Bulky waste** - explore potential pricing options for bulky waste service to reduce annual operating costs;
- **Pest control** - explore potential pricing options for pest control service to reduce annual operating costs; and
- **Events** - develop a Council-wide events policy and procedures to include establishing transparent, fair and consistent pricing options.

3.14 Further details on each are included in Appendix IV.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.15 This programme of work will be managed as part of the CPS's annual revenue budget.

Equality or Good Relations implications/

² Includes Events unit, Major Events, Sports Events and Grants.

Rural Needs Assessment

3.16 No implications at this stage.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Alderman Dorrian and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations set out within the report and agrees also that Party briefings be held, once more detailed proposals are worked up, to allow for them to be considered in advance of a future meeting.



Subject:	The Five C's Public Realm Catalyst Project
Date:	18 December 2020
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director City Regeneration and Development Richard Griffin, Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To seek approval to commit developer contributions secured through the planning process in order to enable delivery of a public realm scheme known as 'The Five Cs Public Realm' catalyst project, which covers Chichester Street, Callender Street, College Avenue, College Court and College Street.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. note the update in respect of the use of developer contributions for a proposed public realm project known as 'The Five C's Public Realm Project' in Belfast City Centre.

	<p>ii. grant approval for the commitment of £3,150 secured as a developer contribution following receipt of amended information regarding planning approval at No. 78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F) to part-fund the Five Cs public realm catalyst project; and</p> <p>iii. grant approval for the commitment of an additional £243,310 secured as developer contributions from The Paper Exchange (LA04/2019/0909/F) and Chichester House (LA04/2016/0548F) to part-fund the Five Cs public realm catalyst project, with a further £42,500 to be committed from the Chichester House scheme on receipt of payment which will be triggered by occupation.</p>
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	As agreed at the SP&R meeting in November 2018 and the CG&R meeting in December 2018, officers have been working with the Department for Communities (DfC) to develop a programme of public realm catalyst projects utilising historical developer contributions.
3.2	These contributions are legally defined by planning agreements and are designed to mitigate the impacts of new development. They can only be required where they are necessary to make the development acceptable and, once secured, are ring-fenced for an agreed purpose. The agreements through which all contributions referred to in this report have been secured specify that they may only be used for public realm improvements to mitigate the impact of increased footfall and to improve connectivity. The contributions may only be used within a defined geographical area, and must be 'committed' by Council within a specified time period of receipt, or risk being returned to the developer.
3.3	Governance arrangements for developer contributions were agreed by SP&R on 17 th December 2019. The commitment of developer contributions requires authorisation by Planning Service and Legal Services for the spending service area (in this case City Regeneration & Development) to proceed, with financial oversight provided by the Business Support Manager. No monies will be paid until all services have provided authorisation.
3.4	At its meeting on 23rd November 2018, the SP&R Committee agreed to commit £475,650 of developer contributions from two developments (including No. 78 College Avenue - LA04/2015/0419/F) to part fund (with DfC) a public realm catalyst project in the College Street/College Avenue area. It was also noted that there would be an opportunity for Members and local stakeholders, including traders and residents, to engage in the development of proposals.

3.5	Following receipt of amended information in relation to No. 78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F) a further agreement secured an additional contribution of £3,150 towards public realm improvements. This sum has not yet been committed.
3.6	On 9th October 2019, the CG&R Committee agreed to proceed with design development and delivery in partnership with DfC, of further public realm improvements in Chichester and Callender Street utilising developer contributions, subject to approval by SP&R Committee, from two schemes - The Paper Exchange (LA04/2019/0909/F) and Chichester House (LA04/2016/0548F). These contributions total £285,810, though £42,500 is to be paid on occupation of Chichester House.
3.7	It was subsequently agreed with DfC that a single pilot project would be taken forward incorporating all of the streets referred to above, involving improvements to footway surfaces, street furniture, lighting and soft landscaping across the 'Five Cs'- Chichester Street, Callender Street, College Street, College Court and College Avenue. The project is being delivered by DfC in partnership with Council through existing governance arrangements established by the Belfast Streets Ahead Board, which includes representation from DfI.
3.8	This project is being undertaken in the context of ongoing work to transform connectivity across the city, and will be delivered in line with the principles set out in the City Centre Connectivity Study 'A Bolder Vision'.
3.9	As reported to the CG&R Committee on 9th September 2020, a BCC Stakeholder and Engagement Group has been formed to provide cross Departmental input, and initial engagement with key stakeholders including DfI has also been undertaken and will continue throughout the project. A workshop for elected members was facilitated in June during the early stages of design development and a further session took place in mid-September. Following this targeted stakeholder engagement, concept designs have been developed and are currently available as part of a public consultation process running from 30 th September to 22 nd December 2020 (see the attached Appendix - Five C's Consultation Booklet).
3.10	The Five Cs scheme has a total estimated value in the region of £1,900,000. Capital funding by Council will only be provided from the developer contributions referred to above which total £764,610, of which £475,650 has already been committed.

3.11	This report proposes commitment of a further £243,310, plus £3,150 secured following receipt of amended information in relation to No.78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F). In relation to the Chichester House contribution, a further £42,500 will be committed on receipt of payment which will be triggered by occupation.
3.12	Each developer contribution will only be spent within the area defined by the relevant S76 agreement, and in line with all other terms of that agreement. Appropriate arrangements will be agreed between Belfast City Council and the Department for Communities, stating the requirement to adhere to the terms of each Planning agreement, including conditions regarding the purpose and location of spend.
	Financial and Resource Implications
3.13	Commitment of £243,310 of developer contributions from two schemes - The Paper Exchange (LA04/2019/0909/F) and Chichester House (LA04/2016/0548F). A further £42,500 will be committed from the Chichester House contribution, on receipt of payment which will be triggered by occupation.
3.14	Commitment of £3,150 of developer contributions in relation to a further agreement entered into following receipt of amended information regarding the scheme at No. 78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F).
	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
3.15	The Five Cs Public Realm Catalyst Project is subject to equality and good relations screening with ongoing monitoring which is being carried out by DfC- https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/5-cs-public-realm-project-screening
3.16	Council's Equality & Diversity Officer has also been consulted on BCC Equality Screening for the Five Cs Public Realm Project to ensure that Equality and Good Relations implications and Rural Needs are fully considered.
4.0	Document Attached
	Five C's Consultation Booklet

THE FIVE 'C'S' PUBLIC REALM

BELFAST

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www.thefivecs.info

SEPTEMBER 2020



COLLEGE STREET - COLLEGE AVENUE - COLLEGE COURT

CALLENDER STREET

CHICHESTER STREET

5 CS SITE BOUNDARY

BELFAST STREETS AHEAD



INTRODUCTION

To deliver public realm improvements in Belfast city centre the Department for Communities developed the Belfast Streets Ahead (BSA) Programme.

The programme takes a phased approach to improving the public realm in Belfast city centre. Phase 1 was completed in 2012 and included the areas that border with the Five C's Project and Phase 5, which is currently being progressed, borders College Avenue and College Street from the Five C's Project.

The overall aim of the Belfast Streets Ahead programme is to maximize the potential of the city centre's public realm to position Belfast as a premier European regional capital and the primary retail and leisure destination in Northern Ireland.

The programme objectives are:

- To improve and enhance the physical appearance of the city centre, building on the work completed under earlier phases of the programme
- To contribute to the physical regeneration of Belfast city centre
- To provide a cohesive approach to the development of the public realm
- To strengthen the economic viability of the city centre
- To enhance the attractiveness of Belfast city centre to visitors and residents
- To improve access to Belfast city centre from all parts of the city

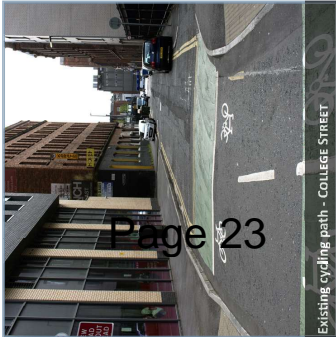
The Five C's Project area comprises College Court, College Street from Queen Street to College Avenue, College Avenue (east side from King Street to College Street), Callender Street and Chichester Street (excluding previously improved paving from Arthur Street to Victoria Street).

This project shall comprise public realm enhancement. It will include improvements to surfacing, lighting, landscaping, street furniture, public art and all associated works within the project area to deliver high quality streetscapes that will contribute positively to the economic, environmental and social viability of the city.

COLLEGE COURT

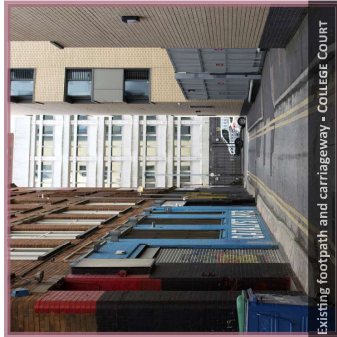


Existing narrow footways - COLLEGE COURT

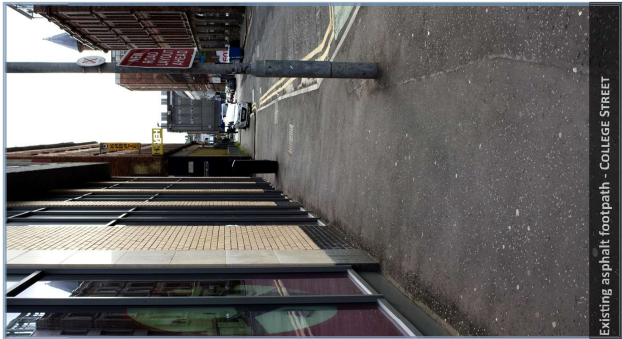


Existing cycling path - COLLEGE STREET

COLLEGE STREET

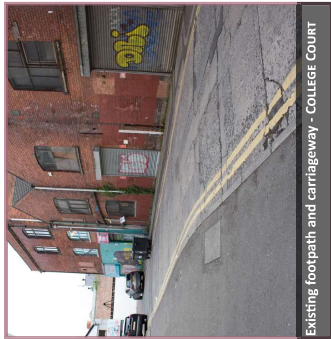


Existing footpath and carriageway - COLLEGE COURT

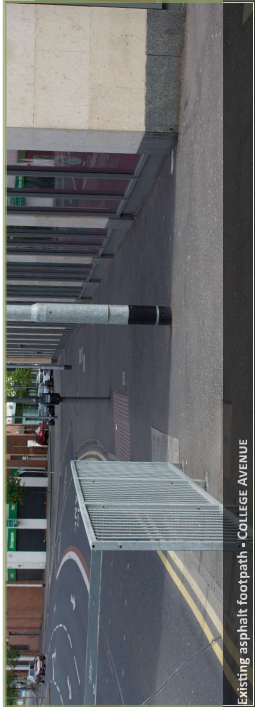


Existing asphalt footpath - COLLEGE STREET

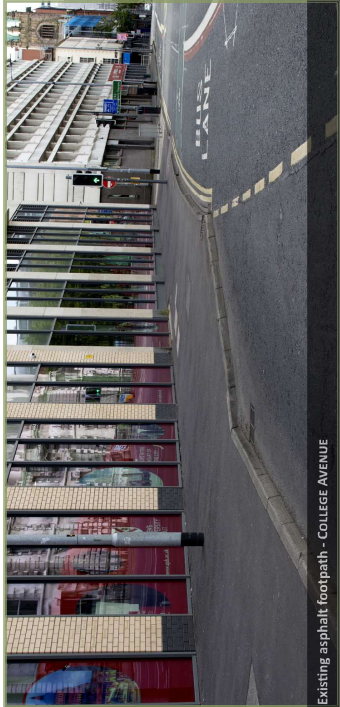
COLLEGE AVE



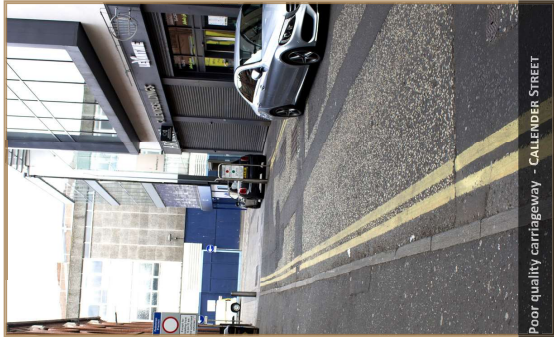
Existing footpath and carriageway - COLLEGE COURT



Existing asphalt footpath - COLLEGE AVENUE

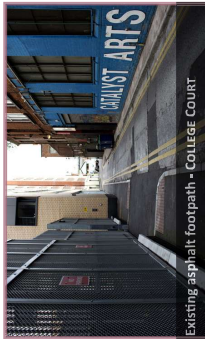


Existing asphalt footpath - COLLEGE AVENUE



Poor quality carriageway - CALLENDER STREET

CALLENDER STREET



Existing asphalt footpath - COLLEGE COURT

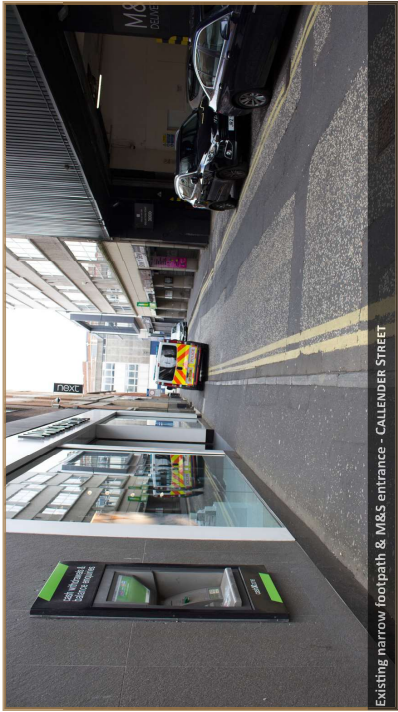


Existing flag paving & trees - CHICHESTER STREET

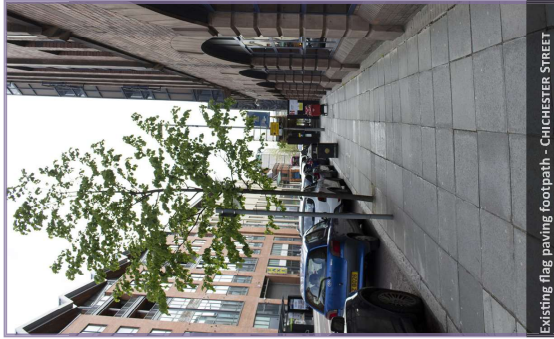


Existing narrow asphalt footpath - CALLENDER STREET

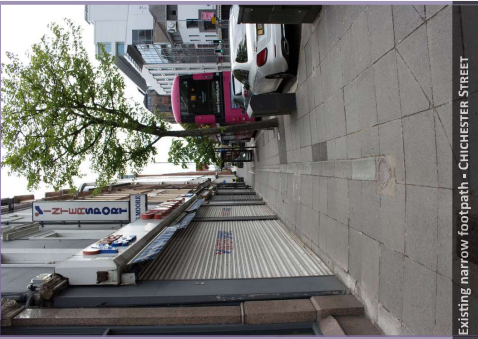
CHICHESTER STREET



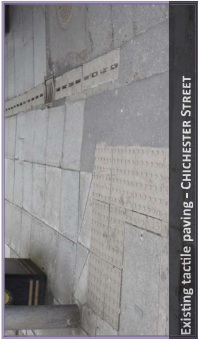
Existing narrow footpath & M&S entrance - CALLENDER STREET



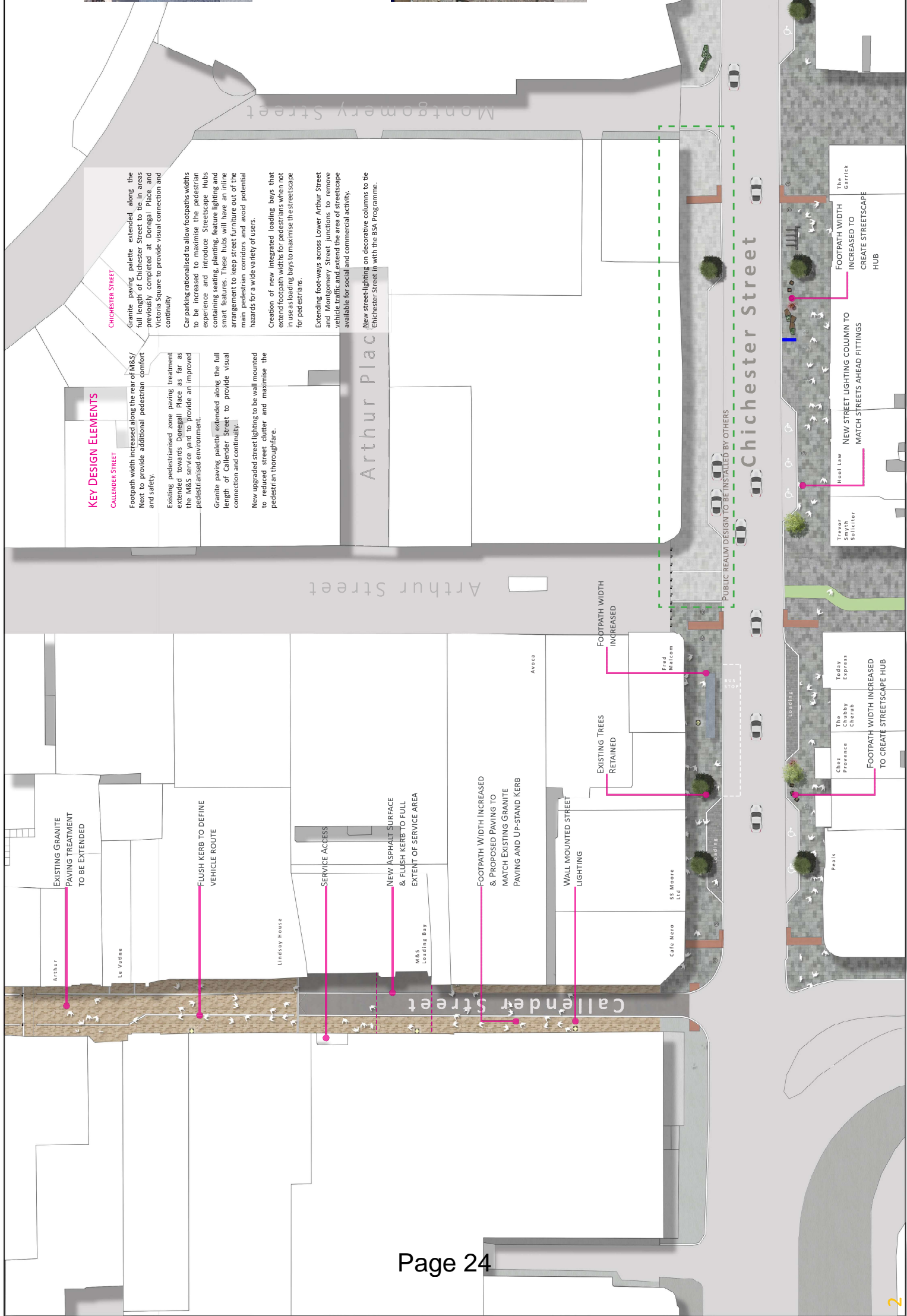
Existing flag paving footpath - CHICHESTER STREET



Existing narrow footpath - CHICHESTER STREET



Existing tactile paving - CHICHESTER STREET

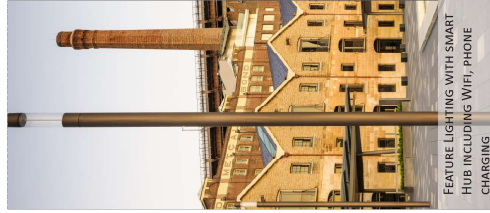




INTEGRATED LOADING BAY



CALLENDER STREET



FEATURE LIGHTING WITH SMART HUB INCLUDING WIFI, PHONE CHARGING



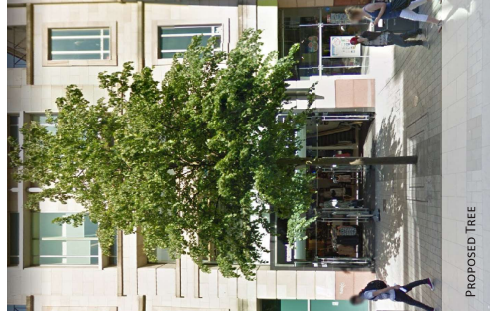
FEATURE LIGHTING WITH SMART HUB INCLUDING WIFI, PHONE CHARGING



STREET FURNITURE



CHICHESTER STREET



PROPOSED TREE



PROPOSED BOLLARDS



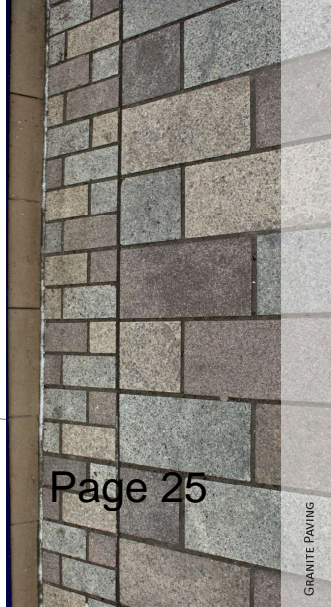
GRANITE PAVING



PROPOSED NATURAL STONE PAVING TO MATCH EXISTING



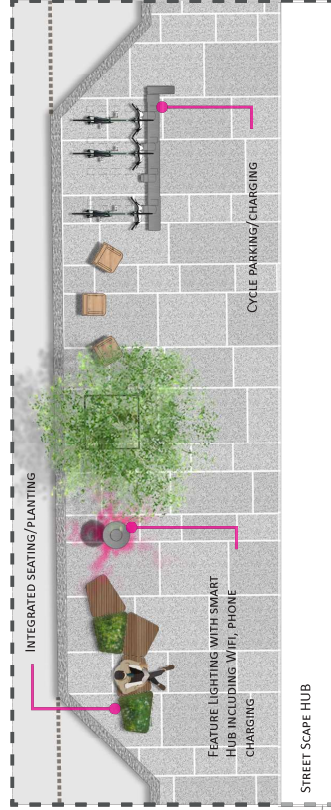
GRANITE SETT PAVING



GRANITE PAVING



STREET FURNITURE WITH INTEGRATED PLANTERS TO HELP 'GREEN' THE STREETScape



STREET Scape HUB

STREET FURNITURE WITH INTEGRATED PLANTERS TO HELP 'GREEN' THE STREETScape

GLIDER HALT

PROPOSED NATURAL STONE PAVING TO MATCH EXISTING

FOOTPATH WIDTH INCREASED TO CREATE STREETScape HUB

STREET FURNITURE WITH INTEGRATED PLANTERS TO HELP 'GREEN' THE STREETScape

NEW BUILD-OUT TO JUNCTION

Centre House

Genny Agency's

FOOTPATH WIDTH INCREASED TO CREATE STREETScape HUB



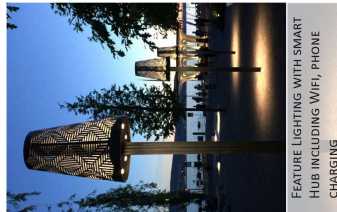
COLLEGE STREET

COLLEGE COURT

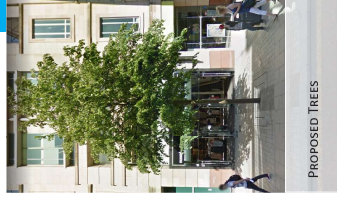


SKIPPER STREET - CAITHNESS PAVING FLAGS & NATURAL STONE SETTS

COLLEGE AVENUE



FEATURE LIGHTING WITH SMART HUB INCLUDING WIFI, PHONE CHARGING



PROPOSED TREES



MEANDERING BENCHES TO PROVIDE PLAY VALUE



CAITHNESS PAVING FLAGS



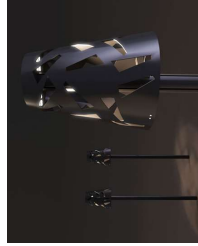
CAITHNESS PAVING FLAGS



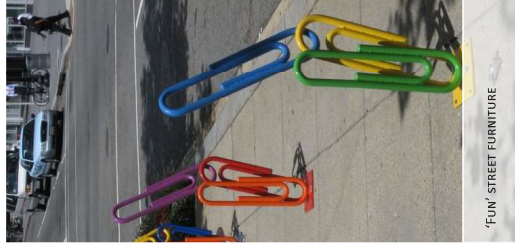
BENCHES & PLANTERS



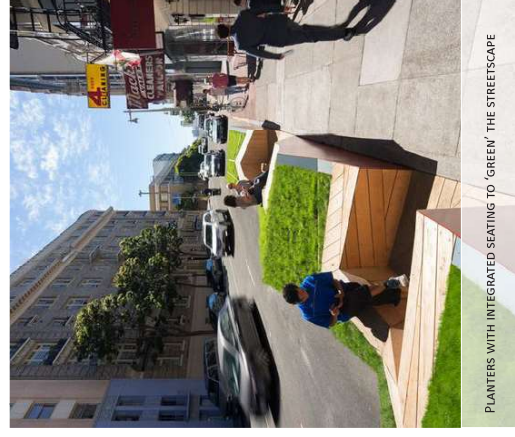
BOLLARDS



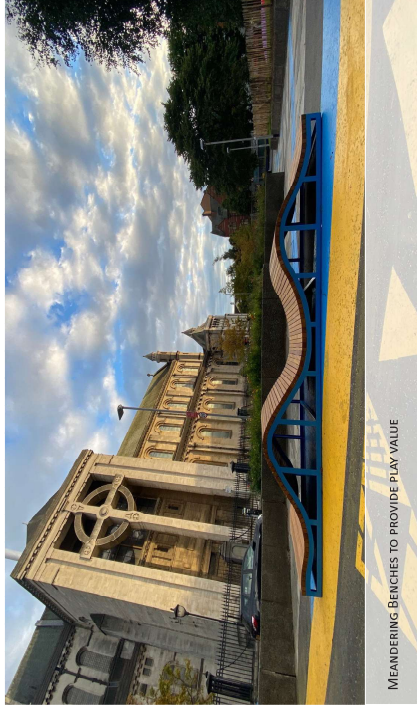
MEANDERING BENCHES TO PROVIDE PLAY VALUE



'FUN' STREET FURNITURE



PLANTERS WITH INTEGRATED SEATING TO 'GREEN' THE STREETSCAPE



MEANDERING BENCHES TO PROVIDE PLAY VALUE



PLANTERS WITH INTEGRATED SEATING TO 'GREEN' THE STREETSCAPE

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

COLLEGE STREET

Creation of a high-quality, pedestrian friendly environment to include increased footpath widths, new high-quality streetscape materials, new lighting and new planting.

COLLEGE AVENUE

Use of new high-quality paving materials and the creation of a streetscape hub to provide connection and continuity with previously completed areas of the BSA Programme.

COLLEGE COURT

Creation of a pedestrian friendly environment by restricting vehicle access and improving the width of pedestrian routes.

This is combined with the introduction of street furniture that provides a focal point for the adjacent residential developments, improved lighting and increased planting to make the street visually inviting.



ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

Monday, 14th December, 2020

MEETING OF ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

(Held remotely via Microsoft Teams)

Attendees

Directors:	Mr. J. McGuigan (Chairperson) Councillor Carson Councillor Corr Councillor McLaughlin Councillor Newton Mr. P. Boyle Mr. K. Ellison Mr. C. Kirkwood Mrs. K. McCullough and Mr. G. Walls
Officers:	Mrs. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager; Mr. N. Munnis, Partnership Manager; and Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.
GLL:	Mr. G. Kirk, Regional Director; Mr. J. Michael, Business Manager; and Mr. A. Walker, Partnership Manager.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th November were approved.

Matters Arising

Agenda Items

The Board noted that reports on i.) a protocol to deal with future requests from non-Directors to attend future meetings; ii.) a plan for the recruitment of Directors; and iii). revised performance and compliance reporting had been included in the agenda and would be considered later in the meeting.

GLL Staff Survey

The Board noted that an update on the progress of a GLL staff satisfaction survey would be presented to its meeting in January.

Update on Covid-19 Lockdown and Recovery

The Board noted that it would, later in the meeting, have the opportunity to discuss with GLL the issues which had been raised at the meeting on 9th November around the Customer Services Advisor role and child safeguarding.

Director Attendance Statement

The Board noted that there were no issues to report in terms of the non-attendance of Directors at meetings.

Proposals for Future Board Meeting Agenda Items

No agenda items were identified by Directors for future meetings.

ABL Accounts for 2019/20 and Annual Company Statement

(Mr. D. Moan, Advanced Accounting, attended in connection with this item.)

Mr. Moan informed the Board that the annual accounts and company statement for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending on 31st March, 2020 had now been completed. He provided a brief overview of the accounts and recommended that the Board approve them for submission to Companies House before the deadline date of 31st December.

The Board approved the annual accounts and company statement for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending 31st March, 2020 and noted that they would be signed electronically by Mr. McGuigan, the Chairperson of the Board.

(The GLL representatives were admitted to the meeting at this point.)

Performance and Contract Compliance

The Board was reminded that the current service contract required GLL to provide it with written service performance reports on a quarterly basis.

The Board was reminded further that, at its meeting on 9th November, it had approved a new set of performance reports for 2020/21, including a revised scorecard, comprising the following nine Key Performance Indicators:

Financial	Expenditure Cost Recovery
Financial	Labour Cost Recovery
Financial	Cost per Visit
Membership	Pay and Play Membership Net Gain
Membership	Pre-Paid Membership Net Gain
Membership	Swim School Membership Net Gain
Occupancy	Main Hall Occupancy
Occupancy	Studio Occupancy
Occupancy	Synthetic Pitch Occupancy

Mr. Walker submitted for the Board's consideration a report providing information on the revised Key Performance Indicators, together with a supporting narrative, on an overall and centre-by-centre basis, for the first and second quarters of 2020/21.

He outlined the impact which the COVID-19 lockdown/restrictions had had upon service provision and performance over the two quarters and drew the Board's attention to the fact that a net gain in new memberships for the Andersonstown, Brook and Lisnasharragh centres continued to partially offset the overall net deficit in memberships across the service.

After discussion, the Board acknowledged receipt of the Performance and Contract Compliance report for the first and second quarters of 2020/21 and noted the information which had been provided.

Annual Schedule of Charges 2021/22

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose amendments to the leisure schedule of charges for 2021/22, based on an average 2.5% price increase. To note the financial impact of Covid-19 income levels with a projected income gap of £1m - £2m in 2021/2022, based on previous year trading trajectory.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is requested to agree the proposed price increases to be applied from April 2021.**
- 2.2 The Board is requested also to note the review and development of a 'pricing matrix' has been completed. This document is an operation handbook designed to describe each product and service covered within the schedule of charges and promote consistency of interpretation, application and equality across the city.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 Pricing is reviewed on an annual basis across the partnership and benchmarks are applied to check pricing against industry standards and Northern Ireland leisure providers.**
- 3.2 A price increase is being proposed at an average of 2.5% across all prices in the leisure centres, this is based on similar value in previous years and is to support in covering the large scale income loss created from the Covid-19 pandemic.**

- 3.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant financial impact on the trading figures in 2020/21, and will have a cumulative impact in the coming year.**
- a) The average income per month across the centres was forecast to be circa £650k in 2020 through the summer period. Based on the first lockdown and four month closure the direct financial impact in this period was an income loss of £2.6m. During this period memberships were frozen and refunds provided for any bookings, therefore no income was received during this period. The income deficit in this period was offset by the government Job Retention Scheme which ensured financial sustainability throughout the summer months.**
 - b) In the early stages of reopening during September there was a positive response from customers and income levels had shown some recovery. But following a further lockdown and enhanced restrictions in October and November, a further impact on income levels was seen.**
 - c) The overall financial position and risk to the Council has been minimised through the ongoing use of the Job Retention Scheme and the fact that some facilities and programmes have been unable to recommence. During November the Job Retention Scheme was extended across the UK and has further helped offset any income gap that remains across the centres.**
 - d) Based on the second lockdown the current forecast for the winter period has been reviewed in order to manage any financial risk going forward, and early stage forecasts show a break even position again based on the support from the job retention scheme.**
 - e) Finance remains a key priority for both GLL and the Council and this is reviewed on a monthly basis. This area remains in a state of flux based on the continual changes in the operating environment.**
- 3.4 The impact of Covid-19 has resulted in a reduction in membership numbers, reduced capacity and programming, increased cleaning costs and changes to our staff structures, which has resulted in voluntary redundancy. This reduction is likely to continue into the year ahead and therefore the application of a small price increase will assist in bridging the financial gap.**
- 3.5 The current income gap is forecast at £1.5m for the coming year based on the original forecast position for 2020. Alongside this most costs of the service have remained the**

same and therefore a number of mitigations to bridge this gap are being considered by GLL including the inclusion of a small price increase. The 2.5% price increase will potentially yield £170k and, therefore, make up 11% of the financial gap created.

- a) **Membership** - Overall pre-paid membership since January 1st has seen a significant decline due to the impact of Covid-19. Memberships have dropped from 16,043 to 12,137 (3,906) which represents a 24% reduction. This combined with reduced capacities results in an income projection for 2021 of a £1.5m loss.
- b) **Cleaning Costs** - The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in increase requirements for cleaning equipment. It is estimated that cleaning equipment costs will increase by 50% in 2021 and result in an additional spend of £42.5k in comparison to 2020.
- c) **Voluntary Redundancy** – has been applied and 17 posts have been removed from the staff team which will support in a more efficient delivery and cost management.

3.6 Supplier costs are set to rise in 2021 and expected to be between 2% and 3%, which will result in further additional spend. It is important to note that the impact of Brexit on suppliers and associated costs is not yet known but it is likely that this will result in increased pricing.

3.7 The CPI is running at a lower than normal rate due to the current pandemic, however based on the income gap a minimal price increase has been proposed.

3.8 The opening of the three new LTP centres has seen increased costs of delivery but these are not matched to the forecast income position.

3.9 The prices in Belfast remain some of the best value for money across Northern Ireland and the UK and are comparably at the lower end of the industry benchmarks.

- a) **Average pre-paid membership price** in GLL Belfast is £24.75. Average prices in a neighbouring council are £30.75 in Ards and North Down. Private operators such as David Lloyd charge on average £96.59 per month, Bannatyne's £47.99 per month and Everlast £36.50 per month.
- b) **Average swimming costs** in GLL Belfast is £3.98. Average prices in a neighbouring council are £4.20 in Ards and North Down. Private operators such do not offer specific swimming rates but offer day access

passes to their facilities which can range from £10 to £15 per visit.

- c) 50% of all members avail of a concessionary rate within Belfast and the service continue to offer free access to over 60s before 11am.
- d) The Belfast Healthwise team work in partnership with the Public Health Agency and Macmillan Cancer Support to deliver a variety of physical activity referral programmes that can be availed of free of charge for a period of 12 weeks. Competitive membership options are also provided to participants who graduate through these initiatives.
- e) Members are requested to note that GLL in Belfast continue to support 150 athletes, both senior and junior through the GLL Sport Foundation scheme. This scheme provides athletes with free access of all centres across the city in order to support their training and preparation for competition at national and international level.

3.10 The private sector continues to expand in Belfast and remains a key driving force in the local market. New Everlast clubs have opened at the old DW site at Boucher and at Shaw's Bridge.

3.11 Proposed Prepaid Membership, Pay & Play Membership, activity and facility hire charges have been circulated to the Board."

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor Carson and

Resolved – That the Board agrees to reject the proposed price increase of 2.5% for 2020/21 across all GLL-managed facilities and agrees instead that no price increase be applied from April, 2021.

GLL Annual Marketing Plan 2021/22

The Board noted the contents of GLL's Annual Marketing Plan for 2021/22, which provided details of its marketing of leisure centres, promotion of health and wellbeing activities, partnership working and new products, together with its Topline Health Communities Plan for 2021.

Update on Group Exercise Programme, Innovation and Development

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

- “1.0 Purpose of Report**
- 1.1 To update members on the year-to-date group exercise performance and programme developments.**
- 2.0 Recommendations**
- 2.1 The Board is requested to note:**
- i. Q1 and Q2 performance (April - September 2019);**
 - ii. that performance monitoring is in place both locally and nationally;**
 - iii. that new Studios came online at Andersonstown Leisure Centre.**
- 3.0 Main Report**
- 3.1 Introduction:**
- 3.1.1 Group exercise class access is included as part of the better membership package.**
- 3.1.2 Group exercise classes are recognised as a key tool in attracting and retaining members/customers.**
- 3.1.3 Group exercise classes continue to be particularly popular with female users, with females representing 3 in every 4 attendees.**
- 3.1.4 The current citywide group exercise programme continues to evolve and change to increase usage figures, provide choice for the consumer and ensure quality across all centres**
- 3.1.5 As a result of Covid-19, the leisure centres across Belfast were closed during the first quarter of 2020. Group exercise classes returned in July in 9 centres with a significantly reduced offer due to social distancing measures and the requirement to reduce touch points. Further details of what was offered between July and September is provided in the performance update below.**
- 3.2 Performance Update**
- 3.2.1 The overall strategic aim remains to get More People More Active More Often through an effective citywide group exercise programme**
- 3.2.2 In July, due to social distancing measures and the desire to ensure large groups could benefit from the group exercise programme, the majority of group exercise**

classes were moved into leisure centre sports halls. In this way the centres could mark out 3m x 3m spaces for group exercise and 2m x 2m spaces for group cycling.

- 3.2.4 The group cycle studio at Andersonstown, BGB and BGC were maintained but with reduced numbers to ensure a 2m x 2m distance could be maintained.
- 3.2.4 Group exercise classes were delivered in July and August in Andersonstown, BGB, BGC, Brook, Falls, Grove, Lisnasharragh, Olympia and Shankill. In September Girdwood and Whiterock were added.
- 3.2.5 In July and August, the reduced programme included group cycling, body conditioning, core conditioning, HIIT, Yoga, Pilates and Tai Chi. In September this offering was extended to include aqua aerobics, body pump, circuits and combat classes
- 3.2.6 Classes offered per week ranged from 179 in July to 218 in September.
- 3.2.7 Virtual classes were offered in BGB due to their reduced studio capacity and in order to reduce cost for an instructor. This offering began as 4 classes per week in July and rose to 6 per week in September.
- 3.2.8 In addition to this the Healthwise team delivered 4 walking groups per week and 8 virtual classes for participants with the Move More and Healthwise programmes
- 3.2.9 Attendance figures are
 - 3.2.9.1 Overall attendance; 23,352 for Q1/Q2
 - 3.2.9.1.1 Q1 Attendance: 0
 - 3.2.9.1.2 Q2 Attendance: 23,352 – 4,869 (Jul), 8,178 (Aug), 10,305 (Sept)
 - 3.2.9.2 Attendance increased throughout Q2 which was attributed to the return of members, increased classes offerings and the introduction of two additional centres in September.
 - 3.2.9.3 The need to manage capacities and track and trace led to a requirement to pre book for all activities. This was possible via the Better website and Better UK app. The use of the app has improved the reporting accuracy of fitness classes and attendance numbers.
 - 3.2.9.4 Lisnasharragh had the highest attendance for a single centre with a total 5,592 participants for Q2, just slightly lower than a quarter of the total group exercise usage.

3.2.10 In Q2, the average attendance of classes was 10 participants. The utilisation of classes was 58.9% in July, 64.2% in August and 65.3% in September.

3.2.11 The most popular types of classes for Q2 were:

- Cardio – 1,211 classes (53.8% of offering)
- Strength and Conditioning - 602 classes (26.8% of offering)
- Mind and Body - 425 classes (18.9% of offering)
- Aqua - 12 classes (0.5% of offering)

3.2.12 Upcoming focus for the Health Team will be to develop more step down/low functioning classes across the city and upskilling health coaches to take water rehabilitation classes

3.3 Studio Provision - LTP update

3.3.1 The new Andersonstown Leisure Centre opened in July 2020. Currently studio 1 is being utilised as an entry and exit point for classes while studio 2 and the spin studio are being utilised for the delivery of classes. Please see below for further details about the active studio spaces.

Spin Studio (69m²)

The spin studio is adjacent to the gym; the studio has a virtual set up supported by LED strip lighting and a staged effect over three tiers

Studio 2: Class Dojo (196m²)

This is a multi purpose studio which can accommodate a variety of activities from conferences to Irish dancing. This is a large studio which can accommodate a 13 x 13 metres martial arts facility. It can also cater for the inclusion of virtual classes.

3.4 Training and Development

3.4.1 Fitness Training to enhance the programme has been provisional organised for all Fitness Teams over the upcoming 2 months to provide information sharing opportunities and the provision of supporting resources.”

After discussion, the Board adopted the recommendations.

(The GLL representatives left the meeting at this point.)

Update on Annual Aquatics Strategy Action Plan

The Partnership Manager submitted for the Board's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the annual review of progress in relation to the Aquatics Strategy action plan.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is requested to consider the progress report set out below and records receipt of the update.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 'An Aquatics Strategy for Belfast 2019-2030' was officially launched at a public event in August 2019. Following the launch, the board developed and approved an action plan to track strategic outputs and development progress. The action plan was approved by the board on 9th December 2019.**

- 3.2 Within the strategic document, under 'what we want to achieve' the development of an action plan is referenced. Specifically that the partners should: 'Develop a detailed action plan within three months of the launch of our strategy' and 'Ensure that the action plan includes annual performance reports and key strategic review points.**

- 3.3 The action plan, a copy of which has been circulated to the Board, is presented in line with the four themes set out in the strategic document under 'Strategic objectives and priorities' (Pages 8 – 11), namely:**

- What we want to do;**
- How we want to do things;**
- Who we want to do it for, and;**
- What we want to achieve**

- 3.4 Within the four themes above, the action plan identifies 12 key objectives each with a set of more focused outputs.**

- 3.5 The first annual review of the strategy would have been scheduled for quarter 3 of 2020/21. The annual board report schedule was due to be considered in April 2020 but, due to Covid-19 restrictions, Board meetings were suspended after the meeting of 11th March and did not resume until 9th November 2020.**

- 3.6 Delivery of the aquatics strategy was similarly impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions with a variety of lock down and**

partial opening conditions imposed on the service. All leisure centres were closed throughout April, May and June with partial opening allowed from mid-July followed by the re-opening of swimming pools in August.

- 3.7 Since August, Council pools have remained open with the exception of a second lockdown between 27th November and 10th December. Although they have remained open, pools have been required to operate under very different and restricted 'Covid safe' operating protocols.
- 3.8 Some pools/centres are currently operating on reduced opening hours. The swimming pool at Brook remains closed due to Covid-Safe protocol compliance challenges specific to this particular centre.
- 3.9 All pool user groups have been negatively impacted by the restrictions.
- 3.10 Given the exceptional operating conditions imposed since March 2020 there may be limited value in reviewing specifics outputs as set out in the action plan at this point. However, there has been significant strategic input into decisions relating to LTP capital delivery, pool programming, customer communications and pricing reviews. Examples of where the aquatics strategy has been referenced and proved to be useful include:
- The application of a citywide approach to local pool availability for different activities and user groups. This has been useful in ensuring that convenient options are available, on an area basis, to serve the needs of different user groups;
 - Planning for the integration of new pool products into the service and related pricing proposals. Examples include; leisure water (at Andersonstown), surf air, aqua splash and diving;
 - The development of consistent operating protocols and related customer communications;
 - The development of fair and equitable programming principles to serve the needs of a large number of different user groups with varying demands;
 - The development of a pricing matrix to sit alongside the approved annual schedule of charges. The matrix is designed to serve as a much needed reference document for centre managers and front line staff in the application of approved pricing;

- **Planning for the programming of pools at Lisnasharragh within the context of the City's main centre for competitive aquatic sports and activities; and**
 - **Liaison with Swim Ulster and affiliated aquatics clubs.**
- 3.11 Throughout the first nine months of 2020/21, the aquatics strategy has remained a live and valued document. The strategy has been referenced frequently to provide strategic context and to support decisions taken.**
- 3.12 There may be some cause for optimism around a gradual return towards 'normal service' in 2021. The next annual aquatics strategy action plan review will be presented August 2021 at which time, subject to service conditions between now and then, a more detailed update of the action plan outputs will be presented."**

After discussion, the Board noted the contents of the report.

Update on the Council's Sports Development

(Mr. C. McCann, Sports Development Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Sports Development Manager informed the Board that the Council's Leisure Development Unit led the delivery of an extensive programme of sports development initiatives in support of the Belfast Agenda.

He provided details of the outputs arising from the main initiatives which had been undertaken between April and September and pointed out that delivery had been restricted by the Executive Office's legislation and sporting governing body guidance around the Covid-19 pandemic.

He then provided specific details around the Belfast Boxing Strategy, the Stadium Community Benefits Initiative, the Pitches Partner Agreements, the GAA Joint Management Board, Support for Sport Funding, Strand one of the Every Body Active campaign and the Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy. The Primary Schools' Cross Country Competition and Bike to Work Day had, unfortunately, been cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

In response to a number of questions from Directors, the Sports Development Manager confirmed that terms of reference were in the process of being drafted for the development of the Council's Sports Development and Physical Activity Strategy and that the Council would be engaging with key partners, including GLL, as part of the subsequent consultation process. The Council had also been consulted by the Department for Communities on its new ten-year Sport and Physical Activity strategy for Northern Ireland. Finally, he confirmed that some of the funding which had been made available under the general support fund had been used to deliver a number of mental health initiatives.

The Sports Development Manager was thanked by the Chairperson, following which the Board noted the information which had been provided.

ABL Board Meeting Non-Director Attendance Protocol

The Board deferred until its meeting in January a report setting out a draft protocol for dealing with requests from non-Directors to attend future meetings, including the release of papers in advance, to allow for a number of issues to be considered in greater detail, particularly the inclusion of a clause restricting issues to strategic rather than operational matters and the notice periods required for the consideration of attendance requests.

ABL Annual Schedule of Performance and Contract Compliance Reports

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by the Partnership Manager:

- “1 Purpose of Report**
 - 1.1 To present the agreed annual schedule for performance and contract compliance Board reports.**
- 2. Recommendations**
 - 2.1 The Board is to approve the annual schedule of Board reports for 2020/21 and 2021/22 as set out below.**
- 3. Main Report**
 - 3.1 Since 2016, Board meeting agendas have been structured around an approved annual schedule of performance and contract compliance reports.**
 - 3.2 At the Board meeting on 9th November, Directors approved a number of changes to the KPI scorecard and the annual schedule of reports.**
 - 3.3 On 9th November, the Board further affirmed an earlier decision to schedule two six monthly ‘open forum’ workshops, in February and September. There is no scheduled Board meeting in February and a September ‘open forum’ would replace the formal September board meeting.**
 - 3.4 The annual schedule of reports presented below allows for a September open forum meeting which, in 2021, will be held on 6th September. To accommodate this, reports previously scheduled for the September Board meeting have been equally distributed into the agendas for the August and October board meetings.**
 - 3.5 Directors are reminded that additional ad hoc reports can be requested at board meetings within routine matters and,**

subject to board approval, would then be scheduled for a subsequent meeting.

- 3.6 The annual report schedule set out below reflects decisions taken by the board and is compliance with the company Articles of Association, the terms of the contract and governance guidelines.**

ABL Board Report Schedule for 2020/21 and 2021/22

Quarter 1	
April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and procedure alignment report (Equality and Diversity) + (Health and Safety) • ABL Strategic Plan six monthly action update • Confirm receipt of ABL Director declaration of interest forms • Six monthly report - facility management & centre inspection report • Six monthly report - Community Engagement •
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q4 2019/20 KPI report • GLL Annual Service report for 2019-20 • Six monthly report - Group Exercise Innovation & Development • Annual GLL HR report (for previous year) • Annual Belfast Agenda outcomes report
Quarter 2 (BCC July recess – No ABL board meeting in July)	
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 KPI report • GLL Annual Service Plan for 2021-22 • Annual Aquatics Strategy action plan review • Six monthly report - Healthwise and PARs • Six monthly report - 3G Pitch Utilisation & Business Performance • Six monthly report - review of ABL Companies House returns • Six monthly report - Underrepresented Target Groups
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve board meeting date for second of two six monthly open forum meetings. To be scheduled along with February open forum meeting as agreed by the board at its meeting on 091120. • No formal board meeting to be held in September • Scheduled September reports distributed equally into August and October agendas.
Quarter 3	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GLL Annual Schedule of Charges review proposal for 2021-22 • Six monthly report - ABL Strategic Plan action update • Six monthly report - Facility management & centre inspection report • Six monthly report - Community Engagement • Six monthly report - BCC Sports Development Unit update • Annual review of GLL membership architecture • Policy & procedure alignment report (HR) + (Emergency Support and PSNI/BCC Public Safety)
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q2 KPI report • ABL Audited Accounts report to 31 March 2020 • GLL Annual Marketing Plan for 2021-22 • Six monthly report - Group Exercise Innovation and Development

Quarter 4	
January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABL Annual plan proposal for following year • Review Annual KPI Report format and schedule for 2021-22 • Review of GLL Annual Customer Survey outcomes • Six monthly report - PARs • Six monthly report - 3G Pitch Utilisation and Business Performance
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q3 KPI report • Six monthly review of ABL Companies House returns • GLL KPI targets for following year • Six monthly report - Underrepresented Target Groups • Six monthly report - BCC Sports Development Unit update

(The above reporting schedule will also be applied to 2021/22)

The Board approved the annual schedule of Board reports for 2020/21 and 2021/22, as set out above.

Update on Plan for Director Recruitment

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th November, it had agreed that a report be submitted to this meeting outlining the various stages in the process for the recruitment of up to a maximum of four Directors.

The Partnership Manager reported that previous recruitment campaigns had been managed in consultation with Volunteer Now, which had utilised its extensive network of contacts within the voluntary sector to provide advice on the recruitment process. It had also managed the application process and had assisted with shortlisting. A representative had acted as a non-participating observer during interviews.

He explained that he had arranged a meeting in January with a representative of Volunteer Now to discuss the forthcoming recruitment campaign. Discussions would focus primarily upon the timing of the advertisement of vacancies, establishing a firm timeframe, broadening diversity, establishing an interview panel and scoring/selection protocols and setting out options for developing a fixed-term reserve pool of suitable candidates from which replacement Directors could be drawn.

He pointed out that, subject to a positive outcome to that meeting, it was envisaged that the recruitment campaign would be initiated in February and continue during the month of March. Successful applicants would then be offered positions and, allowing for induction sessions, would be able to attend either the April or June Board meeting.

After discussion, during which the Partnership Manager confirmed that the need to address the under-representation of various groups would form a central part of the discussions with Volunteer Now, the Board approved the proposed approach for the recruitment of replacement Directors and noted that it would receive a further update at its meeting in January.

Other Business

A Director highlighted the fact that the issues around the Customer Services Advisor role and child safeguarding, which had been covered under matters arising, had not been raised with the GLL representatives.

In response, the Partnership Manager reported that the representatives had been prepared to address the issues but the matter had been overlooked. He undertook to request the information from GLL and to circulate it to the Board by email.

Next Meeting

The Board noted that its next meeting would take place remotely via Microsoft Teams at 4.30 p.m. on Monday, 11th January.

Chairperson